Milan Design Week
Coverage of all the important satellite events and exhibitions, plus the Saloni and Euroluce trade shows.

Ethnographic Research
We explore how this research method is radically changing the way companies develop new products or services.

Catwalks A/W 13-14
Our seasonal overview covers key themes, colour highlights and details from the Autumn/Winter 2013-14 womenswear shows.

APRIL 2013
The Monthly Review explores the key themes that have dominated Stylus coverage over the past month. From a wealth of new directions through to exploration of cutting-edge ideas, Stylus offers a carefully conceived summary for review.
**Vision.**

Vision presents highlights and key directions from April, aggregating our thinking across the science and technology and consumer lifestyle sectors.

**Travel & Leisure.**

Travel & Leisure collates some of the key insights from our report coverage, as well as analysis of industry events.

**Fashion & Beauty.**

In April, the focus in Fashion & Beauty was our comprehensive seasonal catwalk overview of directional trends from the Autumn/Winter 2013-14 womenswear shows, as well as coverage from LA’s fashion and market week.
This Monthly Review explores the key themes that have dominated Stylus coverage in April.

From a wealth of new directions in fashion and interiors through to exploration of cutting-edge ideas in retail and marketing, Stylus offers a carefully conceived summary of last month’s innovation in product development and much more besides.

Stylus coverage always explores how different sectors of industry relate to each other – or can learn from each other – to encourage cross-fertilisation of ideas.

Culture & Media.

We present a summary of the key takeaways from April’s reporting and analysis across media, marketing, arts and digital culture – from exploring future broadcasting to protecting brand reputation online.

Home & Industrial Design.

Milan Design Week dominated April, with a preview, live news and extensive analysis at the heart of Home & Industrial Design coverage throughout the month. We also highlighted the Lab Look trend that is influencing spatial, product and packaging design, and profiled Carwan, Beirut’s leading contemporary design gallery.

Retail.

From luxury fashion to the supermarket sector, Stylus’ Retail coverage in April revealed the tech tools smoothing the in-store experience; the value of deploying a quieter brand strategy; and the growing relevance of commerce with a community-focused edge.
Vision presents highlights and key directions from April, aggregating our thinking across the science and technology and consumer lifestyle sectors.

Ethnographic Research

Ethnography - a research method that investigates the lives and practices of a group by making detailed observations of its members in their natural environment - is radically changing how companies start the creative process to develop new products or services.

In Ethnographic Research, Paula Zuccotti, a former director of ethnographic studies at global design agency Seymourpowell, highlighted three key benefits of using ethnographic research:

- Companies gain first-hand experience of real-life situations, enabling them to design products with better ergonomics and functionality.
- The careful observation required when conducting ethnographic research often generates new insights into the workings of a product that both designers and users were unaware of.
- Companies learn how people emotionally engage with activities, choices and preferences, and gain a better understanding of the role brands play in their daily lives by observing them in authentic settings.

We spotlighted key case studies where the use of ethnographic research has provided inspiration for innovative design or fresh marketing approaches. In 2009, global pharmaceuticals company UCB partnered with US consumer goods company Oxo and global design agency Smart to create a specially designed syringe for use with Cimzia, UCB’s rheumatoid arthritis (RA) drug. During the development process, Oxo’s design team closely followed a group of six RA sufferers, leading them to develop a new syringe incorporating several key features to make self-administration easier for them, including a large, non-slip plunger and a finger loop on the needle shield.
Senior Living

The senior segment is growing faster than any other age group. In 10 years, the number of people aged over 60 will exceed one billion, according to an October 2012 report by the UN Population Fund. But there is a wide gap between current innovations around ageing and what older consumers say they want. “We now have a population of relatively healthy, relatively wealthy older people wanting something new and different,” warns Joseph Coughlin, director of MIT’s Agelab.

Brands must follow a nuanced approach to design to capitalise on this demographic shift. In Senior Living: A Nuanced Approach, Stylus spotlighted the companies and research units using empathy in the design process to satisfy the ageing consumer. Particularly noteworthy is Fixperts - a UK-based scheme launched in September 2012 that connects designers with ageing and disabled consumers, among others, to solve everyday problems. Time now for entrepreneurs to leverage technology to create products that promote connectivity and interdependence. The next generation of ageing consumers will expect better: better design, better service, better functionality.

Future Mobile Trends

The number of global mobile subscribers is set to rocket from 3.2 billion people in 2012 to 3.9 billion by 2017, according to a 2013 AT Kearney report for the GSM Association (GSMA). “Mobile has gone beyond being a mere communications tool to one that provides life-enhancing, and in some cases life-saving, services to men, women and children,” says Anne Bouverot, director general of the GSMA.

A new report on mobile trends published by marketing communications giant JWT in April identifies new strategies for businesses to target the next billion mobile phone subscribers, who will come from developing regions such as India and sub-Saharan Africa. These consumers are “mobile optimists”, who are more receptive to targeted advertising and mobile commerce opportunities. It’s time for brands to harness new forms of communication that inspire new ways of reaching consumers and invest in proactive mobile services. Intelligent personal assistants are set to become a key part of the high-end smartphone market’s offering.
Travel & Leisure collates some of the key insights from our report coverage, as well as analysis of industry events.

**Influencer: James Markham**

In April, we continued our investigation into key directions within the fast-casual dining sector – the most rapidly growing segment of the restaurant industry. Our profile on Californian restaurateur James Markham – who founded successful eateries MOD (Made on Demand) Pizza, Pieology and Project Pie – revealed some valuable insights into this lucrative market:

- Individuality can help you stand out in a saturated marketplace. Customisation opportunities (such as the Chipotle model) enable patrons to exercise control over their diets and display their creative flair.
- Reputation management is key – both on and offline. Social media, for example, can be used as a jumping-off point for face-to-face meet-ups with unhappy customers.
- Unique regional specialties generate memorability and a sense of place. Use of local ingredients earns further kudos with sustainably minded consumers.
- Temporary pop-up sites and unusual spatial formats (like the shipping container used for Markham’s newest venture) create an exciting breeding ground to test out new ideas and augment the core product with exciting extensions.

For more insights into the fast-casual sector, read our influencer profile on Umami Burger’s Adam Fleishman, founder of Californian chains Blaze Pizza and 800 Degrees.

**Natural Nutrition: What’s Next?**

This month we visited The Natural Food Show in London, which showcased new product launches in the natural and organic food arena.

Key observations include:

- Demand for food-intolerance products shows no sign of waning. We predict this category will continue to flourish. For more, see Global Food & Health Trends 2013-14 and the World Food Technology & Innovation Forum.
- Moving on from the saturated coconut water market (see Lunch! and Food & Drink Expo), brands are exploring coconut’s potential as a milk replacement. Yoghurts, ice cream and milk chocolate are being developed using coconut milk instead of dairy.
- Natural, organic and sugar-free ingredients are hitting the sweet spot in the children’s food product market. The sweetener xylitol, endorsed by the British Dental Health Association, ticks the health box for concerned parents.
- Consumer interest in super-foods remains buoyant. Snacks and treats that incorporate super-greens such as kale and algae look poised for growth.
For more coverage on super-foods that are hitting the cultural zeitgeist, see *Super Seaweed* and *Chia: The New Super-Food*.

**Food’s Rising Stars**

As explored in our Gastrokids report, a generation of young tech-savvy consumers are becoming accomplished cooks and bakers. Encouraged by TV programming such as MasterChef (which originated in the UK and is now produced in more than 35 countries), Cooks to Market (UK) and Cake Boss (US) – as well as champions like British chef Jamie Oliver and US cook Alice Waters – they are fine-tuning their culinary skills and confidently broadcasting their methods and end results across multiple social media channels.

British supermarket giant Tesco is now hoping to engage these enthusiastic ‘Koodies’ (kid foodies) through its partnership with UK cookery website Great British Chefs. Here, the companies have launched a free cooking app for children aged five to 12, featuring more than 100 new recipes conceived by British chefs such as Marcus Wareing and Nathan Outlaw. Simple concoctions like spaghetti and meatballs with mini garlic bites and chocolate cornflakes are designed for kids and parents to cook together.

For more on how intuitive brands and retailers are finding ways to facilitate family bonding time – particularly in multigenerational set-ups – look out for our upcoming Influences & Influencers Industry Trend, which explores the new Modern Family.

For more on the digitisation of cookery, take a look at our report on digital cookbooks, *Tech Recipes*. 
In April, the focus in Fashion & Beauty was our comprehensive seasonal catwalk overview of directional trends from the Autumn/Winter 2013-14 womenswear shows, as well as coverage from LA’s fashion and market week.

Catwalk Seasonal Overview A/W 13-14

Our extensive edit of the most important directions for the season ahead included Colour, Materials & Print, Key Looks & Themes, Footwear & Accessories and Beauty.

**Colour:** From winter pastel shades to pops of bright orange, A/W 13-14 offers an array of hues. Navy is the new black, with camels, charcoal and mid-tone greys also favoured as alternative neutrals. Pink is the standout colour of the season, with saccharine shades ranging from candyfloss and bubblegum to hot fuschia and the palest blush. Burnished gold is the central metallic, while rich ruby reds encompass the modern glamour feel of the season.

**Materials & Print:** It’s heritage versus glamour for A/W 13-14; menswear suiting staples such as pinstripes, plaids, houndstooth and tartan fabrications sat alongside feathers, fur, velvet and all-over sequins. Merging the two, designers showed ombre hems with heritage fabrics such as tweed descending into feathers and cocktail embellishment. Both camouflage and animal print are given a grown-up, abstract reappropriation. Brushed wool and vinyl are also key to the season’s tactility trend.

**Key Looks & Themes:** Subversive statements came in the form of modern takes on film noir, punk, the church and the bedroom. In terms of silhouette, the coat shone through as the season’s key piece, with tent-like proportions and masculine shapes (tying in with the menswear theme) proving most popular. The dirndl skirt offers a new shape for the season ahead, while the turtleneck top is a key styling trend.

**Footwear & Accessories:** Chunky tread and fugly footwear shapes offer a cool styling pairing for more feminine looks. Also spotted in clothing, hybrid styles emerged in footwear too. In terms of accessories, matching the bag to the outfit (a key seasonal direction) looked coolest when textural fabrications were introduced. The ear is the new area of jewellery interest, with multi-piercings and ornate ear cuffs tapping into the punk theme. Fur stoles offer an accessible way into the fur trend, most successful in longer lengths and bright pops of colour.

**Beauty:** Faux crops and wet-look hair add edge to the modern femme looks that stormed the catwalks. Ponytails and plaits are updated with ombre-effect colourways. Lips are either berry stained or painted with multiple shades for a 3D, rose bud effect. Eyes come shaded in silver or contoured with amber shadow, minus mascara.

LA Fashion Week A/W 13-14

Celebrating an eclectic mix of emerging local talent, our LA Fashion and Market Week report highlighted five key brands that showcased their collections at the event. With a relatively small roster of labels, there was a lack of overarching trends; instead, designers’ assorted style offerings mirrored the many style sensibilities of Angelenos.
Stylus rounds up the latest in fashion sector materials from Lineapelle – the leading trade fair for skins, furs, synthetic materials, components and hardware. We also look at the Light Show, this year’s blockbuster exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in London.

Lineapelle S/S 2014

Held at the Bologna Fiera in Italy, Lineapelle provides an important destination in sourcing components and materials for designers and manufacturers of footwear, accessories, luggage, interiors and transport.

Stylus notes the key colour and finish directions emerging from the Lineapelle Spring/Summer 2014 collections. Key innovations and techniques are also studied, as are the latest trends in hardware.

Overall, the fair favoured a less fussy and more high-end, crafted aesthetic than previous seasons. We see simple shapes, timeless materials and luxe detailing within hardware, while in colour we see a move away from the brash neons and hyper-real surface treatments. New colour directions favour a more pared-back colour palette, in line with the Stylus Colour Spectrum for S/S 14 and looking ahead to Autumn/Winter 2014-15.
Light Show

The use of light as a medium is the focus of the Light Show exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, which looks at light artworks and installations from the 1960s up to the current day. Stylus visits this inspirational show, featuring immersive environments, disorientating artworks and serene, light-filled spaces.

Clever illusions and sensory experiences are impressing visitors, with a number of light installations seemingly changing the dimensions of the spaces they employ. Static light works and small-scale pieces are just as mesmerising.

An abundant source of inspiration for designers, the exhibition features a string of works by key creatives, including Venezuelan Carlo Cruz-Diez, Berlin-based artist Olafur Eliason, and American artists Dan Flavin and James Turrell.
We present a summary of the key takeaways from April’s reporting and analysis across media, marketing, arts and digital culture – from exploring future broadcasting to protecting brand reputation online.

Future Broadcasters

A number of forward-thinking entertainment brands are taking TV into the future. In April, US entertainment streaming platform Netflix’s stock rose 25% as it revealed it has added three million new subscribers since the beginning of the year. We take a look at how and why in our TV’s Digital-First Future report.

In other future broadcasting developments, we profile brands using Twitter’s new six-second video-capture platform Vine in our Vine: Mini Branded Videos news comment. We also investigate the launch of a new millennial-focused channel from US production company Participant Media in Pivot TV – Generation-Specific Entertainment.

Online News Innovation

US entertainment site BuzzFeed is winning ever more millenial attention with its mix of memes and serious news features. As it opened a London office this month, Stylus interviewed UK editor Luke Lewis to discover 5 Lessons From BuzzFeed on how brands can stay relevant and agile in this always-on world.

A different kind of media innovation came from British news publication the Guardian this month, which launched a user-generated news-gathering platform. We take a look in Guardian Witness: Content Creators.

Digital Thinking

All brands should be engaging with their customers across online and mobile platforms, but what happens when that relationship gets threatened by negative reaction or cyber attacks? We examine the strategies you can use to Protect Brand Reputation Online.

For a case study of a brand getting digital marketing right, take a look at our news comment Thinking Digitally: Domino’s Pizza.

Music & Style

Influential French disco-house duo Daft Punk returned this month with huge fanfare (and clever use of Vine, among other marketing tricks). Our news comment Daft Punk and Saint Laurent Paris looks at the band’s relationship with the fashion industry, and examines the debt the current US electronic dance music scene owes them.

Meanwhile, two exhibitions exploring the aesthetics of the music video caught our eye, previewed in The Art of Music Video.
Milan Design Week dominated April, with a preview, live news and extensive analysis at the heart of Home & Industrial Design coverage throughout the month. We also highlighted the Lab Look trend that is influencing spatial, product and packaging design, and profiled Carwan, Beirut’s leading contemporary design gallery.

**Related Reports**

Profile: Carwan Gallery
Lab Look

---

Müller Van Severen © SMG 2013
Carwan Gallery © David Nascimento
Francesco Morackini © Francesco Morackini

**Milan Design Week**

April is the month when the Stylus team focuses on Milan Design Week. We cover all the important satellite events and exhibitions across the city, plus the iSaloni and Euroluce trade shows.

Stylus’s comprehensive coverage breaks down the major trends and launches across design and product categories. Essential reading for anyone working in the industrial, home, and spatial design sectors.

Reports detail manufacturer news; colour, material and finish information; exciting branded spaces; the designers pushing the industry forward; and dedicated product analysis for furniture, lighting, upholstery, textiles and accessories.

One of the overall messages we picked up from the show this year was a significant slowing of research and development. Bestsellers are refined, icons reissued, and launches designed by a tight number of bankable names that are often interchangeable for various manufacturers. New designs are economic in shape, colour and material. Lightweight, modular, and integrated designs are all important this year.
Profile: Carwan Gallery

The Stylus Rework Interiors Autumn/Winter 2014-15 industry trend explores the need to challenge old design traditions to appeal to new global markets. In line with this, Stylus spoke to Pascale Wakim, co-founder of Carwan, Beirut’s leading contemporary design gallery, about how her gallery is challenging the domestic design dictum.

There has always been an appetite for applied arts in the Middle East, with craft production well-established. But how do you update this for a contemporary market? Wakim talks Stylus through Carwan’s approach of working with international designers to reimagine local making traditions. She also highlights some regional talent making waves both at home and overseas.

Lab Look

Stylus takes you through the trend for clinical-looking environments and scientifically styled designs.

As some consumers become more discerning and knowledgeable about the services and products on offer to them, brands are responding by highlighting their expert knowledge through slick design that takes its cues from scientific instruments, pharmaceutical packaging and laboratory environments.

Emphasise expert knowledge and authority, relay messages of proven results, and make it easier for customers to understand the technicalities and research that go into your service or product.
From luxury fashion to the supermarket sector, Stylus’ Retail coverage in April revealed the tech tools smoothing the in-store experience; the value of deploying a quieter brand strategy; and the growing relevance of commerce with a community-focused edge.

Community & Commerce

From sports clubs to online beauty networks, consumers’ desire to come together over common experiences, interests and opinions is a behaviour that smart retailers are weaving into the very heart of their brand strategies. Engaging communities is now an essential methodology for turning individual brand fans into legions of loyal consumers.

In **The Rise of Edutainment**, we examine a new in-store strategy that combines retail theatre with an enriching layer of education. As ideal for the tech community or the arts and crafts fraternity as it is for sports enthusiasts, it’s a philosophy designed to promote a brand’s assets way beyond the product offer.

Local, regional communities are also firmly back on the agenda. US department store **Macy’s crowdsourcing of an all-American TV ad** is a prime example of a brand tapping into local pride and community sentiment.

Other brands are looking to more niche communities to make fresh retail in-roads. E-tail giant Amazon’s **50+ Healthy Living Store** is its first attempt to directly target the baby boomer community, with a wealth of lifestyle products and services focused purely on more mature consumers.

Looking inwards can also reap rewards. US department store **Bergdorf Goodman’s documentary Scatter My Ashes at Bergdorf Goodman** pulls directly from its own community of staff and associates in order to revel in its own heritage. British fashion label **Jaeger’s new Boutique Gallery** is directly plugging into the renowned community of young fashion design talent in its home city of London.

**Less Noise, More Impact**

While retail in many areas has plenty to benefit from being hyper-connected and always on, there is also a (not-necessarily uncomplimentary) movement on the march regarding quieter, less invasive forms of brand engagement. While seamless connections are vital, the opportunity to tune out is also proving to be extremely valuable.

In **Quiet Branding: Streamlining Retail Design**, we explored how retailers are slicing through the noise of modern marketing. The ‘less is more’ approach is manifest in minimal packaging, luxury logo fatigue and in-store chill-out zones – all strategies designed to offer consumers respite from their increasingly digital lifestyles.

At Milan Design Week 2013, Stylus also observed that several brands had bypassed high-tech showrooms in favour of creating oasis-like spaces primed for downtime. Ranging from botanical installations to sound-absorbent carousels, these low-fi, harmonious retreats proved that the softly-softly approach can prove as memorable as high-tech pop-ups.
Collective Consciousness: Retail Super-Groups

In April, we also observed the way in which forward-thinking supermarkets are re-emphasising their presence as a reliable mainstay for life’s necessities by extending their existing lifestyle services or ranges.

In High-Street Health: Big-Box Retailers Tap the Healthcare Market, we revealed how a slew of major US general/supermarket retailers are planning to launch in-store healthcare services in 2014.

Also trading on consumers’ concerns about health, US technology giant IBM announced the development of a new app dubbed the Augmented Reality Shopping Assistant. With the aid of an augmented reality overlay, which is viewable as consumers run their smartphones along supermarket shelves, it’s poised to bring many of the benefits of online shopping – such as customer reviews and extra info – into the store experience.

Packaging, too, is part of the overhaul. In Own-Label Packaging, we review how imaginative, strategic revamps are allowing own-label product lines to trump big-name brands.
Diversify to Dominate

The convergence of on- and offline retailing also came under the spotlight this month, with a slew of new initiatives demonstrating how integrating technology into physical stores can help brands to both better serve and also understand their consumers.

IBM and American eyewear brand Warby Parker both brought the benefits of the online retail realm to the in-store experience. Echoing the report E-tail Gets a Physical Presence, Warby Parker became the latest online retailer to open a bricks-and-mortar arm - using innovations derived from its digital expertise to subtly trace shoppers’ browsing patterns around its New York flagship.

IBM’s augmented reality Shopping Assistant app will deliver consumer reviews, product comparisons and product suggestions to users in the supermarket aisles.

Chicago cycle shop Roll debuted a 3D body scanning fitting system, using high-tech cameras and lasers to more accurately fit customers’ bikes for free - demonstrating how cutting-edge technology can be deployed to super-service ends.

At Milan Design Week 2013, Korean tech brands Samsung and Hyundai both used their physical pop-ups as arenas to show off their technological capabilities, wowing visitors with gestural technology and an immersive LED display respectively - see Branded Spaces for more details.
To find out more about Stylus or to become a member, please contact us at one of our offices below.

Already a member? Email us at support@stylus.com and we’ll be happy to help.

London - Headquarters
The Office
Marylebone Station
12 Melcombe Place
London NW1 6JQ
United Kingdom

T +44 (0) 203 170 7119
E innovation@stylus.com

New York
102 Franklin Street
2nd Floor
New York
NY 10013
USA

T +1 (646) 597 6200
E innovation@stylus.com