

The Big Three of 2022

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20 Jan 2022

With 2022, there is the hope that life will return to a semblance of normality but the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to show itself in the trends that affect our day to day lives.



There are a number of trends that are emerging and will emerge. Below are a few which I believe will be of interest as we as business people and marketers continue to navigate the rapidly evolving world we find ourselves in today.

1. **Wellness and mindfulness will continue to move to the fore of culture.**

Mental wellness has gone beyond meditation and consumers are connecting and rethinking how choices they're making in their lives have powerful effects on their emotional and mental health. Consumers are looking to three key aspects of their mental health:

- **How to maintain their mental wellness.** Interventions range from mental wellness activities including guided meditation and manifestations exercises to restructuring their lives to find better balance in the form of new careers or moving out of the cities and into a slower or calmer living environment.
- **Re-establishing connection.** In a world that values endless friends lists, consumers are ditching abundance in favour of more intimate connections with a select few both personally and digitally.

- **Exploring creativity.** Finding a space where they feel challenged mentally and within which they can explore their creativity, consumers are spending more time drawing or painting, learning to or playing music and cooking or baking.



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Physical wellness will continue to evolve with at-home workouts still expected to be key within 2022. Expect virtual sports such as Zwift, Pelaton and Hydrow to continue to grow as consumers look for convenient and entertaining ways to work out at home while still involved in a community of like-minded individuals.

But don't expect it to stop there. A big trend within physical wellness sees fitness and gaming come together to provide an immersive virtual reality experience which helps the consumer forget they are exercising as they use their whole body to engage with the gaming world.

Examples include The Beat Saber workout. Launched in 2019, it sees players use controllers as lightsabers to slash colour blocks flying at them in a virtual environment. Another, Virtuix's Omni One, is a self-contained VR treadmill containing around 30 games. It sees players wear a headset and attached to the treadmill with a harness whereon they will be able to run, jump and kneel on the platform, making this one of the most active and immersive gamified exercise systems yet.

2. Creators are crossing the boundary of just having online influence.

The growth of the creator economy is seeing creators develop into entrepreneurs building digital and physical products that tap into a focused consumer base.

Brands are also tapping into this trend collaborating with creators to build hype around the brand and drive demand for limited edition products. Examples include the Ninja and Adidas collab, the Joshua Vides and Converse collab, as well as the Thesis Jagermeister collab locally.



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It's not just creative creators who are building momentum within this trend. Podcasters are becoming more and more influential as consumers start to adopt the medium at scale. Podcasters who have been slowly building relevance and audiences over the last few years will grow in prominence on the back of further audience adoption towards the medium and penetration of regional and specialised content.

Added to this, the growth of tools to monetise and scale will allow them to build a growing ecosystem around them similar to what mainstream creators have had around them.

3. Music is going social.

Short-form video is redefining music discovery and musical experiences are set to increase on non-traditional platforms such as TikTok, Instagram and gaming.

In 2021 the TikTok/Reel'isation of music became a key launch vehicle for chartbusters and this will flow and influence the way we discover and listen to music. The music industry will have to evolve to adapt to this new consumption channel and

this should lead to new interesting ways for not only musicians to interact with their fans but how brands can tap into this growing trend.



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Just look at the growth of the Africa Top 40 channel broadcast on TikTok and hosted by Gigi Lamayne for proof of this trend and its potential within the South African market.

We'll also see more album releases have graphic components to them. Visual streams have been toyed with by artists for a few years including local artists such as Shane Eagle, but the pandemic helped make these more mainstream.

With many artists looking to push the boundaries of their art to create standout and relevance, 2022 should see some exciting new visual experiences. This provides an opportunity for brands to tap into this exciting consumer passion point in exciting new ways if they think innovatively and work with like-minded artists relevant to their brand.

ABOUT RYAN MCFADYEN

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