



UNILEVER EXPANDS INITIATIVE COMBATING STEREOTYPES AS BRANDS CONTEND WITH 'CANCEL CULTURE'

UNILEVER IS BROADENING ITS UNSTEREOTYPE INITIATIVE INTRODUCED IN 2016 TO REDUCE STEREOTYPICAL PORTRAYALS OF PEOPLE IN ADVERTISING AS INDUSTRY-WIDE REPRESENTATION ISSUES PERSIST

Act 2 Unstereotype arrives along with research the marketer commissioned from Kantar that revealed less than one in five survey respondents believe ads today are representative of society at large. Kantar also found nearly half of people from marginalized groups, including Black, Hispanic, Asian, LGBTQ and disabled consumers, believe they have been stereotyped through advertising. Unilever argues that failing to close the representation gap could make the advertising business subject to "cancel culture," where consumers shun people or organizations that fail to meet their standards around social values. In response, the packaged goods giant is expanding Unstereotype's purview to encompass all aspects of its marketing, including production and product development, as opposed to the narrower focus on advertising alone.

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Stats roundup: the impact of Covid-19 on ecommerce

9 out of 10 top global ecommerce companies saw double-digit revenue growth in 2020. Analysis from GlobalData shows that 9 out of the top 10 global ecommerce companies (by revenue) experienced double-digit growth in 2020 as new consumer habits swayed in their favour.

Pinduoduo came close to triple-digit year-on-year revenue growth at 97.6%, raising its total 2020 sales to \$8.6 billion, while South Korea's top marketplace Coupang saw a 90.8% growth, ranking it 7th overall for 2020 revenue at \$12 billion. Amazon unsurprisingly topped the list at a reported revenue of \$386.1 billion, although its growth was far lower at (a nevertheless impressive) 37.6%.

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The customer experience challenge demands clear leadership

In today's competitive landscape, customer expectations have never been higher. They demand a service that is faster, simpler and provides more value than ever before. Consumers' digital-mindset means that companies which haven't been able to evolve quickly enough are losing market share to competitors who have transformed their products and services or to start-ups where digital is their business.

Naturally, customer experience (CX) has been easier for digitally-native businesses. But for organisations needing to adapt today, the journey is much harder. Having the right organisational and operational shape to develop new capabilities is vital. Great CX demands a blend of experience, technology, data and creativity. It requires empathetic organisational and cultural change – which is why it needs clear leadership.

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Brands must go beyond advertising to connect in a post-COVID-19 world

The industry is at a crossroads as less data about consumers could equate with even less effective ads.

We've been hearing about the pending "death of advertising" for years, with ever-increasing ads having less and less influence on actual consumer decisions. Today, the up to 10,000 ads we see every day makes each of them less impactful. It turns out that hitting people in the face with a fire hose is actually a bad way to convince them they should take a drink.

But despite the diminishing returns across the industry, advertising is resilient. Consider the impact on ad spend during the COVID-19 pandemic: despite an initial (and sharp) decrease in the early months of the crisis, digital ad spending actually increased 12% last year.

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Volkswagen targets Pinterest auto shoppers with virtual test drive

Volkswagen is teaming with Pinterest to promote its first all-electric vehicle (EV), the ID.4 SUV, per an announcement emailed to Marketing Dive.

Beginning June 14, the auto brand is using Pinterest's platform to offer a virtual experience for consumers, including the ability to take the vehicle on a "test drive" with 360-degree viewing capabilities. The promotion continues next month when Pinterest creators will walk consumers through their favorite parts of the car.

The partnership sees Volkswagen attempting to expand its reach by both tapping into Pinterest's growing popularity amongst auto consumers and leveraging the platform to create a virtual shopping experience.

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Successful personalization demands a balance of strategy, tactics, technology and skills

It's been a long time coming, but this week, Snapchat announced the next stage of its augmented reality push, with the launch of the first iteration of a fully AR-enabled version of its Spectacles smart glasses.

Though 'launch' is probably not the right term - this new, updated version of Spectacles, which are able to overlay digital graphics onto a person's real-world view will not be made available to the public, but will instead be distributed to AR creators, who will then essentially partner with Snapchat to assist in the next stage of development.

The announcement is a huge step forward for AR usage, and seemingly, comes a step ahead of bigger players like Facebook and Apple which are also developing their own AR glasses.

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Long live organic social media

In what has become a pay-to-play or pay-to-reach social media landscape, with statements like 'organic social media is dead' readily thrown around, why should brands be paying more attention to their organic social media strategies? And what can we learn from how social-first businesses leverage a broad range of organic activities to help prioritise organic social?

A broader definition of organic social media today. Simply put, organic social media is traditionally seen as any social media activity that exists without paid promotion. At the lowest level, this is outbound content on a brand social page. But today, when social media marketing influences the full consumer journey, a much broader list of organic social tactics can include community management, customer care, social listening, employee social media advocacy programmes, as well as leveraging user generated content (UGC) as part of your content strategy.

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