



SEPTEMBER // 2025

STRATEGY // NEWSLETTER

ABOUT

CM Pulse is a monthly newsletter that shares the latest cultural trends and what they mean for brands. It is designed to inform, inspire, and energize the work.

TRENDS

» WIN THE INTERNET BY ACTING LIKE A HOT MESS

» REGRESSIVE NOSTALGIA

» RISK OR RAGE-BAIT?

» BIG PICKLE SUMMER

TOPICS

- Fashion
- Lifestyle
- Social Media
- Economy
- Society
- Pop Culture
- Entertainment

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ISSUE TOPICS

WIN THE INTERNET BY ACTING LIKE A HOT MESS

WHEN BRAND POVS GET PERSONAL

Contributor: Payton Moore

INSIGHTS

Drop the facade in a drastic way and embrace the story behind what you sell beyond just a product's features. The "story" factor of marketing is intertwined with how people are looking for products. Some brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience, but beyond a brand's story, there's a deeper level of connection that brands are seeking. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

BACKGROUND

FEEL BEHIND THE SCENE

Behind a polished product and a perfect campaign, brands share the messy, unedited, and sometimes scary process of creation. It's a "behind-the-scenes" that reveals a deeper bond with the viewer and can help make them feel like they were along for the process.

THE "CONFESSING"

Top personal and worldly hardships, anxieties, and stories are being used to frame products. This is the concept of a "confession." It's a brand of honesty that has a contagious, human, sometimes healing, effect on consumers.

UNPOLISHED AESTHETIC

Unpolished, candid photography, and even flawed, stained imagery are all signs of authenticity that reject the notion of a perfectly curated feed.

BRAND APPLICATION

REFRAME YOUR PLANS

Your brand's imperfections are powerful assets. Leverage messy, unpolished moments, product mistakes, the time, history, the creative struggle.

NARRATE LIKE IT'S REAL LIFE

Personal stories and real life content make your products feel like a natural part of your customers' world, rather than just an afterthought.

FROM "LOOK AT ME" TO "FEEL WITH ME"

Avoided feelings, feelings with feelings and emotional resonance. Unpolished storytelling can help create meaningful, reliable relationships with customers who laugh and grow right along with you.



ISSUE TOPICS

RISK OR RAGE-BAIT?

IS THE ATTENTION WORTH THE CONTROVERSY?

Contributor: Anika Czander & Stephanie Colman-Sadd

INSIGHTS

In today's marketing climate, there's no such thing as a safe and outright negative brand message. Some brands have potential controversy by leaning in with humor or self-awareness. A brand's "controversy" is a double-edged sword. Controversy can be a tool, but only when it's intentional, authentic, and aligned with brand values. Oversteering can be dangerous.

BACKGROUND

DEMI'S DOUBLE TAKE

Two recent design campaigns mixed results due to very different results. American Eagle's Sydney Sweeney ad campaign on TikTok, which was "canceled" because of the controversy, and the "Double Take" campaign by the brand, which was a success. The controversy was a result of the brand's attempt to use a controversial figure to promote their brand.

COMIC RELIEF OR COMIC RISK?

Humor remains one of advertising's most powerful tools. The "Double Take" campaign by the brand was a success because it was a humorous take on the controversy. The brand's attempt to use a controversial figure to promote their brand was a failure because it was not humorous.

YOUR BRAND, THEIR OPPORTUNITY

When a brand's product is used in a controversial way, it's a double-edged sword. The brand's attempt to use a controversial figure to promote their brand was a failure because it was not humorous. The brand's attempt to use a controversial figure to promote their brand was a success because it was a humorous take on the controversy.

BRAND APPLICATION



ISSUE TOPICS

REGRESSIVE NOSTALGIA

THERE'S SOMETHING OFF ABOUT THE WAY WE'RE REMINISCING

Contributor: Lama Abo Aiad

INSIGHTS

Nostalgia can often be inaccurate as it evokes a feeling rather than the perfect reconstruction of a memory. Brands often change, technological advancements, the evolving marketplace, and generational uncertainty, people's perception of a brand's identity, and the way they interact with it, all contribute to a brand's identity. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

BACKGROUND

BOY RETROFECTION OF AN UNEXPERIENCED PAST

From Gen Z and Millennials' obsession with the 1980s to the 1990s, brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

THE NOSTALGIA TACTIC

The nostalgia play has been a trend for years. Brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

DETACHED AESTHETIC FROM SUBTEXT

Despite today's hyper-visual world, people still respect brands to reference nostalgia. Visuals, like logos, shapes, and colors, are all part of a brand's identity. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

BRAND APPLICATION

DEEPEN YOUR AESTHETIC

In a world of Taylor Swift's "Lover" era, brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

EXPLICIT CHALLENGES

With a growing digital presence, brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

DON'T GET AWAY FROM NOSTALGIA

As nostalgic references continue to be used in campaigns, brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.



ISSUE TOPICS

BIG PICKLE SUMMER

THE JOURNEY FROM GARNISH TO CULTURAL OBSESSION

Contributor: Anika Czander

INSIGHTS

Without a "thing" or a "movement" or a "trend" or a "vibe", brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

IT'S NOT YOUR TIME

Pickles are a food, but they're also a trend. Brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

REALLY, IT'S A REDEMPTION

Following the rise in popularity of the "pickle" trend, brands are looking for ways to connect with their audience. The 1980s and 1990s were a time of great change and innovation. Brands that focus on their story and their approach can be a significant play on psychological intimacy where shared vulnerability creates a competitive advantage.

GROWING ONLINE

Now have a platform on the pickle trend better than TikTok's Pickle, who are showing that "pickle" searches reached an all-time high in 2023, even as pickle-related products have an opportunity to get in on the trend.

BRAND APPLICATION

