

2021 media trends and predictions

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Boomerang subscribers, social e-commerce and analytics everywhere: the strategies that will shape 2021's media landscape.



A decade of media evolution has taken place in a few short months. In-home media consumption grew, while consumer confidence and ad spending declined during 2020. Kantar's [Media Trends and Predictions 2021](#) provides insights into which audience behaviours and industry dynamics will stick.

Media Trends and Predictions 2021 provides a deep understanding of next year's media consumer, alongside the key media strategies designed to spark consumer-led economies back into growth. The report outlines:

- In 2021, audience behaviours will be more complex and difficult to decipher than ever. Boomerang subscribers will migrate between video on demand platforms and subscription services, increasing the need to understand and monetise the total audience. Influencer-based content will become an increasingly important feature of the advertising landscape, while e-commerce capabilities will seamlessly integrate with social media to deliver a tangible and immediate revenue stream. Other habits thought long consigned to history will experience a resurgence: for example, as viewers reprioritise the importance of family relationships, the TV will once again become the gathering point for shared social time – even as the sources of content grow.
- In response, advertisers, media owners and social platforms will have to re-evaluate how media strategies are formulated. Ensuring that a brand remains relevant while generating demand will necessitate a new level of data-driven marketing. A purposeful data strategy for owned data within the organisation will require integration with reliable and validated external data sources.
- In maximising restricted budgets, analytics will be infused through all aspects of marketing and campaign management, from creative and media mix optimisation to broader elements like channel strategies and innovation plans. Despite the deprecation of cookies, brands will need to quickly adapt to hybrid methods of ad effectiveness measurement and ROI. Brands will move up a gear in understanding how activism plays into brand strength; their purpose and beliefs will be illustrated in their specific media choices as well creative strategies, and a greater importance will be placed on the context of where ads appear and how they are optimised for those environments.

“Covid-19 has triggered a decade's worth of innovation in just a few short months.” said Serge Lupas, CEO of the media division at Kantar. “As we enter 2021, the media world finds itself at a significant turning point – politically, economically, technologically and socially – and we have identified a series of macro-trends that can position the media and advertising

industry as a driver of economic recovery, as well as offer some joy for the watching world.”

Jane Ostler, media domain leader for Kantar's insights division, added: “It's all about the detail. Advertisers, media owners and agencies will need to forensically understand audience behaviours and attitudes in an environment in constant flux. They need to pay even closer attention to measurement and effectiveness than ever before.”

A summary of the Kantar's 2021 media trends and predictions:

1. **The Boomerang subscriber:** Consumers increasingly see video-on-demand subscriptions as interchangeable, pushing the streaming wars to a new level. Content aggregators will take centre stage to unlock new customer acquisition strategies; collaboration is essential for long-term success.
2. **The audience in the stream:** Togetherness has grown in importance during the pandemic, boosting TV co-viewing. A deeper understanding of co-viewing, with its overlaps and migrations between streaming platforms, is needed, and media trading currencies must reflect the totality of audience behaviour.
3. **The social media dilemma:** Brand investments in social media continue to grow, despite consumer distrust. Brands will become more open-minded and dynamic in their media and comms planning, breaking down silos to create campaigns that reach across channels, and using influencers strategically.
4. **E-commerce and media:** Social media influencers will influence consumers across the entire sales funnel, guiding them to a more efficient omnichannel presence. Brands need to reimagine their D2C strategies to integrate influencers and community-powered platforms.
5. **Infused analytics:** Analytics will fuel more optimal investment, delivering a balanced strategy between the short and long term. Measurement that certifies and optimises creative content quality before airing will grow in importance, and more advanced analytics tools will help determine strategic investment decisions.
6. **Tough cookies:** Digital ad spend is becoming more dominant as the demise of the third-party cookies looms. Advertisers will move towards hybrid ad effectiveness measurement, combining privacy-compliant direct integration, probabilistic and analytics-based modelling to achieve a holistic view of campaigns.
7. **Democratising data:** Media data is being used and shared more systematically within organisations. Media professionals need access to broader data sets for better decision-making and opportunity recognition, while data platforms must be open source so brands can own integrations with multiple programmatic partner platforms.
8. **From activism to action:** Activism enables brands to meaningfully connect with consumers, but actions speak much louder than words. The correlation between values, media selection and influencer strategy is increasingly important for brands but creates risk for media platform owners too.
9. **Creative context takes centre stage:** Seeking differentiation, advertisers and agencies will accelerate their adoption of the latest media channels and formats; content creators must focus their efforts on the platforms providing best value for them. Online video will be the single biggest winner.
10. **Audience behaviours, industry dynamics - stick or twist?** In-home media consumption has increased during the pandemic, but questions remain over how long these habits will last and the challenge this poses for advertisers seeking to optimise their media buys.

Download the full report [here](#).



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PR and communications

Tuesday, 1 December

In this webinar, we focus on the major trends to impact the PR and communications industry in 2021. Join Kantar experts as we delve deeper into:

- *Building audience relationships in a digital first world*
- *Brand activism*
- *Infused analytics*

[Register your place here](#)

For advertisers

Wednesday, 2 December

In this webinar, we focus on the major trends to impact the advertising industry in 2021. Join Kantar experts as we delve deeper into:

- *Audience behaviours and industry dynamics*
- *Democratising data – getting your data strategy into shape*
- *Brand activism*
- *The realities of a cookieless world*

[Register your place here](#)

For entertainment content providers

Thursday, 3 December

Join us for a 45-minute webinar where we'll share highlights from our Media Trends and Predictions 2021 report. Grounded in consumer viewing and subscription trends from 2020 and opinion from experts we'll consider key challenges for your business in 2021 including the role of the content aggregator, the sustainable future of SVOD platforms and the real risks and opportunities viewer platform migration brings.

In a time of increased choice and intense competition who will survive – and thrive? [Register your place here](#)

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