

THE TRENDMASTER'S GUIDE

**Get a Jump on What Your
Customer Wants Next**

ROBYN WATERS

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MAIN IDEA

Contrary to generally accepted wisdom, new trends aren't always spotted early by ultra-hip types who are much cooler than everyone else. At the very best, these people help keep a business up-to-date with what's going on in the world. They're trend trackers. Instead, you need to become a trendmaster – someone who initiates a new trend and translates it into ideas and concepts which make sense for your own company and customers. The good news is everyone can become a trendmaster by adopting the right mind-set and by applying the A-Z tools and tricks of the trendmaster trade.

"I believe that anyone can use these tools to become even more aware of the world around them. Even if you weren't born with a trend spotting bone in your body, you don't have to be a follower forever. These days no one can afford to be just catching on as others are already moving on! Recognizing and reacting to trends is a learned skill, and it can be acquired without extensive time in the streets of Milan or the high schools of Orange County. If you've ever witnessed a trend unfolding and said to yourself, 'I should have seen this coming', there's hope. You too can become a trendmaster and get a jump on your competition."

– Robyn Waters

- ▶ **A** **Antennae** Always be on the lookout for out-of-place little things. That's where upcoming trends originate.
- ▶ **B** **Big Picture** Don't get bogged down in details. Look at the bigger picture issues through your customer's eyes.
- ▶ **C** **Connect the dots** To notice an emerging trend, try and link together all the small details which catch your attention.
- ▶ **D** **Design** The future belongs to those companies which design products with functionality and soul.
- ▶ **E** **Eliminate detail** Focus on what's most important and avoid offering too many options. People crave simplicity.
- ▶ **F** **Fusion** Trends with staying power are usually a series of small trends fused and joined together.
- ▶ **G** **Guts** To succeed as a leader, you've got to take a leap of faith and go forward. You have to be different.
- ▶ **H** **Triple-H** Consumers always buy with their heads (needs), handbags (value) and their hearts (passions).
- ▶ **I** **Instinct & Intuition** Sometimes you just have to go with what feels right rather than waiting for statistical data.
- ▶ **J** **Just-for-me** The hottest trend of all is customization. Allow your customers to express themselves.
- ▶ **K** **KISS** Keep it simple. The less complicated you can make things for customers, the more they will like it.
- ▶ **L** **Lighten up** Trend tracking should be fun rather than a matter of life and death. Have lots of fun.
- ▶ **M** **"Magic button"** A good trend tracker is always on the lookout for ideas which push his or her "magic button".
- ▶ **N** **No secrets** These days, everyone has lots of information. The challenge has become how to be unique.
- ▶ **O** **Observation** Sometimes the most obvious trends are right in front of you but if you're too busy you miss them.
- ▶ **P** **Passion** Trend tracking is about passion first. Find options that will inspire passion in your customers.
- ▶ **Q** **Quintessence** A quintessential product is just right and authentic. Sometimes, the opposite of trendy is timeless.
- ▶ **R** **Resonate** Great trends resonate with their intended audience. They really connect, and hit all the right notes.
- ▶ **S** **Soul** A good trend has soul – an undefinable element of energy, excitement, excellence and desirability.
- ▶ **T** **Translate** Not all trends are relevant. You've got to translate them into something meaningful for customers.
- ▶ **U** **Unabashed** Inject some unabashed enthusiasm into whatever new products you're developing.
- ▶ **V** **Voracious** To pick up on trends, you'll need a voracious appetite for knowledge. Add to what you know.
- ▶ **W** **Walk** To enhance your ability to pick up on a trend, get out and have some new experiences.
- ▶ **X** **(E)xaggerate** Exaggerate what's obvious about your trend and carry everything through to the nth degree.
- ▶ **Y** **Your gut** When you have to make a decision about a trend, follow your gut.
- ▶ **Z** **Zen** For every new trend, there's always a market for going in the opposite direction.

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