

# WEEKLY TRENDS REPORT

Friday 30 January 2026



Pictured: Edited image from iStock



# THIS WEEK'S FORECAST





# FOR YOUR INFO



## This week's dates & microtrends

### TikTok trends

“[The Australia effect](#)”. Glow up by moving down under.

One year after TikTok's almost ban, the [US version has new parents](#). We'll come rescue you if it becomes worse.

### ICYMI

[Alex Honnold successfully climbed Taipei 101](#) in a cool 92 minutes. Race you up there.

[Trinity Rodman became the highest paid](#) women's football player with a four-year \$1.1 million contract.

### Phrase of the week

“[The bathroom door scandal](#)”. Hotels are testing relationships by using sliding doors or transparent walls.

### Tea of the week

Where were you when [Beckxit happened?](#) Every Millennial Brit is begging for the tape of the dance.

### Weekly doses of cute

A [cow that can use tools](#), panda twins [Lei Lei and Xiao Xiao](#) return home, and the most [important life decision](#).

### Digi updates

Savvy AI users are building [micro-apps for personal use](#). We built one to find us the closest clean public toilet (basically impossible).

Pay for friends? [Meta is testing premium versions](#) of its apps.

### What we're loving

The sold out [Pokémon X Natural History museum pop-up](#). We're totally not jealous and wish we booked tickets months ago.

[Sinners makes history](#) with 16 Oscar nominations. If MBJ wins, does he get two Oscars?

### Established trends

Celibacy = billionaire. [Young tech founders](#) are locking in and saying no to love to focus on creating success.

We bring the [\(peptide\) boom](#)! Users are going through loopholes to get their hands on the 'miracle' injections.

### The future

[250 men's opinions](#) on the dating world. Conclusion: It's tough out there.

## On our radar



J.Cole: The Fall Off - 06 February



The Muppet Show – 04 February  
The Super Bowl LX - 08 February



Send Help – 06 February  
100 Nights of Hero – 06 February

### Insights of the week

Scientists are having to [sift through AI generated scientific reports](#).

New music and films are [becoming dispensable](#) in the digital abyss.

### Rising trends

No more fridge cigarettes. Gen Z are opting for [zero sugar sodas](#) over diet sodas.

“[Where Everybody Knows Your Name](#)” Local third spaces are attracting young people with rewards programmes and the [promise of a local hangout spot](#).

### Stat of the week

In the buckets. [KFC lost 5.6% of market share](#) since 2019 while Chipotle gained 8.3% market share.

### One to bake

The ultimate star baker. [Nigella Lawson](#) is set to be the new judge of *The Great British Bake Off*.

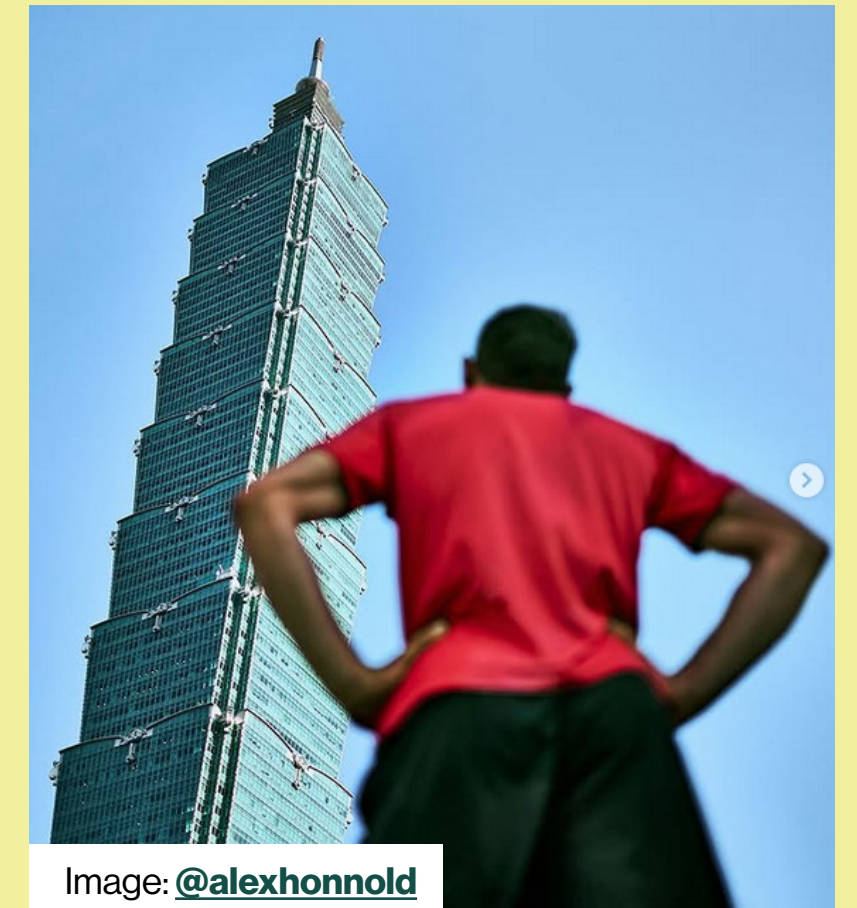


Image: [@alexhonnold](#)



Image: [@trinity\\_rodman](#)



Image: [@elperrotrepapinos](#)



# TREND TRACKING



How some of the trends we've identified have evolved in recent months

## Soundtrack of life

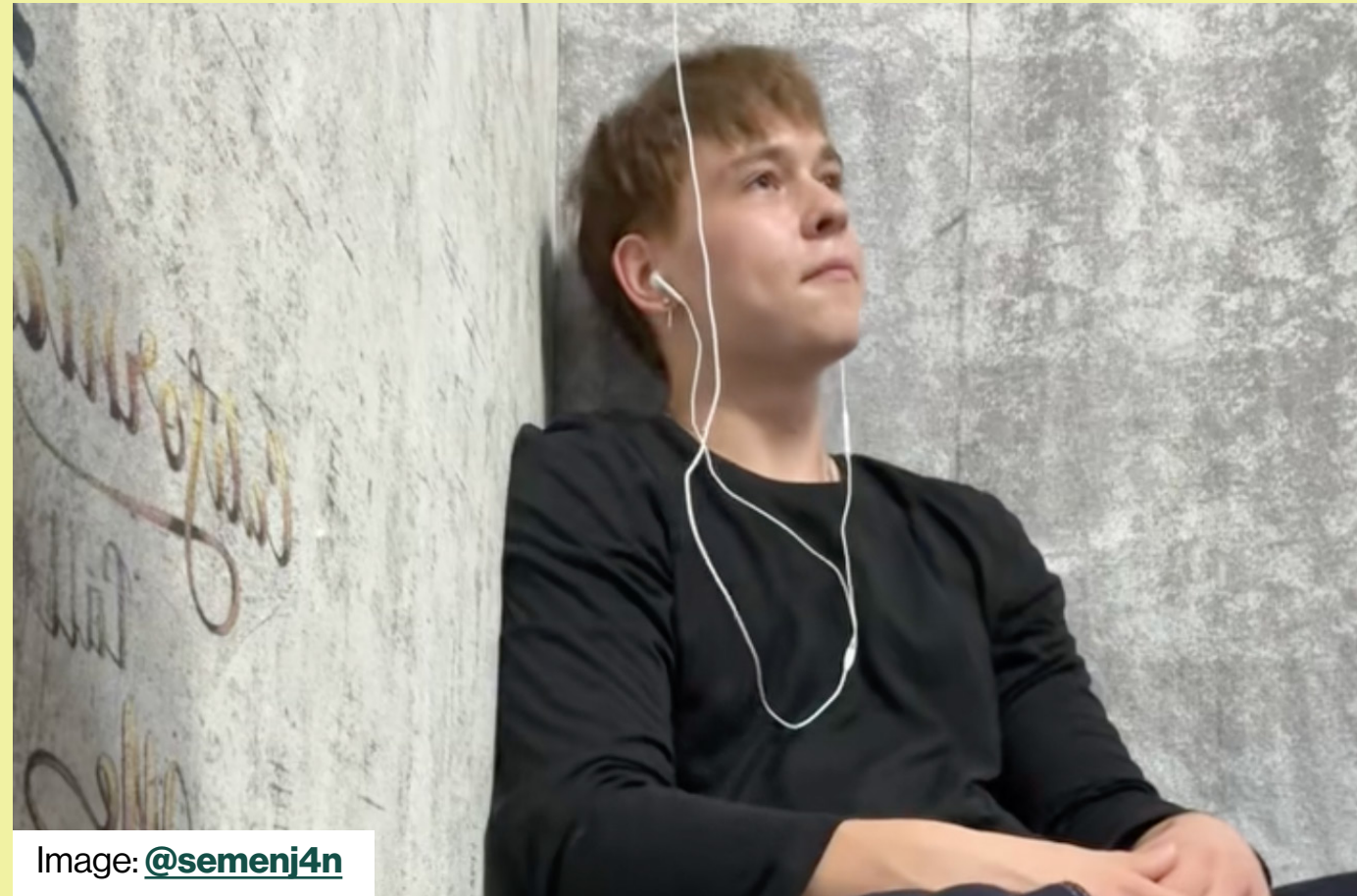


Image: [@semenj4n](#)

Gen Z are soundtracking everything in their lives. From picking the perfect song for an insta carousel, to putting a trendy song over a get-ready-with-me, to creating commute soundtracks. One musician is consistently being used, [Aphex Twin](#), the mysterious electronic musician. His wide body of work can be used for different situations. From the [goofiness of QKTHR](#) to [core core edits](#) to [inspirational edits](#). The versatility in which his music can fit different subjects lends itself well as Gen Z's voice/vessel for expressing the hybrid nature of their digital/real life. It also helps that the logo of Aphex Twin is super cool.

**Trend: Romanticising the mundane**

## Dumb Tee Vee



Image: [@theromeshshow](#)

Streaming content is 'allegedly' being dumbed down for the masses to appeal to the second screeners. [A study](#) found that "94% of 25–34-year-olds scroll while watching TV, with 1 in 3 admitting they 'always' do it. 91% of those aged between 35 and 44 agreed." Newer streaming content repeatedly lays out plot points to remind the viewer about what's going on without them having to press the rewind button. Viewers may want to turn their brain off to watch TV, but when the shows are good, every detail of every second will be dissected by fans online. Fans of *Stranger Things* were so distraught with the final season's plot holes that they believed a [secret episode was coming](#). (Spoiler: there wasn't)

**Trend: Is TV dead?**

## Books Aloud



Image: [@kaismind3](#)

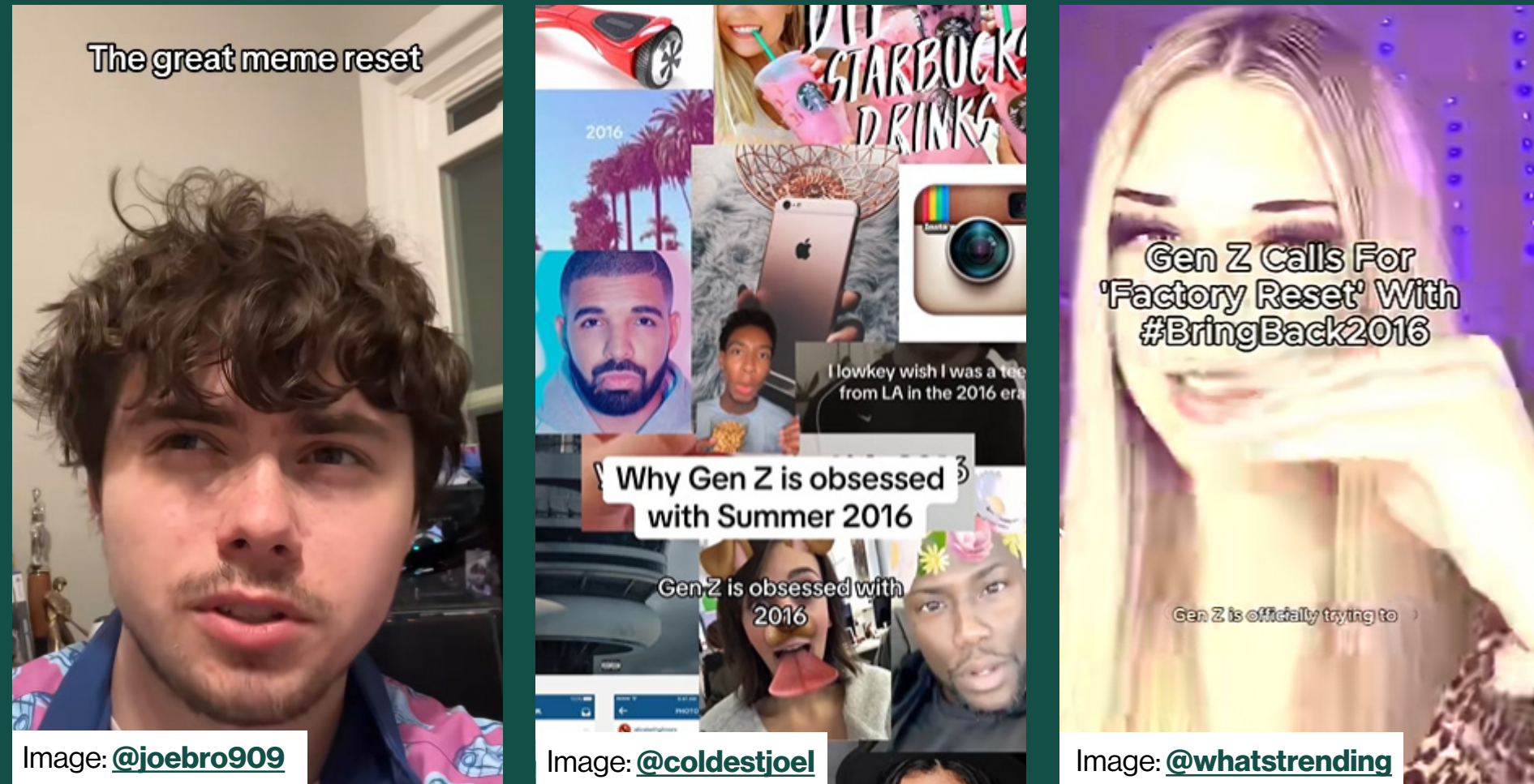
Filming yourself reading aloud is picking up traction, since Kai Cenat, ex-number 1 streamer, posted [a series of videos](#) of himself reading aloud, taking the time to search unrecognisable words and practice his articulation. A deeply vulnerable practise that drew [ridicule and admiration](#). If you haven't heard, we're in a literacy crisis with kids opting for Mr Beast videos. But with last year's performative males' love for feminist literature and this year's hockey smut, reading is on the frontlines of culture. We predict this year is going to be even bigger for books!

**Trend: Bound Together**



# 2026: THE YEAR OF THE RESET

Join the rebellion against AI slop!



## Why Do We Want It to Be 2016 Again?

A new trend has some social media users feeling nostalgic for a decade ago, but the posts reveal something deeper about the state of the internet.

Image: [The New York Times](#)

## Weber Forecast Insight

2026's cultural reset is bringing back the vibes of 2016 (carefree and chaotic) making it the perfect playground for brands. By tapping into nostalgia and mass rebellion, it is the ideal opportunity to lean into community-driven creativity and join in on the weirdness the internet has to offer.

We're just one month into 2026 and it's clear we have pressed the [factory reset button](#). With it, the era of Pinterest-perfect aesthetics and pre-pandemic memes has triumphantly returned. Welcome back, 2016!

Playing in to [millennial optimism](#), Gen Z and millennials alike are romanticising 2016 through rose-tinted glasses as the '[the last good year](#)'. Don't believe us? Earlier this month, [TikTok searches for "2016"](#) surged by 452%. It's no surprise since 2016 was the year to be carefree "[with less performative social content](#)" as defined by social strategist and creator, [Joel Marlinarson](#). Blame it on the recession or [political fatigue](#), but it appears we're done keeping up with trends.

So, how did we get here? The phrase "[2026 is the new 2016](#)" traces back to [The Great Meme Reset](#) first mentioned by [TikToker @joeb0909](#). Fuelled by the nostalgia for a '[simpler internet](#)' and a rebellion of [the March Meme Drought](#), memes are getting

their own reboot, and honestly? It's about time. Where AI shapes a lot of the content we mindlessly scroll (think [Italian Brainrot](#)), there's a growing demand for a digital experience that is less algorithm-driven and more '[humade](#)'. Hence the [reemergence of Vine](#) and [Harambe](#) memes. It's giving [comfort through familiarity](#) for Gen Z and millennials who grew up online and can recognise recycled memes instantly.

As a whole, we are moving from "how do I go viral?" to "how do I feel?" and reconnecting with humour that hits deeper than likes. Of course, some have pointed out the irony in this cultural reset and [suggested it's already becoming a meme itself](#). How meta. That being said, as the year unfolds, the optimists amongst us are celebrating the movement as an opportunity for chaos, creativity and community-driven weirdness.

And so, here is to 2026 and embracing the cultural reset. The internet's about to get weird again – make sure you are in on the joke!



# WANT TO KNOW WHAT ELSE IS ON THE HORIZON?

Talk to us for:

## Reports

Our '**Signals**' reports provide deep dive insights and implications for your brand, audience or category.

## Workshops

Our own '**Culture Collider**' workshop methodology approaches briefs through the lens of cultural trends to help teams create culture first ideas.

Pictured: iStock

