

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In JWT's fourth annual trends forecast, the economy, technology and the environment are recurring themes.

10 Trends for 2009 at a Glance

RECESSIONARY LIVING

The threat of a global recession has spurred people to make adjustments in their standard of living, whether it be cutting back on spending, trading down, choosing quality over quantity or becoming adept at relying on their own resources. (Example: the uptick in DIY activity.)

SIMPLE PLEASURES

The reality or the risk of money running short is a major incentive for consumers to find new ways of enjoying what they have and what they can truly afford. Rather than splurging on extravagant treats and "retail therapy," consumers will look to simple pleasures as a more suitable and satisfying way to feel good. (Example: finding pleasure in simple things like a nice cup of coffee.)

THE ENERGY RACE

Global capitalism's next entrepreneurial Holy Grail is shaping up to be energy-efficient technologies. While the drop in oil prices and immediate economic concerns have taken some of the spotlight away from the energy challenge, significant funds have already been earmarked for alternative-energy exploration. (Example: Suzlon Energy Ltd., India's biggest maker of wind-turbine generators currently has orders valued at 150 billion rupees (\$3.1 billion).)

THE SMALL MOVEMENT

Everything is getting smaller, from stores to cars to mobile technology to packaged goods. (Example: big-box stores scaling down and opening smaller formats.)

THE MOBILE DEVICE AS THE EVERYTHING HUB

As the availability of wireless broadband expands and the cost of advanced mobile phones drops, the mobile device will become the preferred hub for digital activity. (Example: mobile devices as the first PC for some youth, especially in developing markets like China.)

CAREER REINVENTION AND EXTENSION

More people will find themselves facing a career break (aka being laid off), and many will question whether they want to return to the same line of work—either because it wasn't fulfilling in the first place or because more lucrative opportunities now lie elsewhere. Others will postpone retirement as they see their savings shrink and will formulate new ideas for late-stage careers. (Example: a former Wall Streeter transitioning into a non-profit career.)

DISTRACTION AS ENTERTAINMENT

Understanding that people do more than one thing at a time, content creators are turning what could be a negative (distraction) into a positive (an immersive experience). By layering a multitude of media into entertainment, they are creating content designed for simultaneous consumption and engagement. (Example: authors suggesting playlists to accompany their books.)