



## #Virtual Reality



Imagine walking on the moon with Neil Armstrong and the crew of Apollo 11, or being on stage at a Paul McCartney concert, or running with the bulls in Spain. It's all possible now thanks to a revolutionary technology called virtual reality. VR replicates a specific environment (real or imagined) and allows the user to interact with that world.

Even better, virtual reality can open new doors for your business. According to The Motley Fool, a stock advisory service, the virtual reality market is expected to be worth \$30 billion by 2020. The opportunities are endless: VRTalk, the online virtual reality forum, predicts virtual reality headset sales will double every year until approximately 2025. Not to mention, Netflix is starting to roll out exclusive virtual reality content this year.

If you're wondering what virtual reality can do for distributors, prepare to be amazed. Virtual reality is about to completely transform the business world, and you could be getting in at the ground level. If a new resort hotel wants to promote its property to remote clientele, all they have to do is send them a VR headset and a link to their VR content. If a college wants to recruit students from across the ocean, it just takes some tech.

With advertisers looking for new ways to increase brand visibility, and for promotions that frequently include a tech component, virtual reality is the perfect opportunity for distributors.

Check out these promotional products that will jumpstart your client's virtual reality promotion:

### 1. Virtual Reality Headsets

Naturally, the heart of any virtual reality experience is the headset itself. Virtual reality headsets are the perfect opportunity to get your client's branding at the forefront, thanks to a large imprint area on the front of the headset. When your client's end buyers are transported to a Hawaiian vacation, they'll have you to thank, and what's better than that?

### 2. Power Banks

We've all experienced what it's like for a cell phone to go dead when you need it most. There's nothing that can kill a virtual experience faster than a dead phone. Ensure users don't miss out on their virtual reality experience with branded power banks.

### 3. Wireless Bluetooth® Headphones & Earbuds

As a society always on the go, it's rare to have a moment to ourselves. But, that doesn't mean we can't fire up our virtual reality experiences on the train, airplane, etc. With wireless headphones or earbuds, end-users can transport themselves from red-eye flight turbulence to an African safari, all without disturbing the person next to them. Brand wireless headphones or earbuds with an eye-catching logo, and you've got an item that can be used for movies and music in addition to VR.

### 4. Portable Bluetooth® Speakers

Much like a virtual reality experience can be tailored for a quiet environment, users can also go all out with more immersive experiences. To feel like you're truly a part of the action, portable Bluetooth® speakers are a great way to amplify sound and transform the living room into a home theater.

## The Trend

- The VR revolution is taking off as an increasing number of businesses look to engage in experiential marketing and entertainment.
- Virtual reality is predicted to become one of the biggest tech trends in the coming years.

### Virtual Reality Glasses



### Folding Headphones with Microphone



### Tuscany™ Slim Executive Charger



# The Trend

- Corporate gifting remains popular as a way to thank clients and show appreciation to valuable employees.

- Personalization is a rising trend among corporate gifts that adds a much-appreciated touch to any gift.

- In a survey conducted by *Incentive Magazine*, 32.8 percent of businesses surveyed are giving food gifts in 2016. One of the benefits of food gifts that come in a bin, basket or tin is that the gift can be shared and the end-buyer can keep the packaging, making both giver and recipient happy.

**Gildan® Heavy Blend™ Ladies Full Zip Hooded Sweatshirt**



**Tuscany™ Bluetooth® Speaker**



**Vienna™ Tablet Portfolio**



**Tuscany™ Thermos, Hot Cocoa & S'mores Gift Set**



## #Corporate Gifting



Like the old saying goes, "It's better to give than to receive." And while that might be a cliché, in business, there are truly unending perks to corporate gifting. There's no better way to keep your company top-of-mind with valuable clients, and studies have shown employee gifting could boost annual profits by \$2,400 per employee, according to The Work Foundation's report.

Corporate gifting boosts brand recognition, generates positive associations with your business and, in the case of employee gifts, improves corporate culture.

Currently, corporate gift trends revolve around personalization. Businesses need to show their clients they can go the extra mile and that they care about them on a personal level. Plus, it's the perfect opportunity to showcase a company's branding.

Here are some ideas that are sure to wow any receiver:

### 1. Food Gifts

Food and wine are always timeless gift options, and they're poised to continue growing. Packaged Facts forecasts U.S. consumer and corporate food gifting sales will grow 3.5 percent in 2016. Suggest your clients take advantage of this delicious promotional opportunity

with seasonal hot chocolate gift baskets, gingerbread cookie baskets or any mulled wine gift baskets.

### 2. Apparel

Relaxed apparel (commonly known as athleisure wear) is what's trending now with corporate gift buyers. Sweatshirts and zippered warm-up jackets are the name of the game here, with end-users sporting both embroidered and silk-screened versions. And these shirts aren't just for lazy Sundays—they are popular to don around town, increasing your clients' logo exposure.

### 3. Tech Gifts

Tech consumes our modern-day lives, and we love it. Clients and employees can never have enough tech, whether it's a power bank, portable Bluetooth® speaker or headphones, and everything in between. Suggest tech gifts to your clients that will demonstrate they're always taking action to stay connected.

### 4. Personalized Luxury Gifts

For those top-tier clients and top-earning employees, personalized gift sets are just the thing. Whether they feature a journal debossed with the recipient's initials or a beautifully imprinted leather portfolio, any company's clients will be overjoyed. Other options include personalized coasters or any home and kitchen gift set.

## The Trend

- Health and wellness benefits offered by companies have become more important to current and prospective employees when evaluating one company versus another.
- Fitness trackers and branded athleisure apparel are popular rewards in corporate wellness programs.
- Promotional products play an important role in corporate wellness programs and are used in a variety of ways: as incentives for reaching wellness goals; to prevent the spread of colds and flu, which often leads to an increase in absenteeism; and, to foster a sense of community.

# #Health and Wellness

### B-Active Fitness Tracker



### Pouch Wipes



### Gel Bead Freezer Water Bottle



Health and wellness is no longer a trend—it's a growing priority among the population. Don't believe us? The global wellness market now is three times larger than the worldwide pharmaceutical industry, according to the Global Wellness Institute. Today, people are taking a proactive approach to their health. And, if you're looking for dollars, the global wellness market (i.e., healthy eating and nutrition, fitness and preventative health) is now worth \$3.4 trillion.

If your clients are not integrating health and wellness programs into their corporate culture, they're already behind. Now, more than ever, prospective and current employees are looking for employers who care about employees' well being. The Virgin Health Miles/Workforce survey found that about 87 percent of employees consider health and wellness offerings when choosing an employer.

But the benefits of a health and wellness program continue past new hires. The American Psychological Association's (APA) Psychologically Healthy Workplace Award named four employers that did the best job of incorporating health and wellness programs into the workplace, and they found that the winners also had an average turnover rate of 6 percent, while the national average is 38 percent. And, the U.S. Department of Labor sponsored a study that proved corporate wellness programs have been shown to result in a 3-to-1 ROI in terms of corporate financial gains thanks to reduced absenteeism, staff turnover and employee stress.

While there is no perfect track for corporate health and wellness programs, there are small steps that result in big payoffs. Employees love receiving health and wellness products, and branding them with the company's logo fosters a sense of community—it shows that employers care. To ensure your client's

promotional health and wellness products are on trend, suggest these options:

#### 1. Hand Sanitizers

An important aspect of health and wellness programs is prevention. Yearly flu outbreaks cause employers about \$10.4 billion in health care and absenteeism costs. Hand sanitizers and antibacterial wipes curb the problem at the source, so that they don't have to wreak havoc on your client's business.

#### 2. Fitness Trackers

The forecasted wearable device market is predicted to reach nearly \$6 billion by 2018, according to Statista Fitness. Trackers will no longer be a high-priced fantasy; they will be a mainstream necessity. If companies want to go the extra mile for their employees, fitness trackers are always a good program reward.

#### 3. Athletic Apparel

With the health and fitness markets heating up, athleisure clothing has transformed from a trend to a lifestyle. Sales of moisture-wicking zip-ups are racking up big dollars at retail. Activewear is predicted to reach \$83 billion in sales by 2020, according to Morgan Stanley Plus. Now is the perfect time for you to present this hot trend to your clients. Use virtual samples to demonstrate how amazing their logo will look on a zip-up jacket, sweat-shirt or long sleeve T-shirt.

#### 4. Yoga Accessories

According to a survey by Yoga Alliance, there were 36.7 million yoga practitioners in 2016, who spent \$16.8 billion on clothing, equipment and accessories. Suggest to your clients branded yoga mats, sport bottles or duffel bags, and they'll be sure to see an increase in employee energy, morale and productivity.

# Your Logo Matters

→ Your name is the first and last piece of information pertaining to your identity, ergo the name of your business has the same value. While many companies' names have not been created solely on how a name looks or sounds, a business does have the ability to formulate an identity with a name by how the name appears as it is presented again and again in various contexts. In fact, a logo can take a tiny part of the name and singularly carry the business identity. That image can be cropped tight, made very small or span overhead and still be recognized.

I like to put a logo design to the "Infinity Test"—How small or large can a logo become and still remain identifiable? How long will it take for a logo to be a solid form of a company's branding? How long will it sustain character and relevance while existing in a world of constant motion? Some of these factors remain unknown as the relationship of the company's success and continued presentation of the logo will be close. You can quickly remember many logos by the fact that they have just been around a long time. The company hasn't changed them much from their original inception.

Off the top of my head, a great example of the success of a company and its branding contrary to its not so sexy name is Hewlett Packard, founded in 1939. We all think of it as simply "hp". "hp" is also not so sexy when you think about two letters of the alphabet together, how they sound, how they look, their basic functions in our language. Yet, because of their very simple configuration within a circle, that same "hp" is known around the globe for its enduring relationship and inventiveness with electronics. It absolutely survives the "Infinity Test." In fact, it even survives different treatments and substrates easily. It has gone through subtle redesigns over the years, some of which have been used for splash and

glamour to reintroduce the brand with product launches, but somehow that very simple "hp" returns as the symbol.

One of my favorite logo/branding stories is Tiffany & Co. They actually own a color—Pantone 1837. Their iconic box holds their black, classy name so well that Tiffany & Co. never really had to do anything else. They do, however, have the luxury of selling luxury and having a sexy name.

Quickly think about memorable logos such as Honda®, Pokemon®, Apple®, Nike®, IBM®, HBO®, Target®, McDonald's® or Google®, each of which embraces simplicity and contains a symbolic element. Each has been blown up, reduced and cropped tight, bled off, embellished with chrome, light, depth, set to motion, flexible enough to sustain its identity. Each provokes an emotion that sells their wares specifically. Each has transformed its special icon to suit the trend and fashion of the decade within which it currently resides.

The power of a good logo can be seen regularly in situations such as when a model or object partially covers a magazine title and yet the title/logo is so recognizable, you can immediately identify the magazine's full name. Covering a logo used to be a big no-no, but now we regularly see companies' advertisements where their logo is strong enough to be identified even if partially obscured.

There are plenty of logos that are undeveloped, surviving purely on the success of the commodity being sold. Usually the problem with a logo is it tries too hard. There is just too much going on with multiple, overlapping messaging. A success story for that treatment is Starbucks®, a 45-year-old company that has slowly pared down its logo to the stargazing lady it is today, still somewhat complex but getting there. So all is not lost if you have a busy, less than sexy logo and name;



1

Tuscany™ Thermos and Cups Coffee Sets



2

Casablanca™ Journal

## #TRENDING NOW

3

Rubik's® Cube



4

Hercules® 30 oz. Tumbler



5

Sierra™ Zip-Around Tech Portfolio



you can dig down deep and find an interesting element in your name or product line, and tweak it just enough to remain contemporary.