

New trendtalk quarterly review discusses influential trends

The quarterly trendtalk#8 panel discussion featured Chris Reid, Louise Marsland and Yenza, who touched on the notion of the Maker/Hacker, framing it as a prominent and influential trend for 2014/15.

This rise and the 'internet of (every) thing' are the two major cultural trends that will significantly influence our lives, as predicted by these leading local trend analysts.



Chris Reid

21st century archetypes

For professional trend researcher Reid of ITI (International Trend Institute), 'The Maker' is a rising star on the trend forecasts for this year. He began his trendtalk presentation by noting an important change - the increasing importance of connectivity and collaboration in an era that is still very much catering for the individual. He described emerging group identities as the new '21st Century Archetypes' and went on to describe the two most exciting and relevant types: The Maker/Hacker and The Surrealist.

According to Reid, we are entering a new phase where the line between maker and consumer is gradually fading. Maker/Hackers are consumers that are not necessarily satisfied with an existing product and are happy to improve or adapt it to their needs. They strive to modify their environment in order to achieve a higher level of self-sufficiency. The act of 'Hacking' one's life is multifaceted; Maker/Hackers alter and augment all kinds of objects - from re-modelling Ikea furniture, to fixing their bicycles with versatile silicone putty, to experimenting with wearable technology.

Another major element of the Maker/Hacker trend is the integration of the internet into daily life, for example, the introduction of smart appliances that can be controlled wirelessly via apps, such as temperature or thermostat monitors. He describes this phenomenon as 'the internet of things' - a phrase that attempts to explain the way in which objects in our daily lives are being connected to the internet in order to improve their efficiency. He states that brands should embrace the archetype of the Maker/Hacker and build adaptability into their products, harnessing the same kind of creativity, in order to evolve.

'The Surrealist'

The second archetype that he discussed was 'The Surrealist'. This is an equally important type to monitor in 2014. Surrealists are creative innovators as well as inventors, yet they employ fantastical strategies to communicate their vision to the rest of the world. Their powerful infiltration of the mainstream marks them as important to watch. 'The Surrealist' approach is useful to brands, as seemingly bizarre and experimental campaigns have recently shown to be more effective than traditional branding strategies.



Louise Marsland

Touching on similar topics, media, marketing and consumer insights commentator Marsland emphasised the importance of trends and explained their migration from fringe culture to the mainstream, guiding our tastes and informing the decisions we make. Marsland, who is the current editor of TrendAfrica, also focused on ['the internet of things'](#), an idea similar to Reid's, yet she dubbed it the 'internet of everything'. She predicts a total integration of the internet and our daily lives. '

Lastly, she spoke about what she terms the 'YOUiverse' - a rising culture of the self that permeates all facets of culture in 2014. The role of the 'selfie' portrait, the Oscars Selfie and the theme of individuality in relation to commerce and branding was explored extensively throughout her presentation.

Curating Hacker/Maker



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Social entrepreneurial group Yenza, formed by architect and designer Rene Rossouw, art director Charl Edwards, stylist Kara Furter and architect Lucie de Moyencourt, exemplified many of the trend predictions discussed by Reid and Marsland. The group is part of the official WDC2014 calendar and has curated a collection of design products sourced from various townships across South Africa.

The group searches for 'Hacker/Maker' types in underprivileged communities across the country, bringing their innovative design solutions to the forefront of the design world. It has sourced a wide array of objects, from recycled metal candlestick holders to decorative mats and bowls woven out of shopping packets. These objects reveal an existing Hacker/Maker culture in South Africa and an approach to design that is inventive and self-sufficient.

The trendtalk#8 speaker panel revealed a wealth of insights into the zeitgeist and its formation. The event, which is supported by Inhouse Brand Architects and Plascon, is accredited by the IID (Institute of Interior Design) and takes place every quarter. The next trendtalk is set to take place on 6 May, and will feature a report back from the Salon d'Mobile in Milan.

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