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[Edit Item](#)

Emerging Market Trends

Take a closer look at market trends that have emerged over the past year and the circumstances that shaped them – and learn what will continue trending in 2021.



The emergence of the pandemic created a significant shift in consumer habits. A quiet emergence of trends has directly impacted many markets, including our own. Each trend has been brought on by shifting lifestyles that have been organically tailored

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circumstances of the past nine months. While each trend's emergence represents regular consumer markets, remember that B2B buying is most directly impacted by how consumers ordinarily spend.

Physically Digital

There is more interconnectivity than ever before in part because of the necessity of the digital world's maintenance of business and life. "Phygital," or physical-digital, is a hybrid of consumer trends that bring together opportunities of life both in-person and online when in-person consumption is not possible. This trend's emergence will have long-term implications that directly impact various markets. Consumers will inevitably have an expectation of digital integration in much of their lives from here on out.

Outdoor

The unusual nature of 2020 slingshot many trends that will continue to appear throughout the new year from a consumer perspective. One of the most considerable retail markets that have experienced significant growth due to the pandemic's emergence is the outdoor market. This includes fitness equipment, travel drinkware, camping goods, outdoor recreation gear, and personal travel commodities. Major outdoor retailers witnessed double-digit growth by the third quarter, with some seeing triple-digit growth by year's end.

VSCO

Last year even observed the emergence of a subculture well-rooted in promotional goods. VSCO or VSCO Cam (an abbreviation for "Visual Supply Company") is a photography mobile app developed in 2011 that made an unusual leap forward thanks to necessary physical distancing, specifically among those 16 to 25. The software, a previously little-known image filter application, now has its own subculture that in many ways is a blast from the past. This consumer-ready group is most notably identified by Hydro Flask water bottles, tie-dye t-shirts, slip-on shoes, and scrunchies, all supplemented with an eye for sustainability in reusable straws and upcycled products.

At Home

It is expected that there will be little return to "normal" office life this year, if at all. The home office has become a sanctuary for millions of working adults but has only recently begun to take shape. While many expected the pandemic's impact on their working realities to only last a few months, now nearly a year in, workers are realizing their current workspaces are less temporary than they may have thought. The trends appear to be more about mobility and functionality to counter the sedentary nature of a traditional home office. Desks have been replaced with multifunctional seating and fabricated home-offices made to be mobile.

Frugality

A final note pertaining to trend emergence comes from the economic consequence side of the pandemic. Most consumers have become increasingly frugal in order to better safeguard themselves against unforeseen economic impacts. Spending on certain goods might be down in order to amplify a spend on something more costly.

The fluidity of the present situation will continue to shape consumer spending and therefore trend emergence. While many of the present trends can be directly linked to the sudden and unexpected development of a global pandemic, many long-term predictions can be made from this present consumer spending that will impact many product-related markets for years to come.

by [Seth Barnett, VP Content Development](#)

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