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Daily Insight Article:

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN 2017? THE ULTIMATE PREDICTION ROUNDUP

THE EXPERT PREDICTIONS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD AND TRENDS TO KNOW IN MARKETING, TECH, RETAIL, FOOD, AND MORE...

Predicting the trends for the year to come has become a new year tradition across industries. We've combed through all the forecasts to create the ultimate roundup of expert opinions on what brands need to know in 2017:

TECH

2016 was the year that augmented reality surprised everyone—outshining virtual reality's rise. In the year to come, some [experts expect](#) that trend to continue, and for AR/mixed reality to be more important than VR to consumers and brands. Pokémon Go is credited for bringing augmented reality to the masses, but those in the interactive kids' product field see Pokémon as just "a teaser" for what's to come: "Smart" AR characters that react to their surroundings, AR children's books and games, and educational tools. Content and monetization are the main focus of the industry, but [the CEO of Legacy Games predicts](#), "You will see AR experiences when you go to Disneyland...You will see it implemented in amusement parks, museums and more." But VR is a big part of [Business Insider's predictions](#) for 2017—they expect the technology to make an impact in events like sports and concerts, as well as therapy this year. They also see the chatbot trend—which [we've covered](#) all year—becoming a "huge" part of running a business.

MARKETING

[According to](#) agency Brand Union, in 2017 brands will try to be as unbranded as possible. This insight is based on the emerging trend of candid photography, honest copywriting, and transparent business strategy currently being used by brands like Casper, Thinx, and Urban Outfitters. They predict that more companies will be adopting the "meticulously un-designed" look next year, striving to appear "flawed, unpredictable, naïve, even strange," because "it's no longer enough to be human." To reach young consumers with these so-called unbranded messages, [Mashable](#) and [Fast Company](#) are both forecasting major shifts in social media marketing thanks to diminishing results and young consumers with smaller digital footprints. The latter reports that social media will be "reborn" as a far more focused tool—with "pay-to-play" as the central key to success for brands.

FASHION & RETAIL

Here's another space where virtual tech is predicted to go big this year. [Intel reports](#) that "[t]he next frontier of retailing across industries will be virtual," and cites interest in virtual mirrors, in-store VR headsets, and interactive displays as evidence. According to the group, VR, AR, and live-streaming will all help brands to further [experientify](#) their offerings, and tell their story to consumers, in 2017. Meanwhile, in the fashion world, [Billboard predicts](#) that activism will spark fashion trends, and body positivity/size diversity will go mainstream. (Ypulse [found last year](#) that 80% of young consumers would rather see brand advertisements with models who have curves than models who are skinny, so clearly they've been ready for

this trend to grow for some time.) Vogue's predictions for the fashion year includes the rise of "athluxury," and [other experts say](#) the athleisure category is going from buzzword to "just how we dress," and soon all clothing will be designed with comfort in mind.

FOOD

Eater's [own roundup](#) of "Every Single Food Trend That's Been Predicted for 2017," provides a sweeping look at everything that could trend in the food world this year, from cauliflower to [purple foods](#) and coconut, but food sustainability on menus and store shelves is a recurring theme, as is (not surprisingly) healthful foods and tonics. As they did last year, the National Restaurant Association [surveyed professional chefs](#) to curate their prediction list, and found that new cuts of meat and multiple ethnic food trends—including street food-inspired dishes, ethnic breakfast items, and authentic ethnic cuisine—are top of mind with professionals this year.

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