

Ziba Insight Report

Issue 6 of 6

Future of Community

QUANTUM CLARITY

The concept of community is being reshaped into self-managed, peer-to-peer trust networks. The future of market creation lies with brands that support consumers in self-assigned roles creating dynamic, influential new communities that transform culture and inspire the creation of whole industries.

Quantum Clarity 2021

Future of Community

Having a sense of community unites us and being a part of community can make us feel like we are part of something greater than ourselves.

Beyond connectivity and belonging, community also has a more practical function as a validation tool. Across communities large and small, groups of humans come together and recognize patterns—those patterns establish an authentic, shared source of truth. New, self-organizing models of micro-communities are establishing the foundation for what will be good, true, and trusted in the decade ahead.

How might your brand engage through new roles in community?

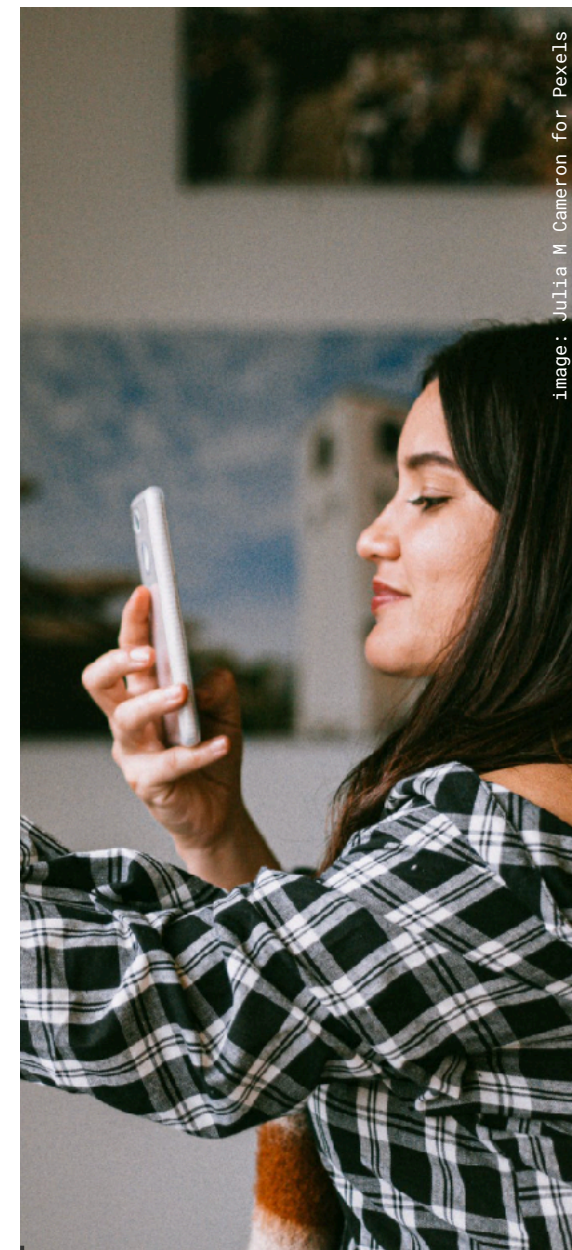


image: Julia M. Cameron for Pexels

10%

Average Instagram engagement rates jump from 2.67% to 7-10% with a marketing shift from macro- to nano-influencers.¹

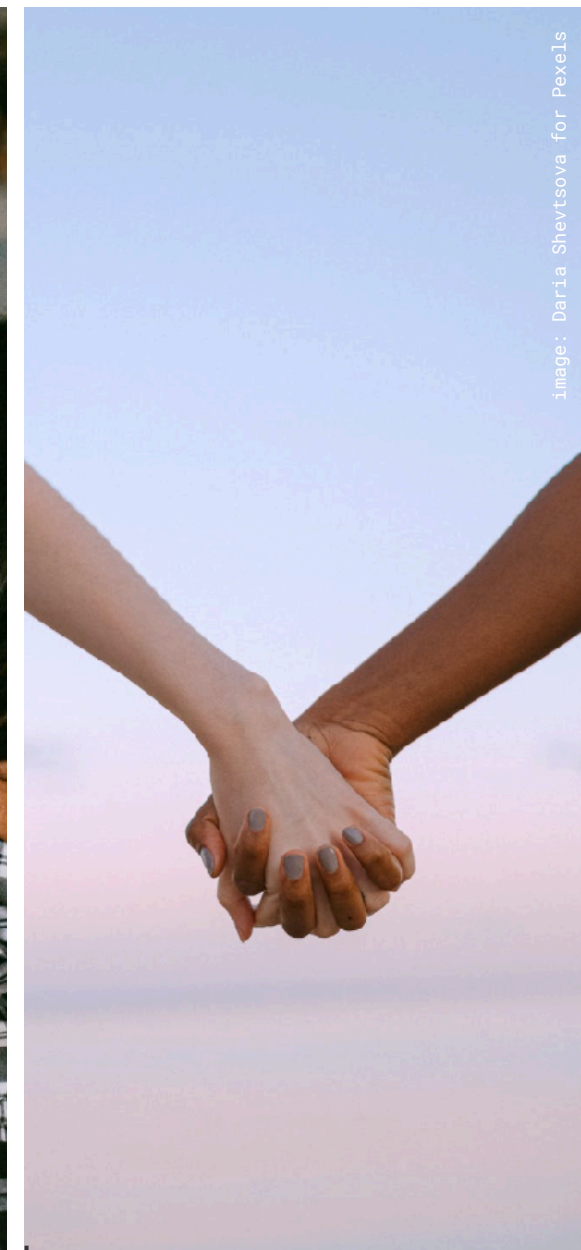


image: Daria Shevtsova for Pexels

>50K

Instagram influencers with fewer than 50,000 followers offer brands slightly higher average engagement rates (3.5%) than macro-influencers (2.67%).²

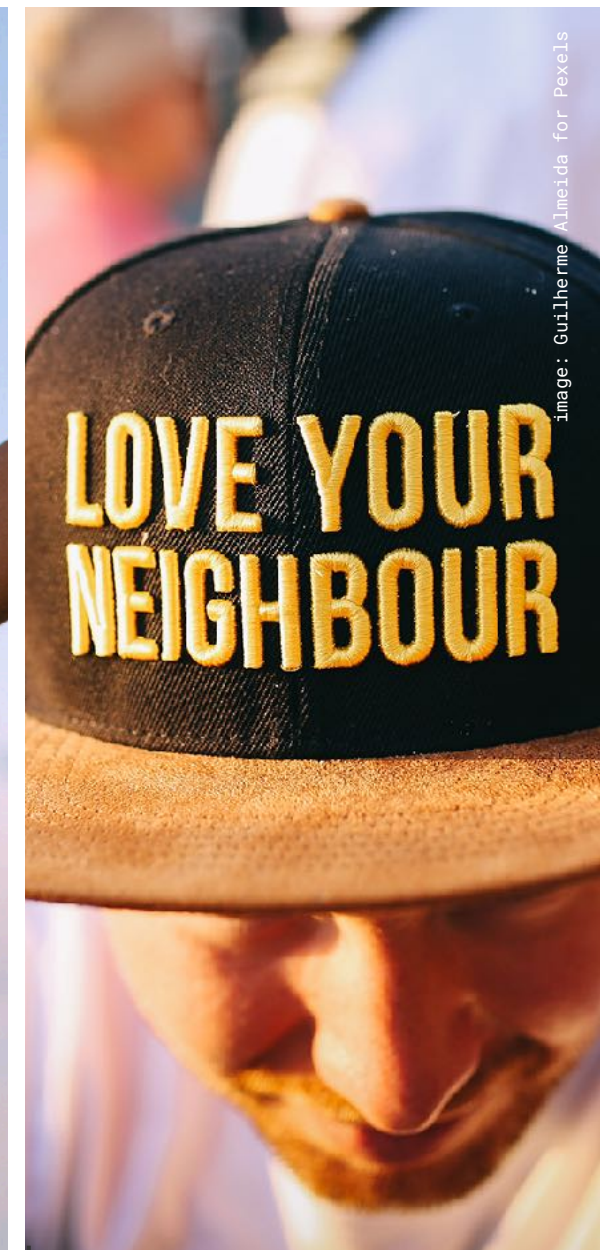


image: Guilherme Almeida for Pexels

88%

Eighty-eight percent of consumers anticipate that feeling more connected to their local communities is a sentiment that will remain long after the virus is contained.

Source¹: [State of Influence 2020](#)

Source²: [Friendship Report 2020](#) Snapchat

Consumers are eager for a remedy to digital isolation. Looking for any excuse to step into those casual everyday engagements that were once a staple of the human connection.

Nano Networks

Today's communities are self-organizing into networks of micro-cultures. These smaller groups become more valuable faster because of their influence, interconnectedness, and trust. Smart brands embrace these new decentralized networks to monetize, mobilize and co-create with fan communities and expand their reach. The challenge many brands face is how to move at the speed of these micro-communities and engage in the serendipity necessary to be a part of their everyday world.

Forward-thinking brands are asking what role they might play as they activate new initiatives for community-building. Rather than starting from scratch, savvy brands can support existing communities and their micro-influencers to become valued participants and instigators of engagement.

Centralized



Decentralized

Managed



Self-Managed

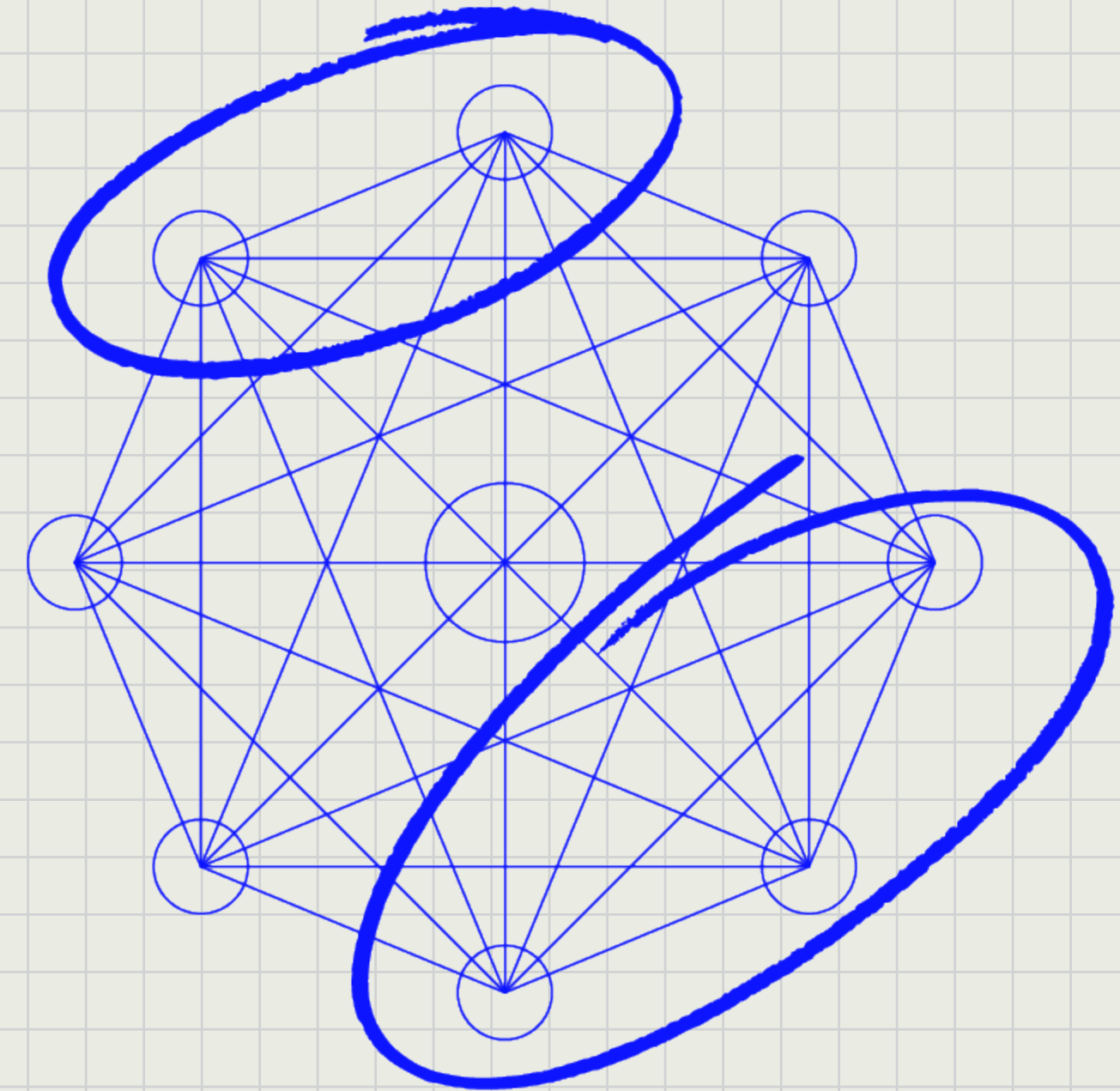
Sponsorships



Collaboratives

A constellation of brand-centric influencer-driven followers

A fluid ecosystem of peer-to-peer enabled trust systems



REED'S LAW

Networks may grow proportionally to the network size, but some micro-groups scale faster in value than others because of influence or interconnectedness.

SMALL BUT MIGHTY



The Opportunity

ROOTED LOVE

OPEN TO ALL

The opportunity is

Small But Mighty

Embracing The Nano-Influencer

Consumers with thousands of 'likes' are longing for just a few real soulmates to trust. Eager to engage in new, affirming and even vulnerable ways, consumers are searching for conversation and confirmation. Authentic, open, and honest brands are welcomed into these dialogues and become adored by influencers that curate nano-groups of connected followers.

THE OPPORTUNITY:

Intimacy at Scale

Bigger is not always better. The influencer market is expected to be worth more than \$14 billion over the next decade. Great potential lies for brands in partnerships, not only with influencers with large numbers of followers but with nano-influencers of fewer than 5,000 followers where brands can reach a more highly engaged consumer group in more intimate and trusted ways.

Nano-influencers and micro-niches are altering the nature of engagement for

everyone as consumers choose to trust these influencers' over established sources of information and entertainment – as they gather together around the metaphorical campfires of micro-communities.

Success is found in the support of online and offline fan groups and huddle spaces, recognizing the imperative of learning how to drive intimacy at scale. In addition, brands experience the value of self-motivated brand ambassadors and savvy new consumers when they serve them as problem-solvers, patrons, facilitators, educators, and ecosystem architects.

The next decade will see successful brands step back from center stage, but lean into support of the performance. Knowing that to be welcomed in as a valuable part of consumers' inner circle, they must empower consumers to discover their own meaningful roles in community and facilitate people to engage in cooperatives to find their own safe place within these new self-managed trust systems.

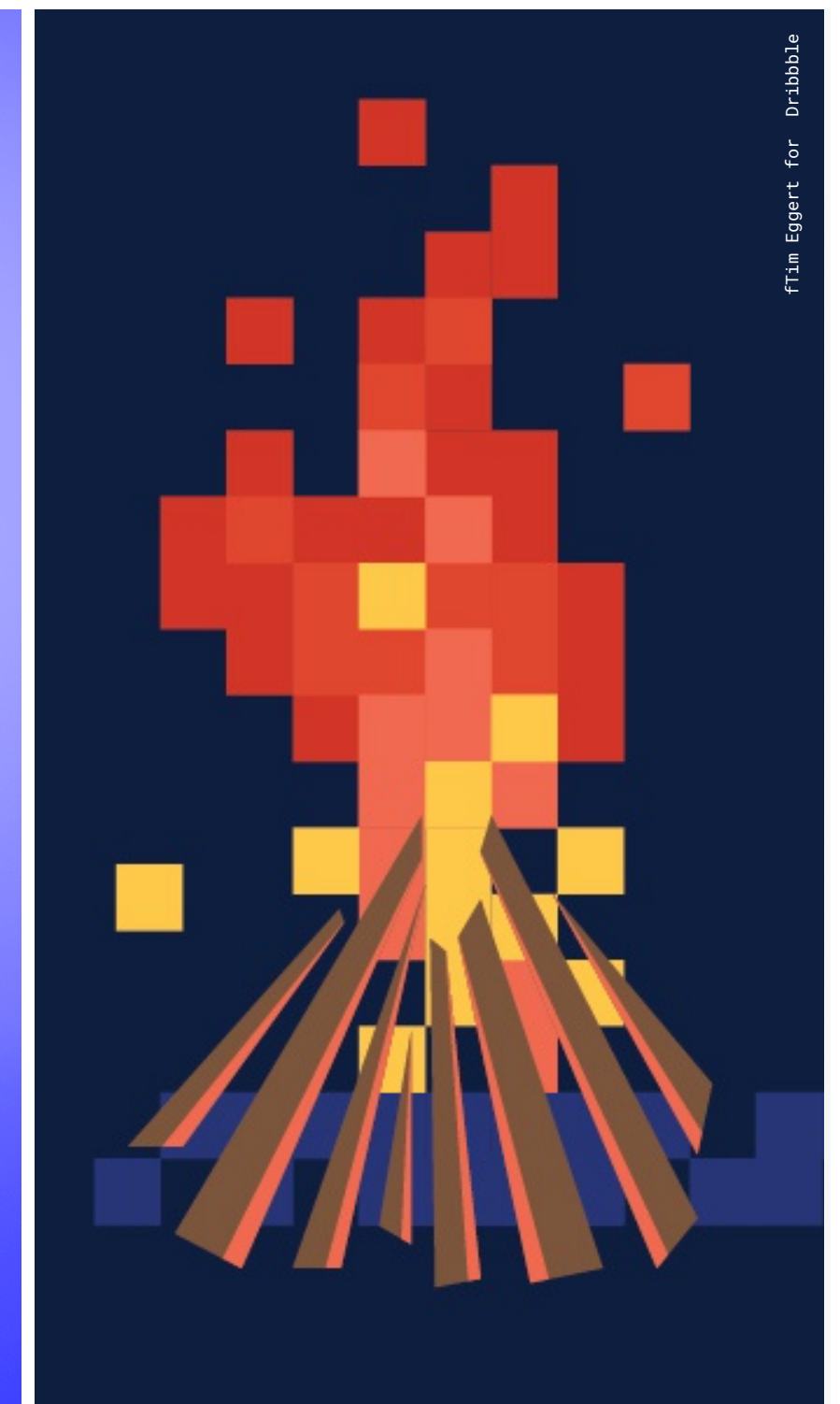


Image: Cottonbro for pexels

2010–19

THE DEATH OF INTIMACY

Consumers used social media as a broadcast tool in order to feel connected and to avoid the feeling of being left out of the group.



ftim Eggert for Dribbble

2020–30

FLAMES OF DESIRE

The rise of nano-influencers as educators and mentors in smaller private 'digital campfire settings' kindle new flames of desire for true vulnerability and intimacy.

Small But Mighty

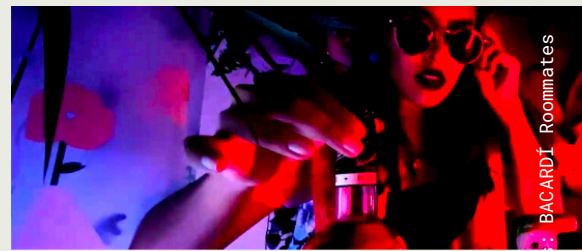


Image: Bacardi Roommates



Image: Behind The Scene



Image: Behind The Scene

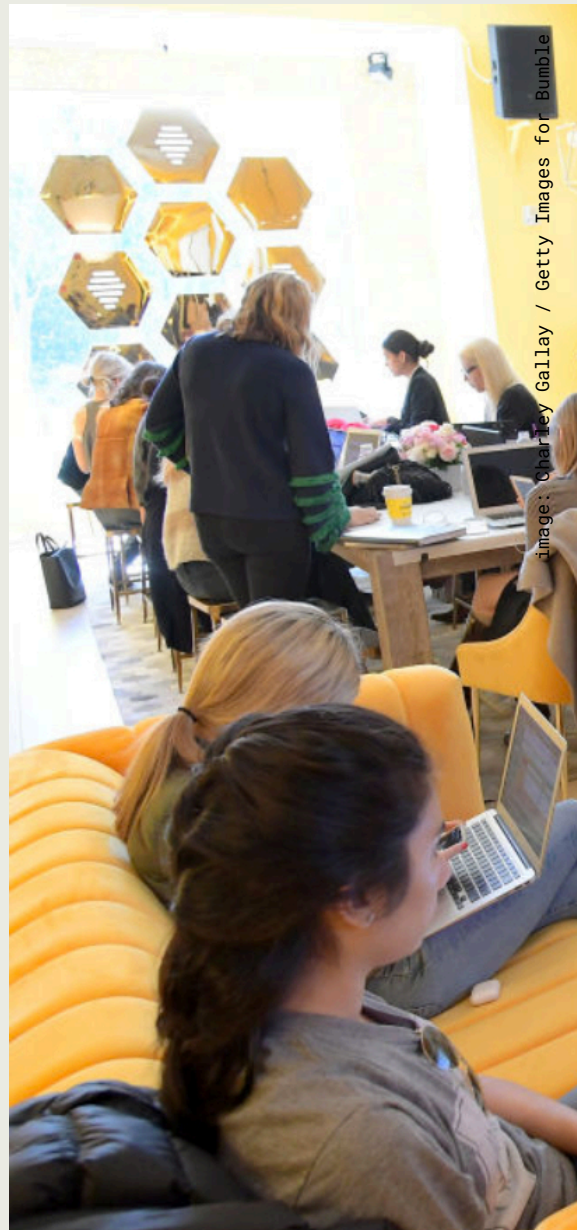


Image: Charley Gallay / Getty Images for Bumble



Image: Domestika

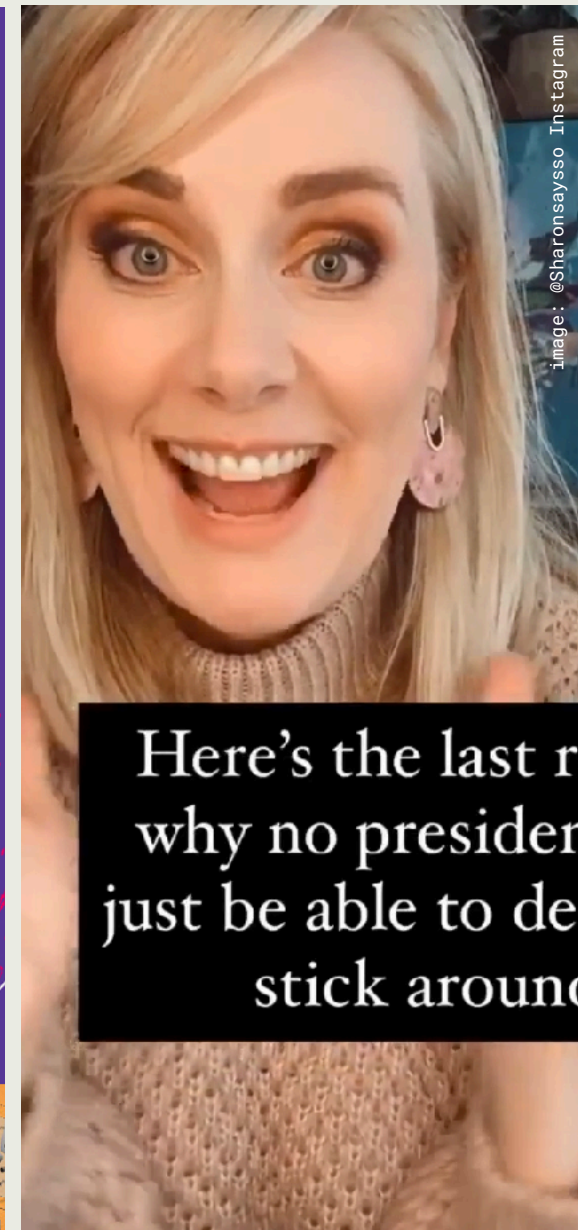


Image: @SharonSaysSo Instagram



Image: @RealGlowGang Instagram

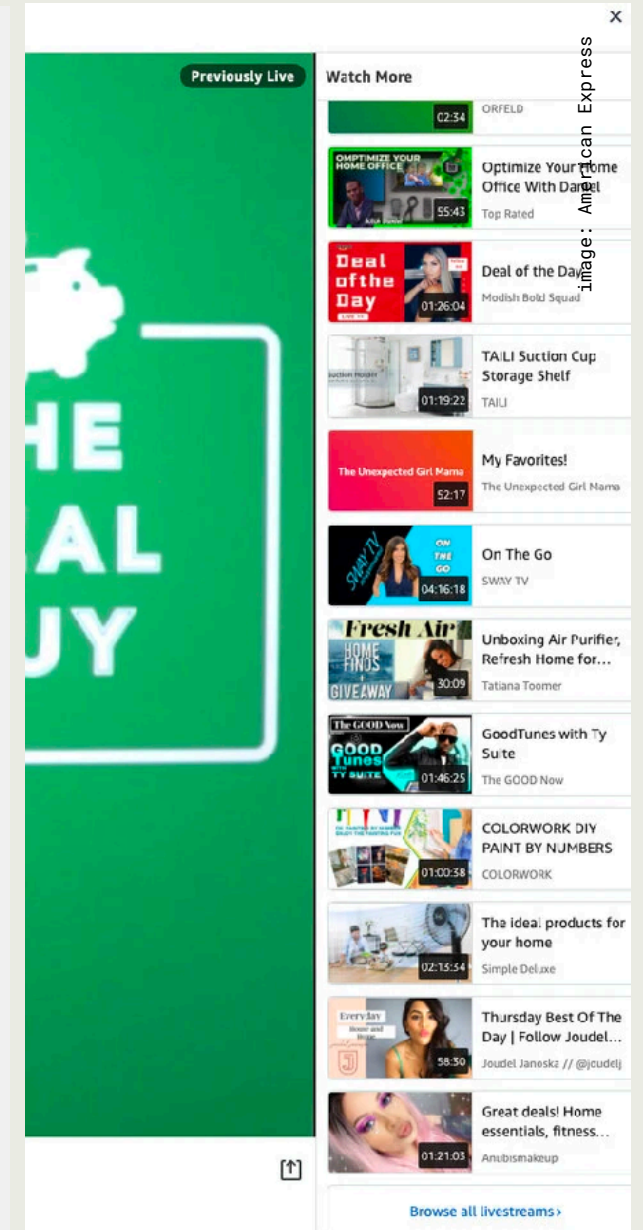


Image: Amazon Express

01

BACARDI CONCERTS

Connecting intentionally smaller digital audiences, Bacardi sponsors a series of geofenced concerts in lieu of summer festivals. Each show caps at 500 attendees to preserve the community vibe and connect those joining in new ways.

bacardi.com

02

BUMBLE BREW

Bringing people together in small spaces to build deeper connections, dating app Bumble introduces pop-up spaces and permanent small, physical all-day cafes and wine bars to promote meet ups.

bumblebrew.com

03

DOMESTIKA

Inviting participation in new and creative micro-communities – if only for a moment – Domestika offers intimate online courses hosted by warm and welcoming artists.

domestika.org

04

SHARON SAYS SO

Doing good together, Ex-teacher Sharon McMahon and her small but growing group of followers – Governerds – together generate \$2M+ in donations since 2020 from her Q&A platform on politics, history, and everything in between.

@SharonSaysSo

05

GLOW RECIPE

Celebrating diversity with friends, K-beauty brand Glow Recipe supports a private Instagram account for its followers, the Glow Gang, inviting conversation, panels, and events.

@RealGlowGang

06

AMAZON LIFE

Supporting an online space where micro-influencers livestream shows to small interactive audiences featuring products available on amazon, gaining followers and profits from sales for themselves.

amazon.com

The opportunity

Rooted Love

Responding To Local Desires

Consumers who could search anything, now search local, as searches for 'available near me' grew more than 100% globally in the last year. A new era of consumers with shifting attitudes about how and where they live, work, and play are eager to support brands that think and act locally. Brands who 'revillage' with them, support the things that matter most to them and their communities.

THE OPPORTUNITY:

Curated Connections

Consumers now say they prefer to buy goods and services produced in their own countries and communities. Dominant brands more effectively connect with these local-minded consumers when their presence respects and reflects the distinctive culture and particular needs of their chosen locale.

Intangible expressions of love aren't enough to establish loyalty among locals. Consumers expect brands to micro-size their operations to respond to local needs at accessible, efficient, locally oriented hubs using community resources and reasonable prices. Small town thinking is the path to consumers' loyalty and to securing a place in their hearts and minds.

Thinking close to home, power of scale may need to be rethought as consumers are demanding brands do more and behave better to fit in.

The next decade will see brands sustain engagement to the extent they understand that localism isn't a passing fad; it is a movement with deep and enduring roots in humanity's growing craving to feel, to trust, and to find meaning in community.



image: slon.pics

2010–19

GLOBAL ACCESS

The jet-setter of the last decade flowed seamlessly from one place to the next, taking pride in the number of stamps on their passport.



image: DGT Portraits for Pixels

2020–30

CONNECTED EXPLORATION

Being grounded and rooted wherever you go guides safe wandering and local exploration, discovering deep knowledge and experience in fewer locales.

Rooted Love



Image: Nike

01

NIKE LIVE

Responding to community preferences, neighborhood stores emphasize localization tailoring the assortment, design and community engagement elements to what customers in the area want most with weekly 'drops'.

[Nike.com](https://www.nike.com)


Image: Etsy Made Local 2015

02

ETSY MARKETS

Promoting real, physical, engagements, Etsy local markets bring together local sellers for in-person selling events just in time for shoppers to find gifts for loved ones during holiday and event seasons.

[Etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com)


Image: Street Stewards



03

STREET STEWARDS

Empowering people to band together and take care of their communities, Street Stewards allows residents to "adopt" a block and commit to picking up trash once a week. A shared map tracks commitments and grows as the service spreads across communities.

[streetstewards.com](https://www.streetstewards.com)


Image: Bed-Stuy Strong



04

BED-STUY STRONG

Matching local volunteers with nearby residents who are elderly, disabled, immunocompromised, or otherwise unable to leave their homes due to COVID, Bed-stuy is a mutual aid group of neighbors helping other neighbors to buy groceries or other supplies.

[bedstuystrong.com](https://www.bedstuystrong.com)


Image: Ridwell

05

RIDWELL COMMUNITY

Uniting like-minded neighbors with a desire to minimize waste, Ridwell collects hard-to-recycle items like plastic bags, bubble wrap, batteries, light bulbs, and clothing that aren't allowed in curbside recycling bins.

[ridwell.com](https://www.ridwell.com)


Image: Kroger

06

KROGER + KITCHEN UNITED

Supporting local businesses, Kroger and Kitchen United team up to host ghost kitchens inside grocery stores. Ghost kitchens allow restaurants to prepare meals strictly for takeout or delivery, sometimes with multiple brands under one roof.

[Kroger.com](https://www.kroger.com)

The opportunity

Open to All

A Spark Of Serendipity

Though the world out there may not feel as safe as it once did, consumers still long for the less expected and serendipitous encounters. Today's self-serving algorithms strangle serendipity by exposing consumers only to things they already know or care about, but also by robbing them of a life of chance and surprise. Consumers are eager to engage with brands that foster the kind of human surprises that resonate and make us feel alive and connected.

THE OPPORTUNITY:

Diversity Algorithms

Brands will sustain engagement by preserving consumers' sense of control while also inviting them to risk a surprise human encounter. As a result, brands may go it alone but more likely will choose to engage in unexpected collaborations to spark new opportunities.

Smart brands recognize the unique power of diversity to foster opportune moments of delight. They curate interactions that

help consumers realize that a greater sense of control arises from feeling at peace in a surprising and unexpected world rather than in staying at home, fearful of anything different or changing.

Embracing accidental discovery can shatter the monotony of months of hunkering down. Consumers value brands that promote diversity and discovery, acting rather as a role model and provocateur.

Standardization and homogeneity will be viewed as a barrier to the serendipity that sustains attraction. An incubator mentality nurtures and grows a culture of collective appreciation for the differences among us.

The next decade of consumer experience will be defined by brands that leverage community as a way to expose eager consumers to a broader world. Thus, enabling all to be open to more creativity and authenticity in how we think, feel, and act in the world.

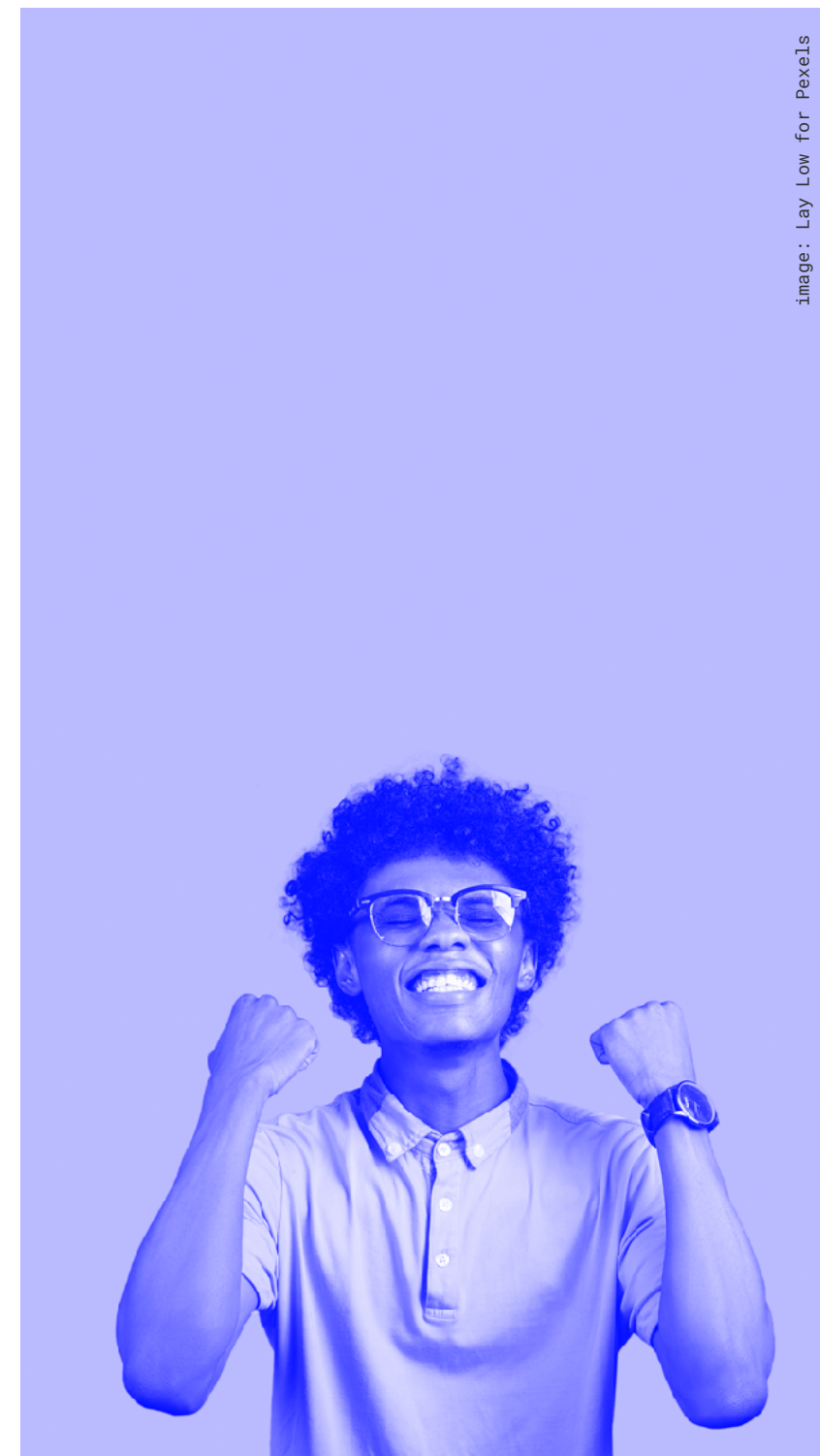


image: Lay Low for Pexels

2010–19

PLANNED CURATION

Smart, consumer-centric systems evolved to curate an endless set of choices into a smaller set of 'preferences' tailored to online behaviors.

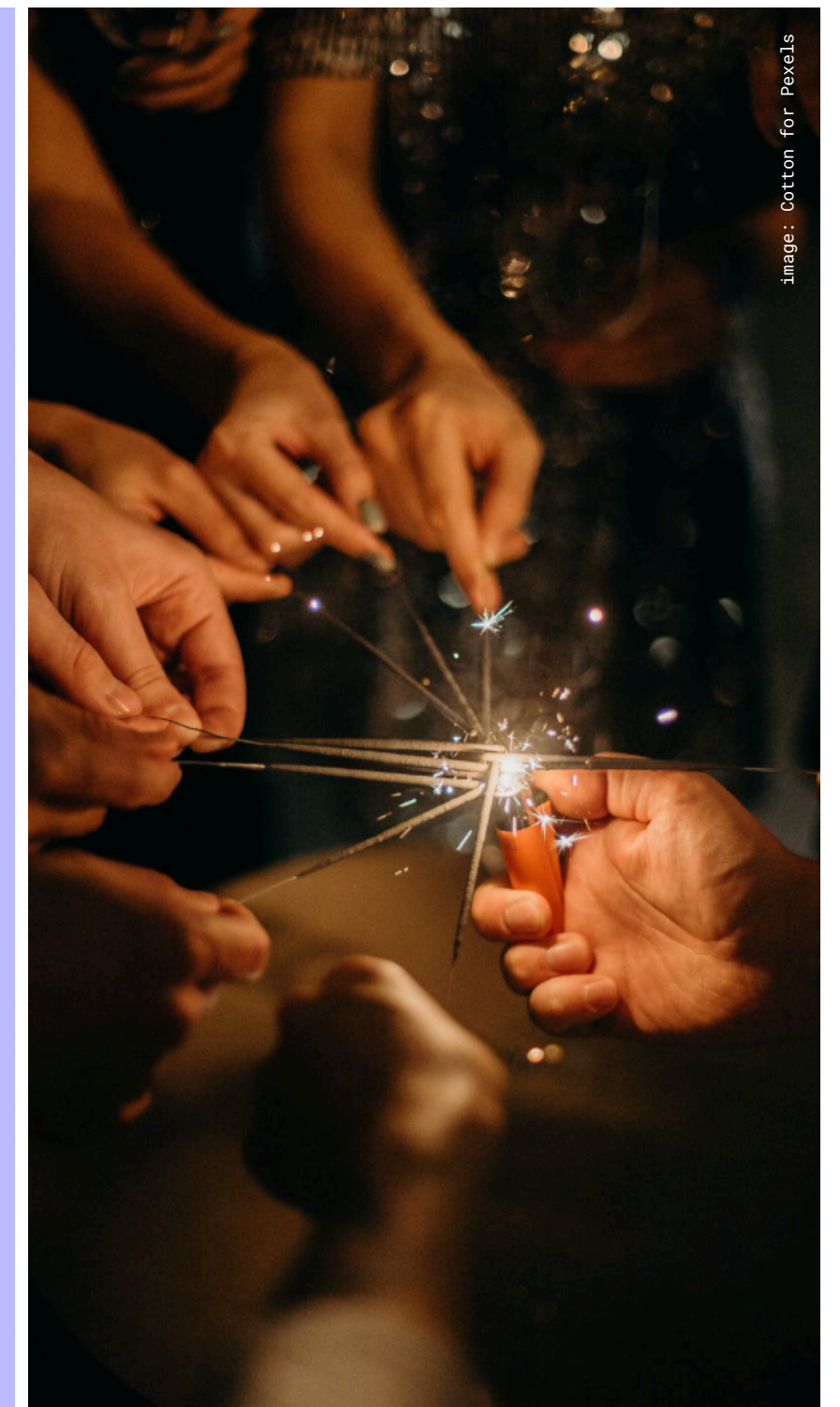


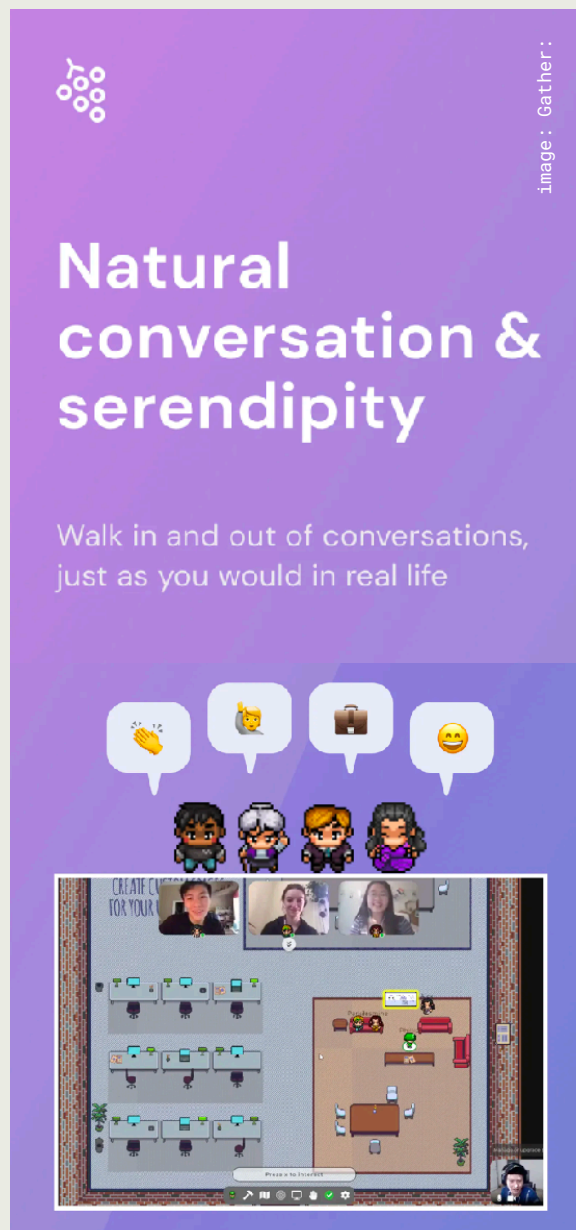
image: Cotton for Pexels

2020–30

BRAVE ENCOUNTERS

Bravely searching out systems that surprise us with serendipity, collaboration, and openness to community.

Open to All



01

GATHER.TOWN

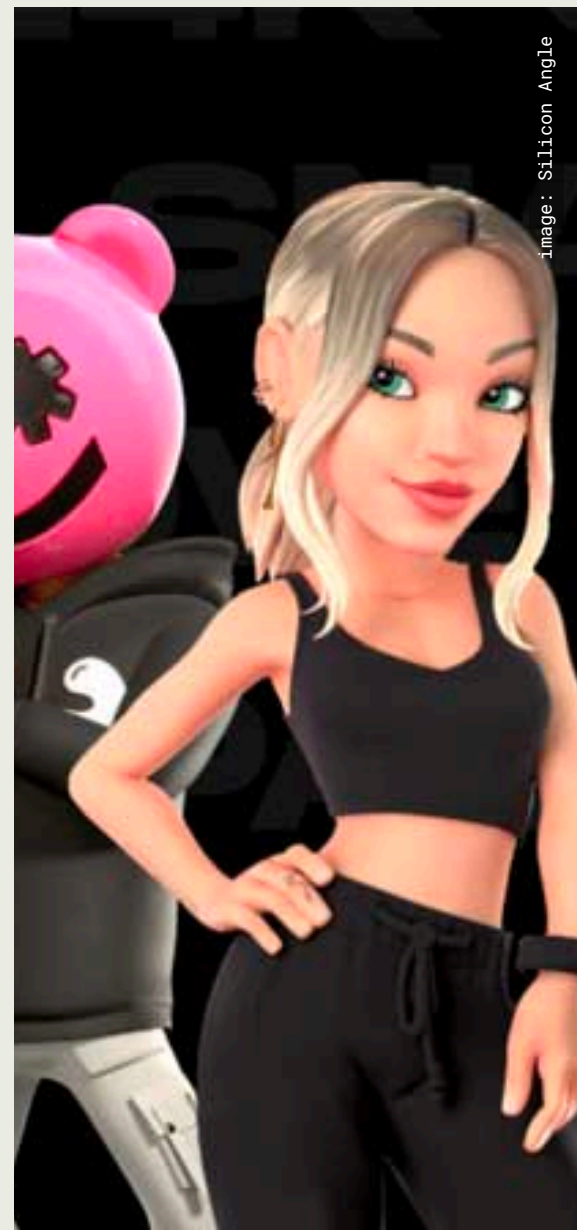
Fostering a new online meeting experience, Gather.town offers a spatial meeting platform that brings a little serendipity to remote gatherings. As with real-life gatherings, participants are free to form small groups, have side conversations, and more.

gather.town


02

CLUBHOUSE

Seeking group drama, gossip, and entertainment, Clubhouse, a new type of social network based on voice—bring people from around the world together to talk, listen and learn from each other in real-time.

joinclubhouse.com


03

GENIES

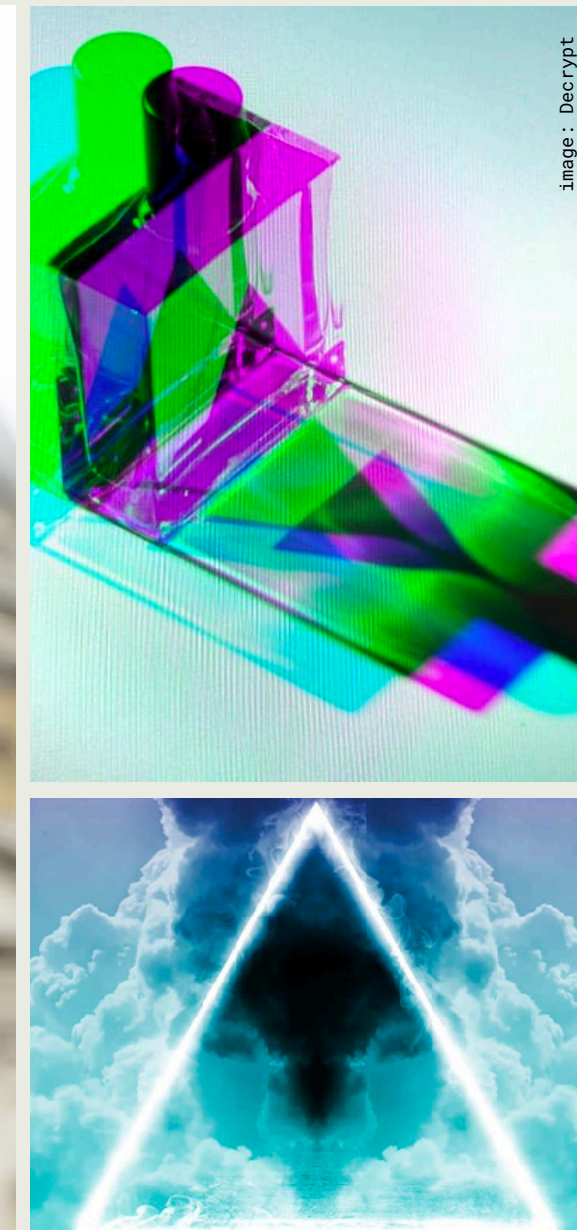
Experiencing a fantasy version of yourself, Genies offers surprising engagements and brings people closer together as they express their authentic selves through intelligent avatars and dynamic online communities.

genies.com


04

FIND UNLIMITED

Rediscovering the world together, Vodafone's augmented-reality game, brings unexpected people together in search of Vatoms (virtual tokens) using their smartphones.

blockv.io


05

METAVERSE SCENT

Join a DAO dedicated to olfactory exploration to explore the possible fragrance notes of the 'Metaverse,' buy-in to collaborate in creating the scent.

rookperfumes.co.uk


06

AMEX POP-UP DINER

Cultivating micro-connection points, AMEX brings unexpected community members together through pop-up diner events. Takeout is available to anyone, but Amex Gold Card holders dine-in together.

americanexpress.com

Business Opportunities

Small But Mighty

Rise of Squad Culture

Rooted Love

Catalysts For Connections

Open to All

The Spark Of Serendipity

HOW MIGHT YOUR BRAND ENGAGE THROUGH NEW ROLES IN COMMUNITY?

The future of community is grounded in new approaches to building trust systems through small, diverse, and intimate group engagement. Brands that recognize their potential role to engage in communities will scale relationships with consumers over the next decade. Consumers' will benefit in new ways from these communities of the future.

Increasing customer retention by 5% can increase profits by up to 95%.

88% of consumers want you to help them make a difference

Source: Harvard Business Review

HOW MIGHT YOUR BRAND BUILD AND/OR PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY?

Future Proofing:

Build Momentum with clarity & conviction. Ziba.

Trend analysts define trends, but Ziba makes meaning of trends in the context of our clients' businesses by applying our core competencies in Design Thinking and Design Making. We design relevant innovations and customer experiences that are actionable and future proofed, setting our clients up for success tomorrow, starting today.

Ziba has only one metric for success, and that's the success of our clients.

LET'S GET STARTED

Quantum Clarity Future Proofing Workshop

Future Proof your products and services in a scalable, quick-results workshop. Your team will conduct a 6-point Quantum Clarity diagnostic to identify your competitive advantage and refine initiatives roadmaps that align with new opportunities for growth and impact.

Experience Design & Innovation

Ziba can help you cross the chasm into the Future of Community. Collaborate with us to reimagine digital and physical experiences for the future. We'll help you clarify your vision and we won't stop until it's realized.

Contact Ziba at 503.223.9606
or quantumclarity@ziba.com

Thank you

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