

Clicking, 16 Trends to Future Fit Your Life, Your Work and Your Business

by Faith Popcorn and Lys Marigold, Harper Collins *Publishers*, 1996

For a summer read, I pulled *Clicking* off my “to read” book stack and plunged in. *The Popcorn Report*, Popcorn’s first book was a fairly accurate look at the future when published in the 80s. Some of you may remember the term “cocooning” coined by Popcorn. *Clicking* takes those trends and their forecasts a bit further.

The opening of the book explains what it means to “click” and I feel that I, like Faith Popcorn, have been fortunate to find some places in my life where I click, it’s “about being ready to be in sync with what’s coming tomorrow. To survive now, one has to bend, to be flexible. It sometimes feels like *deja vu* -- only it didn’t happen before,” says Popcorn.

After writing *The Popcorn Report*, Popcorn explains that based on the amount of letters and input she received she realized that people are looking to business books. “As divergent as these individuals were, they were linked by common threads: A search for a way to end the frustration, the disappointments. A plan to jump over any personal obstacles and clear any fears. A dedication to seize all new opportunities and see the future clearly. One single word seemed to sum up for us what all those smart men and women are looking to do -- and that word is . . . Click.” She goes on to describe that CLICK stands for Courage, Letting Go, Insight, Commitment and Know-How.

Popcorn and Iris Marigold, her co-author, worked together at a company of Popcorn’s origin, BrainReserve. Marigold is now writing and serves, as a consultant to BrainReserve. BrainReserve’s consulting provides for companies a way to grasp current and future trends and incorporate them into their future strategies. BrainReserve uses a TrendBank where they regionally and globally interview 4,000 consumers per year on twenty different product categories; read 350 publications monthly in several different languages; go to movies, theaters, concerts; listen to the Top 10; read best-sellers and “BrainJam” with staff and clients and TalentBank; go on TrendTreks around the planet; look at new stores, formats and product ideas. The back portion of the book offers a reading list and it was very interesting and one which I plan to incorporate into my reading list.

Because marketing and communications strategies are my focus, I wished that I had read this book when I had first purchased it. While there are some leading edge philosophies and ways to think about applying trend watching to business, the world is evolving so quickly that some of the trends seem to have crested or peaked. However, the philosophy of trendwatching is a sound one, “people who click are on trend -- their ideas, their actions, their passions and their pursuits fall effortlessly and target What People Want.” For marketers and visionaries, trend information is essential!

Much of this book refers to forecasts and responses to Popcorn's previous book. The sixteen trends that Popcorn and Marigold define in *Clicking* are:

1. Cocooning -- in the 80s it was for fun, now it's for safety
2. Clanning -- hitching ourselves to those who share our interests, ideas, aspirations and addictions
3. Fantasy Adventure -- our need to experiment, thrills and chills in small doses
4. Pleasure Revenge -- "fed up with self-deprivation in the sanctified name of Health and Correct Behavior"
5. Small Indulgences -- thinking highly enough about yourself to treat yourself well
6. Anchoring -- renewing our spirits by grabbing on to a line of hope, our anchor
7. Egonomics -- appealing to customer's individuality, no niche too small
8. FemaleThink -- being awake and aware of the differences (Popcorn and Marigold point out that 88% of BrainReserve's staff is female)
9. Mancipation -- emancipation of men or the flipside of FemaleThink
10. 99Lives -- coping with time-compressed lifestyles, "the land of multiple images"
11. Cashing Out -- quality of life issues are leading people to leave the corporate world
12. Being Alive -- *Popcorn Report* talked about Staying Alive, now we say survival isn't good enough it's about quality of life
13. Down Aging -- throwing out the rules and constraints which dictate how we should behave by certain points in our life
14. Vigilante customer -- consumer of today is militant, one sector she speaks to is warrior parents fighting for their children and gives the example of Carroll O'Connor after his son died of a drug overdose
15. Icon Toppling -- "by-the-books business world" has changed, with people throwing out the way things used to be as the rule of thumb
16. S.O.S. (Save Our Society) -- a global wake-up call, making the world safe for ourselves and our children and protecting our known world.

Clicking is an easy to read book, offering practical no-nonsense images for our personal and business lives. The book is full of what I'd call "Popcorn/Marigoldisms" -- words they have coined to fit the world as they see it. Their philosophy is one of believing that trends offer a compass to the future -- the key is knowing how to read the trends and move in the right direction. They discuss a "Click Screen" as a reality check asking yourself three questions:

- Trendworthiness -- is it on or off trend
- Longevity
- Viability -- is the segment large enough to "make a loud click?"

Further, they believe that "super-successful ideas" are supported by at least four trends. While healthcare is not a specific topic -- our industry can apply lessons learned from trends discussed. The authors suggest forming your own brainstorming group once you have measured your idea(s) against the click screen. Include your friends, family members, co-workers and use the moderator's guides included in the book for these sessions. In addition to ideas, they offer this same methodology in terms of career evaluation.

BrainReserve (with Popcorn and Marigold) "Braille the Culture" getting clients ready for the future, *Clicking* gets readers ready for the current business world and offers a glimpse into the next century.