

**ESZEN**

**Web3;**

**WHAT**

**WE'RE**

**WATCHING**



# A PEEK INTO WHAT WE'RE WATCHING

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**Crystalyn:** "A rebooted, retooled, revision version of community is emerging"

**Cara:** "What data actually matters? Or is instinct and trend more powerful?"

**Neil:** "Not all influencers are creators and not all creators are influencers"

**Laura:** "It's encouraging to be anonymous on the internet again"

**Daniel:** "Expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness is more important than ever in this equation"

**Yenfu:** "What if AI algorithms are biased and perpetuate social inequalities?"

**Caitlin:** "In a world of information overload, authenticity will be king"

**Sol:** "'De-influencing' isn't a trend"

**Jonathan:** "How can we repurpose content from longer videos to short form videos?"

**Mallory:** "People use different platforms to fulfill different needs"

**Jeffrey:** "There are so many areas where we have the illusion of ownership without the agency that comes with it"

**Meghan:** "Unfortunately I do not see BeReal's popularity lasting long into 2023"

**Justin:** "How can we use digital tools to gamify our clients' interaction at scale?"

**Hannah:** "Will short form content become the new normal?"



## Crystalyn Stuart-Loayza

### Chief Digital Officer

Crystalyn is a passionate digital transformationalist with over 20 years of experience in digital marketing, focused on helping brands supercharge programs with digital. She's been an early social media pioneer and leader in digital content and is currently a specialist in building interactive experiences.

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## WHAT CRYSTALYN IS WATCHING

# THE PICKLEBALL EFFECT

Back in the earliest stages of web 2, the idea of creating digitally-enabled relationships fundamentally changed communications.

Now as we move firmly into a web3 world, the idea of trusted community, authority, human connections in a digital-led world, has made a profound comeback. People seeking people.

A rebooted, retooled, revised version of community is emerging, and Citizen is here for it.

### Why I'm Excited

- Citizen is poised perfectly to lead and iterate in this new world of community.
- It's about time for another landscape shift!
- We know and love people!

### How Might We?

- Bring our unique version of conversation mapping paired with Community experiments to clients at scale?
- Test and refine our approach to brands within emerging communities?
- Help brands ready for this shift from ads to community-centricity?



## Cara Peckens

### SVP, Analytics & Technology

Cara is a seasoned marketing & technology professional and integrated strategist, with over 15 years of experience. She co-creates, packages, and operationalizes innovative and digital-first marketing capabilities and products.

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#### WHAT CARA IS WATCHING

## DATA UX IS THE NEXT JOB SKILL TO ADD TO YOUR RESUME

Data, data, data is everywhere but brands and agencies struggle with how to use it. The teams and individuals who are able to distill and democratize data in a way that's user friendly and intuitive will have the ultimate IP and competitive advantage. ChatGPT is the perfect example. GPT has been a mature and stable technology for several years, but it took the simple chat interface for people to begin to understand its power and capabilities.

#### Why I'm Excited

- We have the right mix of skills and ideas to accomplish
- We believe that technology and data are human augmenters
- Storytelling is at the core of what we do.

#### Thought Starters

- What does a valuable dashboard really look like? Just a search box...
- Can humans function as the predictor in predictive modeling?
- What data actually matters? Or is instinct and trend more powerful?



## Neil Mohan

### SVP, Creator Marketing

Neil's relationship with technology began in high school writing books about the Internet and grew into a career integrating creativity and technology to help brands grow by engaging millions of people. After creative technology roles at ad agencies and Meta, Neil's current focus is how tech's democratization of creativity is empowering emerging creators to partner with brands for modern influence.

## WHAT NEIL IS WATCHING

# CREATORS & INFLUENCERS

An influencer has consistent authority to a specific audience. Next week I'll likely buy the same BBQ as my neighbour, I see him with it every night like it's his third child.

A creator builds their brand by creating relevant things that earn attention from as many people as possible. My feed algorithms serve me amazing travel and comedy content that I will watch until my spouse makes me go to sleep.

Not all influencers are creators and not all creators are influencers. How we spend our time with both and how brands have a value exchange with both is going to captivate me this year.

### Why I'm Excited

- Digital creators share of culture continues to grow by most metrics (watch time, favorability, share of wallet)
- The knowledge gap to become a creator continues to lower and the number of formats continue to grow (podcast, AR, video, Generative AI)

### Thought Starters

- How can brands be a welcome addition to communities of influence?
- How are we evolving measurement of a strong creator vs. a strong influencer?
- Do influencers and creators bring different business results in the full funnel?



## Laura Brown

### VP, Digital

Laura brings 15 years of experience in advertising and public relations agencies. She leads teams to develop digitally-led creative communications campaigns, channel plans, influencer marketing campaigns, paid media plans, community strategies and content development.

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## WHAT LAURA IS WATCHING

# DEATH OF INDIVIDUALITY ON SOCIAL

When was the last time you looked at someone's profile? Why follow an author when you can follow #BookTok?

As a millennial, I'm ready to let go of being "Insta-ready" before going out with friends, taking pictures of plates of food at a trendy restaurant, or creating boomerangs cheering cocktails with friends.

To what end have we been doing that for? For clout? Who cares when you can actually make an impact amongst a collective instead?

### Why I'm Excited

- Communities are powerful and way more interesting
- It's encouraging to be 'anonymous' on the internet again
- Personal brands are (mostly) gross

### Thought Starters

- How can the brands we serve be a character within a bigger story vs. the hero of our own?
- What if we could each find a new community for our brands to play in this year that put the power back to the people?



## Daniel Sendeki

### VP, Performance Content

Daniel is an award-winning print, digital and content strategist for B2B, B2C, and D2C brands. Bringing nearly 20 years of experience, Daniel has a proven history of establishing and supporting revenue and profitability through strategic content development.

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## WHAT DANIEL IS WATCHING

### HOW WE SEARCH IS CHANGING, BUT FUNDAMENTALS PERSIST

When it comes to search and discovery, audiences are showing a clear interest in more visually rich forms and new channels. This year invites digital communicators to capitalize on this trend in search behaviour by continuing to focus on search intent, regardless of medium or channel.

#### Why I'm Excited

- Matching user intent and purpose remains fundamental to creating great, reputable content for users.
- Expertise, authoritativeness, and trustworthiness is more important than ever in this equation.
- Trust is no longer just built on-site—off-site digital PR and link acquisition can play an increasing role in building trust.

#### Thought Starters

- With these shifts, do traditional communications agencies have a leg up on search-focused marketers? Is it easier to adopt SEM best practices compared with adopting traditional PR tactics?
- If Google's AI is looking for authority-building content, how does that impact strategy?
- How can we focus on authority building and content to significantly grow organic traffic?



## Yenfu Chen

### Creative Technology Lead

Yenfu Chen has developed services, campaigns, and digital products for global brands, organizations and startups, with over 18 years of experience. He is a creative technologist, an instructor of digital communication and also an interactive product designer.

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## WHAT YENFU IS WATCHING

# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENT AUTOMATION

AI automation is the use of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to automate tasks that were previously performed by humans. AI automation involves using machine learning algorithms, natural language processing, and other AI techniques to enable machines to perform tasks that would typically require human intelligence, such as recognizing patterns, making decisions, and processing language.

### Why I'm Excited

- **Increased Efficiency:** AI and automation can perform tasks with greater speed and accuracy than humans, reducing the time and resources required to complete a task.
- **Enhanced Customer Experience:** AI can be used to analyze customer data and provide personalized recommendations, improving the overall customer experience.
- **Improved Decision-Making:** AI can provide insights into large amounts of data that would be difficult for humans to process, enabling better decision-making.

### Thought Starters

- What if AI takes over most jobs, leaving people unemployed?
- What if AI algorithms are biased and perpetuate social inequalities?
- What if AI is used to make decisions about people's lives, such as whether they are hired for a job or granted a loan? How can we ensure that these decisions are fair and unbiased?
- What if AI is used to create hyper-realistic fake videos or audio recordings, making it difficult to distinguish between reality and fabrication?





## Caitlin Imbimbo

### Senior Digital Director

Caitlin Imbimbo is a Sr. Director on our Digital Team at Citizen, with 10+ years of experience in various sectors from CPG and ecommerce to pharma and B2B. Caitlin's expertise lies in social media marketing, with a love for data-driven storytelling and maximizing on pop culture trends.

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## WHAT CAITLIN IS WATCHING

# AUTHENTICITY IS KING

With the rise of AI, people will be more hungry than ever for person to person interactions on social.

I know I resonate most with product reviews that aren't regurgitating the same information and feature set that ChatGPT could, but instead product reviews where I see the item in use by a real person and they tell me their unique, individual experiences.

Because of this, I think influencer marketing will only continue to grow. In a world of information overload, authenticity will be king.

### Why I'm Excited

- It creates space for more genuine influencers to rise to the top.
- It allows for social to still drive sales and marketing, while not losing its soul to commercialization.

### Thought Starters

- Do influencers know this or are they more focused on the speed that AI can offer?
- How do small, more authentic influencers beat the algorithms when there are massive creators just repeating the same info?
- Which social network will allow for the most person-to-person interaction? I feel like YouTube or TikTok - video-first, where I can see their face.



## Sol Carmona

### Director, Creator Marketing

Sol is a digital marketing strategist with experience leading integrated, multi-channel digital campaigns for a variety of CPG, retail, healthcare and technology clients. She has rich experience in both the strategy and executional oversight on creator marketing, organic and paid social media campaigns, and SEO/SEM. Sol's data-centric approach to audience insights and ROI tracking helps drive results for clients by taking a user-first approach to channel selection, technology and content creation.

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## WHAT SOL IS WATCHING

### A RETURN TO THE BASICS OF INFLUENCERS

With engagement rates declining and the new concept of 'de-influencing' taking over, we'll see a shift back to the origins of influencer marketing. User-generated content is becoming more popular, and people are looking for original and credible conversations within niche communities. This year, we are looking to build rich, authentic, community-focused collaborations that aren't only based on the volume of content, impressions and reach but on creating something truly next level with a creator that drives more efficient results.

In my opinion, 'de-influencing' isn't a trend, it's a transition as we evolve based on user behaviour.

#### Why I'm Excited

- We have the right talent and experience to lead a new breed of influencer marketing that is heavily web3 forward
- We believe that real influence is done through community

#### Thought Starters

- What if brands apply hybrid models of creator marketing where both community and ROI are at the core of the strategy?
- Is 'de-influencing' the death of inauthenticity?



## Jonathan Kim

### Senior Manager, Digital

Jon is a Senior Manager on our Digital team at Citizen, with experiences in public relations, digital marketing, social media and journalism. His experience varies from food & beverage and CPG to retail fashion and e-commerce, with a strong passion for community building and creative storytelling.

## WHAT JONATHAN IS WATCHING

# THE RISE OF YOUTUBE SHORTS

Although we've seen the continuing popularity of short-form video content through TikTok and Instagram Reels, I believe we will see creators leveraging YouTube Shorts more in 2023, whether it's original content specifically for Shorts or repurposed TikTok/Reels content.

In addition to the YouTube Shorts Fund, YouTube announced Shorts will be eligible for monetization with creators keeping 45% of revenues generated from viewership. With TikTok/Instagram predominantly only offering creators revenue through brand partnerships, we may see creators switch over to a platform where they can generate revenue for viewership and still develop brand partnerships.

### Why I'm Excited

- Opportunity to grow alongside creators on (new) platform
- Google's search engine providing enhanced visibility and accessibility

### Thought Starters

- How can influencer/brand content for client campaigns better leverage Shorts?
- How can short-form videos complement long-form videos?
- How can we repurpose content from longer videos to short-form videos?



## Mallory Tapp

### Digital Strategist

Mallory is a seasoned digital strategist and performance marketing specialist, bringing a wealth of knowledge and experience to the table when it comes to crafting a solid online brand presence. Through her strategic and tactical planning, which is always informed by the latest industry insights, she is able to create surround-sound campaigns that are not only creative, but also humanized, intelligent and action-oriented. Her passion lies in understanding and utilizing data to connect with audiences in a meaningful, emotional way that leaves a deep and lasting impression.

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## WHAT MALLORY IS WATCHING

# COPYCAT CULTURE SHIFTS TO SPECIALIZATION

Has anyone been getting the “Ick” factor from Instagram lately, with the platform’s less than successful attempts to incorporate a myriad of its competitors’ features? You’re not alone. In 2023, I think many social platforms that have tried to become everything for everyone all at once will realise that this move can actually increasingly fuel negative perceptions of their brand overtime (just look to Meta’s 2022 quarterlies...)

People use different platforms to fulfill different needs. TikTok has never called itself a ‘social networking site’, and was always defined as an ‘entertainment’ platform. I think and hope that key social media players like IG and FB in particular will move back to specializing their focus towards what they are best known for (either photo-first content, or connecting with friends and family) or run the risk of driving their core user base away as a result of a perceived identity crisis. Pinterest is a great example to point to relating to platforms that have gotten it right! With that, I would also expect/hope to see an expansion of digital features on those platforms to make those unique-to-each-channel experiences even richer.

## Why I’m Excited

- I’ve never been a fan of a one-size fits all content approach and the more that platforms differentiate from one another, there will be more exciting and creative places to play,- with a variety of ways to experiment with content that is highly tailored each individual channel.



## Jeffrey Glos

### Social Strategist

Jeff has been a social strategist for 7 years, working on all kinds of clients from CPG, to auto, to finance. In between he's been able to work as a producer for BuzzFeed News, and before joining Citizen, freelance in the Crypto space with defi protocols and NFT creators. He enjoys bridging the gap between strategy and creative, leading to deeper insights and more impactful content.

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## WHAT JEFFREY IS WATCHING

### OWNERSHIP WILL BECOME COUNTER CULTURE

The ownership I'm talking about is directly related to autonomy and agency – our ability to be in control of important aspects of our lives. There are so many things that we don't "own" in that capacity, but there are also many areas where we have an illusion of ownership without the agency that comes with it: data, storage, media, and money are great examples.

With developments like Apple's pilot project to sell hardware on a subscription model, car companies like Mercedes testing the water with subscription services to access premium features, and private equity firms like Black Rock aggressively purchasing homes, we're seeing an expansion of this model outside the world of SAAS and social media. My prediction is we will start to see a shift in how we discuss "ownership" of everything from homes to records, and there will be an introduction of class and political ideologies that will fuel the discussion, with the narrative shifting to ownership being bad, elitist, and undesirable. That's exactly what "the man" wants, because at the end of the day someone will own all these things, it just won't be you.

#### Why I'm Excited

- Awareness of the issue is leading to more attention being put on open source & decentralized tech (very cool)
- We have probably the best opportunity in history to vote with our dollars in a way that can impact change

#### Thought Starters

- "How can I start to take ownership back in some of these areas?"
- What does ownership look like in an increasingly digital world?
- How can we, as digital professionals, operate ethically in systems that are inherently unethical?



## Meghan Mahoney

### Social Media Coordinator

Meghan is a recent marketing graduate from San Diego State University and a Social Media Coordinator within Citizen's Los Angeles office. She specializes in strategic content creation, copywriting, and community management for brands in the automotive and consumer tech industries, including VinFast US, Oral-B, and Kidde Fire Safety.

## WHAT MEGHAN IS WATCHING

# DEATH OF BEREAL

It pains me to admit this, but unfortunately I do not see BeReal's popularity lasting long into 2023 or into the years to come. Even though the app won the Apple award for Best iPhone App of the year in November, has supposedly gained over 10 million daily active users, and is worth about \$600 million, I am just not sure how the company is going to be able to expand into new markets or make money.

Do any of you use BeReal? Would LOVE to get your thoughts on where you think the app is headed (hopefully I am not right LOL)

### Why I'm Not Excited

- I love BeReal! I'll be honest I'm not always the "realest" since I always pose to look cute, sometimes do multiple takes and post after the timer goes off but I do love that you cannot add a filter and can share little random life moments with friends!
- BeReal could be wildly entertaining and a useful tool for companies if users could "follow" instead of "befriend" companies or celebrities. Imagine how entertaining it would be to see Rihanna brushing her teeth or eating breakfast at 7:32 AM while promoting her lingerie company

### Thought Starters

- If BeReal has only made its money through investments so far, how will investors get their ROI if the app never requires subscriptions or in-app purchases and does not show any ads (all of which are hallmarks of BeReal)?
- Even if BeReal stays popular for the next few years (with let's be honest, primarily Gen-Z users) what are other ways the app could grow into other markets and make money?





## Justin Bellmore

### Content Writer

Justin is a journalist turned copywriter with almost a decade of experience creating engaging content for web, social media, blogs, email marketing, B2B brands, business television, and employer branding. Before Citizen, he specialized in crafting messaging campaigns for startups to help scale the hiring process in industries like fintech and digital healthcare. He was also a segment producer and writer for Canada’s #1 business broadcast BNN Bloomberg, where he booked, produced, and published over 1000 high-profile television interviews.

## WHAT JUSTIN IS WATCHING

### VIDEO GAMES WILL DOMINATE POP-CULTURE, ENTERTAINMENT, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Today, the video game industry is a massive \$184 billion business, and it’s creating countless new opportunities for other forms of media.

Let’s start with influencer marketing. Gaming streamers have a lot of pull with their audiences, with some of them earning up to \$300,000 in monthly revenue on platforms like Twitch, Discord, and YouTube. This presents a huge opportunity for brands to tap into the gaming community and reach a highly engaged audience.

Games like Fortnite have risen to massive fandom and popularity in part due to its ability to bring people together from all over the globe, and to allow extremely personalized avatar appearances, including skins that reflect celebrities and pop-culture trends. Additionally, the gaming industry is driving innovations in even more immersive experiences through VR headsets like the Meta Quest and the PSVR2. There are entire universes with growing consumer bases, creating incredible opportunities for brands that enter the space early.

Gaming is also having a big impact on the entertainment industry. Shows and movies like HBO’s The Last of Us, Netflix’s The Witcher, and Prime Video’s God of War series are being created for gaming audiences. This “game cinema” could be the next Marvel in Hollywood.

### Thought Starters

- Could the burgeoning realm of “game cinema” overtake an increasingly stale superhero hegemony in Hollywood?
- People rarely click on static ads, so how can we use digital tools to gamify our clients’ interactions at scale?
- Mobile is the predominant form of gaming in China surpassing PC and console. Is this a market we can tap into with our China business division?



## Hannah Strong

### Production Designer

Hannah is a Production Designer on our Digital team and has many bright ideas she's excited to bring to the table. Her love for design and social media makes her passionate and excited about every project she's involved in.

Hannah's background consists of both graphic design and advertising which allows her to work in different creative situations. She's done projects in various design fields, which include branding, social media graphics, UX design, and art direction.

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## WHAT HANNAH IS WATCHING

### TIKTOK WILL HAVE A BIGGER IMPACT ON MEDIA & CULTURE THAN EVER BEFORE

Over the past 2 years, TikTok has been seen as one of the biggest social media platforms in the world. Showcasing a variety of content ranging from comedy, cooking, beauty, lifestyle, and everything in between, anyone can find any interest they have on the app.

As someone who's a daily TikTok user, I'm excited to see all of the new upcoming trends and topics that come out of the app in 2023 and see what ways social media marketing could potentially change to favour TikTok. As well, how will the other big social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube handle competing with TikTok? Will they come up with more ideas to try and bring down the competition?

I'm also interested to see how mainstream media will include TikTok into their content. Will there be new creative ways, or the typical somewhat cringey method that's currently used?

#### Why I'm Excited

- More companies will become familiar with the app and will want to use it for any future campaigns
- TikTok can potentially push the boundaries of social media even more than it already has

#### Thought Starters

- What if TikTok began to dominate over YouTube (traditional, not Shorts)?
- Is it possible for influencer marketing to change to favour TikTok/short-form content?
- Will short-form content become the new normal?
- Will TikTok influencers be seen as mainstream celebrities more than they already are?