

# Conclusion

We've looked at two decades of kinship between the underground scenes that define themselves as an alternative to the mainstream, and maverick businesses seeking to make a quantum leap. At times when the market is in need of innovation and the means of identity expression is in need of diversity, the collision of the two is what challenges the status quo and shapes the zeitgeist. By being at the intersection between economics and culture at a particular stage of technological development, grassroots movements – and by extension the mavericks that share their ideals and aesthetic sensibilities – are the precursors of future trends. They trigger change in established business models and influence the mainstream style and communication industries. At the same time, with every subcultural coming-of-age moment, there is a further step towards positive change in the guise of facilitating liberties.

By the nature of their being a cycle ahead of mainstream consumption behaviours, grassroots movements are attractive to marketers. I have discussed their trajectory from the underground into the mainstream in terms of crossover and sell-out. This is the language of rock 'n' roll, invented in the 1960s, the 'homeland of hip', when hip and rock 'n' roll (an attitude rather than a musical genre) became synonymous. Hip was rebellious. It was about rejecting conformity in favour of individual expression. Paradoxically, this refusal to conform made hip the perfect vehicle for the constant reinvention of new consumption cycles. By rebelling against what it had previously patronised, hip became the lifeblood of consumer society...