LS:N GLOBAL

REVELATION BRANDS

08 : 07 : 2016   Revelation Brands : Serendipity : Filter Bubble

Revelation Brands, identified by LS:N Global in 2015, explores how companies are helping consumers to escape the confines of their filter bubbles and embark on journeys of discovery.

Overview

Siam Discovery by Nendo, Bangkok. Photography by Takumi Ota

In our drive to use digital technologies to streamline every element of our existence, we have engineered out the potential for indeterminacy. Chance, accident and serendipity are important facets of how we explore the world, yet we seem to have fewer and fewer opportunities to access experiences beyond the boundaries of what we already know.

Added to this, the rise of **Mega-systems** has meant that it is now possible to conduct most daily activities through just one or two companies. This is an obvious problem for brands. How do you get new products in front of a generation of consumers afflicted with digital myopia?

Consumers have grown to rely on search engines that show them only what they want to see and maps that only tell them where they want to go, making it increasingly difficult to find new passions or formulate alternative desires.

As a result, brands are now as likely to be concerned with inventing immersive experiences and sophisticated discovery tools as they are with developing products. In today's world, being lost is the new luxury, your senses are the most important search terms and stores sell brand messages rather than goods. It is no longer what your customers know that is key, but what they don't.

*Click through the sections on this page to see how Revelation Brands trend has been manifest since 2015.*

2015

Airbnb app

October: Airbnb collaborates with Google Maps to help people find the road less travelled

Airbnb has created Hosted Walks, a Google Maps feature that directs people to mainstream attractions by way of one of Manhattan's hidden gems. When they search for a tourist hotspot, an advert encourages visitors to see New York like a local. Clicking the ad opens Google Maps, which uses their location to calculate a new route that takes in a lesser-known attraction along the way.

Key Development: Consumers are using apps to change the way they navigate the world and help them serendipitously discover new experiences.
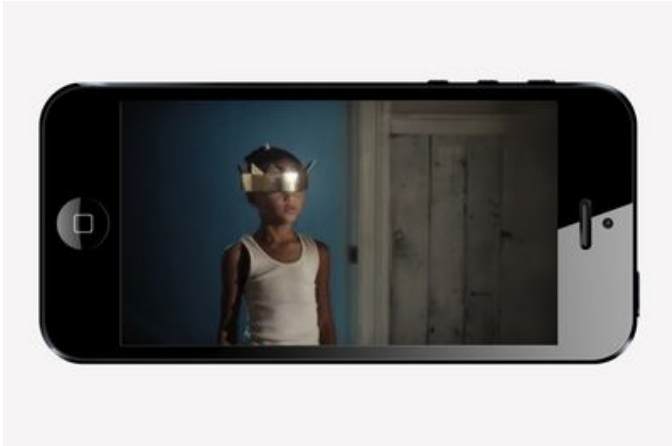
ANTIdiaRY.com by Rihanna

November: Rihanna sorts her biggest fans from the rest with an online game

Visitors to ANTIdiaRY.com begin in an eerie bedroom in which they must uncover clues. When they find the 'key' they are taken to the Instagram account 'Iamthekeyholder', where viewers join a dialogue of users attempting to decipher the series of symbolic images in order to discover information about Rihanna's latest album.

Key Development: Digital storytelling offers myriad new opportunities to engage consumer interest and build buzz around a product.

The Sipsmith Sipping Service, London

December: **Gin distillery Sipsmith delivers unusual flavour experiments to your door**

The Sipsmith Sipping service provides access to experimental gins that never make it to full production. The quarterly subscription delivers four differently flavoured sipping gins in 90ml sample bottles to a subscriber's home every three months. This gives them the opportunity to discover new flavours and challenge their palates.

Key Development: Curated subscription food and drink services are giving consumers the chance to discover unusual flavours that they might not otherwise try.
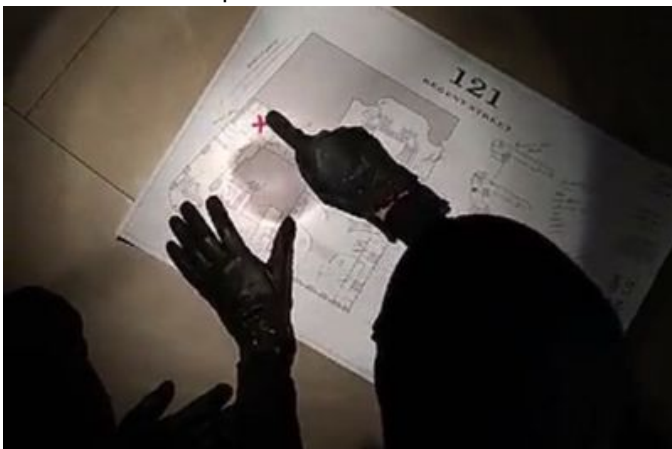
2016

02 store by Dalziel & Pow, Manchester

January: **O2 opens its new northern flagship store with a focus on letting customers hang out**

Designed with the help of London-based agency Dalziel & Pow, the Market Street store's open-plan design features separate zones dedicated to retail, relaxation and inspiration.

Customers on any network are encouraged to connect with the store – whether by working remotely at the communal table with a complimentary coffee, charging their phone or taking a technology workshop with an O2 guru.

Key Development: Stores are incorporating casual working facilities to get consumers on-site and keep them there for extended periods.

Burberry autumn/winter 2016 Snapchat campaign,
London

February: **Burberry launches a Snapchat campaign inspired by a fake heist**

In a staged heist, two models are pictured on CCTV screens breaking into the brand's Regent Street store. A series of Snaps show the models entering a room protected by a series of laser beams before finding the locked up autumn/winter 2016 collection, which they then dress in. They are caught by a security guard while tucking into desserts at the Burberry café.

Key Development: Luxury brands are using social media to build hype around catwalk collections.

Libreria by Second Home, London. Photography by Iwan Baan

March: **A new bookstore concept by Second Home champions serendipity over straight taxonomy**

Libreria's organisational principle differs from that of regular bookshops, eschewing genre-based classifications for more closely curated sections on themes such as mothers, madonnas and whores, or the sea and the sky. SelgasCano installed undulating book shelves and reflective surfaces to create an infinity effect that makes the restricted space feel boundless, enhancing the perception of exploratory browsing.

Key Development: Physical retailers are experimenting with the way they categorise stock to create serendipitous shopping experiences.

Style Code Live by Amazon

April: **Amazon launches a free-to-view daily live show covering fashion and beauty**

Style Code Live brings together the two main sides of Amazon's business – shopping and streaming – to create a new conduit for product discovery. Each stream runs for about half an hour and is free to view on the Amazon website. The show updates the traditional shopping channel experience with the addition of a carousel below the video player that displays featured products available direct from Amazon.

Key Developments: Traditionally passive services such as Amazon are adding shoppable live show elements to enhance product discovery.

Space Explorer, London

May: **The Space Explorer app turns Hackney into an immersive public art exhibition**

The Space Explorer app uses GPS to help the user navigate to all 15 photographs included in the Another Space in Time exhibition, creating an interactive public gallery out of the urban environment. Once within about 20 metres, audio recordings of each of the photo's subjects begin playing, adding another layer to the exhibition.

Key Development: Geo Quest campaigns that can only be accessed in specific locations are being used to encourage urban exploration.
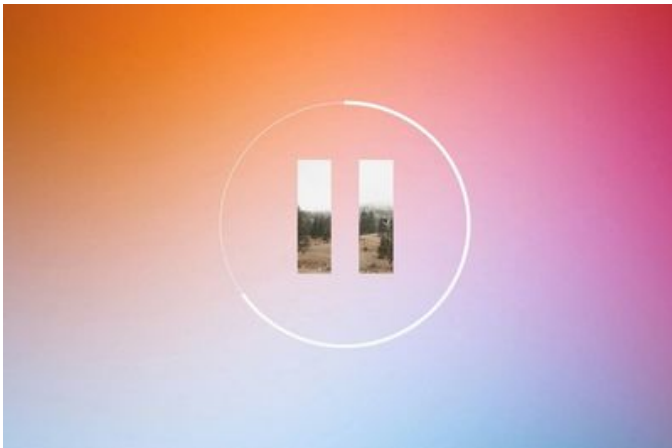
The Week Song

June: **The Week Song is a website that plays one song, and one song only, every week**

The Week Song website introduces visitors to one independent artist each week, encouraging a slower online experience. The site only plays the work of little known artists and visitors have to subscribe to receive a biography and a link to where they can hear more.

Key Development: Strictly curated online platforms are helping people find and engage with culture outside of the mainstream.

Casa Cook

August: **Pack Up + Go is a travel service with a twist – users only know where they are going when they get to the airport**

Users begin their journey by completing an online questionnaire, which determines the kind of travel experience they are looking for, such as action, relaxation or culture, as well as where they have been before, their hobbies and their budget. One week before they are due to travel, users receive the weather forecast for their mystery destination, as well as a list of recommended items. It is not until they reach the airport that they discover where they are going.

Key Development: Consumers are increasingly seeking to experience rather than own things, and products and services are emerging that take people on unexpected, surprising journeys.

Hyundai Commission 2016, Anywhen by Philippe Parreno
at The Tate Turbine Hall, London

October: **Artist Philippe Parreno installs a constantly evolving exhibition at Tate's Turbine Hall**

Anywhen combines an array of sonic and visual stimuli to deliver a unique experience to each visitor. Sounds picked up by microphones positioned in and around the building fill the exhibition space, while a large screen and fish-shaped balloons move about the space.

Key Development: Artists are embracing technology to escape the monotony of algorithms and spark creativity through chance encounters.

Paper Planes by Google and Active Theory, Global

October: **A Google app enables users to send virtual paper planes inscribed with a customised message to people around the world**

Paper Planes connects people from all over the world, enabling them to send notes to strangers through a digital message-in-a-bottle format. Users type a message onto a virtual plane and send it by flicking their phone with their wrist. As the plane soars through the simulated ether, other users can catch it and mark it with a stamp that symbolises their nationality. The plane eventually makes it back to the sender, who can can trace its journey around the world.

Key Development: Brands are using technology to create chance encounters between people in order to alleviate feelings of loneliness.