



## **WGSN Predicts the Key Trends for 2009**

**London 10 December 2008** WGSN, the world's leading creative intelligence service, has identified five trends that will dominate the creative landscape in the coming year and beyond. From powerful women and a new respect for age, a polarised take on luxury with an end of the 'It-Bag' celebrity, to the world wide community thanks to evolving technology. You heard it here first.

### **The Wisdom of Age**

In a world that has idolised youth for decades, 'age' is little more than a dirty word. But as the economy gets tougher and as Baby Boomers get older, the concept of 'experience' is acquiring a new relevance and energy. To get the best from the benefits of age is more than learning lessons from the past — it's about applying experience to new ideas and concepts.

### **The Power of Women**

Powerful, iconic women have been making headlines recently, not only with their ability to inspire new generations as role models (Hilary Clinton, Christiane Amanpour) and fashionistas (Michelle Obama, Carla Bruni), but also through a growing awareness that the 21<sup>st</sup>-century workplace will be far better served if it taps into its feminine side: Experts cite female characteristics such as 'discipline, focus, detachment, and systematic thinking, together with playfulness, empathy, and design' as the key to management success. From a retail point of view, women hold the decision-making power for many products, making it vital for

marketers and brands to connect with them. In recessionary times it makes even more sense to focus on the group that holds the purse strings.

### **Opposites Attract**

An adverse reaction is often the birth of a new trend. This trend could be termed the “baglash” - a movement against the now *de rigeur* It bags and conspicuous consumption - and in its place, a humbler design approach to luxury that’s all about understated perfection and unconscious simplicity. For the modern consumer, the placement of a perfect seam or an immaculately sculpted collar is more awe-inspiring and authentic than any logo. That’s not to say we’ve forsaken glamour entirely. But rather than OTT branding, the flip-side of this modest trend is about bold, dramatic gestures that tell a story. Look to bygone fashion icons such as Iris Apfel and Diana Vreeland: eccentric and headline-grabbing in their styling, yes, but always true to themselves.

### **Fractured Thinking**

The vast oceans between the world's land masses are no longer a hindrance to the modern day consumer. In fact in this age of interconnectedness, it is possible to view the planet as nothing more than a collection of digitally chain-linked islands: a 21st century archipelago, complete with high-speed cyber bridges and information superhighways. This global network has allowed us to celebrate, not our hugeness, but our smallness. Local craft comes to the fore with sites such as Etsy.com — allowing unique knitted toys, beautiful hand-embroidered cushions and delicate ceramics - all made at home by consumers - to be purchased by anyone, anywhere, anytime.

### **Discreet Celebrity**

The cult of celebrity is here to stay, but in the last few years we’ve seen this evolving. Today’s icons are those pushing trends that go well beyond the latest handbag and translate into real action, and the charities and non-profits of the world have finally recognised the huge potential of leveraging just a small amount

of star power. Celebs such as Angelina Jolie and Leonardo Di Caprio are the poster children of this movement, galvanising support for grass-roots issues such as global warming, while President Elect Barack Obama is the shiny new kid on the block. Having roused a dedicated, young fan base usually reserved for rock-stars, he has the potential to politicise celebrity culture for years to come.

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**About this research**

WGSN delivers continuing trend analysis and forecasting employing its Think Tank methodology. This 12-month rolling process includes seasonal trends days and input from its global analysts and contributors analysing everything from literature, art, culture, design, retail, science, politics and society.

**About WGSN – The global leader in style trend analysis**

WGSN (Worth Global Style Network) is an online subscription service that delivers information, analysis and inspiration to the apparel, style, design and retail industries. WGSN's forward-looking trend analysis, real-time intelligence updated every hour and 10 year archive of reports and images provide information and inspiration for industries across the world. Our global team of 200 experts design, analyse, photograph and write about style, sourcing, distribution, consumer insight and the business of fashion.

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