The Key Insights for 2012

What do your customers think the year ahead is going to hold?

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The Expert Forum

Who better to foretell new consumer trends than the trend setters themselves?

Promise hosted a unique event where 34 brand, innovation and insights professionals and 25 consumers came together to 'co-create the future'. We believe firmly in our collective ability to understand and even define the future.

Our audience was made up from brands as diverse as British Airways and L'Oreal, Orange and McDonald's. We also had consumers who considered themselves 'trendsetters' and those who fitted a more mainstream profile.

The outcome: 4 key insights and 8 emerging top trends for 2012.

Thanks to everyone for making the event a success. If you want to find out more about The Top Insights for 2012, contact Lilli Allihn on lallihn@promisecorp.com and we'll let you know how we can bring the Expert Forum to you.

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Our unique process

Promise is not a futures company or trends agency. We do however believe that emerging trends that will affect us tomorrow, will to some extent be present in our lives today. Our process was to 'layer-up' different exercises to co-create trends, with business leaders and consumers.

1

Relationship building &
'completing the past'

2

2011: where have we come from?
The winners and losers of 2011

What's changing?
Hopes, fears, predictions

3

Winning ideas:
A creative ideation exercise

4

Some key changes in 2011

Wagon wheels aren't as big as they used to be!

Last year we coined the term 'The Desperate Optimist' as the prevailing consumer mindset. We predicted the rise of the voucher culture, the emergence of mainstream 'real world technology' and even the civil unrest in England last summer (although this one is a bit more tenuous!).

This year, we observed some similar themes, but also a difference in the prevailing attitude with some specific emerging trends.

The key differences between 2011 and 2012 are:

- Consumers have fallen out of love with brands! There is a strong 'us vs. them' mentality
- Facebook and Twitter find their places in our lives – the relationships settle, cement and rebalance
- Technology dominates the dialogue – this is the first place that people go to talk about change. Expectations are sky high
- Tablets and smart phones tip into mass, mainstream use (although there is a heavy city bias here)
- People are desperately looking to fill gaps in their day. Free time is no longer a commodity, it is a vacuum.

I have never liked smart phones, but now that all my friends have one, I don't want to be left out!

The overarching theme for 2012: Brandenstein's Monster

After years of aspirational marketing followed by heavy discounting and profit focused delivery, brands have created a consumer attitude that we are calling **Brandenstein's monster!**

What are the characteristics of Brandenstein's?

1) **Angry at brands and companies** – ready to assume the worst even if you tell them different
2) **Mile high expectations** – want brands to deliver the dream
3) **Devolve all responsibility** – "it's up to businesses to make a difference, what can I do on my own?"

Despite all this, we also believe that Brandenstein's are…

Looking for love! Constant suspicion, change and flux is exhausting. People *want* to be loyal, they just need to know that they're not going to be hurt again!

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The creation of Brandenstein's Monster

Throughout the early part of this century, marketing messages peddled sky high aspiration. Then the recession hit, communications switched to being price focused and brands looked to remove cost. Product and service experience has suffered, while aspiration for what a brand should provide has stayed the same.

Brands told us:

- Impossible is nothing
- Just do it
- Because you're worth it
- We are 'Like no other'
- We are in a 'Priority club'
- We can 'Live well for less'
- We are there 'For the journey'
- We're ready!

Consumers' experience:

"Smaller pack sizes"

"Bankers' bonuses"

"Give with one hand, take with the other"

"Need to read the small print"

"Bombarded by offers"

"Reward new customers, ignore existing ones"

What we really want:

- Constant innovation
- Make us feel good about ourselves
- Give us more for less
- Be there for us
- Come to us – be proactive

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Brandenstein's dangerous extremes

What we also observed about Brandenstein's is that they swing between extremes. They are suspicious and ready to be disappointed by the majority of brand experiences and then pleasantly surprised and happy advocates when a brand really delivers for them.

Brandenstein's are more likely to act on these emotions and lash out or fall in love with brands than previously.

If I think that I'm being made a fool of, I get really angry!

They changed the car insurance for 4 weeks – it just made my life easier

The majority feel

The minority experience

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8 emerging trends for 2012

1. On demand economy
2. A new world of value
3. Social benchmarking
4. Generation I (for Innovation)
5. Small society
6. New brand architects
7. Discount hangover
8. Personal technology 3.0

Find out more about the key insights for 2012!
Please contact Lilli Allihn (lallihn@promisecorp.com)

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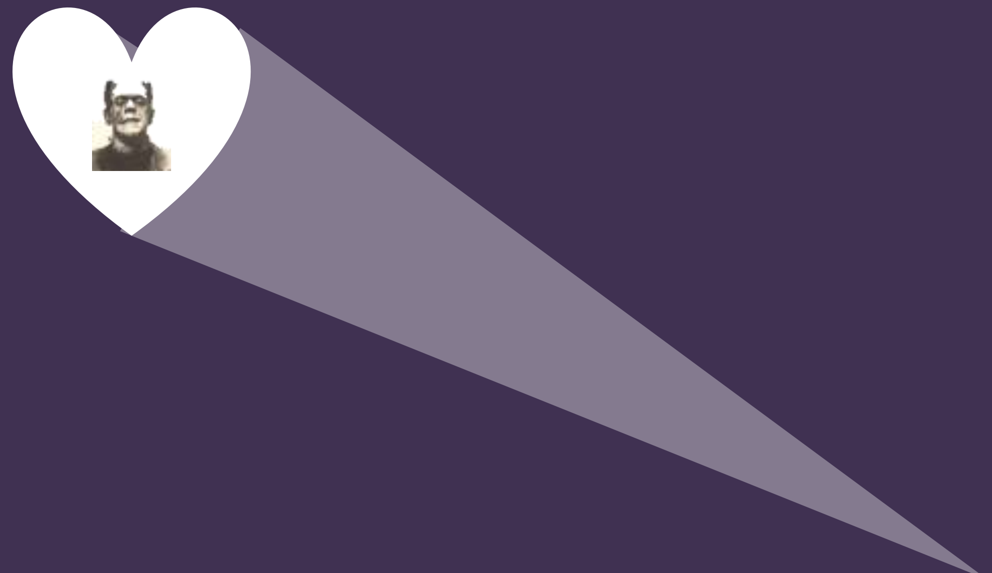
About Promise

Promise helps brands grow. We specialise in brand strategy, insight and co-created innovation.

To be successful as consultants and advisors, we stay close to the world of consumers as well as the world of business. Our goal is to help increase our clients' growth and profitability by co-creating powerful brands. Promise is helping companies succeed including Barclays, Visa, Aviva, Kraft, McDonald's, Orange, Global Hotel Alliance and GlaxoSmithKline amongst others.

For more information, visit www.promisecorp.com or contact Lilli Allihn (lallihn@promisecorp.com)



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