

#ULRNM

URBAN LIFESTYLE REPORT NEW MEDIA

FREE
NEW MEDIA
TREND REPORT
FOR MARKETERS

NO. 1
JANUARY
2009

NICHOLAS GILL - LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

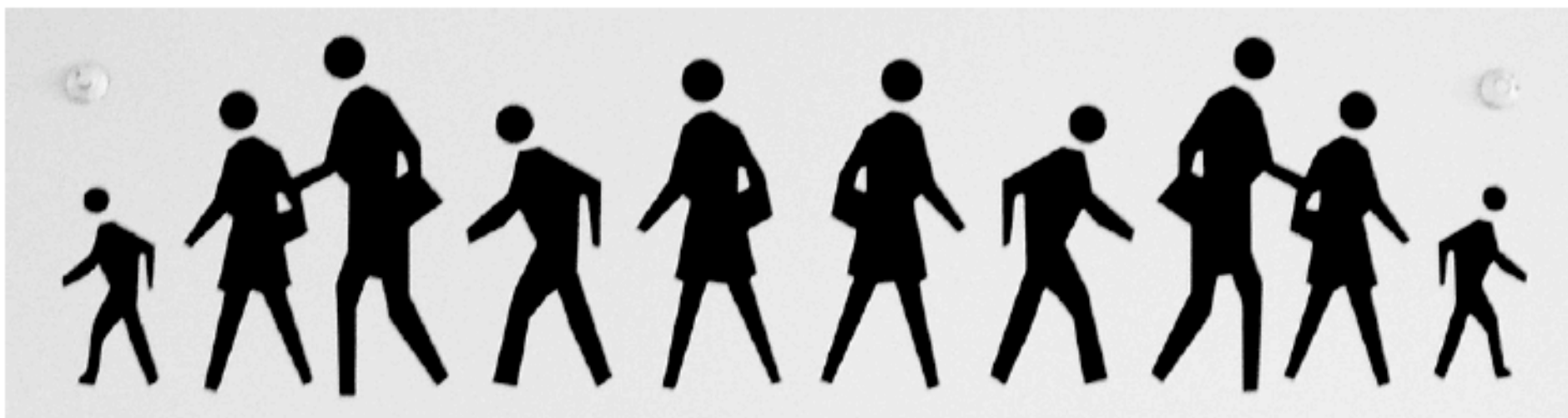


Planner with a love for digital at Lawton Communications Group but also a blogger, podcaster and general evangelist for innovative marketing strategies. Has previously worked as a client partner and strategic leader for a wide range of blue chip clients.

Web: <http://bluurb.wordpress.com> **Twitter:** [@nicholasgill](https://twitter.com/nicholasgill)



Web: <http://bluurb.wordpress.com> **Twitter:** [@nicholasgill](https://twitter.com/nicholasgill)

Picture: [katmere](#)

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE BRAND EXPERIENCE - SEAMLESS BUT NOT STANDARDISED

**NICHOLAS GILL**

Location: London, United Kingdom

Blog: bluurb.wordpress.com

The way users consume digital content has changed the way brands need to behave in the digital space. Where traditional media (web 1.0) is shouting, web 2.0 is about conversations. Consumers expect to be involved, engaged and invited to collaborate. They have on-demand expectations; they expect real-time dialogue and want personalised experiences. This is where digital has the advantages of relevance and context, enabling consumers to immerse as much or as little as they want, when they want, how they want.

Social networks are now culturally assimilated into the psyche

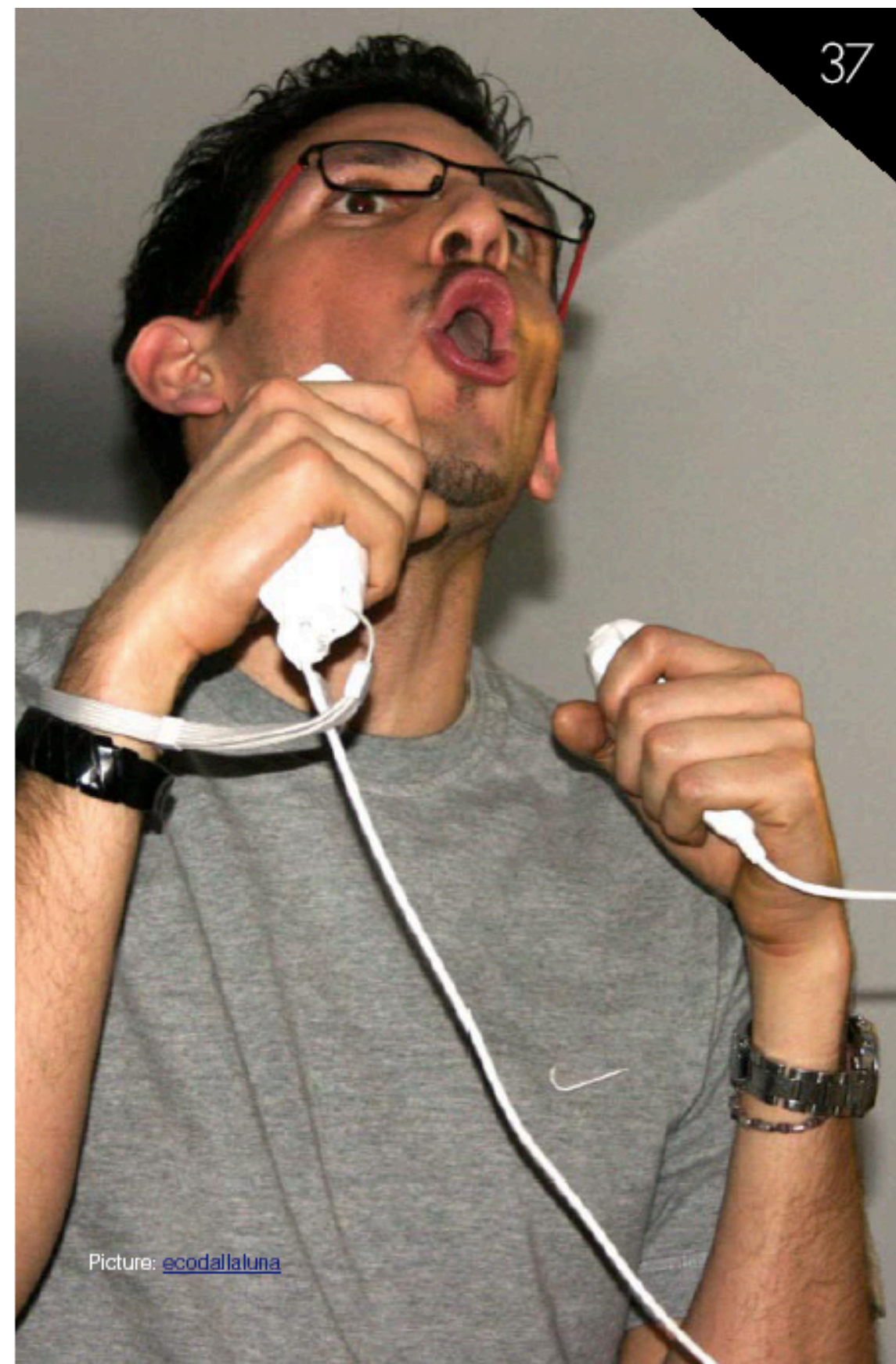
People are spending less time on communication and content sites and more on consumer generated media (+47%) and entertainment (+8%) sites which has seen the huge rise of social networks leading to the ubiquitous Facebook app in every creative presentation in the last 18 months. To dramatise the impact social networks have had; Christmas Day 2007 was the busiest ever day for social networks in the UK. Facebook was the 3rd most visited website pushing eBay to 4th for the first time.

Social search on social networks such as Facebook, MySpace, Linked In etc. will become more valuable to users because of relevancy and their inherent higher trust in consumer, particularly peer, reviews of places, people and companies than from brands themselves. 90% of consumers trust recommendations from other consumers compared to 45% from a TV ad. Augment this with the fact that 51% of users would abandon a consumer electronics purchase due to negative user generated comments and positive opinion and increased use of social search become increasingly important. Combining search and peer advice will become more important than contextual listings and vertical search.

Gaming has shifted our notion of entertainment

A huge shift in consumer attitudes has turned video games into the UK's most popular form of entertainment with UK sales of games outstripping music and video for the first time in 2008. As CD sales continue to decline, the traditional high street music retailers are diversifying and changing store layouts to focus on more lucrative areas such as gaming.

Gaming is clearly no longer confined to the traditional Generation Y and younger audiences. Social gaming platforms, like the Nintendo Wii, have been shown to have a positive influence in the home changing



Picture: [ecodallaluna](#)

the traditional view of gaming by families: facilitating peer bonding and encouraging child exercise. 25% of all UK homes now have a Nintendo Wii.

As much as consumers don't experience brands in silo channels these days, increasingly they will want to continue their gaming experience across channels. Already this is happening in nascent territory such as downloadable content to enhance the gaming experience. Online gaming shifted from niche to mainstream with the advent of games such as Call of Duty to the point where Radio 1 DJ's Chris Moyles and Vernon Kay talk about their gamer tags and gaming activities. You can't get more mainstream than Radio 1.

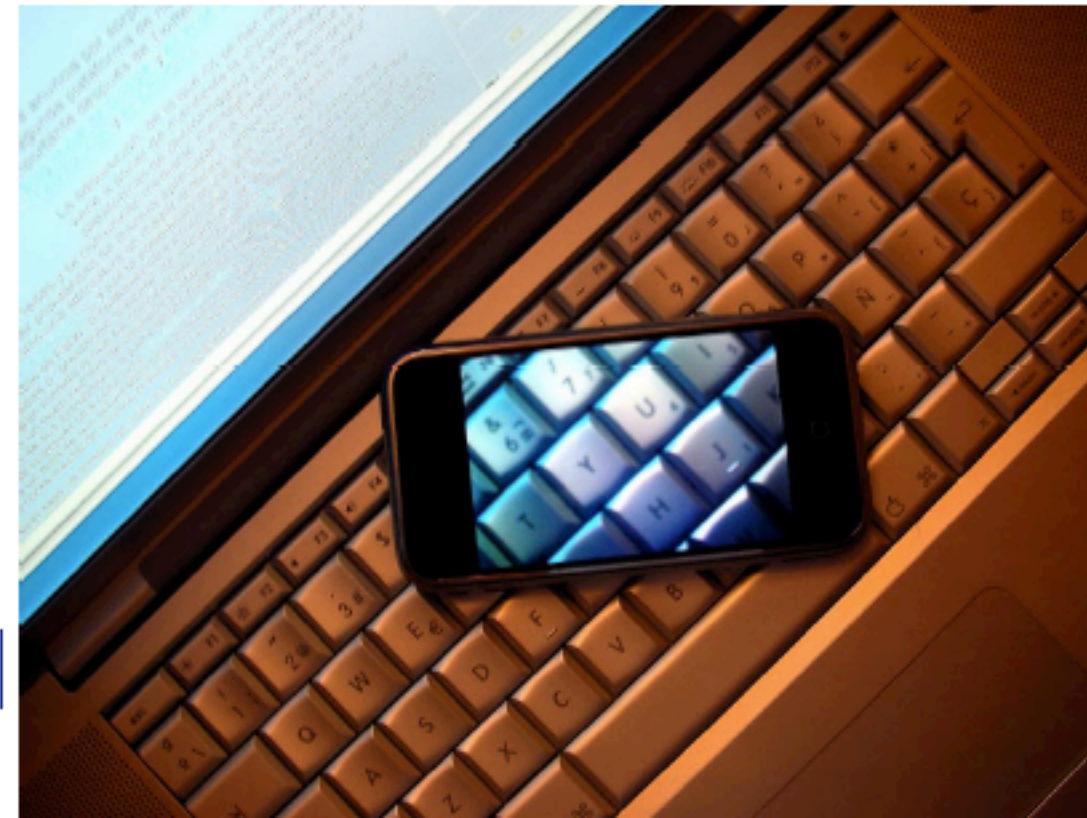
Extending the gaming across channels will become expected. From console to PC to mobile, porting your stats and chat systems will become the norm. The communications activity a brand produces must also replicate this experience.

Community

Enabling the brand in the social networks these consumers operate in is no longer an option. This does encompass the ubiquitous Facebook Group and Application but it needs to go beyond this. Being a fan of a new product is only part of the story. Enabling true consumer engagement through releasing the brand and content into the hands of the passionate consumers, let them co-create and collaborate with you to take the product to new levels. Participation is not just a buzz word, it's an expectation.

This extends to online advertising where it's about engagement and interaction. Advertising static content gets lost. Deeper engagement and immersion delivers results.

Picture: edans



Digital enables deeper immersion than any other channel. Fan boys will want more than just the official web site and the occasional developer diary. Taking learnings from some of the major theatrical releases in modern times, Batman: The Dark Knight and Cloverfield, brands need to extend their digital presence to involve, inspire and create talkability.

Device convergence

Today we carry many pieces of equipment, tomorrow one. And it won't be the laptop. Witness the rapid growth in mobile internet usage today, fuelled by the accessible interface of the Apple iPhone and new Google Android mobile platform. 38% of users will access the Internet via a mobile device by the time the Olympics comes to this country in 2012. The pace of development in mobiles will leave other devices in their wake. If you can get an 8 mega pixel camera phone today, why buy a separate camera tomorrow?

Is it the death of TV?

164 minutes online everyday versus 148 minutes watching TV everyday suggest TV is dead. Well, not quite. It's where and how consumers are watching their TV that matters. People are now accessing TV online, shifting their media and increasingly mashing it (the youth demographic mash 44 hours of activity into a 24 hour day) meaning they watch TV and are online at the same time. A massive engagement and relationship deepening opportunity for digital.

The notion of time-shifting means PVRs change viewing habits to when consumers are ready to watch it and over 70% of PVR owners fast forward through advertising. Innovations such as BBC iPlayer and Channel 4 On Demand are place-shifting where consumers watch. They're still watching TV but on their own terms. And often on multiple devices. In a straight choice between the TV and their PC 80% of younger consumers wouldn't lose their PC because it's more versatile at delivering the content they want.

There is a symbiotic relationship between TV and digital. Far from being separate channels, the two work in solid combination to drive relevance, association with brand values and importantly intent to purchase and talkability. Digital amplifies this through the innate social aspects of the medium.

Implications of a digital future

The single biggest implication is that consumers do not think in terms off or online. For them this is antiquated. There is no line. They don't experience a brand or product the way brands are organised into departments and responsibilities. They experience it the way they want to. On their terms.



A brand is the sum of all perceptions resulting from every point of contact a person has with a company, either directly or indirectly, over time. Different people have different ways of performing a task.

There is no need to limit to a single way of doing things. Be non-linear. Don't force users to follow a specific path: brands can create and users will find multiple paths to same content. Consumer interactions are not aligned vertically with the corporate structure. They cut across multiple departments of a company.

This means it's about creating a brand experience, not a channel led approach.

Think of experiences rather than channels. A channel can provide multiple experiences.

Adopt a more integrated and customer-centric approach to communications. Consider the moments of interaction between people and brands, and seek to generate as much value as possible from these interactions. The experience needs to be consistent and seamless across all points of interaction. This doesn't necessarily mean matching luggage creatively but must absolutely be aligned from a strategic perspective and applying that to understand the role that each channel plays in the complete experience.

In a nutshell, multiple ways to access the content and having great content that is informative, entertaining and engaging in the first place.

Picture: [Spencer E Holtaway](#)

Sources:

eMarketer, Forrester, Google, Yahoo!/OMD, OfCom, Advertising: It's Everywhere, Media Awareness Network, Forrester/Intelliseek Research, Yankelovich Monitor, BBC.