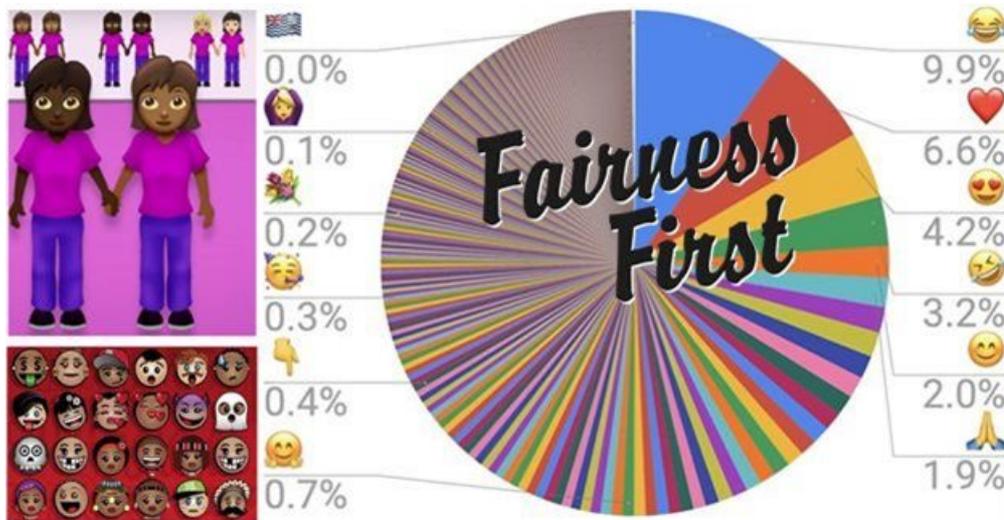


A picture's worth a thousand words - make sure yours speak of inclusivity

By Leigh Andrews

10 Feb 2020

Social justice has never had a better time to shine than in 2020, especially following the global #MeToo movement and #AmINext here in SA. UN Women has taken this to heart by asking everyone to rethink their word use to fight gender bias, while the next batch of emojis is set to be the most inclusive yet.



The call for inclusion grows stronger by the day and the adage that the pen is mightier than the sword still holds true.

In light of this, UN Women has published a social media post titled, 'What you say matters':

Actively aiming to use more inclusive language also means you're aware of stereotypes that may worsen incidents of racism, xenophobia and GBV.

Speaking words of inclusion

We all need to be aware of the words we use and how they impact others around us.



#FairnessFirst: We're all part of the problem. Rethink GBV normalisation

Leigh Andrews 16 Dec 2019



Building on the theme of the power of words, we also need to think more creatively about the way we communicate, as 'attention spam' is a real thing.



#BizTrends2018: Rewind from attention spam back to attention span

Leigh Andrews 8 Jan 2018



“*Luckily, we can streamline our communications as there's no denying that a single picture often does the job of a thousand words – a photo that captures the moment can do more than roughly two A4 pages of carefully-worded text.*”

Sharing the emotion of emoji

Emojis even more so, as there's no need to translate them into a specific language in order to convey emotion and even humanise an otherwise overly formal memo, when used sparingly.



#FairnessFirst: Welcome the most diverse emoji set yet

Leigh Andrews 18 Feb 2019



Their very universality is the reason we always celebrate the latest release of emoticons from Unicode, as they're used on most communication devices the world over, whether you're a WhatsApp whizz or Facebook Messenger is your preferred chat platform.

In fact, a 2016 [infographic by CMO](#) revealed that 92% of the world's online population already used emojis back then.

What to expect from the next emoji pack

So, as I wrote about last year's Unicode update:

“*In today's time-starved world, why struggle to put something into words when a few well-placed emojis can do all the*



Bringing diversity to messaging app

15 Oct 2019



With the first emoji set brought into play in 1997, [Scroll In](#) reveals that new skin tones were only built into the Unicode in 2015, with the 2019 update having placed more emphasis on living with a disability.

The 2020 update, AKA 'Unicode 13.0' and coming to your mobile device in September 2020, promises not only 55 skin tone and gender variants, but more focus on gender-inclusive emoji in the form of a man feeding a baby, a person in tuxedo, a ninja and even a non-gendered Santa Claus.



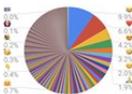
2020 emoji will include pinched fingers, bubble tea and more gender-inclusivity

Shereesa Moodley 30 Jan 2020



Interestingly, the Unicode Consortium has found that the least-used emoji after country flags are the 'couple with children' variants.

Unicode revealed this information to help people who submit new emoji for approval to better understand what users prefer.



These are the world's most popular emoji according to Unicode

Shereesa Moodley 16 Oct 2019



So, while it's a positive step forward in that there are more inclusive options than ever before, that doesn't mean you'll see them popping up in all your chats going forward.

The most-used emoji remain the non-gendered and culturally-neutral favourites of the 'laughing-cry' face, the red heart, heart eyes, prayer hands, crying face and flame.

It seems a picture truly does tell a thousand words...

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

Leigh Andrews AKA the #MilkshakeQueen, is former Editor-in-Chief: Marketing & Media at Bizcommunity.com, with a passion for issues of diversity, inclusion and equality, and of course, gourmet food and drinks! She can be reached on Twitter at @Leigh_Andrews.

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