



KI

TRENDS



January 2025

01

## 2025 welcomes generation Beta

Babies born from 1 January 2025 will be the first of **Generation Beta**, spanning those born until 2039. They will be children of younger millennials or older Gen Zs, **making up 16% of the global population by 2035**. McCrindle Research notes this marks the first time in history that **seven generations will coexist**, with many Gen Betas likely to live into the 22nd century.

While Gen Alpha experienced the rise of smart technology and AI, **Gen Beta will grow up with AI and automation fully integrated into everyday life. They will be the first to see widespread autonomous transport, wearable health technology, and immersive virtual environments as the norm. Their lives will centre on unprecedented personalisation**, with AI tailoring education, shopping, and social interactions beyond what we can currently imagine.



02

## Grammy-Nominated Maddison Beer teams up with LEGO

Lego has unveiled a new campaign for its Fortnite series, featuring **Grammy-nominated former influencer Madison Beer**. The campaign promotes the brand's Fortnite Odyssey game update and the **launch of its social roleplay game, Fortnite Brick Life**. In one ad, Beer rallies fellow gamers to take on the villainous Storm King, while in another, she appears as a real estate mogul navigating the world of Fortnite Brick Life.

The advertisements will be showcased **across social media and online streaming platforms**. Beer also hosted a **live-streamed event on Twitch** to mark the campaign's launch.

03

## Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl

*Wallace and Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl* has broken viewership records as the first Aardman feature in over a decade since 2008's *A Matter of Loaf and Death*.

The film follows Wallace (Ben Whitehead) and his "smart gnome" Norbot (Reece Shearsmith), whose programming is hijacked by their old foe, Feathers McGraw. **Premiering on Netflix in the US and BBC One in the UK, it drew 9.3 million viewers on Christmas Day, making it the second most-watched programme of the festive season and the second-highest UK broadcast since 2022.** Viewership has since climbed to **16 million**.



04

## Squid Team Trendjacks

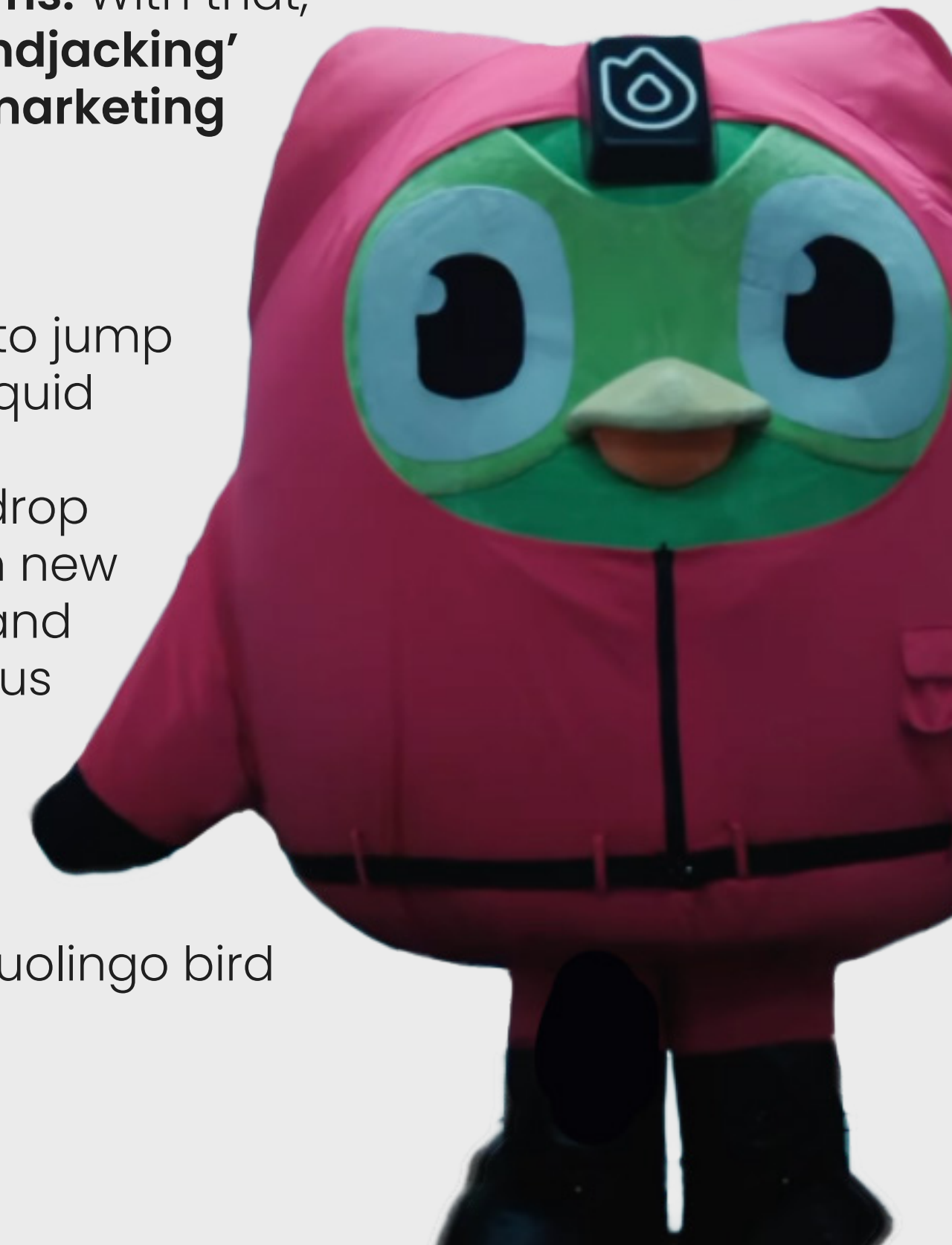
The **highly anticipated second season of Squid Game** has not only solidified a cultural sensation but also demonstrated the **immense global appeal of non-English language content on streaming platforms**. With that, brands wasted no time in **'trendjacking' the series' hype in their own marketing strategies**.

**To name a few:**

**Crocs Malaysia:** Crocs raced to jump on the trend with their latest Squid Game-inspired shoes.

**CASEtiFY:** The latest CASEtiFY drop features tech accessories with new prints inspired by the season and fan-favourites from the previous release.

**Duolingo:** Duolingo urged users to catch-up on their Korean lessons with a humorous reel featuring the Duolingo bird dressed in guard costumes.



05

## Government urges YouTube to promote 'High-Quality' Kids' TV

The government have urged platforms like YouTube to feature 'high-quality' children's content more prominently on their websites. Lisa Nandy, Culture Secretary warned that young people are less likely to see programmes that are educational or better for their 'emotional and mental wellbeing' as they are increasingly looking to watch via online platforms rather than linear TV.

She argues that platforms are failing to promote the 'widest range' of material which is affecting young people and families around the country. The government is seeking a voluntary agreement with online platforms, Nandy said, but signalled the government would be willing to take further action if one can not be reached.



06

## The Multibank fights child hygiene poverty

Gordon Brown's charity, The Multibank, is ramping up efforts to fight child hygiene poverty in 2025, **partnering with sports clubs and the Hygiene Bank to collect hygiene products.** On Jan 6, Amazon pledged 250,000 items after a survey revealed teachers often fund student needs.

**Brown noted that donations have boosted children's confidence and engagement in school.** He praised Amazon's effort to expand partnerships with hygiene companies, stressing the need to support families and innovative charitable solutions for this urgent issue.



07

## Hasbro and the Sandals Foundation gift 16,000+ Toys

Hasbro and the *Sandals Foundation* distributed over 16,000 toys to Caribbean children during the holidays. Since 2011, they have partnered to bring joy through volunteers with toys, games, and events.

***“The holiday season is a time for giving, sharing, and inspiring hope. We’re grateful to partner with Hasbro to bring joy to children and show them they are cared for.”*** – Patrice Gilpin, Public Relations Manager at Sandals Foundation.

The annual *Holiday Toy Distribution*, a cherished tradition in several Caribbean countries, has now expanded to include St. Vincent and the Grenadines.



08

## Bluey joins Disney experiences

Disney Experiences announced that **Bluey will join Disneyland Resort, Walt Disney World Resort, and Disney Cruise Line in 2025.** Families can enjoy meet-and-greets with Bluey and Bingo, games, and dance parties – on Disney Cruise Line voyages from Australia and New Zealand..

The announcement **marks an expansion of Disney's global partnership** with BBC Studios, including the upcoming Bluey movie releasing in 2027, followed by streaming on Disney+ and broadcasts in Australia.

09

## Moonbug partners with Lingokids for Blippi games

**Moonbug Entertainment** partnered with *Lingokids* to create Blippi-themed games on the Lingokids app.

The partnership will cement Blippi as the first third party IP on the Lingokids app, used by more than 100 million families around the world.

**“The new content blends the company’s educational methods with Moonbug’s characters to enhance vocabulary, logic, creativity, and emotional intelligence for children ages 2–8.”**

– Moonbug and Lingokids



10

## YouTube looks to simplify shorts creation from longer clips

**YouTube** is testing a new feature that automatically clips engaging segments from longer videos into shorter *Shorts*.

This tool allows creators to easily create 16:9 Shorts based on the most engaging parts of their videos, boosting overall engagement.

**Shorts are YouTube’s fastest-growing content type, now driving over 70 billion views daily.** While creators may need to edit, this feature simplifies creating Shorts with less effort. The option is currently being tested with a small group of creators using English videos only.

11

## Hasbro launches Play-Doh professors

Hasbro has recently launched *Play-Doh Professors*, **a social media content series demonstrating the importance of imagination for everyone**, regardless of age.

The series features three young Play-Doh Professors, aged 6–8, teaching adults to rediscover creativity through imagination and play. Released 7th–10th January, it includes four films showing adults breaking free from structured thinking.

**This campaign builds on Play-Doh Kids Can, empowering children to view imagination as their superpower, with Play-Doh Professors proudly showcasing creativity.**



12

## Mattel to release Barbie and Hot Wheels manga

Mattel has teamed up with TOKYOPOP to create original Hot Wheels and Barbie manga for readers aged 8–12, featuring authentic Japanese formatting. Penguin House will distribute the series globally, starting in 2026.

**“This partnership builds upon Mattel’s ongoing efforts to further engage fans through storytelling,”** according to Mattel.



13

## Netflix Brazil and Heineken create 'streaming bar'

Heineken has launched a *streaming bar* on Netflix, enabling viewers of the Brazilian miniseries *Senna* to order beers during ad breaks. **By scanning a QR code, viewers interact with a virtual bartender**, select a Heineken beer, and complete the purchase via iFood.

This interactive feature is available to Netflix Standard plan users with ads.



14

## Ed Sheeran launches music education foundation

Ed Sheeran has launched the *Ed Sheeran Foundation* to **support music education in disadvantaged UK areas**, addressing inequality highlighted by a 2019 survey showing one in four deprived schools lack music lessons. Partnering with groups like Sound Progression and Coventry Alternative Provision Academy, **the foundation promotes inclusive opportunities for children to explore music.**

Ed Sheeran highlighted how music education shaped his career and criticized government cuts to arts funding. Alongside advocating for music teachers in schools, **the foundation will provide vital resources to ensure young talent is nurtured and community spaces for creativity are preserved.**





15

## TikTok stops working as US ban comes into force

TikTok, which went dark in the U.S. for over 12 hours due to a looming ban, has begun restoring services.

The company stated: **“We thank President Trump for providing the necessary clarity and assurance to our service providers that they will face no penalties providing TikTok to over 170 million Americans and allowing over 7 million small businesses to thrive.”**

An executive order from Trump delayed the ban, reassuring providers they wouldn't face liability. However, debate continues, with Senator Tom Cotton warning of liability for companies facilitating TikTok and Trump hinting at a joint venture with potential U.S. ownership.



16

## Brands should utilise superfans

**Superfans of icons like Taylor Swift, BTS, or brands like Apple and Pip & Nut are invaluable.** They spend more, amplify messaging through posts and interactions, and their emotional connection often outweighs price, **driving awareness and influence both online and offline.**

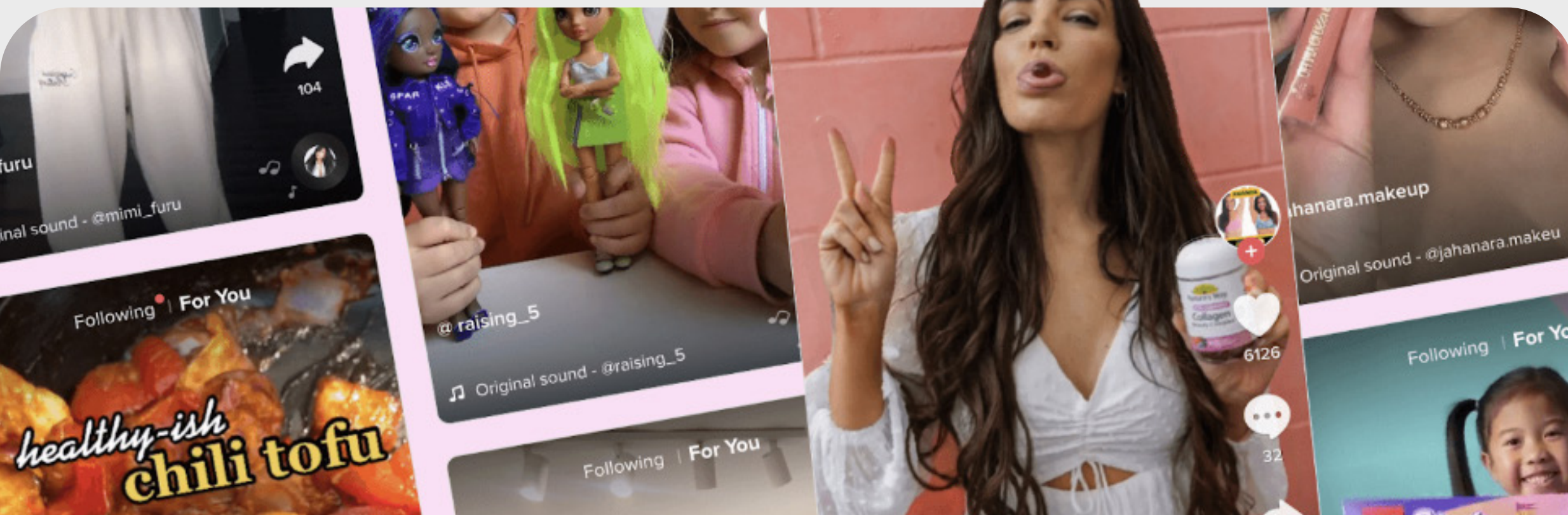
*Marketing Beat* suggests brands cultivate superfans through authentic engagement, exclusive opportunities, and incorporating feedback. Pip & Nut's *Secret Squirrels* community, for example, **lets superfans influence product innovation**, fostering loyalty. This approach builds lasting connections and **turns casual users into brand ambassadors.**

# 17

## What does it mean now that TikTok is back in the US?

TikTok avoided a US ban after Trump's executive order, but a 12-hour shutdown left users and creators scrambling as ByteDance explored alternative ownership solutions. Platforms like **Zigazoo Kids benefited from the disruption, briefly reaching number one in the Apple App Store for children**, while ByteDance's other product, *Marvel Snap*, remains offline.

The incident **highlights the risks of over-reliance on a single platform for marketing and engagement**. Experts urge brands to diversify by using platforms like YouTube Shorts to repurpose content and add shopping features. **Diversification ensures resilience in a volatile digital landscape**, providing both engagement and revenue opportunities across multiple platforms.



# 18

## Netflix to create My Melody & Kuromi sto-motion series

In 2025, Netflix will release a **stop-motion animation series based on the iconic Sanrio characters, entitled *My Melody & Kuromi***.

The series will follow the adventures of the Sanrio characters in their homeland of *Mariland*.

The series will mark the 50 year anniversary of *My Melody* and 20 year anniversary of *Kuromi*, launching in July 2025.



19

## Dreams Resorts & Spas X Masterchef Junior

*Dreams Resorts & Spas* (part of Hyatt's Inclusive Collection) is partnering with **MasterChef Junior** to launch kid focused culinary programmes at its properties across Latin America and the Caribbean this year. The initiative for kids 6-12 features MasterChef Junior activities like *Mystery Box Challenges*, pop-up events, and a *For Kids by Kids* menu, **inspiring culinary creativity and lasting family memories.**

This collaboration highlights Hyatt's commitment to **delivering meaningful, experiential travel with a focus on food and beverage.** By bringing MasterChef Junior's spirit of discovery to its resorts, Dreams Resorts & Spas is able to offer families a **unique blend of relaxation, adventure, and hands-on culinary empowerment,** encouraging the next generation of food enthusiasts.



20

## Gabby's Dollhouse creates travelling museum experience

DreamWorks Animation has partnered with the Association of Children's Museums to create a **Gabby's Dollhouse museum experience, which will make 25 stops in the US in 2025.**

*Gabby's Dollhouse MEOWseum Discovery Days* will offer an exciting lineup of activities designed for young visitors, including hands-on craft stations, scavenger hunts, and interactive storytime sessions.

Gabby will appear at the end of each day for meet-and-greets and photos with children and families. The tour begins on 25 January at the *Brooklyn Children's Museum*.

DREAMWORKS  
**GABBY'S  
DOLLHOUSE**



# Our Spotlight:

## Fan-Focused Events & Milestones

Brands like Zog, My Melody & Kuromi, and Gabby's Dollhouse expand fan engagement with immersive events and experiential celebrations, driving excitement for new content and merchandise.



### Insight:

Real-world experiences enhance brand connection and anticipation.

## Emotionally-Driven Campaigns

Purpose-led campaigns like CALM's "Missed Birthdays" and Cadbury's 'Made to Share' use emotional storytelling to raise awareness for social causes and promote positive change.



### Insight:

Brands embrace heartfelt narratives to inspire action.

## Platform-Specific Content & Collaboration

Nickelodeon's YouTube series and TikTok's shifting landscape push brands to tailor content for specific platforms while diversifying across digital channels. Simultaneously, nostalgic collaborations like Mattel & Ferrari deepen consumer engagement.



### Insight:

Strategic content and cross-platform engagement drive growth and loyalty.

# Ki TRENDS

January 2024