

INSIGHT

Design perspectives from FRCH Design Worldwide

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TECHNOLOGY & THE EMPOWERED CONSUMER



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For years we have been tracking the shifting trends in technology and what they mean for our clients and their customers.

Today we see a huge opportunity for our clients to use technology as a source of entertainment, information and service for their customers. Hotel check-in can be fun with a mobile app that lets you breeze past the guest counter, or how about a retail shopping experience that lets you skip the check-out line.

Today's technology has become less about features and showcasing technology as "cool", and more about inspiring and establishing an emotional connection with customers.

Whether on a blog, Twitter, Facebook or a customized mobile app, to be credible with the new "social" consumer, brand messages have to be honest, authentic and relevant.

That is why our strategy for the FRCH blog, "Creative Fuel" was based on having a team of design professionals as our content managers and core contributors. They blog on the industry and things they are passionate about. Un-biased opinions provide a fresh look at our business category and the world. The QR code adjacent will take you to our view of the technology-empowered consumer. Enjoy!



FRCH | CREATIVE FUEL



PHOTO CREDITS: 4Food, New York (left) - courtesy of Laughing Squid, Ordering on iPad at 4Food (right) - courtesy of Popal.

4FOOD DOES IT RIGHT

To view a good mix of display and content technology in a retail and hospitality space, head to New York and check out 4Food. Their space mixes display technologies, content management systems and social media that pioneers a new direction in retail.

Customers are greeted by a large video wall that displays recent Tweets about the restaurant and public Foursquare check-ins. Half a dozen iPads are waiting and ready for order entry, or the roving

staff, who are also carrying iPads, can order your meal for you. Giant digital menu boards display a myriad of options and ingredients people can use to create their customized burger.

4Food maintains a live "Buildboard" chart that tracks the most popular burgers and ingredients. The Buildboard is an innovative way to generate sales. 4Food incents customers to log on to Facebook or Twitter and start promoting their hamburger creation to

their friends. Each burger ordered from a customer's named creation generates a 25-cent credit in their account. They can use this money on their next visit.

From the giant digital display wall to the digital menu boards, to the iPad ordering system, 4Food is wrapping technology, content management, digital displays and social media into an innovative experience for the customer.

Just because consumers are tech savvy doesn't mean they want complicated experiences. They tend to seek out interfaces that are simple and intuitive. Innovative companies are using technology to enhance consumer interaction with their brand.

DISPLAY TECHNOLOGIES

From the wall of high definition panels in an airport that displays flight information and promotes the newest restaurant in the food court, to the wayfinding panels found in

department stores or hotel lobbies, innovative display technologies are everywhere these days.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Great digital displays require regular content updates to keep consumers engaged. Custom content management systems can be tailored around your branding and your message. While more costly, they can bring excitement to your display. Lower end, pre-built content management systems can also

offer some degree of customization. Much like creating a PowerPoint you can drag and drop pictures, text and video from your existing digital assets to build your display.



PHOTO CREDITS: Interactive Signage (left) - Photo courtesy of X2O Media Inc., provider of digital signage solutions, Hilton McLean Tysons Corner Technology Lounge (right) - courtesy of Hilton.com.

TECHNOLOGY: FROM TEXTING TEENS TO SILVER SOCIALITES



PHOTO CREDITS: Teenage girls texting (left) - copyright of Cathy Yeulet/123RF.com, Teenage boy texting (right) - copyright of Cathy Yeulet/123RF.com.



PHOTO CREDITS: Millennials on cell phones (above) - courtesy of FRCH, Twitter page (below) - copyright of Tomistav Konestabo/123RF.com.



PHOTO CREDITS: Family playing video game on smart phone (above) - copyright of Cecile Agullo/123RF.com, Groupon app (below) - copyright of Jakob Kamender/123RF.com.



PHOTO CREDITS: Boomer couple on laptop (left) - copyright of Kurhan/123RF.com, Boomers shopping (right) - copyright of Juice Images Photography/Veer.com.



TEENS & TECHNOLOGY

The ability to buy anything, anytime, from anywhere. Bricks and mortar no longer define a retail environment. Consumers are connected through mobile devices, the Internet, and apps. They know they have options and are savvy about comparison shopping, using technology to their advantage. But when it comes to technology there are generational differences. With technology, when you were born really does matter.

Seventeen million teens (80%) own a wireless device and (50%) can text blindfolded. Teens like texting over talking because it offers more options including multi-tasking, speed, the option to avoid verbal communication and it's fun. Over half view their cell phone as key to their social life and consider their phone a form of entertainment. And with cell phones—who needs a watch?

Bottom-line: Technology as entertainment plays a big role for this consumer group.

MILLENNIALS

This group is tech native. They have never known a world without the Internet and are most comfortable using technology to integrate friends, family, colleagues and their life. They use multiple technology platforms and like to choose the one that best fits their life (at the moment). They need convenient access, flexibility and choice.

Bottom-line: This is the first generation to challenge the premise of bricks and mortar storefronts. Progressive technology will be key to drawing them in and creating a relationship.



GEN X

Time-starved and budget sensitive, GenXers demand highly efficient experiences. Smartphones allow them to manage their incredibly packed lives in convenient and relevant ways. And it's not just young professionals who describe themselves as tech dependents. GenX moms are also enthusiastic adopters of smartphones, the ultimate empowerment tool.

Bottom-line: Pointless experiential technology is the least important to this group. They get the low-down from peers, not marketing.



BOOMERS

Technology may not be intuitive for this group but they have embraced it as a life enhancer and are fully aware of the benefits it provides. Although some may say it was for up-close spying on their kids, in 2010 boomers represented the greatest increase in social media adoption. This group still places value on seeing and feeling a product before purchase. Retail environments are places to experiment and discover new products.

Bottom-line: Technology should be incorporated as a consultative tool for sales associates as boomers value "high tech and high touch." Technology that is simple and intuitive with high function "wows" this generation.



PHOTO CREDITS: Shopping apps (left) - courtesy of FRCH, Woman on phone shopping (right) - copyright of Yuri Arcurs/Veer.com, Shopping with SmartPhone (below) - courtesy of blog.unbulmerchantservices.com.

From mobile optimized web sites, to mobile apps, to interactive group sites like Groupon and Squarespace—brands are going mad for mobile. And of course the primary reason is—that is where their customers are.

Research shows that smartphones can create more engaging loyalty programs along with providing detailed product information, comparison shopping and in-store customer service. While consumers have some frustrations with mobile... from tiny screens to browser blocks, they like mobile technology to enhance their brand experience.

Shopping malls are taking notice and experimenting with mobile applications to help consumers navigate their stores and parking lots. Simon Property Group and Westfield Group have both launched proprietary mobile apps. Simon's app displays store promotions, publicizes events and even helps shoppers remember where they parked.

While recent times may have created a new consumer that "spends less and saves more" there are certain products that they refuse to let go of—their mobile device is one of them.

