

Spring

Snapshot 2016



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Noticeboard

SUGAR FIX

We're pleased to see that Public Health England's sugar reduction app has been downloaded nearly 2 million times since launching in January. Containing data for 85,000 products, the app uses images of sugar cubes to show sugar content in a simple and engaging way.



DOWN ON WASTE

Food waste is another subject that's close to our heart so we were delighted to see that Asda are selling Broccoli leaves. Usually ploughed back into the ground, the leaves (which are 70% of the plant) are the healthiest part of the plant and high in vitamins A, C and K and a source of calcium and potassium.



Flying in to a Supermarket near you...

Cricket flour is set to become the latest superfood and Gathr foods are blazing a trail with their Crobar snacks - winner of the recent World Food Innovation Awards. A healthy and sustainable ingredient with 15g of protein and 4g of fat per 100 calories (versus 11g of protein and 8g of fat for beef) we think once perceptions shift, we'll all be munching on cricket flour snacks...



THE ALTERNATIVE SUPER BRANDS

Congratulations to Screwfix, Wilko and Toolstation who appear in a new top 10 list of 'alternative super brands'. They're recognised for demonstrating a good understanding of their customers as well as driving long-term customer loyalty and engagement.



OUR UK HOME IMPROVEMENT PLAN...

A new survey from Gocompare.com Money has shed some light on the UK's home improvement plans. The research reveals that 14% of homeowners are considering making improvements to their home with new kitchens, extensions and installing a new bathroom topping the list.

THE WISH LIST

- 1 - A new kitchen - 36%
- 2 - Build an extension - 34%
- 3 - Install a new bathroom - 33%
- 4 - A garden make-over - 24%
- 5 - Convert the attic into an extra room - 19%
- 6 - Install a new boiler or central heating system - 17%
- 7 - Knock through rooms to create an open plan space - 16%
- 8 - Fit double glazing - 10%
- 9 - Add an extra bedroom - 10%
- 10 - Install solar panels - 7%



Look out for...

Waitrose is building on its growing share of the horticultural market by launching a glossy new magazine - Waitrose Garden. With gardening the second most popular pastime for Waitrose customers, we predict it will be as popular as their Food and cookery magazines.



We LOVE...

Now that the BBQ season is almost with us we'll be adding a splash of colour to our gardens with these fun and funky flowerpots from Hum and this colourful furniture from Think Outside. The more creative among us will be recycling old terracotta pots and wooden furniture with Cuprinol Garden Shades tester pots!



Trend Spots

Key trends coming into the home in Spring/Summer 2016 and beyond...

TROPICAL ENERGY



As the Rio Olympics spark a global flurry of energy and celebration, sporting activities and vibrant festivals unite the world. Spirited celebrations, street food and Brazilian art underpin this vibrant, optimistic trend.

This lively palette really captures the spirit of Brazil and provides some great opportunities for colour clashes in bold patterned prints.

WEATHERED



Weathered, a trend driven by an increasing awareness of the effects of nature and how the weather shapes our world over time. This contemporary coastal story taps into a desire to slow down and appreciate the natural lifecycles in the world around us.

Surfaces are softened by sprays of salt air and reveal visible signs of rust, sun bleaching and water damage. This trend emanates a wonderful calm, that fuses both natural and minimal aspects allowing products to exude a pared-back yet organic quality.



Materials FOR THE HOME

With a move towards a more minimal aesthetic look in the home, materials are increasingly being used as a replacement for pattern and colour. The transition to grey-based neutrals, has also allowed a wider variety of tones to be introduced into the home through hard surfaces and materials.

WARM METALLICS

Grey neutrals have allowed homeowners to introduce more pink into the home, and these rose gold accents work best when paired with blush tones, cool pinks and subtle nudes.

CONCRETE & STONE

One clever way for homeowners to confidently inject grey into the home, is by accessorising with concrete. The material has been seen across furniture, flooring and accessories.



Source: Trend Bible



Granny's Garden

Old-fashioned flowers are blooming again. Nostalgic plants in delicate blush tones and pale shades that conjure up earlier garden eras such as foxgloves, begonias, peonies, gardenias, sweet peas and heavily fragranced rambling roses. Even camellias and hosts are fashionable again, flying out of garden centres and leaving succulents and more graphic, structural plants firmly on the shelf. Fuelling this trend is the second wave of the edible gardening trend of the last decade. We're now adding flowers (both edible and non-edible) to food crops or growing soft fruits. Granny used to grow on her smallholding.



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Packaging news...

STRIPPED BACK BRANDING

You may have noticed that a couple of well-known brands are opting for more stripped-back approaches to their identities. Gone are the serifs, drop shadows and glossy effects; the latest trend is to remove everything but the essentials. In the words of design guru, Dieter Rams, 'good design is as little design as possible'.



TREND

AS SIMPLE AS POSSIBLE

Designers are simplifying the message and stating it clearly and boldly across the face of the packaging.

The idea: clarify and simplify.

Shelf Life



There is a focus on the longevity of the product, making items that live in your home more beautiful. Objects once shoved away in cabinets are now being proudly left in the open.



LEXUS DESIGN AWARD 2016...

With more than 1,200 entries from 73 countries, the Lexus Design Award attracts students from all over the world hoping to win the chance to gain funding to turn their ideas into reality. Our congratulations go to Japanese winners AMAM for their Agar Plasticity - biodegradable packaging made from algae. Not a new concept but what makes it impressive is the research they've undertaken alongside scientists and within agar factories to create different grades of packaging. Next step will be to make the material tougher and waterproof.

GORGEOUS GIN BOTTLES

According to figures from market research firm Mintel more than two in five (42%) of Brits aged 18-34 say they have drunk gin in the past 12 months. Among the over 45s that figure is just 27%. Beautifully designed bottles are helping to drive sales of Gin. It's well and truly shaken off its old fashioned image and embraced the trend for artisanal and vintage.



TREND

ORNATE ARTISANAL

Look out for designs idealising the past – when things were simpler, cared for, made by hand, and detail-oriented, but with a modern twist.



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weird & Wonderful

RUGGIE is an alarm clock hidden inside of a warm soft mat which makes you get out of bed to turn it off.



TINY BICYCLE FLOWER VASES Are The Perfect Bike Accessory For Spring. created by Colleen Jordan.



NAP BAR in Dubai Lets You Take Breaks During Busy Days the brainchild of Smarin.



Believe it or not, out of the deep pot comes Nessie! **OTOTO'S** Nessie is guaranteed to offer a legendary time in the kitchen.



The perfect way to secure your wine or spirits. The **IGGI COMBINATION BOTTLE LOCK** bottle stopper is almost impossible to crack, making it an ideal way to keep your drink safe.



MASTER PAN FROM LAKELANDS

This multi-sectioned frying pan has suddenly become an internet hit since Olympic diver Tom Daley posted an image of it on his Instagram feed.



Introducing the World's First Self-Cleaning T.

ODO has created stain and odor-proof clothing that's stylish, clean and comfortable. The fabric used has silver ions which repel liquids and odor-causing bacteria. Cool!

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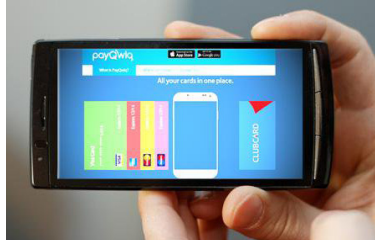
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What's happening in Retail...

THE MOBILE PAY PIONEERS

Although Apple pay hasn't exactly set the world alight, Tesco is rolling out its PayQwiq mobile payment app nationwide. Their rationale is that it will not only allow them to gather customer data, but also saves them from having to pay fees to the likes of Apple Pay (if it does start to gain in popularity). Sainsbury's are hot on their heels with a shopping app that will also eventually become a payment tool and we predict others will follow - after all, what retailer doesn't want to speed up payment?



Lowe's Holoroom

Lowe's Holoroom continues to be rolled out across stores in America. The tool is a virtual reality tool that gives customers an immersive, intuitive experience in their dream room. Currently you can only design kitchens and bathrooms but it's a great source of inspiration as you can visualise exactly how you want your rooms to look. You can't yet walk through your virtual room or pick up items but the technology is improving all the time so watch this space!

IKEA VR EXPERIENCE

Ikea have also announced the release of their pilot virtual reality app - Ikea VR. Using a headset, the user can move around the kitchen and change colour of the cabinets with just a click. Ikea VR see this as an opportunity to co-create with people globally and hope users will give their feedback and contribute to the development of the app.



JOHN LEWIS HOT HOUSES RETAIL INNOVATION WITH THE RETURN OF THE JLAB...

John Lewis is running its JLAB startup accelerator programme as it continues the search for bold new ideas that will drive innovation in retail.

Innovations from the 2016 JLAB will be designed to meet the needs of the modern day John Lewis shopper who navigates different channels seamlessly to browse, purchase and collect goods.

Based in the London HQ, The JLAB will immerse selected startups in the workings of John Lewis and give them the opportunity to work with top level mentors for 12 weeks. They will benefit from the commercial insight offered by John Lewis Directors and be able to collect valuable feedback on their ideas from the consumer panel. They will also be eligible to apply for funding of up to £100,000 in exchange for equity in their company.

Startups are currently being invited to collaborate with John Lewis in the following categories...Health and Wellbeing, simplify my life, effortless shopping, tech for kids and surprise me. The overall winner will be announced in September.

Latest Innovations...

FLAT OF THE FUTURE



John Lewis now has a dedicated 'smart home' area in its Oxford Street store. Laid out like a typical flat, it's the perfect environment to showcase technology such as Sonos, Dyson's new air purifier and the Bluetooth Nespresso machine. Star of the show is the Samsung's family

Hub - a massive fridge with a huge android tablet embedded that will help you control your life...



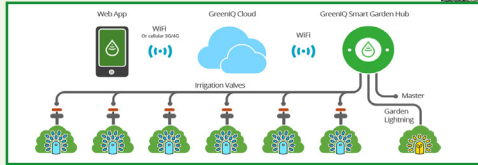
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Smart Gardening...

This lot will make even the worst amateur gardener's fingers seem green!

Helpful
tech...

greenIQ Smart Garden Hub

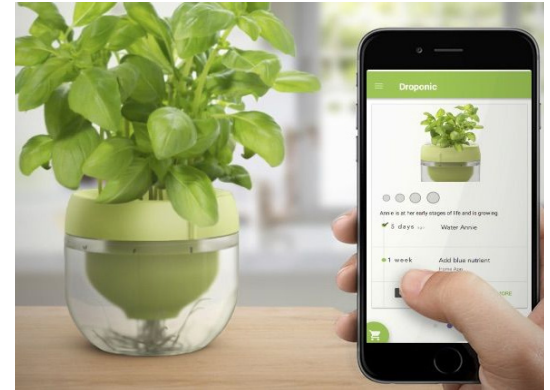


GreenIQ has come up with a Smart Garden Hub which taps into your local weather reports to work out exactly when and how much it needs to water your plants. If it's about to chuck it down, then there's no pointing in wasting your money on unnecessary bills. It can also control your garden lighting based on sunrise and sunset schedules throughout the year.



DROPONIC SMART PLANTER

Solving the issue of time, skill and space for the Millennial homemaker, Droponic is a beacon for indoor herb growth using hydroponic technology - water instead of soil. The accompanying app informs owners of what exactly their plant needs to flourish!



Flymo® Robotic Lawnmower

This little guy does your mowing for you: it mows the lawn on its own, while you enjoy your free time to do other things. Once finished mowing, the robotic mower recharges itself at the charging station, and all without the slightest effort on your part. Even though there is quite a few robot lawnmowers these days (and while it's going to depend a little on your garden size as to which model you plump for) one of the better brands out there is Flymo.



plantui
SMART GARDEN™

Plantui 6 latest grow lamp is height-adjustable to accommodate your plants all the way from seedlings up until harvest. The intensity and colour of the illumination changes as the system dictates what is optimal for the greenery underneath. Pop the plant capsules in along with the water and the Plantui app will sort out the rest. Cucumbers, chillies, flowers, whatever you like!



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G'DAY BUNNINGS!

The February acquisition of Homebase came as a bit of a shock to us especially as Bunnings (and owners Wesfarmers) are pretty unheard of in the UK. So we thought we'd find out more...

CASE STUDY



Wesfarmers is one of Australia's biggest companies and owns Bunnings Warehouse as well as supermarket

brand Coles and department stores Target and Kumart. Bunnings Warehouse is a very successful home improvement and outdoor products retailer. With over 120 Warehouse stores (and 60 smaller store formats) it sells to both commercial and personal customers in Australia and New Zealand. It's these synergies with Homebase that made it the perfect target for Wesfarmers and the ideal opportunity to expand into the UK.

"When you go and invest £340 million (\$642 million) of shareholders' money you've got to have a plan," Mr Goyder said.

"Part of the plan was that Peter Davis would run the business - we were clear on that from day one. The other part was that we would take a handful of people from Bunnings, which I think is a world-class business, into a business that frankly isn't world-class at the moment."

We understand that the big red hammer will hit UK shoppers in as little as eight weeks as Wesfarmers rolls out the Bunnings brand across a handful of Homebase stores in time for the warm summer weather.

They have not commented on an actual launch date but suppliers suggest Wesfarmers is keen to test the brand in a number of outlets clustered around the Homebase headquarters in Milton Keynes.

What they want to do is maximise the potential sales and increased customers traffic over summer, one close source said "The focus of the guys in the UK is to get the thing operational," he said.

Goodbye Homebase...

Wesfarmers are bringing the Bunnings brand to the UK backed by an investment of £500m. The acquisition is the first step in a programme which would see investment in the core Homebase assets and team to build an exciting new Bunnings business over three to five years. Wesfarmers' management team told analysts that the company had studied the UK market for more than a year before making its move and the strategy makes sense.

"They will use this European summer to test the market, they will use a number of stores and see how each of them trades, each with a slightly different model."

There is also speculation Wesfarmers will alter the product mix at Homebase, with a stronger focus on gardening supplies and accessories, and a reduced range of soft homewares such as bedding and curtains.

Wesfarmers have attracted criticism for taking an axe to Homebase's senior management team in early March, a decision managing director Richard Goyder defended as a critical element in its plan to transform the embattled British chain into a "world-class business".

Homebase - Key Facts

- Founded in 1979
- The first stores opened in 1981
- It has 265 stores and 18,000 staff
- In 2015 its revenues reached £1.5b

According to YouGov Brand Index, awareness of the Homebase brand is above 90% among the British public and it is one of the top 10 'general retail' brands.



The new strategy...

The acquisition of 265 Homebase stores makes Bunnings the second largest home improvement and garden retailer in the UK and Ireland behind B&Q.

Wesfarmers has told investors it could improve on Homebase's store operations, cut prices, widen ranges, improve service, appeal more to tradesmen and do more online.

John Gillam, managing director of the Melbourne-based Bunnings, said: "We have noted some commentary in the UK claiming that DIY is in decline; we could not disagree with this more. We see a huge market opportunity for good quality home improvement and garden retailing. Bunnings is well-placed to unlock value from the Homebase business and has a proven track record in delivering growth both organically and through acquisitions"

Given their track record Wesfarmers certainly seem to know what they're doing. They took the ailing Coles supermarket business and transformed it into one of the most successful retail businesses in Australia adding around £10bn in sales between 2009 - 2015.

What will Bunning's strategy be? In Australia, Bunning's strength lies in its 3 brand pillars: biggest range, lowest prices and good service. Consistent branding of these key attributes through catalogues, advertising plus delivering on the service promise have driven the Warehouse success, underpinning the Bunnings business. Given the market similarities between the regions, there's no reason why they won't roll this out in the UK too...

3 ways to boost your brand...

These days even the smallest brands can have a big personality! Here's 3 ways to grow your brand and increase consumer loyalty and engagement.

1 Use Packaging to Connect

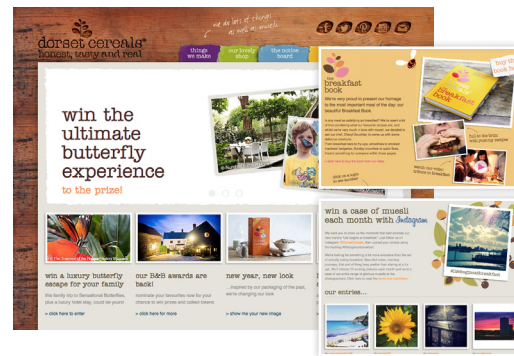
Your brand's packaging is becoming more and more important. With a shift to online retailing, the packaging is often the first physical interaction consumers will have with your brand and great packaging is the most effective way to build a personal relationship with consumers. Graphics that appeal to your audience, messaging that connects and structural tweaks that prove you understand your consumer's needs will undoubtedly drive trial and ensure loyalty. Why not make 2016, the year you start ensuring your packs are up to scratch when it comes to conveying your brand's attitudes, values and story.



We love nothing more than receiving our Graze snack box (for the quirky pack as well as the contents) so we were delighted to see these mini versions of the famous box when Graze secured distribution in-store. They've retained all of the appealing personality plus the unique structure that makes them unmistakably Graze.

2 Create a Dialogue

The power of the global mega brands is under threat as we see a whole raft of smaller, more personal brands coming into the market. These days, the power of social media means new brands don't necessarily need the big ATL budgets of old to get noticed. Quirky, personal brand stories, targeted, engaging social media content and interactive websites are all being used to create a dialogue to form powerful relationships with consumers. In 2016 don't just 'tell and sell', think about how your brand can talk 'with' your consumers rather than 'at' them.



Dorset Cereals are the masters of consumer engagement with brilliantly targeted social media content plus a fun and engaging website that really communicates the values of the brand. When it comes to understanding the needs/wants and attitudes of their consumers, they're second to none.

3 Sell an Experience

Don't just sell a product... sell an experience. This is the raison d'être for service brands like Virgin and Four Seasons but successful products have been doing it for years too (think Redbull and Cadbury). Miele was the first white goods company to really embrace experiential activity and regular cookery demonstrations and events have proven very successful in driving loyalty, engagement and sales across the portfolio. Yeo Valley have opened their farm in the beautiful valley so consumers can really live the brand - with food and gardening demos, walking tours and a canteen style restaurant.



The River Cottage empire is centred around experience. Millions aspire to the River Cottage lifestyle and the brand has become hugely successful from sales of cookery books, courses and festival ticket sales. A brand stretch into grocery products (think chutneys, jams, etc) must surely be just around the corner...



Let us know what you would like to see next time...

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