



TrendWatching's hong-bao for meaningful prosperity!

Year of the Ox

After a tumultuous Year of the Rat, we're ready to move forward with eight awesome APAC-based innovations, picked to give you an inspiring start to the Year of the Ox. We chose ideas that are particularly relevant to the coming year, all with the goal of helping you tap into new opportunities.

Wishing you a prosperous and purposeful year!

The TrendWatching Team



Ride the livestream

Travel brand and video-sharing network join forces

Chinese travel brand **Tongcheng-Elong** partnered with social media platform Kuaishou to integrate travel products (hotel stays and tourist attraction tickets, for instance) with short videos and live-streaming content. The duo also launched a traveler incentive program, encouraging Kuaishou users to create their own inspiring content in exchange for deals and special offers.

Investing in of-the-moment distribution channels and new media will broaden your brand's outreach and could bring lucrative returns.

💡 **How can you repackage your existing products to engage a new audience?**

Safe shouting

Letting an app do the lohei yelling

In order to facilitate the traditional shouts that accompany the communal tossing of the vegetable dish lohei/yusheng, Singapore-based Koh Beng Liang – aka **DJ Beng** – created an app containing 14 pre-recorded shouted phrases. By tapping on the phrases, users can make sure that every step of the lohei is accompanied by the appropriate shouts, for prosperity without the risk of COVID-19 infection.

It's a simple yet smart innovation that allows people to enjoy traditional celebrations, while also keeping each other safe and healthy.

💡 **How can you facilitate safe yet authentic celebration of traditions?**



Art everywhere

Platform supports artists and invigorates spaces

ArtWallStreet is an inclusive platform that supports artists and incorporates their work into new spaces. They believe art has a place in daily life, and recognize a growing market for affordable work. Curating artists from Southeast Asia to exhibit across a network of spaces, 'Everyday Galleries' can occur in cafés, bistros, bars and retail spaces, allowing art and artists to reach new communities.

As we look to a new year, find ways to invigorate existing spaces, uncover hidden talent and reward hard work.

💡 Which gaps between supply and demand can you spot and cater to?



Paying with bytes

Money digitization offers new opportunities

The mayors of Beijing and Shanghai announced **2021 pilot programs** with the digital yuan. No details were given as of yet, but both mayors hinted at the pilots supporting larger plans for economic recovery. With more cities rapidly adopting the new means of payment, China is well on its way to achieving widespread use of digital money.

This year will see changes in the way people look at money. Anticipating these changes ahead of the curve could be key to acquiring new customers.

💡 **How could your business profit from the digitization of money?**

Isles of the future

Manmade islands as regional hubs

Work on the three new **Penang South Islands**, off the coast of Malaysia, will start in March. The design team includes the Bjarke Ingels Group, and their masterplan – dubbed BiodiverCity – envisions 2.86 miles of beaches, 600 acres of parks and 15.53 miles of waterfront development, integrating Malaysian culture. Transportation will be by autonomous air, land and water vehicles, keeping everything car-free and pedestrian-friendly.

(Re)building society is an opportunity to improve quality of life while keeping the esthetics and traditions that make a culture unique.

💡 **Think of ways to combine new developments with older traditions and esthetics!**



Pop-up webshop

Chinatown shopkeepers are given an online boost

An extended lockdown hasn't stopped **Petaling Street**'s Lunar New Year celebrations. Kuala Lumpur's Chinatown is operating online trading until February 13th on e-commerce platform Shopee. Market-goers can access traditional decorations, food and clothing. Additionally, Shopee has provided traders with free access to Shopee University e-commerce workshops to help them develop an online business.

Virtual celebrations can boost holiday spirits. Better yet, sharing skills will allow businesses to adapt and prosper.

💡 **How can you avoid disruption and stay connected with your customers?**



Virtual nature school

Learning kits keep kids connected to nature

Malaysian nature-based preschool **Rimbun Montessori** was forced to be creative to continue teaching their students about gardening, sustainability and food. To work around COVID-19 restrictions, learning kits were created for students to use at home during screen-led, hands-on activities. Contents varied from planting materials and cooking ingredients to batik painting.

Children are digital natives, but that doesn't mean that shouldn't be given the opportunity to get hands-on with nature.

💡 **How can you keep the next generation engaged with their offline surroundings?**

Buy now, pay later

More purchases through accessible payment options

Buy now, pay later is surging in Singapore. Fintech startups **Atome**, **hoolah** and **OctiFi** allow consumers to split payments into several installments. What's key, is that they're not charging interest. Responsible credit is a win-win for both businesses and consumers, as it increases online conversion while making purchases more financially manageable.

Accessibility is key to ensuring that economic recovery is swift and uplifts all layers of society.

💡 **Can you help consumers flex their spending power without escalating debt?**

Share on your network of choice
(remember, it's caring!)



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- [Did someone say 4-day workweek?](#)

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