
The Magnificent Seven - the trends that will shape 2021

By John Blyth, Marketing and Communications Manager, CIP Group,

Ricoh Europe, London, January 26 2021 — It goes without saying; but I'll say it anyway. 2020 was a year. Like. No. Other.

I expect 2021 to be exceptional too as we all adjust to a very different new normal. Remember the old normal? Me neither.

So, what will 2021 look like? What are the trends that will define it?

No surprise that the professional forecasters have peered into the murk and are now publishing their wisdom in the form of their 2021 projections and trends across business, society, consumer behaviour and the economy.

Here is a curated list of some of the most prominent and interesting trends. Some are surprising, some are maybe 'predictable', all though are likely to play a role in the unfolding pattern and texture of this year we are entering.

So, this Magnificent Seven starts with a trend that it seems almost everyone has identified as key for 2021.

1. Online shopping

It relates to the stimulus that the Coronavirus has provided. Remaining at home in 2020 led older age groups to approach online shopping as well as younger people. And there will be no going back. With high levels of e-commerce becoming the norm across European society's different demographics. The Creativepool report, The Consumer trends that will define 2021 stated that "Consumer insight platform Attest reports that 68.9% of Brits say they're now more likely to shop online". And for much business to business purchasing too. All of which means that brands need to raise their game as far as the online user experience is concerned. The browsing and ordering process needs to be as smooth, enjoyable, and convenient as possible.

2. Sustainability

Again, no great surprise here. The pandemic has forced consumers to reassess, or double down on, their attitudes to the environment as they saw some positive results and the planet start to recover. Sustainability will be a burning topic in 2021 as consumers fear that recent gains are lost. Brands will be expected to play their part. Those showing commitment to the cause are likely to have the upper hand.

3. Social re-evaluation

In adjacent territory is the shift to the foreground of social causes and the quest for social justice. People at home reflecting on the state of society are increasingly not satisfied. And they expect the brands to whom they give their loyalty to share their values and concerns. To illustrate this the GWI consumer trends report for 2021 showed 41% of consumers want brands to put more focus on supporting social causes.

4. DIY Innovation

This is perhaps more left field than the trends outlined so far. People facing different challenges to the ones of the pre-Coronavirus world have shown remarkable ingenuity. They have found life hacks, improvised, and worked around in both their private and working lives. The phenomenon has found expression in the surge in new business start-ups, the use of Tik Tok for medical advice, and the

team behind Fortnite finding a way to bring a live game experience to 12 million.

Organisations need to tap into the DIY revolution, innovating in such a way that their offerings become platforms on which third parties can adapt. Co-creation is the way ahead and a more ecosystem-oriented approach to innovation.

5. Work Evolution

The contract between employer and employee is being reframed as workers who once travelled daily to their workplace are now effectively living in their office. To preserve and enhance wellbeing and productivity, employers can innovate in the areas of technology where investment in digital transformation can revolutionise work from home experiences, team collaboration and connectivity with central databases and customers. Companies that invest can emerge triumphant. Also, culture: as virtual teams interact in different ways to co-

located teams. Ad hoc communications should be encouraged therefore to foster camaraderie and combat isolation.

6. Safety First

It is no surprise that personal safety and protection will be a priority around Europe in 2021. Safety, it can be argued, is the new wellness movement. The fear of infection and increased health awareness will drive demand for hygiene products, contactless solutions and experiences, free from inherent risk. This safety obsessed trend was identified by Euromonitor International in its Top 10 Global Consumer Trends 2021 report.

7. Memorable Moments

Lastly, home has become the new storefront, but without the buzz and thrill that comes with the instore purchase experience. This means an opportunity is forming for brands able to create a memorable moment. Personalisation and supply chain solutions can contribute here to make a distinctive experience that gives competitive edge. As the Fjord Trends 2021 report from Accenture puts it succinctly: “The way we get hold of things changed in 2020, and it’s becoming more important to deliver joy right through to the last moment.”

So, seven diverse trends - many of them interdependent and complementary. All of them important. The list is not definitive. The future isn’t. But it may serve as a working synthesis of what is heading our way. Strap yourself in – 2021 is upon us.

| About Ricoh |

Ricoh is empowering digital workplaces using innovative technologies and services enabling individuals to work smarter. For more than 80 years, Ricoh has been driving innovation and is a leading provider of document management solutions, IT services, communications services, commercial and industrial printing, digital cameras, and industrial systems.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group operates in approximately 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ended March 2020, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 2,008 billion yen (approx. 18.5 billion USD).

For further information, please visit www.ricoh-europe.com

###

© 2021 RICOH COMPANY, LTD. All rights reserved. All referenced product names
are the trademarks of their respective companies.

For further information, please visit www.ricoh-europe.com

For further information, please contact:

Ricoh Europe PLC

Jack Gibson

Tel: +44 (0) 203 033 3766

E-mail: media@ricoh-europe.com

Homepage: www.ricoh-europe.com

Join us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ricoheurope

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/ricoheurope

Visit the Ricoh media centre at: www.ricoh-europe.com/press