

# Marketing trends 2022

**Our guide for business leaders**

# Now is your time to seize the opportunity.

**2022 will bring new challenges, but it will also bring fantastic prospects – as long as business leaders stay abreast of the latest marketing trends.**

You can't conquer Covid. Brexit isn't going anywhere. But you can observe how these and other business challenges are affecting consumer behaviour and change your marketing accordingly.

To market your business effectively, you need to ask three questions. What do your consumers want? How can you reach them? And how can you demonstrate that your business can solve their problem? Knowing the people you are selling to and the landscape you are selling to them in is the best place to start.

In this guide, we'll be discussing the key trends, consumer behaviours, and technology developments business leaders need to be aware of in 2022, giving you vital insights that will help you to plan for the future.

What do your consumers want?

How can you reach them?

How does your business solve their problems?

## 2022 Marketing Trends:

**Virtual influencers:** The evolutions of influencer marketing?

p3

**The metaverse:** Transporting marketing to the digital realm

p4

**NFTs:** Digital assets at the heart of marketing campaigns

p5

**First-party data:** Preparing for the death of third-party cookies

p6

**SEO:** Adapting to new customer search behaviours

p7

**New social media platforms:** Opening up new avenues

p8

**Consumers:** Prioritising personal change and wellbeing

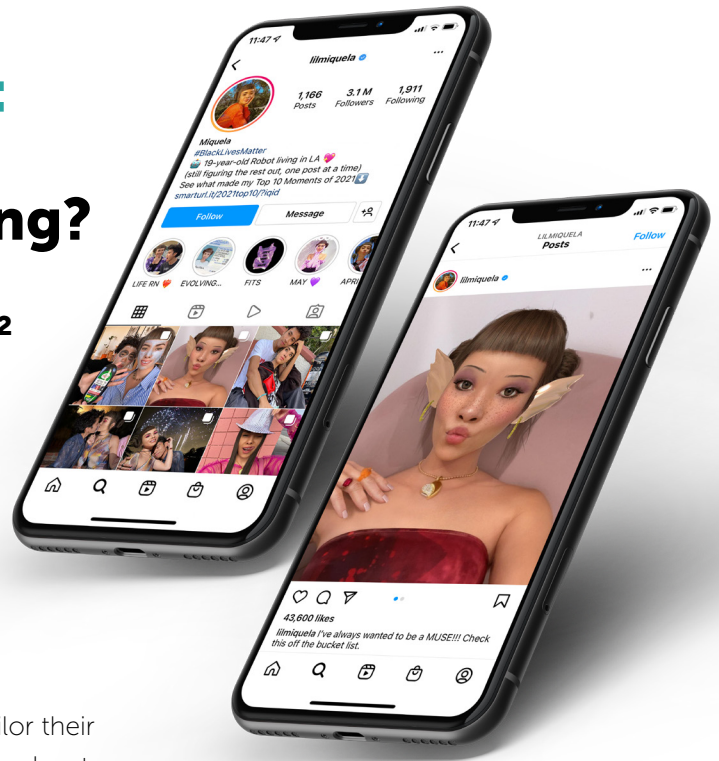
p9





# Virtual influencers: The evolution of influencer marketing?

**Influencers will expand their reach in 2022 to support an even wider range of brands across social media. Some of them won't even be real people.** Take Lil Miquela, a 19-year old fashion icon who promotes music and sends pics of her travels to over 3 million Instagram followers – not bad, considering she's actually a virtual 'robot' created by an LA-based start-up.



By enlisting a virtual influencer, brands can tailor their message however they want, with no messy reshoots or editing required. They don't have to worry about the influencer's track record (no dodgy tweets popping up from 5 years ago), or whether they will remain a long-term partner for the future because they aren't real human beings.

Then again, some commentators have raised concerns about 'fakeness' and lack of authenticity. The worry is that some virtual influencers appear so realistic as users scroll that they can't be distinguished from the real thing, which might promote unattainable, pixel-perfect beauty standards.

There have also been concerns about the kind of content that virtual influencers are posting. For instance, many commenters were upset when Lil Miquela told a story about being sexually harassed in a taxi in 2019, as they claimed it crossed an ethical boundary and trivialised the stories of real abuse survivors.

# 1,000+

leads generated from **200,000** views and **4,000** e-book downloads from TopRank Marketing thanks to influencer marketing

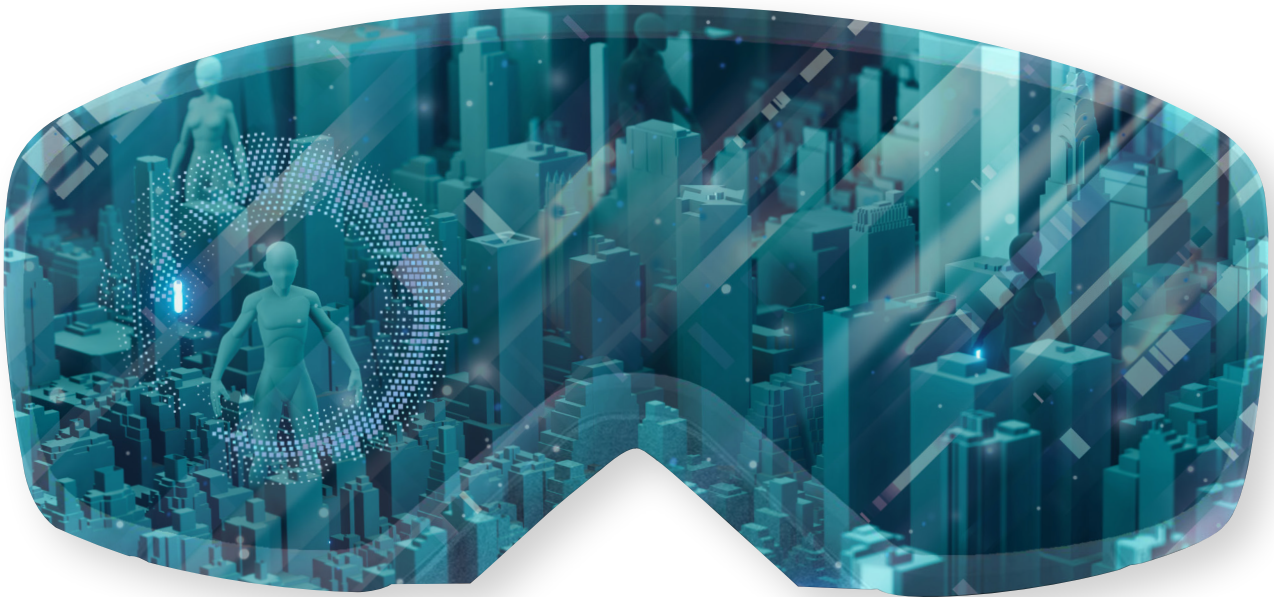


## KEY TAKEAWAY:

**Authenticity is key – if consumers feel they are being misled or lied to, they won't engage with your brand. Want to market authentically? Get to know your audience.**



# The metaverse: Transporting marketing to the digital realm



**What even is the metaverse anyway?** The simplest definition refers to an online immersive environment existing separately from the real world, one which we can access through extended reality (XR) technologies, game consoles, PCs or even phones. But nobody really knows how far the metaverse concept will go.

We can see how brands might market themselves in the metaverse – virtual conventions or immersive online experiences that promote their product in an entirely new way, for example. Meta has certainly gone all in, having invested \$10bn towards the metaverse concept already. But many online commentators aren't sure about the idea: after all – do we really want to spend most of our time in a virtual world?

# \$10bn

already invested in the Metaverse by **Meta**

If the metaverse requires even more of our personal data – right down to our movements, our emotions, our everyday conversations – will this data be used in an ethical way? Many people aren't happy with the idea of big tech companies holding the reins over a future metaverse where everyone spends most of their time. On the other hand, some say it could be a good thing for people who can't experience the physical world in the same way (disabled people, for example).



## KEY TAKEAWAY:

**VR and AR technologies can be great ways to capture user's attention – but are they the right marketing avenue for your brand? Look at what competitors are doing in this space.**





# NFTs: Brands putting digital assets at the heart of marketing campaigns



**Let's talk about one of the most controversial marketing trends to watch in 2022.**

By the end of 2021, nearly \$41bn had been spent on non-fungible tokens (NFTs), which give the buyer unique ownership of a specific digital asset, such as a video clip, an online image, or a piece of art. Ownership can be bought and sold from one person to another, and NFTs rapidly rack up in price as people vie to be the undisputed owner of a piece of digital content.

Why does this matter for marketers? With consumers growing more connected to the online world, digital assets are growing in value. This is leading brands to create digital assets and use NFTs to create brand awareness. See, for example, Budweiser's Bud Royals NFT campaign, which saw them releasing 11,000 tokens to help promote new music artists (while building some traction using the NFT trend).

There's been explosive discussion about NFTs online, and not all of it is positive. The now famous Bored Ape Yacht Club NFT collection was recently victim to a copycat attack from a creator who slightly altered/mirrored versions of the NFTs and released them online, begging the question: what's the point of NFTs anyway? Some commentators are saying they could be a front for money laundering and tax evasion schemes, because the market isn't facing the same level of scrutiny from financial lawmakers.

What's more, a huge amount of energy is used by specialised computers to monitor and verify NFT sales. One study even claimed that in under half a year, one artist's NFTs could have a footprint of 160 tonnes of CO2 emissions.

# \$41bn

had been spent on  
**NFTs** by the end of 2021

## KEY TAKEAWAY:

**More brands will jump on the bandwagon with some incredible NFT campaigns. But look before you leap to ensure that you don't damage your reputation by entering the space.**



# First-party data: Preparing for the death of third-party cookies



**Consumers are warier about data privacy than ever before.** That's partly why Google is set to phase out third-party cookies in 2023, and marketers and brands will be thinking this year about how they can collect more first-party data.

Third-party cookies are created by other domains and track how visitors interact with websites. First party cookies, meanwhile, are stored on websites you are currently visiting – they remember things like user preferences, or what they have in their shopping cart. But first-party data can mean so much more than that to businesses.

Through apps, social media, surveys or other means, brands can reap all kinds of marketing insights from their consumers, from unique visitor numbers to their location, user interests and the time they spend on certain pages. This information can be used to highlight specific products that gel with certain demographics, so that those users could be targeted with a personalised email campaign. Whether it's through online forms on their website, emails or mobile apps, collecting first-party data will allow businesses to create targeted campaigns and build trust.

**86%** of browsers will be **unreachable** via third-party cookies from 2023



## KEY TAKEAWAY:

**The better your first-party data, the easier it is to create personalised marketing schemes that build customer loyalty and ultimately boost your profit margins.**



# SEO: New customer search behaviours will drive change



**We all know that optimising content for search is extremely important (organic search was responsible for 53% of total traffic on the web in 2021).** But the SEO landscape is changing fast, and businesses may need to adapt their SEO strategy to target customers effectively in 2022.

With working from home now the norm, a focus on local SEO will become even more important for grabbing the attention of people searching 'businesses near me'. Brands should think about jumping on the short-form video craze (leapt on by TikTok and Instagram Reels), as short videos aren't just shareable engaging content, but can be added to existing articles to boost SEO.

Much has been said about the impact that artificial intelligence (AI) will have on SEO in years to come. For example, enlisting an AI to write copy for your business might sound like an easy way to produce lots of content quickly – but as search engine algorithms grow more intelligent and can discern high-quality content from generic content, AI copywriting might not be as influential as some commentators think.

# 53%

of total web traffic in 2021 was through **organic search**



## KEY TAKEAWAY:

**If you aren't including SEO in your marketing strategy, you need to be. Analyse your existing SEO approach based on how consumers' search behaviours are changing.**





## Social media: New platforms will open up new marketing avenues

**Ever heard of Clubhouse?** It's the app that's tapping into audio as a new stream for grabbing followers, brands and more with audio-only chatrooms that allow people to tap into light and heavy discussions on the fly. One moment you can be listening to motivational Monday tips, the next you can be learning an entirely new language.

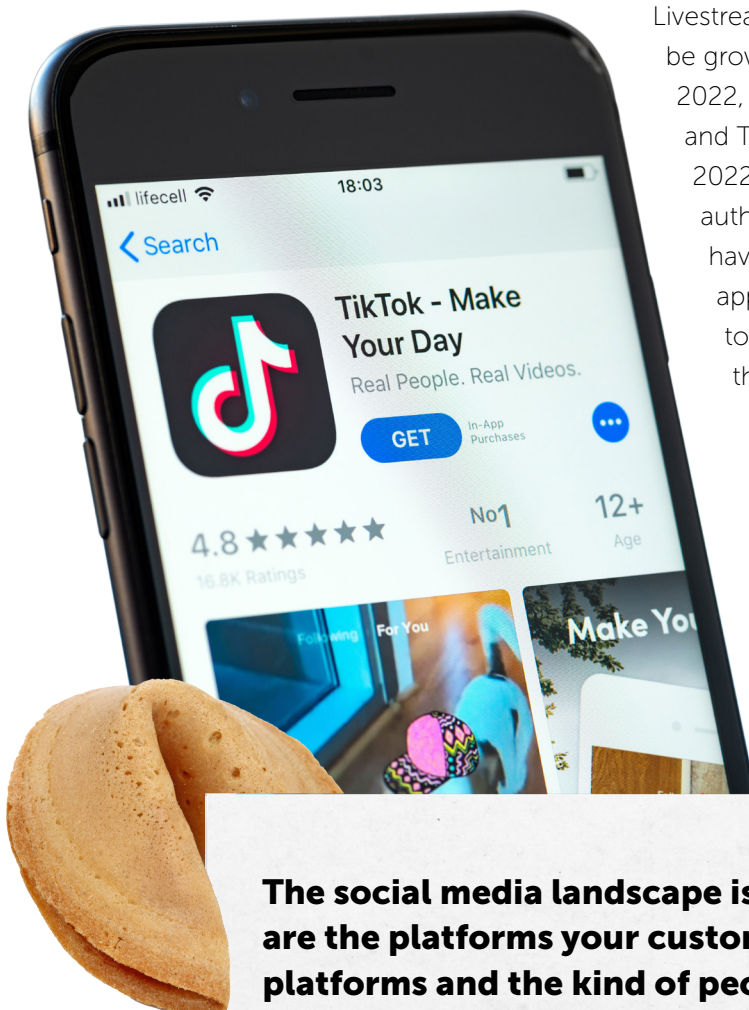
For marketers, this kind of easy drop-in app can make it even easier to promote webinars, fireside chats and Q&As, giving brands a voice and helping bring them to life. We're also seeing Twitch and Discord – two platforms originally popularised by gaming – evolving to host all kinds of new content as people have switched to WFH-led careers, or have additional time on their hands to watch and engage with streams.



Livestreaming and audio might both be growing avenues for social media in 2022, but short-form videos on Instagram and TikTok will continue to dominate in 2022 as consumers are drawn to their authenticity and relatability. Brands that have already gravitated towards these apps know that they are a fantastic way to connect with audiences directly in the palm of their hand.

# >1bn

people around the world now come to TikTok **every month**



### KEY TAKEAWAY:

**The social media landscape is constantly changing, and so are the platforms your customers use. Keep an eye on new platforms and the kind of people/businesses who follow you.**





## Consumer behaviour: Prioritising personal change and wellbeing



**If the Great Resignation has taught us anything, it's that consumers are scrutinising their lives more than they ever have before.** The pandemic may have kept us locked inside, but it's also given people more financial freedom and an understanding that our time on the planet is finite. This is making consumers bolder and keener for change – whether that's thinking about switching careers, learning more skills or taking up a new hobby or interest.

The pandemic has also driven consumers to think about wellbeing and take steps to improve it, whether that's through exercise, meditation, attending therapy or trying new relaxation methods. This move towards personal development and wellbeing is going to redefine the way many brands approach their marketing in 2022.

B2B brands are realising the importance of storytelling to seem more relatable and position themselves as problem-solvers for human beings, instead of just providing a service to businesses. We'll see more campaigns from brands explaining how their product can help people achieve their personal development goals. Brands outside the wellness sphere will continue to tap into that crucial human need to detox and destress.

# 74%

of consumers believe their priorities  
(and resulting shopping habits) have  
been **impacted by Covid-19**



### KEY TAKEAWAY:

**Consider whether you can tie in your product or service with personal change or development to ride the ongoing 'betterment' trend amongst consumers.**



# The world of business is changing. Your marketing needs to change with it.

That's where Nutcracker can help.

We keep up with the latest industry trends, marketing technologies and business insights. The result? Campaigns that are relevant, fresh and eye-catching for your target audience.

**Want to speak to a marketing expert about how you can shake up your marketing in 2022?**

Book a consultation with Nutcracker today by emailing [hello@nutcrackeragency.com](mailto:hello@nutcrackeragency.com), or call us on 020 3941 0305.

**Email us now**

