



WGSN wows at Cannes Lions

London, 6th July 2009 WGSN (www.wgsn.com), the world's leading fashion and style forecaster, wowed the audience with its youth market intelligence at last week's Cannes Lions festival. WGSN's Content Director Juliet Warkentin was invited to participate in the prestigious annual event as an expert on youth trends. Her session entitled 'Decoding Youth' affirmed the company's position as the leading authority on trends.

Despite being in the midst of one of the toughest trading environments for many years, the youth market, unlike the rest of the apparel sector, has not been hit as hard by the recession. "What is apparent is that the youth market is still driven to purchase products that hit the zeitgeist for them" explains Warkentin. "Even though they are struggling to get jobs, when they find an item they like they are still buying." For the advertisers and their agencies gathered at the event, this message hit home as they look to adapt and evolve as traditional advertising faces up to the challenges of the economy, as well as a fragmenting media landscape and the increasingly pivotal role of digital.

Warkentin discussed how new communities are springing up in less traditional places than the main fashion hot spots thanks to social networking and blogs, and they are creating their own fast-moving sub cultures. Random trend analysis of these currents in the market is just as important as linear (or traditional) forecasting – at least in the world of youth.

The session included a hands-on tutorial in trend forecasting. The audience was invited to identify profile types they were given, characterise the person, add 'style filters' and create an advert targeting this person.

How is this relevant to the brands and advertisers that made up the audience? “Keep your brand transparent, relevant and be prepared every once in a while to think outside the box”, advises Warkentin. “The youth sector likes to make informed choices and admires a brand that owns up to its mistakes. A brand that is personal and involves or connects the customer is also more likely to succeed. Being relevant can come in the most simple but pertinent forms: Uniqlo’s human vending machine that gave free Heat Tech T-shirts to customers who were feeling cold: pop-up shops, such as last summer’s Tretorn mobile pop-up for flip-flops and wellington boots in New York’s Central Park, ensure a brand stays relevant.”

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WGSN defines and shapes winning style and design

With proven global authority, WGSN identifies and analyses current and future trends, creating online tools that can be put into action to power their customers' commercial success. WGSN enables those who need to see, think, and act on consumers' evolving wants, needs and behaviours to create brilliant products and services.

Our vision is to be the indispensable and inspiring resource for every organisation large and small at the intersection of fashion, style and commerce, loved and advocated by our users. For more information visit www.wgsn.com

The Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival

This annual event is the meeting place for global professionals from the communications industry. Thousands of delegates from more than 90 countries gather in Cannes every year to hear the industry’s leading figures speak about the topics of the day. Past presenters include Sir Martin Sorrell, Bob Greenberg, Kofi Annan, Steve Ballmer, Bob Geldof and Mark Tutssel. The Festival includes a comprehensive programme of Keynotes, Seminars, Master classes and Workshops from some of the most creative and prestigious companies in the world. A key highlight of the event is the announcement of the winners of highly coveted awards for the best advertising creative and execution. The organisers receive more than 22,000 submissions for the categories which are chosen by a 250-strong jury.