

HUNTER: CONSUMER PULSE CHECK

At HUNTER, we are #AlwaysHunting for insights and inspiration that helps us earn the attention of the consumers who matter most to our clients. HUNTER: Insights accomplishes this by keeping our fingers on the pulse of the consumer and the ever-changing cultural and communications landscape. Here's a summary of our latest consumer trends to help you supercharge your communication plans and programs.



SELF-CARE = TREAT YOURSELF

Dubbed as “little treat culture” on social media, the act of rewarding yourself for doing everyday tasks, justified as self-care, is a growing trend among Millennials and Gen-Zers. “Little treat culture,” often used as a tool for escapism, is the latest example of a collective experience that unites and soothes adopters during chaotic and divisive times. “Little treat culture” is an amplification of our Macrotrend, “Live... a little,” where consumers are aware that the “sensible” thing to do is trim spending, especially during the holiday season when spending for others is at an all-time high but choose to self-soothe through the high volume of emotional and financial stressors with personal pleasure. In fact, according to Shopify’s latest survey, 64% of people said they are likely to purchase something for themselves that won’t be given as a gift this holiday season. Brands could consider a messaging strategy that encourages holiday shoppers to employ a “one for you, one for me” gifting approach to tap into this timely trend.

THE FEAST OF THE TINNED FISHES

From gift guides and grazing boards to souvenirs and stocking stuffers, the Tinned Fish trend has reached a tipping point. While a staple in many cultures around the world, Americans have historically considered canned meats and fish as an emergency kit essential. Fueled by supply chain shortages during the pandemic, snacks moving to center of plate and the rise of climate-friendly eating habits, tinned fish has moved past a fleeting Tik Tok trend to mainstream meals across the country. And with inflation concerns flying high this year, people continue to look for affordable indulgences that deliver memorable and unique experiences. The flavor and fish variety available along with the colorful and creative packaging align nicely to two of Mintel’s consumer trends – Sense of Intense and Aesthetic Effect. Never has there been a better time for brands to consider new flavors, formats, and packaging innovations to drive conversation and consumer interest.





BOOMERS SPEND ON SOCIAL

While brand marketers have been working hard to make inroads with younger generations on social media, older generations have become increasingly adept at social and digital channels. According to Meta, the amount of time American's age 65+ spend on social media has grown 68% in the past decade, while Boomers usage of TikTok has grown 57% since 2021.* And it's not just passive time. Thirty-nine percent of Boomers report making an online purchase for a product or service in the past week. With nearly three times the purchasing power of Gen Z, betting on Boomers seems like it would be an obvious strategy but only ten percent of Boomers report feeling represented in advertising they see.* Now is the time for brands to not only right size their marketing spends against the outsized opportunity that Boomers represent but to bring the same Main Character Energy to messaging and visual communications that they exert on the younger cohorts.

**Source: GWI Connecting the Dots 2024*

VACATION #DUPES

First it was beauty dupes, then fashion dupes...now entering the chat, destination dupes.

As inflation woes hit Americans' wallets, consumers continue to look for deals across categories to enjoy life's little luxuries at a more budget-friendly price point. This #dupe trend has now infiltrated the travel sector as vacation-seekers swap pricey hot spots for alternative destinations that offer similar sights, sounds and experiences. Think Paros instead of Santorini, Palermo instead of Lisbon or Liverpool instead of London. Driven largely by Gen Z and TikTok, searches for "dupe" spots doubled internationally in 2023 according to Expedia's 2024 Travel Report and this trend is slated to hold strong well into next year.

With consumers thirst for a good deal coupled with a "treat yourself" mentality, there's no doubt dupe culture will continue to expand into other categories, especially as Americans' views of the economy remain pessimistic. Brands can take advantage of this trend by positioning their products or services as a valuable alternative that make audiences feel like they're still getting the perk without the price tag.

