

The retro revival



By Sheila McGillivray

14 Jun 2016

While advertisers are debating whether augmented reality will pip virtual reality at the post, some marketers are heeding the consumers' desire to go back to basics with a retro revival.



Brought to a head, or should we say beard, by a generation of hipsters, we're seeing a lot of new-retro around and these are some of our favourite throwback iterations.

Author Mokokoma Mokhonoana said (rather uncharitably), "Retro is a symptom of a generation that is too lazy to innovate," but that was way back in 2011 when our lives weren't quite so engulfed by digital "reality".

To counter an ever increasing online existence people are yearning for tangible experiences. They want to be involved in creative projects that take time and make memories, and brands are listening. In many ways we're going old school and the latest "thing" harks back to a time before; retro is cool again.

Do It Yourself: You know when DigitalTrends.com has a free Weekend Workshop section, showcasing "badass" DIY projects, that creating is big. From crafting your own record player to building a retro gaming console, it's all right there for you to DIY. The workshop calls itself "equal parts easy, affordable, and fun", and that's it in a nutshell, plus, hopefully, you're actually left with something useful in your garage at the end of it.

Pyjamas in the Daytime: Seeing Britney and Madonna on the red carpet recently you may be thinking the "underwear on the outside" fashion is back. But no, it was Dolce&Gabbana's pyjama [range](#) that caught our eye as well as their retro ethos: "The pyjama, an everyday item, or a glamorous subversion of fashion etiquette, remains unmoved in fashion, yet mirrors the changing times." The brand's also showcased from [loungewear to fashion](#), an elegant reminder that the liberation of pyjamas are in some ways associated with the liberation of women.

Stamps: We're enchanted by the UK's Royal Mail's new [Animail](#) stamp series – cute cut out animal stamps, including a woodpecker, snake, chimpanzee, bat, orang-utan and koala bear, all of which cling to the edge of the envelope. These stamps were designed to appeal to children and pre-suppose an era where people actually wrote letters and collected stamps, which it seems they still do.

Doodle Art: A local campaign, [1000 Drawings Jozi](#), encourages people of all ages and stages to do an A5 doodle (or take a photo, or embroider) for charity. The project runs all year long, with people doing group doodles and donating their art to an exhibition at the end of the year. What's retro about this? People are actually putting pen to paper and leaving their

comfort zone to make a difference - instead of doing an EFT.

Storytelling: As long as we have stories, we have retro. We evoke the past to have a retrospective story on which a future can be built. While content marketing studios and customer innovation labs are becoming a “thing”, brands still need authenticity. Google's [Africa Connected](#) is a wonderful campaign that showcases and awards innovative and inspirational stories.

Now if you'll excuse me, I'm off to make a cup of tea from water boiled in my 1950's style mint green kettle.

ABOUT SHEILA MCGILLIVRAY

Sheila McGillivray's knowledge of the advertising industry spans four decades. Sheila's energy, enthusiasm and passion for her work has grown with every new position and challenge. Her experience in the industry is exceeded only by her willingness to keep learning and innovating.

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