

WEEKLY TRENDS REPORT

Friday 16 October 2026

Pictured: Envato



THIS WEEK'S FORECAST



FOR YOUR INFO



This week's dates
& microtrends

TikTok trends

Avoid all responsibilities with the [shanshenbu flash step](#). We tried this at the office and got reprimanded.

The fans wanted it and they got it, [Wicker in 4DX](#).

ICYMI

[A'ja Wilson wins her historic 5th MVP](#) and [Messi says goodbye](#) to Argentina.

Karl Bushby finally [finishes his 28-year journey](#) across the world. He walked 36,000 miles across the world and still wanted to go back to Hull?

Phrase of the week

[“Are you ready for the Woo-Woo comeback?”](#) Did it ever leave?

Digi updates

How much is a [company willing to shell out for creators](#)? [The rise of IRL influencers](#), an [interview with a luddite](#) and [fake fan accounts](#).

The power of the [front row at a fashion show](#) and [who won social](#) during SS27? Spoiler: Korean pop stars and Thai actors.

Tea of the week

[Kelly Clarkson VS indie store. No one is a winner](#), but we're dressing up as the bird for Halloween.

What we're loving

Voice actor, [Aleks Le's Daredevil short film](#).

Man of the people, the [French mayor shielding students](#) from the police.

Established trends

Who doesn't love an [unusual celebrity pairing](#)? Put us in a room with Justin Trudeau, the Jedward twins and Chapell Roan and watch the sparks fly.

[A number one record](#) doesn't hold cultural weight anymore. If our nan doesn't know it, it ain't a hit.

Insights of the week

Chinese families are [struggling to pass on the family business](#), while [college grads are going into farming](#).

The death of [hosting](#), [mixed gender friendships](#) and [texting family members](#).

On our radar



Clayface – 23 Oct
Wildwood – 23 Oct
Ali G: Who Iz I? – 23 Oct
Possible Love – 23 Oct



Cyberpunk: Edgerunners 2 – 20 Oct



Final Fantasy Resonance – 22 Oct
Call of Duty: MW4 – 23 Oct



LISA: Press Play – 23 Oct

Weekly doses of cute

[Lorax dance](#), [Sour Dad](#), [Orangutans back home](#), [owl family](#), [movie cats](#), the [wedding album](#), [sea turtles](#), [tie bday](#) and [Skarsgård's freaky feet](#).

Rising trends

Prepare for the influx of dating profile pictures of catches holding their catches. [Bass fishing is seeing a popularity boost](#).

[First-class amenity kits](#) have become collectibles, and [charity shops](#) are a dump for the unsellable.

The future

The [world of maths is forever changed](#) after OpenAI solved age-old math problems. Don't worry 1+1 still equals 2.

Stat of the week

Where are all the hunks? Mr England was nearly cancelled after [only 10 men entered the competition](#).

Ones to watch

[Naruto is back](#), [GIRLS is back](#), [VTubers with Critical Role](#), [Druski on SNL](#), [Miami Vice 85](#), [Crazy Rich Asians is back](#), [Digger](#) and [Social Reckoning](#) flop.



Image: [@AleksLe](#)

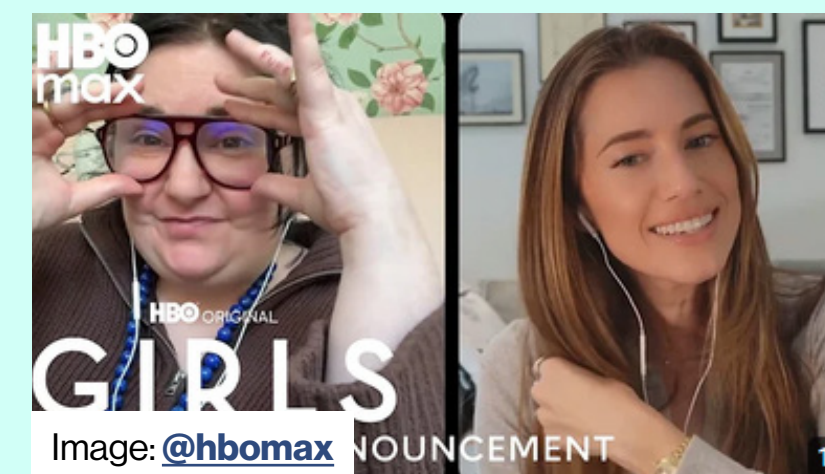


Image: [@hbomax](#)



Image: [@wickermovie](#)

TREND TRACKING



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

The wellness 'darty'



Today's students are swapping kegs for kettlebells and red cups for matcha as the rise of 'college wellness darties' grows at universities. According to [Mashable](#), a "traditional 'darty' — literally, a daytime party — usually revolves around drinking, music, and hanging out. At the wellness version, the agenda might include Pilates, a run, an ice bath, and a coffee or matcha afterward." It was sparked by a [viral TikTok](#) showing students filling ice plunges instead of ice buckets - setting off the latest generational debate as [millennials commented](#) things like "I would have drank a fifth of vodka before this in 2006". It's not so black and white, though. Instead, it shows the increasing move towards balance. Yes, they're running a marathon. And yes, they might then have a beer and cigarette to celebrate after.

Trend: Not so wellness

Lore-tripping



The latest Gen Z travel trend is 'lore-tripping' - planning holidays to places that have a distinct story to them. According to Airbnb's [latest travel trends report](#), as young people feel the strain on wallets, they're thinking creatively to plan memorable holidays on tight budgets - creating new tourism winners and [changing people's conceptions of what holidays are for](#). Airbnb found that "90% of surveyed Gen Zers have set their sights on small towns and other "under-the-radar destinations" for fall trips" including places like Point Pleasant, West Virginia (home of the Mothman), and Leavenworth, Washington (an old logging town that has been "reinvented as a Bavarian village in Germany"). Time to unearth the weird and wonderful stories for your next tourism campaign.

Trend: Detourism

Chainmailers



As tech, AI and synthetic materials are increasingly hurled around as insults, there's been a rise in chainmail, medieval-inspired parties and banqueting supper clubs as the folk are desperate for lore. Condé Nast [recently covered](#) the rise of autumn folk festivals, [renaissance fairs](#) were all over our timeline in summer, fashion week saw a variety of [feudal looks](#) strut down the runway and influencer Chole Hayward [channeled medieval princess](#) for her recent hen do – the signs truly are all around us. As if that wasn't enough, Margot Robbie [recently announced](#) her backing for the 1536 Tudor play, saying that women are still having the same conversations. Perhaps the new KPIs should be meaning, magic and human connection.

Trend: Return to the dark ages

Mile: 2
Taco Bell: 2



Image: @road to leadville

How Running's Burrito League Went From Internet Oddity to Mainstream Movement

Image: [Outside Magazine](#)

McDonald's Is Handing Out Pickle Juice Shots to Chicago Marathon Runners (and Fans): Where to Get Yours

Image: [People](#)



Image: [Famous Campaigns](#)



Image: [Chipotle](#)

Weber Forecast Insight

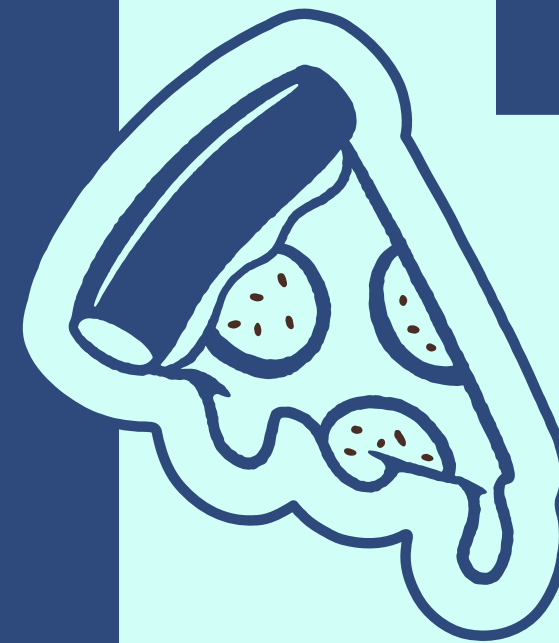
Quick-service restaurants are taking a run at run clubs and marathon culture, reminding brands to keep pace with unexpected moments that create new paths to connect with communities.



This week's long read



FAST FOOD FOR FAST FEET



America runs on carbs.

One of the best moments to chomp on a burger? Right after a marathon, baby! Turns out, the road to runners' hearts and stomachs might just be paved with pickles, patties, and post-race carbs. A grueling run deserves a satisfying finish, after all.

Fast food brands are going the extra mile for ravenous runners. McDonald's served Chicago Marathoners **pickle brine shots** throughout the race for an electrolyte boost. Burger King gave London Marathon runners the ultimate royal treatment: a **free Whopper** at the finish line, plus a next-day BOGO deal for a regal recovery. And for the past two years, Shake Shack has been the **official burger of the New York City Marathon**, fueling the frenzy with a dedicated cheer zone and dishing out post-race freebies and giveaways.

But brands aren't the only ones running the show. When Chipotle and Strava didn't renew their **partnership** for year three, runners were left hungry for more and cooked up the **Burrito League**. The fan-made challenge closely followed the original, asking participants to log the same Strava route on repeat for a year of free burritos. Meanwhile, ultramarathoners are taking **'running on Taco Bell'** literally, tackling a 50K that challenges them to hit 10 chain locations and eat at nine, all within 11 hours. Sounds like a race that would give anyone the runs, if you ask me.

Fast food and fitness might sound like a stretch, but brands and runners alike have a clear appetite for the crossover. The takeaway for brands? Step beyond the usual lanes and run with the unexpected cultural moments that inspire communities to go the distance with you.

BRANDWATCH



Inspiring creative from around the world

NikeSKIMS

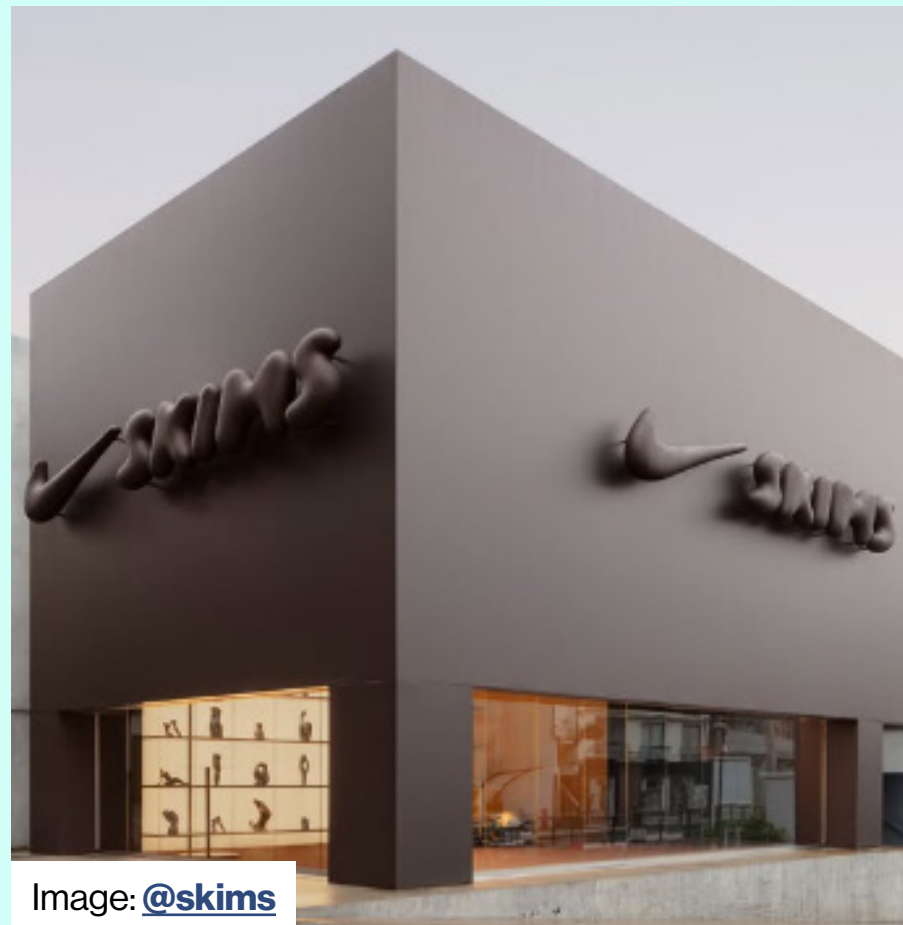


Image: [@skims](#)

Nike and SKIMS have turned a simple product launch into a **limited-time café** and pop-up in Tokyo's trendy Jingumae district. Pairing traditional Japanese tea and wagashi with the **latest NikeSKIMS** collection, the experience taps into the continued demand for immersive, shareable brand worlds. Serving looks and culture.

Chipotle



Image: [@chipotle](#)

Chipotle has proved that sometimes bigger really is better, unveiling a giant 3-foot-wide “**Big Ass Chipotle Bag**” to promote its family meal offering. What could have been a straightforward product push becomes a highly shareable cultural moment by borrowing cues from **oversized luxury fashion trends** and turning everyday packaging into the hero. It's a perfect example of how brands can transform functional assets into a strong visual hook. Sometimes the packaging steals the show.

Denny's

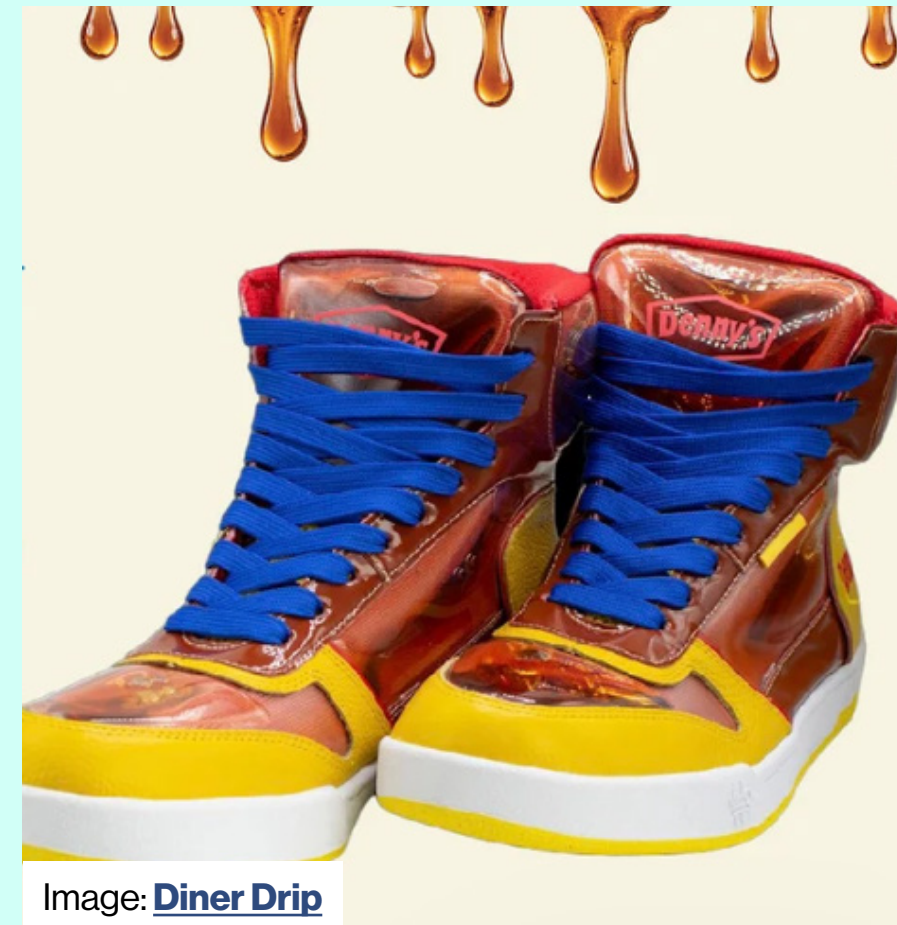


Image: [Diner Drip](#)

Denny's has **brought back** its weird and wonderful syrup-filled **Sticky Kicks 2.0 sneakers** with custom footwear designer Dan “Mache” Gamache. Complete with real maple syrup chambers, syrup-scented packaging and pancake rewards, the launch (now **completely sold out!**) blurs the lines between product, experience and meme-worthy content that completely embraces the fandom. 10/10. Denny's understood the assignment.

Kraft



Image: [@konnnectagency](#)

Kraft Natural Cheese has taken bag charms to new heights with the launch of its new flavours, transforming the iconic parmesan shaker into **Pocket Parm**. Part pantry staple, part fashion accessory. Even everyday grocery brands can earn **cultural relevance** by inserting themselves into existing consumer behaviours rather than creating entirely new ones. Kraft has clipped the vibe perfectly.

REVOLVE



Image: [@revolve](#)

REVOLVE has turned magazine distribution into a **real-world treasure hunt**, placing **branded vending machines** across key cities and rewarding visitors with magazine issues, exclusive merch and the chance to uncover a “**Golden Ticket**” gift card worth up to \$500. The activation taps into the growing appetite for gamified experiences. It's true. Golden Ticket energy never goes out of style.

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: Unsplash

