

A YEAR IN REVIEW

20

22

Welcome to Demonstrate's A Year In Review: a countdown of our top 15 trends that became 2022's defining cultural moments, and which promise to shape the digital ecosystem in 2023 and beyond.

It's moments like these that showed us the signal through the noise of 2022: the importance of connection in an increasingly #backoutside world — and the resiliency of digital ecosystems, even as we come back together, in person.

We began 2022 with a drastic ebb and flow of COVID cases, underscored by rising political uncertainty across the globe. We were redefining "normal" in a post-vaccine society... and playing Wordle to pass the time #inside while we awaited the future with cautious neutrality.

We're excited for you to come on this journey with us. Enjoy!

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WORDLE

We started the year off with **WORDLE** — newly acquired by the New York Times — that asks players to guess the five-letter word of the day in six tries or less.

Reminiscent of Words With Friends of the early 2010s, the green, yellow, and white grids posted to Twitter sparked a slew of memes and cultural moments from internet denizens and brands alike — proving that even the simplest concepts can engage and influence for months on end.



15

DEATH OF BINGE STREAMING

As daily agendas get longer and attention spans grow shorter, short-form content like Instagram Reels and TikTok will continue to evolve and thrive.



14

Paying streamers are lamenting a future where the price of content is equal to that of cable — and beginning to divest from platforms that don't deliver the shows they want to see, or #stoppingthestream entirely.¹

That's not to say that long-form content such as TV streaming will completely fall to the wayside, but it will need to captivate an audience beyond simply showing up on the services that users already pay for.

¹ The Washington Post, "Streaming TV is having an existential crisis, and viewers can tell".

THE WILD CRYPTO WEST

Cryptocurrency rose and fell dramatically in 2022, and the jury's still out on NFTs — but crypto has permanently changed our understanding of the links between reality and virtuality.



13

Thanks to crypto, the traceability, authentication, and carbon footprint of digital activity are now part of mainstream conversation.

CITIZEN (DATA) SCIENCE

New data transparency regulations have helped internet users become more familiar with the data that they are offering up for collection — and savvier in collecting their own.



If you cannot smell a Yankee Candle, it might be user error.

Throughout 2022, the medical and science communities on TikTok boomed, democratizing healthcare and showing the potential for social media to bridge racial health disparities.

crowd-pleading — a hybrid of citizen science and crowd-funding — to organize mass digests of climate litigation.

In May, Marjan Minnesma was recognized by the Goldman Environmental Prize for her environmental work that uses

And in October, Twitter noticed a relationship between Yankee Candle Co. reviews on Amazon and COVID spikes — proving that there's a story to sniff out wherever we share data.

CORE AESTHETICS

Up until 2020, -cores were adopted to serve; normcore, gorpcore, and momcore prioritized organization, functionality, and optimization via bullet journaled schedules, meal prep, and an active membership at The Container Store.



11

Cue the chaos of the previous two years, and -cores have since evolved to encourage limitless self-expression, joy, and mindfulness. Barbiecore, cottagecore, and cluttercore (among HUNDREDS of others) encourage participants to "play" as hard as they

work by expressing themselves with joyful abandon.

And 2023's niche aesthetics will only get more core-ageous as self-exploration and the pursuit of joy continue to trend upwards.



10

THE FUTURE IS (3D-)PRINTABLE
 Creators used 3D printing to close the loop between imagination and reality.

On Instagram, fashion content creators brought AI-generated designs to life, and in Spain, 3D printing gained legs as a sustainable building method to construct earthen houses from locally sourced clay.

ALTERNATIVE PROTEIN

The summer of 2022 saw a surge in alternative protein options as consumers look to reduce the footprint (carbon and literal) of their plates.



Alternative proteins hop up to the plate.

In July, Strive partnered with Perfect Day to launch the first full-line of sustainable milk alternatives enriched with animal-free whey.

Impossible Chicken Nuggets launched in August — fooling at least one batch of

taste testers with impossibly meaty, plant-based bites.

And in September, cricket flour officially arrived with a mention on Great British Bake Off that soon went viral.

09

MEET ME IN THE METAVERSE

If people are back #Outside, who's staying in the Metaverse?



In 2022, brands turned to virtual reality to launch campaigns and host global events.

Household brand names, for starters. Walmart dug into its "anytime, anywhere" promise with the launch of its virtual Roblox experiences, Walmart Land and Walmart's Universe of Play — allowing users to shop Walmart's "isles" for "verch" (virtual merchandise).

And in early spring, fashion houses of all sizes appeared at a Virtual Fashion

Week with digital catwalks, product placement, and virtual queues for real-life items — providing invitees with a small glimpse into what brand interaction could be like in the future.

Whether we're back #outside or staying in, we can guarantee that the Metaverse will be doing anything but staying put in 2023.

08

DIGITAL ACTIVISM

The year's biggest political moments gave average users a direct connection to first-person POVs of unrest, protest, and powerful calls to action.



Initially suppressed through disinformation, the on-the-ground reality of the war in Ukraine was soon made apparent through journalism and social media.

Protests in Iran received the same treatment — with activists on the scene and around the globe sharing images, videos, and written accounts of injustices committed.

In the US, harrowing scenes of injustice, banned rights, and far-right ideology launched countermovements — and a record voter turnout for the Midterm Elections of 27% among all youth ages 18 to 29.²

Throughout these events, one theme remained consistent: global citizens are using digital platforms to seek out and affirm authentic, personal connection.

² Tufts, "2022 Election: Young Voters Have High Midterm Turnout, Influence Critical Races".

07

COMMUNITIES OF INTEREST

The brands and users that went "viral" and gained widespread traction across mainstream digital platforms in 2022 tended to publish content specific to an interest they specialize in, as opposed to their personal life.

Our prediction: In 2023, audience will gravitate to niches rather than personalities, and find satisfaction in building community over becoming celebrities.



06

