

l'œil

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in depth study of new
consumption trends

by L'Observatoire Cetelem

www.observatoirecetelem.com

The art of marketing is sometimes inspired by the methods of yesteryear

Although numerous pure players are now keen to set foot in the real world, they don't necessarily need to open an actual store.

www.bonnegueule.fr

Seen in Montpellier, Strasbourg, Bordeaux, Toulouse, Nice and Nantes

Having opened two shops in Paris and Lyon, French men's fashion website *bonnegueule.fr*, which has built a reputation for giving useful advice and an editorial tone that appeals to thirtysomethings, recently decided to turn its customers into ambassadors in their home town. Six have been officially appointed (in Nantes, Nice, Strasbourg, Bordeaux, Toulouse and Montpellier) and others are being recruited to enable the site to stamp its presence across France's regions. The chosen few will be able to set up a "Bonne Gueule" showroom in their home. Anyone wishing to pay them a visit to receive fashion advice will simply need to sign up.



What to think of it?

Like many e-commerce sites, *bonnegueule.fr* has been tempted to enter the "real world". The strategy devised to fulfil this objective, which involves the recruitment of ambassadors and the set-up of showrooms in their apartments, is definitely a shrewd one. Firstly, this is a great way of **minimising payroll and rental costs**. It also enables the firm to gain a presence across the regions, while most pure players focus almost exclusively on major cities and, in some cases, European capitals, convinced that this is the only way of building their brand's reputation. In provincial towns, **consumers seem to be hungrier for advice, in an environment that is generally more relaxed** than in the major conurbations, where consumers are more stressed and rushed. Selling products from people's homes is also an effective way of gathering information about customers at little cost. **Getting to know consumers better to more closely meet their expectations**. Given the success numerous brands have achieved through home-based selling (Stanhomes, Charlott', Thermomix, etc.), it is no surprise to see e-commerce sites following suit. Indeed, such firms have also been able to develop **a relationship based on trust and a feeling of belonging to a community**. Today, **a brand's philosophy makes just as much of a difference as its actual offering**.

As a clear sign of their vitality, subscription boxes are now appearing in unexpected forms and with unlikely themes

Having traditionally revolved around the idea of discovering new products, boxes are now branching out into more emotional experiences to revitalise their relationship with subscribers.

www.pblvbox.fr

Seen in France

Since early September, TV soap opera *Plus Belle la Vie* has given fans the option of receiving a box containing a collector's item from a particular episode, a magazine devoted to the show that also offers viewers a glimpse behind the scenes, beauty products by Energie Fruit relating to the theme of the box (the first being "Indian summer") and even a golden ticket to try and win a VIP tour of the studios, appear in an episode or meet the cast. Different subscription packages are available, starting from €19.90 with no minimum term, and subscribers receive a box every two months.



What to think of it?

While brands are usually the ones that sponsor TV shows, allowing the former to take advantage of audience numbers and the latter to receive financial backing, here the opposite is true. With the *Plus Belle la Vie* box, **cosmetics brand Energie Fruit, which is still relatively unknown, is actually sponsored by the series**. It benefits not only from the show's notoriety, but also **from its values and glamour**. This is a new and original way for a brand to gain exposure and start building a rapport with consumers. The venture also **offers a fresh take on the subscription box concept**, which, over the last few years, has become so widespread that it is now struggling to maintain its appeal. Previous boxes were geared towards introducing people to new products. These are designed to **draw them into a different world**. In this case, we are talking about a "cultural" (TV) world, but why not that of a designer, a brand or a retailer in the future? The box created for *Plus Belle la Vie* features a clever blend of **objects, surprises and experiences** thanks to the "golden ticket", **thus mixing the actual with the potential**. This should **add intensity and suspense** to the range and mark it out from those comprised exclusively of products, which makes them somewhat predictable. An innovative way of **breathing life into an offering**, the ultimate marketing challenge.



For many, living in a remote cabin remains a dream. The concept has now become a marketing strategy.

Living “small” doesn’t always mean living “poor”.
A sign that expectations and ideals are shifting.

<http://swisstinyhouse.ch> / www.scandichotels.com/landing-pages/scandic-to-go

Seen in Japan, Switzerland and the United States

Having first appeared in the United States in the wake of the property crisis, the trend for micro-homes is now gaining ground in Europe, where numerous firms have entered the segment, including start-up SwissTinyHouse, which offers small houses on wheels with floorspace of 15 m² that can be inhabited all year round. Another concept is that of Scandinavian firm Scandic To Go, which will install a container housing an 18 m² hotel room at the location specified by its customers, within reason of course. Two recently published books, *Vivre heureux dans un petit espace* and *Cabin Porn* (a reference to the Foodporn trend, where individuals feel compelled to post photos of their meals on Instagram), provide a compendium of the micro-homes built around the world. There are countless videos on the web of proud homeowners lauding the merits of their Lilliputian homes. Lastly, Japanese retailer Muji, which is never slow to embrace a trend, has announced that in 2017 it will be selling “Huts” offering floorspace of 10 to 40 m², made from cork, wood and aluminium. Sold at a price of between €20,000 and €35,000, the buildings can be easily dismantled and moved.

What to think of it?

Loft apartments and old converted workshops are no longer alone in fuelling people’s dreams. Today, small houses infused with a “cabin spirit” also occupy the fantasies of city dwellers looking to add a little magic to their daily lives. The phenomenon could perhaps be viewed as a reaction to a property market that is increasingly tough to access and as a positive acceptance of the fact. But not only. This cabin spirit is **also a sign that people are looking beyond the supposed ideal of economic growth**, reflecting the spirit of the times. Less space, fewer objects, less consumption, less CO₂. “Less is best”. Less is also **an attitude adopted by connoisseurs**. Carefully choosing each product means thinking about the purchase, rather than compulsively buying things to fill a void. This is a new approach to consumption. Finally, this fondness for all that is tiny is illustrative of **a new relationship with our environment**. A cabin is neither a caravan, a mobile home, not really a house. It can be placed in almost any location without leaving a trace and allows its occupants to enjoy the landscape, while also offering **a degree of mobility** that is highly appreciated by consumers today. The quest for simplicity, a creative aesthetic, the potential for mobility and a desire to commune with nature: in its own way, the micro-home movement seems to sum up the various expectations of consumers today.



Why not offer creative talents “residencies” as a fresh take on partnership strategies?

Initiated by restaurants seeking to generate a buzz, could the concept of offering chefs “residencies” inspire brands searching for new ideas?
www.fulgurances.com / www.theparispopup.com/fr/apropos

Seen in Paris

In Paris, more and more restaurants are inviting “resident” chefs for an evening, a few months or to devise a menu. This is the philosophy embraced by Fulgurances (originally a food magazine), which every six months entrusts the kitchen of its restaurant in the 11th *arrondissement* to chefs who have earned their stripes in star-rated establishment. Another example is Paris Popup, which takes over restaurant kitchens on the days they are closed and the cooking facilities of hotels that no longer offer food, the idea being to blend into the surroundings and work with local produce. This summer, restaurant chain Maison Burger invited two chefs more accustomed to creating stews and fish dishes to take the reins at its establishments and come up with three totally new burger recipes and a dessert.

What to think of it?

Original and slightly offbeat, the residency system could easily be adopted by brands wanting to quench their customers’ thirst for thrills. This would highlight the fact that, today, **identity can also be viewed as being alive and constantly changing, enriched by the values of others, and no longer unique and precious, requiring protection from external influences**. Inviting talents to the table also means **creating something rare and, therefore, desirable**. This is happening here and now, not somewhere else tomorrow. Those who don’t wake up to this will be missing out. They can kick themselves as they watch these events unfold on social media. The approach often stems from a new vision of creativity that involves **being inspired and guided by the environment we inhabit and attempting to see it differently. A state of flux between a location and a talent** that breaks away from strategies that lead to the same offerings being churned out again and again, without any consideration for culture or geography. Ultimately, should this trend for “chefs in residence” not be perceived as a metaphor for everything that creative brand marketing should stand for today? **A departure from traditional methods and a quest for new sources of inspiration.**



With the advent of new technologies, car dealerships are rushing to reinvent themselves

It isn't always necessary to invoke the future to forge innovative customer relationships, nor to try and eliminate human ties altogether in favour of digital relations.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kR5S2pid0jg

Seen in Barcelona

To coincide with the launch of its latest model, the Ateca, Seat has sought to innovate with its Seat Live-Store platform, which enables customers of certain dealerships to initiate live dialogue with one of the brand's experts and watch a customised video of their chosen vehicle. The dealerships in question are fitted with 12 fixed cameras and 4 mobile cameras so as to answer any questions relating to the equipment, technology and design of the Ateca, but also the Leon and the Ibiza. During the online presentation, the Seat expert and the user can surf the web, view specific images and videos, transfer documents and configure a vehicle in real time. The Seat Live Store is also available in Germany.

What to think of it?

After Audi's virtual reality headset (see the November 2015 issue of L'œil) and the experiences Bentley offers to help buyers select equipment for their SUV (see the February 2016 issue of L'œil), Seat's platform may seem less groundbreaking and futuristic. But that does not detract from its utility. Here, the company is using innovation in a way that is relevant, because it is **prompting consumers to adopt new habits without going too far and disorienting them**. The aim of the Seat Live Store is not to keep people away from dealerships, but to take advantage of **the tool's fun and interactive side to give web users the urge to discover something new** and book a real-life test drive at a sales outlet near them. **Dealerships remain an important part of the relationship** and are there to initiate dialogue or finalize purchases via a tablet, smartphone or computer. Seat's platform is an innovative communication channel that allows the brand to establish contact with customers in just a click. It also serves as a reminder that **offering customers a unique experience does not necessarily mean cutting ties on a human level**.

And also...

According to a survey by **OpinionWay for L'Observatoire Cetelem, 63% of homeowners** who are currently paying off a mortgage have already taken advantage of exceptionally low interest rates to renegotiate their loan, or are planning to do so soon.
<http://observatoirecetelem.com/question-conso>

In the period from July 2015 to June 2016, physical retailers topped the online sales rankings in the clothing sector, **accounting for 35.3% of online purchases**. This places them above traditional mail order companies, which nonetheless still account for 34% of online fashion sales, compared with 50% in 2009.

In 2000, a survey conducted by Microsoft revealed that **humans have an attention span of 12 seconds**. A similar survey carried out recently showed **that this has now fallen to 8 seconds**. Just to illustrate, when a website takes more than a second to load up, 40% of visitors give up...



According to a survey on connected homes conducted by estate agency Immobiliare, despite the fact that **83% of the French population have already heard of such homes**, barely more than a third state that they own connected household items. The most popular include roller shutters, central heating systems and lights. And which room are the French keenest to hook up? The living room.

(Survey performed by www.immobiliare-neuf.fr in May and June 2016, via the web and by telephone, with a panel of 1,800 French customers of Immobiliare)



Summing Up

Since 3 September, Kiabi has been trialling a robot called Pepper at its Val d'Europe store in Seine-et-Marne. The role of the 1.2 metre-high android is to greet and interact with customers. This is a fun way of promoting innovation and anticipating what shopping will look like in the future.

American co-working giant, WeWork, recently set up operations in Paris, between the Gare Saint-Lazare and Gare du Nord railway stations. Across the Atlantic, WeWork's services are aimed at the self-employed, but in this case the main targets are SMEs.

www.wework.com

 *Patricia B. / L'Observatoire Cetelem*

American retail giant Walmart recently filed a patent for the development of a shopping trolley fitted with a motor and several video sensors. Once ordered via an app, the trolley will find its way to the customer, guide them to the correct aisles and even park itself.

 *Monique B. / PF Consulting*



On display in Amsterdam, Treewifi is a wifi hotspot that takes the form of a bird house fixed to a tree. It only functions on days when the air is not polluted. On those days, the hotspot lights up in green. An amusing way of raising awareness of urban pollution.

 *Marshal S. / Marque, Communication & Advertising*

Available in the United States and the UK, Sweatcoin is an application that rewards those who choose to walk. All journeys made are converted into currency that can be spent on the products of partner brands.

<https://sweatco.in>

 *Quentin H. / International marketing*

Ulule, one of Europe's leading crowdfunding platforms, recently opened its first store in the Marais quarter of Paris, where it sells the products it helped to fund. The outlet's line-up will change every two months, allowing the public to chat with those who initiated the projects supported through Ulule.

 *Matthieu J. / Echangeur*



Ford has set up a partnership with Motivate, which runs San Francisco's bike-share scheme. The service will be rechristened FordGoBike and the number of bikes available will rise from 700 currently to 7,000 in 2018.

 *Véronique B. / Brand, Communication & Advertising*

The Nordic pool of the Butte aux Cailles swimming baths in Paris allows visitors to swim out in the open air in water heated to 28 degrees... by the servers of start-up Stimergy, which are installed in the pools basement.

<http://lalettreducloud.com/2016/02/23/des-serveurs-pour-chauffer-la-piscine-de-la-butte-aux-cailles>

 *Isabelle R. / Distribution France*

Since 15 September, web users have been able to create their own unique sweets at www.luttilab.fr using a 3D printer. They can choose from a selection of 80 designs, write personalised messages or give their imagination free rein.



Word of the month



Story: the photos and videos posted on Snapchat disappear a few seconds after they are seen by their recipients. It is also possible to arrange several posts together to compose a "story", which remains visible for 24 hours. A year ago in the United States, Snapchat launched Discover, which provides its users with news from the main media outlets in the form of interactive stories. Since 15 September, a French version of Discover has been online, which features stories from Le Monde, L'Equipe, Melty, Cosmopolitan and even L'Oréal. Target audience: 18-24 year olds.

Employees of BNP Paribas Personal Finance help to uncover the micro-facts reported in L'Œil by L'Observatoire Cetelem.

 *means that the fact or the news in brief was spotted by one of them.*

L'Œil de L'Observatoire Cetelem analyses micro-facts on consumption, revealing the emergence of new manners of spending.

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