Families are becoming increasingly fragmented and diverse. Our rapidly evolving world is affecting our domestic lives and as a result there have been shifts in the family structure, how its members interact and how we think of family as a consumer segment.
While the traditional family unit of mum, dad and two kids isn’t extinct, more modern configurations have been rapidly taking form in the past decade. Cultural, social and economic shifts naturally have brought in new family segments – from cohabitation to non-marital childbearing. Being single is now a lifestyle choice. In the past, unmarried and single people were stigmatised as if there was something wrong with them, but being on our own is now more socially accepted and marriage is becoming less important. Working culture and the search for progression are forcing people to move to big urban areas to make a living, find secure jobs and ensure economic stability, and as a result consumers adopt friends and acquaintances as their new families.

Migration has generated a growing number of multicultural and multiracial families, giving birth to the new international family (global citizens). Reaction to the establishment has empowered minorities to pursue their own interests and live lives of their own choosing. For example, feminism and the gay rights movement have achieved recognition, with developed and occidental countries leading the way – the rise of gay marriages and gay couples able to adopt children mark turning points in the development of new family values.
Traditional family roles are also evolving – for example, more females are chasing career opportunities and becoming the family breadwinner, while men are feeling more comfortable with the idea of staying at home to look after the kids and do the household chores. The digital age and the role of new technologies are also key to the way we communicate (or not) with our loved ones and are influencing how we raise our children.

According to Mindreader, 86% of the global population often spend their spare time with their families and 45% would like to do so even more often. Today there is not just one definition of family, each example is unique and often goes beyond relatives to include the people with whom we share our lives and our deepest passions. These family segments have an impact on most product consumption and brands are becoming more mindful of the way they target families, embracing and celebrating these new arrangements.
Culture Vulture’s 21st Century Family explores current cultural and brand trends in the context of what the family means today. It understands how the definition has changed and is affecting the world we live in. This report features interesting case studies of brands reflecting these changes and implication ideas for brand communication and strategies.

**Explore**
current cultural and brand trends in the context of what families mean today.

**Understand**
how the definition of family has changed, hence affecting the world we live in.

**Share**
case studies of interesting brands and businesses reflecting these changes in family culture.
THE NEW FAMILY SEGMENTS EVOLVED FROM CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SHIFTS

- While the traditional family unit isn’t extinct, more modern configurations have rapidly been taking form in the past decade – from cohabitation to non-marital childbirth.
- Being single is now a lifestyle choice. In the past, unmarried and single people were stigmatised, but now being on your own is socially acceptable and marriage is becoming less important.
- Working culture and the search for progression are forcing people to move to big urban areas to find secure jobs and economic stability – as a result, they adopt friends and acquaintances as their new families.
- Migration has generated a growing number of multicultural and multiracial households, giving birth to the new international family.

HISTORICAL TURNING POINTS IN FAMILY VALUES

- Reaction to the establishment has empowered minorities to pursue their own interests and live lives of their own choosing.
- Feminist and LGBT social movements have achieved recognition of minority rights, with developed and occidental countries leading the way. The rise of same-sex marriages and same-sex couples able to adopt children mark some of the turning points in the new family values.
- Brand campaigns are becoming more inclusive of LGBT segments, representing in a positive and supportive way the diversity of family structures.
- Promoting these new family values is not just raising awareness, but is also portraying brands and advocates as active supporters of a more progressive society.

GENDER ROLES ARE EVOLVING

- Traditional family roles are changing – more females are chasing career opportunities and becoming the main domestic breadwinner.
- Men are feeling more comfortable with staying at home to look after the kids and do the household chores.
- Stereotypes are no longer the rule and most females do not feel represented in brand campaigns – there is a big shift underway to represent women as their real selves, not as the ‘ideal woman’ in the collective mindset.
- There are still cultural differences across the world in the way ‘masculinity’ and ‘femininity’ are portrayed in the media, but we are seeing many brands taking a progressive stance on gender equality, empowering women as well as encouraging men to express their sensitive side.

THE DIGITAL AGE HAS REDEFINED FAMILY INTERACTIONS

- The digital age and the role of new technologies are key to the way people interact and communicate with their loved ones – there is a plethora of ways in which families can keep in touch at all times.
- New technologies have become important tools, influencing how parents raise their children and how they organise their domestic lives.
- At the same time, rising concerns about technology’s negative effects on family life are challenging brands and media to encourage domestic interaction without the use of technology, or using it in a non-invasive way.
- The duality of technology presents brands and consumers alike with opportunities and challenges to improve family life.
Me, Myself and I

New consumers are choosing to be on their own and are comfortable with it. There is a growing awareness of the benefits of solo living, such as independence and career prioritisation.
From a working culture forcing people to move to big urban areas for career progression, to seeking solitude to escape from the crowds and social fatigue, the number of individuals living on their own and looking for their own spaces for daily activities is increasing. Consumers’ everyday needs have to be customised for their lifestyles – from entertainment to travel and from furniture to packaged foods.
These consumers’ engagements are more likely to involve a small circle of friends or like-minded individuals, and social media is one of the key environments in which they socialise and where their need for communication is satisfied. In a virtual world, they have more control of their lives and there is an inclination to fabricate their persona through anonymity. However, at the same time, the spontaneity of their daily interactions is being suppressed.

Brands are realising that the solo consumer is a growing trend and they are targeting such individuals with products specifically fitting their needs. Activities once commonly shared by more than one person can now be done alone. Feelings of social pressure to be in the company of others are disappearing. Instead, people are taking pride and enjoyment in spending quality time by themselves.
### Table for One
With more people living in homes better suited to one person than several, furniture brands are creating more products for tight spaces. For example, Ikea has expanded its range of ‘Small Spaces’ products. Its collection targets twentysomethings ‘on the move’ in cramped urban apartments. TRNK’s furniture and design inspiration fill the gap for masculine domesticity. The brand’s website combines design and storytelling with commerce to help design-centric men fulfil their aspirations of living in a beautiful home.

### Individual Media
The arrival of entertainment devices such as Oculus Rift and PlayStation VR puts the individual at the centre. Even though they don’t have to be played solo, they are still very self-focused: such technology offers immersive experiences engineered for one that make you feel like the centre of the world. New ways of consuming media, such as streaming from mobile devices, are very much solo-behaviour experiences – individual consumers can stream as much content as they want, whenever they want via streaming platforms such as HBO Go or Netflix.

### Alone in Public
Dutch restaurant Eenmaal has opened a pop-up in Amsterdam catering purely to solo diners, offering such customers a relaxing eating experience. With no families or couples allowed, this is further evidence that spending time alone is not only normal, but also desirable. Consumers are also seeking solo spaces in the wider leisure world. Avoid Humans, a search app for solo experiences, uses location-tracking technology to find bars and restaurants that are empty or less crowded for consumers who want to be alone.

### Solo Travelling
Tour agencies are offering packages that accommodate solo travellers (such as G Adventures, whose slogan is “Travel solo – but never alone”), or are targeting growing niche interests such as cultural tours for young single professionals (for example, Virgin Holidays’ Human Nature Collection, which caters for cultural experiences aimed at individuals). Similarly, some destinations are marketed as solo stops. New Zealand, for example, is promoted abroad as a safe, clean and green adventure playground – ideal for travelling alone. Tourism New Zealand’s main marketing slogan, “100% Pure New Zealand”, reflects this (women travelling alone account for the largest percentage of adventurers). Henn-na Hotel in Japan is a start-to-finish experience where guests can eschew human contact. At reception, there is a humanoid check-in desk robot; a robot porter takes visitors’ bags to their rooms; and a lamp-sized robot in the shape of a tulip blinks on the bedside table and acts as concierge for room service.
Some 46% of people are carrying out social activities alone. Eating an evening meal is most commonly a solo pursuit in Sweden (30%). More than half of Americans exercise alone; over one-third of Chinese consumers play games alone; and 28% of Japanese people most often drink alcohol by themselves.

nVision Research – ‘Scrolling Alone: Engaging the Solo Self’ (2016)

“Solitary dining can actually be an inspiring experience, because you get a chance to disconnect for a while in our hyper-connected world”

Marina Van Goor, Eenmaal Founder

Emerging markets will experience growth in single-person households at triple the rate of developed economies between 2016 and 2030 (around 44% compared with 14%). However, single-person homes as a proportion of total households will be much greater in advanced economies by 2030 (33.6% versus 15.8%)

Euromonitor – ‘Emerging Market Households’ (2016)

Since 2010, single-person households have grown faster than any other domestic demographic globally, as people focus more on their careers and leisure time than on starting a family or living with a partner. Singletons often search for affordable goods, especially when it comes to food and accommodation. They are more likely to purchase fast food and use websites such as Airbnb to book a holiday home, but they do spoil themselves, especially in terms of gadgets, trips and clothes.

Euromonitor – ‘Household Trends: A World of Singleton Consumption’ (2016)

“For young professionals, living alone is a sign of success and a mark of distinction, a way to gain freedom and experience the anonymity that can make city life so exhilarating”

Eric Klinenberg, author of ‘Going Solo: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone’
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

AVOID STEREOTYPING

The growing importance of the solo consumer in today’s marketplace suggests that brands need to adapt instead of stereotyping these people. Perceiving them as ‘lonely’ or ‘singleton’ in a negative manner will drive away business.

FROM BUDGET TO LUXURY

Solo consumers have more choices and time to explore brands and products. They are more likely to be informed about trends and keep up to date between budget and luxury consumption. Being on their own means they can treat themselves whenever they want to.

PERSONALISATION OPPORTUNITIES

Brands would benefit by offering personalised products and services ‘just for one’ to improve customer satisfaction, allowing the solo consumer to feel more independent and individual.
Families are becoming increasingly anxious about not spending enough time with their loved ones. There is a sense of urgency in trying to arrange ways of spending more time together and make every family moment more memorable.
Families are spending less time together during the week because of the demands of modern life. When they do get together, most of the time is spent in silence in front of the TV, smartphones and tablets, and even grandparents miss out on time with their children and grandchildren.
In a world of amplified experiences, there is a need to share new sensations with the family. Although the majority of parents believe that staying close is important, many families are separated by distances too vast to make day-to-day parenting possible. Parents are suffering a huge amount of guilt when it comes to their kids and regret the lack of quality time spent with them – a guilt especially prevalent for those who travel for work.

Brands and retailers are trying to seduce and entice consumers to participate in fun family moments and generate interaction, as well as enjoy a more stimulating and entertaining lifestyle by creating multiple experiences that enable families to maximise their few moments of escape from frenetic modern life.
**BRAND EXAMPLES**

**ONE MORE DAY**
MasterCard’s #OneMoreDay campaign started a movement based on the idea that one more day of vacation with one’s family is far more valuable than an extra one spent at the office. TV and video were used to support this movement by appealing to common sense: work is important, but spending time with your family is vital too and needs to be a priority.

**EMOTIONAL EXPERIENCE**
Lufthansa is helping anxious parents relieve their guilt by introducing Bedtime Stories – mobile recording studios at airport departure gates where passengers can record their favorite bedtime story as an audio book in their own voice, and then send it to their children at home via email or text. The airline is placing itself within a positive emotional framework for business travellers by facilitating happy connections with their kids.

**MOMENTS OF JOY**
Ikea’s 90-second spot Wonderful Everyday takes us on a journey through a couple’s life together, highlighting how events that might seem ordinary – for example, painting your first home, or playing tennis in the back garden – can become epic when life is good.

**FAMILY ACTIVITIES**
Virgin Experience Days offer a range of activities for the family, allowing parents and children to connect with each other and their surroundings, and offering the possibility of experiencing memorable moments by enjoying, sharing and learning – from visits to a safari park to attending sports events.
Briton’s favourite activities to share with the family: celebrating special events (67%), sharing meals (65%), going on holiday (43%), watching TV (40%), indoor activity (30%), outdoor activity (24%), cooking and baking (21%).

You Gov National Poll Stats, 2015

Among US working parents with children under 18, more than half (56%) say it is difficult for them to balance their work and family responsibilities.

MAGIC MOMENTS

IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

FAMILY MOMENTS VS BOREDOM

Being with the family doesn’t need to be boring. Brands can cherish family time and emphasise that moments of fun are more enjoyable if shared with the people you love.

OUT OF THE EXTRAORDINARY

Memorable family moments and celebrations provide an opportunity for brands to increase their presence within this space by helping find time for such experiences and provide advice and inspiration on an emotional level.

LACK OF TIME AND GUILT

Moments that families spend together are precious. Technology can offer a shared experience to create meaningful family moments (as well as being of great value to brands).
Family Playground

Parents are turning to gamification and technology to share playful moments with the family. Household activities are becoming more engaging and entertaining for every member of the group.
Over the past few years, play has been transformed into mainstream behaviour, with games appealing to the broader population rather than a niche subset of consumers. At the same time, gamification has become a standout way to encourage, motivate and promote success among consumers, bringing fun and excitement into everyday life. It is also notable that gaming is moving away from being a solitary pursuit to become increasingly integrated into shared leisure activities.
In the family setting, gamification can be used to improve the running and wellbeing of the home, as well as providing good old-fashioned fun. It can also help parents to make banal activities enjoyable for children. The fun factor is key – routine and dull tasks can be transformed into opportunities for triumph, with family members competing against each other for further motivation.

As mobile devices become increasingly sophisticated, on-the-go gaming is evolving into a popular leisure activity, enabling families to fill moments of otherwise unproductive downtime with digital fun. Playful game-like mechanisms are being embedded into both commercial offers and marketing targeting the family, stimulating parents and children to buy, use and play.
BRAND EXAMPLES

Healthy Competition

Insurance company Aviva challenged the Jolliffe-Austin family to have their driving monitored through its Aviva Drive app, competing against each other to win the title of safest driver. The app measures driving for 200 miles and then gives a score based on cornering, braking and acceleration. Aviva released a series of videos, each following a different household member. At the end of the competition, James Austin was ranked last and had to wash the car of the first-place driver, his father-in-law, Malki Jolliffe.

Habit Building

Beam, the dental insurance company, launched a smart toothbrush along with a mobile mini-game, 'Boulders and Bandages', to gamify children’s teeth-brushing experience. Progress in the game is based on activity, with five lives being earned for every half-minute of brushing, encouraging more diligent and thorough dental hygiene (and letting parents keep track of their children’s brushing habits).

House Chore Game

HighScore House offers a website and an iPad app where children can track and earn points for doing their chores, redeemable for ice creams or other rewards. Even though users set up the chores and rewards, the site makes suggestions too. ChoreWars is another online game, loosely based on ‘Dungeons and Dragons’, that can be played with other people in the household. Tasks can be assigned to each other, with added excitement in the form of encountering random monsters.

Empowering Parents

Apple’s Parenthood app helps people to be better mums and dads. It depicts a full day of typical family activities assisted by the iPhone. The advert starts with a mother lying in bed who is woken up by the baby monitoring app Withings. The Family Matters app is designed to help parents to engage with the family members of any age. Some of the questions and activities are simple, while others are deeper and probing.
55% of parents use game apps at least once a month via smartphone and tablet.

nVision – Future Foresight online research (2015)

42% of the global population like to make a game of household chores.

Mindreader - Wave 7

56% are constantly trying to surpass themselves by taking new challenges.

Mindreader - Wave 7
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

SELF-IMPROVEMENT
Brands can capitalise on the competitive nature of consumers to help them improve various aspects of family life, such as schedule management and forming healthy habits.

GAMIFIED LEARNING
Gamification can make learning fun for the whole family – playful products that simplify teaching and learning will be welcomed by parents and children alike.

PLAYFUL DISTRACTION
Families are invited to transform even the most mundane moments of the day (for example, taking the bus) into an opportunity for playful distraction. On-the-go gaming offers an opportunity to reduce out-of-home dead time and boredom.
Instants of Joy

Instant family frames and videos have become not only an everyday part of family life, but also a generator of household experiences that evoke pleasure, joy and fun.
These modern times are seeing the rise of video and photography on a whole new level. People use it to capture feelings, events and personal experiences, and to communicate with others. The latest innovations not only support people’s interactions with technology, but also facilitate new forms of interplay with others.
Mobile phones (and camera phones in particular) are examples of such technology. In recent years, their primary function has changed from being a medium of verbal or text communication to one that uses pictures to facilitate people’s social life. In the past, photo albums where documenting moments that were moving in time, but it now seems that phones allow people to enjoy themselves in a new way by capturing every moment of their family lives.

In this context, it seems that family frames are taking on a new dimension in family life. Mobile phones with integrated camera and video features have changed the dynamic in which families communicate and shape their activities.
**BRAND EXAMPLES**

**REVISITING MEMORIES**
In 2016, Cadbury’s Dairy Milk Buttons launched an online tool called Memory Lane. It allows users to create a 360-degree VR video set in a quintessentially British street in Colchester, Essex, where they can embed pictures of their family memories in virtual shop windows, signs and street furniture. The end product can then be emailed to its creator.

**PARENTING MOMENTS**
Dove’s Real Dad Moments campaign recognises the true role fathers play in their children’s lives. The campaign portrays numerous occasions where fathers contribute, from their kids’ first years through to adulthood. Using the #RealDadMoments hashtag, social media users were invited to share their own images and ideas of what fatherhood really is.

**THE PERFECT SHOT**
Pinpic is a Canadian app that allows its users to book photographers for their holidays, based on their location. It aims to provide everybody with the best photographic memories at affordable prices. Users are able to browse and find photographers, choosing them based on their personal profile and specialities.

**PARENTAL SHARING**
Notabli is a social network where parents can privately share photos, videos, quotes and audio clips of their children’s lives with only those whom they wish to see the content. Posts can be organised by child, date or location.
36% of UK parents have live streamed or are interested in live streaming a video on a social network.

40% of the global population upload photos to photo-sharing sites/social networks.

Mindreader - Wave 7

nVision – Future Foresight online research (2015)
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

PERFORMATIVE LEISURE
Looking good on camera can influence consumption choices. Opportunities arise for brands to help parents appear well-rounded, fun, interesting and in control – especially among new parents, the imagery they share will reflect and document their nascent role as parents.

CAPTURE EVERY MOMENT
Photos and videos are ideal formats for tracking children as they grow up and develop. Brands can support consumers on this with tools that allow them to capture, store and share precious moments easily with a select audience.

MAGIC NOSTALGIC
Family frames and videos can help evoke memories, cementing household bonds and inducing nostalgia among family members as they relive special times. Services such as Facebook’s On This Day can prompt families to remember the good times they have shared.
Family First

Family dynamics have changed and so have family values. In this fast-paced world, spending quality time with relatives has become harder and digital technology is one of the reasons why.
In this context, there is a need to spend quality time with the family and promote healthy and meaningful connections and lifestyles. Turning off technology to elevate family values with more authentic experiences is becoming more desirable, as opposed to increasingly virtual communications or even being mentally absent when sitting with loved ones.
We see families sharing a common space, but experiencing entirely separate lives through technology – an increasingly familiar evening ritual. In many cases, more technology has been used to counteract this growing distance, not actual face-to-face communication (for example, parents ‘friending’ their children on Facebook or other social media as a way to feel closer to them, not just to keep track of their activities).

Social, cultural, economic and technological changes have fragmented traditional family structures and reshaped them in multiple forms. Families aren’t able to build relationships as strong as they would like: as a result, we are seeing more and more conscientious and grassroots movements promoting the idea of returning to traditional family values. Brands are conscious of the importance of quality time spent with loved ones and are associating their products with genuine family values.
**FULFILLING BREAKFASTS**

Cereal brand Cheerios wants to make breakfast the most important meal of the day and a more fulfilling family experience. The Cheerios Family Breakfast Project encourages households to find seven minutes each morning to eat breakfast together. The microsite provides seven themes for seven days of the week, including ‘Laugh’, ‘Connect’ and ‘Love’.

**TECH VERSUS SAFETY**

Child Safety Week, an annual campaign run by the Child Accident Prevention Trust, encourages families to turn off technology for safety reasons. Accidents often happen when we’re distracted. By turning off technology at crucial times in the day, parents can give their children focus and keep them safer when pressures mount. This also sets an example to children and young people that it is good to turn off tech when crossing the road or when you need to concentrate to stay safe.

**NON-TECH DINNER TIME**

Moment Family app aims to bring back the traditional family dinner by sounding alerts if anyone picks up their phone at the table. Family members can track each other’s daily phone use from their device and start timed ‘screen-free’ sessions.

**GADGET FREE**

The #GoGadgetFree campaign asked UK parents to spend a day without technology. With traditional family values under pressure from modern living and a variety of mental, physical and emotional issues stemming from technology overuse, people of all ages have never been more desperate to find ways to disconnect from technology and reconnect with themselves and those they love.
72% of the global population are seeking authenticity and 86% are striving for a genuine lifestyle.

Mindreader – Wave 7

59%
agree that social networking is diluting the quality of human interaction.

Mindreader - Wave 7

53%
don’t always want people to be able to contact them.

Mindreader - Wave 7
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

TRADITIONAL VALUES
Embrace the idea of family as the pillar of our society. Maximise the impact of your message and highlight the core company values associated with the importance of tradition without sounding antiquated.

TECH AND TOGETHERNESS
Technology can be used as an inspiration, not a discouragement. Brands can share real stories where technology helps families connect, especially those separated by distance.

QUALITY TIME
The meaning of ‘quality family time’ is shifting. In a fast-paced world rich with choices, brands have the opportunity to offer authentic, genuine physical experiences that families can share together, such as volunteering for a good cause.
Simply Be Together

Information overload from the internet and social media is distracting and making it harder to communicate with our loved ones. Families are counteracting this phenomenon by using technology to simplify their communication and lose the clutter.
Time to share with the family is becoming less available and thus more precious. The use of smart home and mobile technology is empowering parents and allowing families to organise their time and simplify their communications and activities – for example, family digital clouds, shared apps to track the location of members, etc. Within this context, households are leading a more minimal existence with less clutter and fewer objects.
Another way of simplifying family life is by switching off technology. Many families are leaving big, busy, urban environments behind in search of a better quality of life and are opting for a decluttered existence – physical and virtual. The digital revolution and technological innovation have created devices and products for multiple functions.

In a world oversaturated with objects and marked by an increasing lack of urban space, families are moving towards a more simplified life embracing zero waste, sharing and circular economic practices. We see that families’ habits are changing – from organic to recycled and non-packaged products – as a reflection of becoming more aware of the impact of their decisions.
BRAND EXAMPLES

FAMILY CIRCLE
The Life360 app keeps families and close friends connected in a simplified way. Users can instantly see everyone in their private circle on the map. It has flexible and customised settings, such as alerts when circle members come and go from certain spots. Members can also message the whole group at once or one to one.

EASY RIDERS
Uber’s Family Profile has added the Trip Tracker feature, which allows family members and friends to track each other’s trips and pay rides for their trusted group. Those in charge of the group receive details about the trips being taken; whenever someone takes a ride under the Family Profile, they can also receive instant notifications and watch the trip in progress on the map.

IT’S A PLAN!
Mobile app Winnie can make parents’ lives a little easier by offering information about nearby kid-friendly places, as well as detailing what sort of family facilities a location may have—such as stroller access, quiet nursing areas, changing tables, etc. The idea is to make going out with the little ones less stressful, allowing parents to focus on the moments spent together.

BACK TO BASICS
Families are increasingly opting for a minimal existence. There is a proliferation of content on minimalism, decluttering, less consumerism and how families can live a simple and more meaningful life. The Minimalist Mom, The Minimalists, Slow Your Home and Becoming Minimalist are some examples of blogs in which people share their experiences and how they are benefiting from them.
87% of the global population are in favour of living a smarter life.

Mindreader – Wave 7

71% agree that mobile technology makes their life simpler.

Mindreader – Wave 7

69% are more inclined to live a minimal life.

Mindreader - Wave 7

53% have an increasing desire to slow down their life.

Mindreader - Wave 7
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

TECH ALLIES
Provide simple ways for families to connect and engage with your brand, such as apps and geo-location technologies that can simplify and add value to their family time.

MEANINGFUL MINIMALISM
Functional and quality objects, breathing spaces and intelligent design are essential for an uncluttered family life. Brands have endless opportunities to provide not only minimal products, but also decluttered retail experiences (physical and virtual).

SWITCH OFF THE NOISE
Stand out as a brand by turning down the volume and appealing to families with calm and quieter brand experiences that disconnect them from the stress and anxieties of their daily lives.
SNACKING

Pick and Mix

Busy schedules and on-the-go lifestyles are encouraging families to commit for shorter periods of time when it comes to consumption. Temporary ownership and content ‘snacking’ satisfy the need for instant gratification and non-commitment.
The sharing economy and subscription models offer serious benefits to families. First, the opportunity to ‘try before you buy’ allows consumers to test out a product or service before committing, either via renting or sampling a broader range of subscription options, such as membership boxes. Second, the potential to save money and space is key – renting a power tool or car is cheaper than buying one outright, and allows for a less cluttered home environment.
Adaptable family schedules increase the need for snackable media and entertainment. With children demanding attention at a moment’s notice, live media requires time-shifted alternatives – the affection for on-demand content among families is in part driven by the emerging ability to create enjoyable on-the-go media moments throughout the day.

Overall, whether in media or in ownership, the snacking model offers speedier access and satisfaction, important for both demanding children and time-pressed parents.
BRAND EXAMPLES

MEDIAL SNACK FOR KIDS
YouTube has introduced its own YouTube Kids channel, which delivers child-appropriate content. The platform has a simplified, easy-to-navigate design enabling easy browsing for young children. It includes simplified searches, bright colours and bold icons. The content is organised in four categories: shows, music, learning and exploration.

QUICK BEDTIME STORIES
Netflix launched five-minute videos of DreamWorks’ popular ‘Dinotrux’ series to help parents get their children to bed. The platform set out to assist with the bedtime ritual by helping parents strike a compromise with their kids, allowing them to watch some TV before going to sleep without staying up too late.

PART-TIME PARENTING
IKEA’s Every Other Week campaign documents the story of a divorced couple who share custody of their son. In the advert, we see that the child’s room has been duplicated in both homes, helping him to adjust to the atypical set-up.

NO COMMITMENTS
Pearachute is a subscription model start-up that gives 0- to 5-year-olds access to activities and classes tailored to their age and offers them the opportunity to get together with other children locally. Children can switch between classes if they want, thus minimising the risk of their parents signing up to lengthy contracts for an activity that is not a perfect fit.
44% of parents have already or would be interested in borrowing a household item via a peer-to-peer lending service.

nVision – Future Foresight online research (2015)
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

ACCESS OVER OWNERSHIP

Many child-specific products (for example, prams, cots, etc.) are only required for relatively short periods of time. The rise of the rental economy will appeal to parents looking to save space and money, and provide more flexible consumption choices.

IN THE MOMENT

Varying schedules and needs make short bursts of media content especially appealing and important for families. Brands should aim to provide easy access and stretchable content to satisfy every age group via an appropriate format and timescale.

FLEXIBLE FAMILIES

The growth of new family structures is driving the need for temporary ownership and part-time products and services – for people with shared custody, for example, non-essential items such as cars and access to activity clubs may be required only on weekends.
Connected Together

People can come together in new ways thanks to modern technology and devices – from child-tracking gadgets that allow parents to check on their kids remotely, to dating apps and social media that are opening up a new world of opportunities to find love and meet people.
There has been a proliferation of a new type of social networking to maximise the potential of family communication and interaction that goes beyond sites such as Facebook. Platforms and apps have been developed to help families stay organised and accomplish different tasks as a group.
It has never been easier for families to stay connected when they are not together. Busy parents find it difficult to take care of their children, but new technology such as child-tracking devices allow them to check on their kids remotely.

There are apps that fit any domestic structure – traditional nuclear families, divorcees with joint custody, grown children taking care of their parents – as well as specialised apps for playdates, carpooling and chores. With increasing connectivity, it is easier to find friends and people to spend time with or share common interests and hobbies.
**BRAND EXAMPLES**

**FAMILY PURCHASE**
Google has launched Family Library, a sharing function that allows up to six people to share purchases made via the Google Play store (children need parental approval). The library includes a variety of apps, movies, TV shows, books and games.

**WEARABLE MONITORS**
The Sproutling Baby Monitor is poised to become the Fitbit for little ones. The anklet is enabled with sensors to monitor and track the baby’s health via smartphone, answering vital questions such as: Is she still asleep? Is she breathing? How long will she sleep? Is she hungry? This new monitor, coupled with data the company aggregates, could provide insights into all these questions and more.

**SHARING THE LOAD**
The Cozi Family Organiser keeps everyone’s activities and appointments in one place. It can create and share shopping lists or chores in real time, store recipes and quickly add their ingredients to your grocery list. The app can be accessed from any mobile device or computer.

**ALGORITHM-BASED LOVE**
Once you’ve filled out a profile, online dating sites will provide a list of matches – people they think you are compatible with. Sites such as Tinder, eHarmony and Match.com now boast a million matches a day. Some free dating sites are becoming the most popular way to look for love, with many becoming increasingly specialised (for example, based on age groups, religion, race, etc).

**CONNECTED TOGETHER**
44% of the global population use the internet once a day or more to communicate and socialise with others.

Mindreader – Wave 7

48% talk to family/friends about brands or products on a weekly basis.

Mindreader - Wave 7
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

CONNECTED EXPERIENCES
Brands can create extra value for consumers by integrating social media technology, not only in their brand interactions, but also through their family groups, sharing and connecting through such experiences.

HUMANISE TECHNOLOGY
Families will soon expect all kinds of services to incorporate their family information into products that respond to their moods, activities and location. Brands can create a purpose by using this data to respond and adjust immediately to networkers’ emotions and circumstances.

FACILITATE AND INTEGRATE
As privacy and anonymity become more manageable variables in social networks and online environments, the nature of what we capture and share will change. Create safe virtual environments where families can access your relevant content to drive traffic to your brand.
NATIONAL CELEBRATION

We Are One

Heritage and tradition are still strongly celebrated and passed down from generation to generation. However, globalisation has led more people to become more open to other cultures, to travel more and build their own families abroad, triggering an increase in multiracial and multicultural families.
Knowing our past and traditions helps to shape our present, and learning about our history is a major part of understanding our identity and who we are. Thanks to the internet, the challenging task of searching for ancestors has now become extremely easy. Only a few years ago, people had to look through huge numbers of records to trace their history and build a family tree. Today, our ancestors might be just a click away.
Some of the old ways of living are returning. With rising house prices, families around the world increasingly are living in multigenerational households – while the younger generations can save money and get help with childcare, their elders can benefit from sharing costs and domestic tasks.

We are seeing more and more multiracial families being celebrated by the media and society as a whole. Migration has prompted multicultural families, an international phenomenon creating global citizens, with multiracial identity generating a growing appreciation and empathy for cultural diversity.
**BRAND EXAMPLES**

▲ ROOTS DISCOVERY
AncestryDNA unlocks your family story with one simple test. Genetic information can reveal your ethnic mix and ancestors you never knew you had. It uncovers where your ancestors came from, helps you discover distant relatives and finds details of your family tree. TV programmes that trace ancestral history also remain very popular – for example, BBC1’s ‘Who Do You Think You Are?’ and PBS’ ‘Finding Your Roots’.

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◆ GLOCAL FAMILIES
Coca-Cola was finding it difficult to crack the Indian household, as it was associated with irregular eating out of the house. To increase regular consumption of Coke with meals at home, the company decided to champion the Indian family mealtime. By becoming an ally to Indian mums, Coca-Cola not only became the preferred drink of choice with food, but also created brand loyalists in the process.

▲ MULTIGENERATIONAL
Dolce & Gabbana focused its AW15 campaign on the intergenerational family and the role of motherhood. The images show the family laughing, with older women and younger generations participating in selfie photos, and wearing the jewel-encrusted headphones and clothing used on the runway. The campaign was accompanied by the hashtag #Dgfamily.

◆ INTERRACIAL LOVE
An Old Navy ad featuring a white male model and a black female model with a child provoked a backlash in the US, with some claiming the retail chain was pushing an anti-white agenda. However, such criticisms were quickly met by other consumers who posted that ‘love wins’ and published photos of their own interracial families, images that went viral.

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73% of the global population agree that keeping local traditions, heritage and culture alive is important for society.

Mindreader - Wave 7

54% tend to buy local products to support the community where they live.

Mindreader - Wave 7

35% of 18-34-year-old American men now live with their parents. For the first time in more than 130 years, they are slightly more likely to live in their parents’ home than they are to co-habit with a spouse or partner in their own household.

Pew Research Center (2016)

61% worry that the values and traditions they most appreciate about their country are being eroded by other cultural/global influences.

Mindreader - Wave 7

65% are looking for cultural experiences and influences that will broaden their horizons.

Mindreader - Wave 7
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

SENSE OF BELONGING
Focus on local cultural relevance embracing inclusion and diversity. Associate the brand with a particular time, place or mindset to reinforce the sense of belonging and identity.

GOOD OLD DAYS
Portray a consistent emotional appeal of nostalgia, positive memories of the past and images evoking cultural identity to engage and provide a sense of security and comfort.

LOCAL HEROES
Share experiences, build strong community ties and respond to unique local family needs and preferences. Brands have the opportunity to offer family experiences to restore cultural pride and support local values and history.
Modern Family

The family structure has evolved into many kinds – from same-sex parents to single mothers by choice. The definition of family is constantly changing and everyone can characterise it differently to encompass the relationships they share with the people in their life.
The traditional family has evolved to now include a range of structures and arrangements. Men are no longer the sole breadwinner (in many cases they are staying at home), while women’s economic power and independence are greater than ever before.
The percentage of married couples with children has declined globally; at the same time, the number of married couples without children has increased. Meanwhile, becoming a single parent by choice is increasingly convenient for those who don’t feel like settling in a relationship. In other cases, childless couples fulfil their desires for parenthood by focusing on their nieces and nephews.

Adopting friends as family is a reflection of people flying the nest and moving to big urban areas. Minorities are no longer stuck on the fringes of society: in developed countries, feminist and LGBT rights movements have achieved recognition (for example, same-sex couples becoming more widely accepted and able to bring up kids).
**BRAND EXAMPLES**

**FRAMILIES**
US telecom Sprint’s Framily Plan lets customers add up to 10 people – the bigger the number, the greater the saving. The TV spot explains that “friends are like family”. Another ad shows a man deciding who will be in his Framily Plan: he chooses his daughters, his partner and members of his fantasy football league.

**SAME-SEX PARENTS**
Brands are strongly campaigning for new and diverse family structures. Matalan’s Made for Modern Families campaign in the UK features a range of LGBT examples, and Target in the US continues the portrayal of same-sex couples in its marketing campaigns, with the aim of representing modern family arrangements.

**SINGLE PARENTHOOD**
A Canadian campaign for Peanut Butter Cheerios, dubbed “the official cereal of dadhood”, is an ode to the modern father. Far from being clueless and uncool, the father in a light-hearted two-minute spot confidently tells the viewer, “being awesome isn’t about breaking rules, it’s about making them”. He deftly manages the family’s four kids before proclaiming, “this, my friends – this is how to dad”.

**BROKEN GENDER RULES**
Chase’s Mastery 2.0 campaign captures different stories of parents making sure their daughters are taken care of. In one, a dedicated dad sits in his bedroom in front of the mirror with a tube of bright red lipstick in hand, ready to join his daughter’s fairy-themed birthday bash. The campaign defies fathers’ established gender roles and expectations.
65% of the global population agree that it is good for traditional family roles to evolve and modernise.

Mindreader - Wave 7

45% agree that people of the same sex should be able to marry.

Mindreader - Wave 7

43% agree that rules are made to be broken.

Mindreader - Wave 7

75% live their life by their own standards and not others'.

Mindreader - Wave 7

“There is relatively little variation among countries in attitudes about the value of a two-parent home. In most of the world, about one-half of adults believe that ‘one parent can bring up a child as well as two parents together’

Institute for Family Studies and the Social Trends Institute – ‘World Family Map 2015’
IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

EMBRACE DIVERSITY

Represent the diverse make-up of modern families by creating a coherent message and meaningful connection. The key is to step up to the challenge by having a point of view, embracing and driving the reality of our eclectic and vibrant family ecosystem.

UNIVERSAL MESSAGES

By appealing to the universal experience of parenthood – the hopes and fears of parents, whether married or single, straight or LGBT – brands can bring this diverse group together in emotional and universal messages.

INSPIRE AND SUPPORT

Brands can provide reassurance and support to the pressures and dreams of modern families. The opportunities can be maximised by inspiring, informing, encouraging and supporting them not only as family members but also as individuals.
INSPIRING ORIGINAL THINKING THROUGH A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURAL TRENDS

Culture Vulture’s Global Consumer Trends Framework is our approach to applying cultural trends. It serves as an inspiration to understanding the wider cultural context in which we live and for creating new strategies and ideas for business and communications. Mindshare considers the ‘10 Global Consumer Trends’ to be a powerful influence on culture.

Culture Vulture’s 21st Century Family dossier identified 10 dynamics of the family consumer culture through an extensive research and curation process of trends and manifestations from around the world. They reflect changes in the family structure and their impact on products, media and culture.

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