

Ziba Insight Report

Issue 3 of 6

# Future of Play

2020 - 2030

QUANTUM CLARITY

The future of brand engagement and loyalty will be led by brands that leverage gamification, game theory and behavioral economics to develop the rules and boundaries that motivate and captivate a chronically distracted audience.

Quantum Clarity 2020

# Future of Play

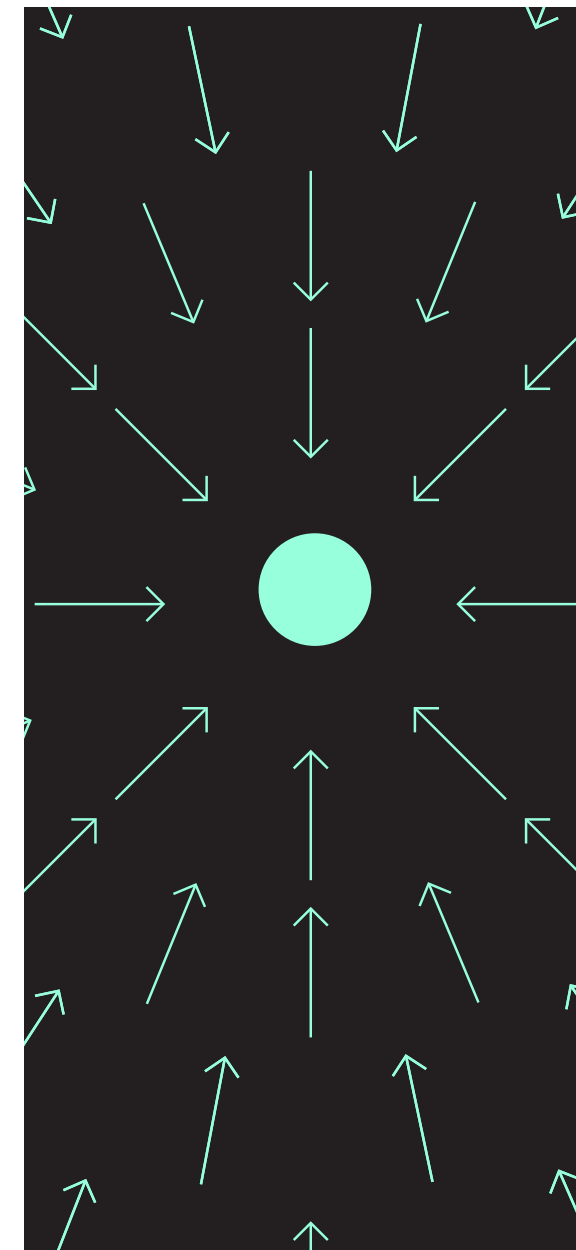
New models of engagement are emerging in response to the seriousness of the world, to social upheaval, to boredom, and to the fact that it seems like no one can focus these days. Chronic distraction crowds the brain and fills the mind with noise, and relationships suffer as people turn inward and swing between emotional numbness and overdrive.

Brands have a social obligation to lead: to step up, step into people's lives, and identify new and healthy ways to engage. Behavioral science confirms the healing power of play and play's capacity to restore focus. When brands gamify GOOD things into their offerings that do GOOD for people, they add value and rekindle the thrill of consumption in order to win the attention war and build fierce loyalty.

# How might your brand engage consumers in play to build loyalty?

"The problem is not the technology, it is what has happened to one's brain with the overuse of technology. Lack of focus is epidemic."

Source: Nurse Journal



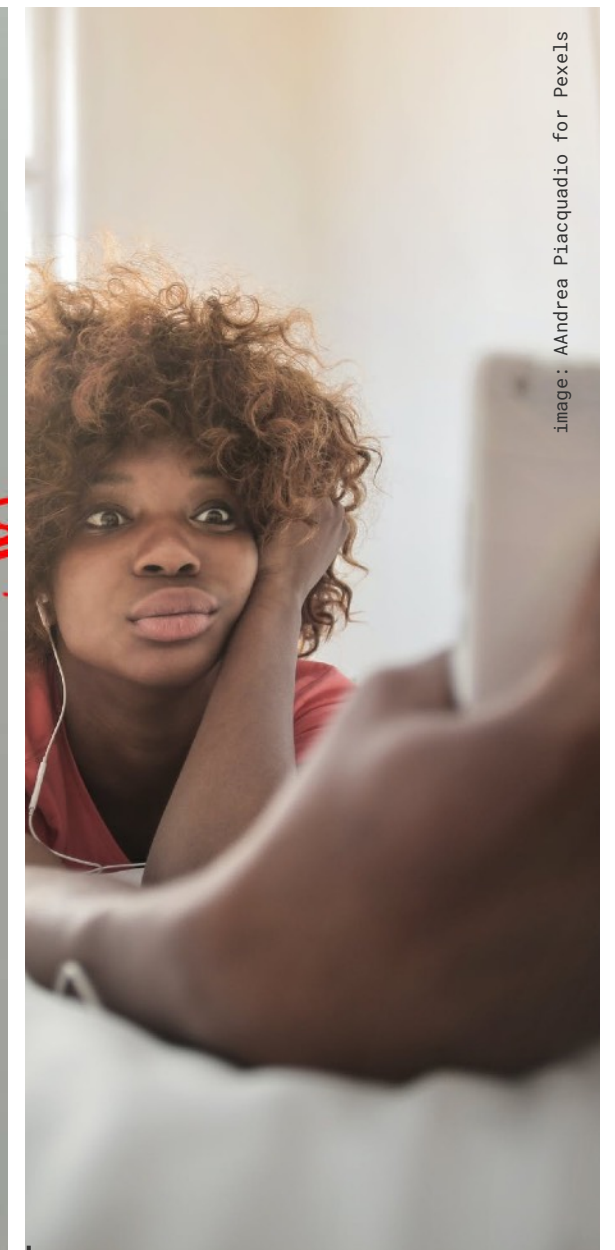
## 40% +

The brain is capable of amazing results when allowed to concentrate on one issue at a time; having to shift all its resources from one thing to another decreases performance by as much as 40%.



## 80% +

CDC reports that today 80% of medical expenditures are due to **stress**.



## 185% +

In the midst of the coronavirus, people are seeing the screen time jump to as high as 185% of their usual interactions.

Consumers feel more and more distracted and isolated amidst our changing world -- aware enough to realize that their digital addictions are rewiring their brains in unhealthy ways — but too numb, destabilized, and bombarded to take action and re-engage in real, meaningful ways.

# The ROI of Play

Smart, connected brands with a finger on the pulse of their consumers are recognizing the value of engaging people in deeper conversations in order to build strong, lasting relationships. Their track records shows that loyal, repeat consumers are overwhelmingly more profitable for business, especially in today's digitally connected, social media driven world, as loyal consumers do much more for a brand than purely generate revenue on purchases.

**Increasing consumer retention by just 5% can increase profits by up to 95%.\***

Products, services, and experiences intentionally designed using the science of game mechanics and behavioral psychology contain the experiential building blocks necessary to engage consumers over time. The innovative application of game mechanics to experience design gives brands an innovative new way to invite consumers, as players, into pleasurable experiences designed to delight and sustain desire.

When building relationships through play, brands have the opportunity to play three gamified roles: PLAYMATE, PLAYMAKER and PROVOCATEUR. Responsible brands use savvy play in ways that do GOOD, helping consumers rewire their brains in positive ways and supporting the healthy habit-forming behaviors that drive growth, loyalty and sustained engagement.

TODAY

## Promotion

Based on entertainment and the promise of escape.



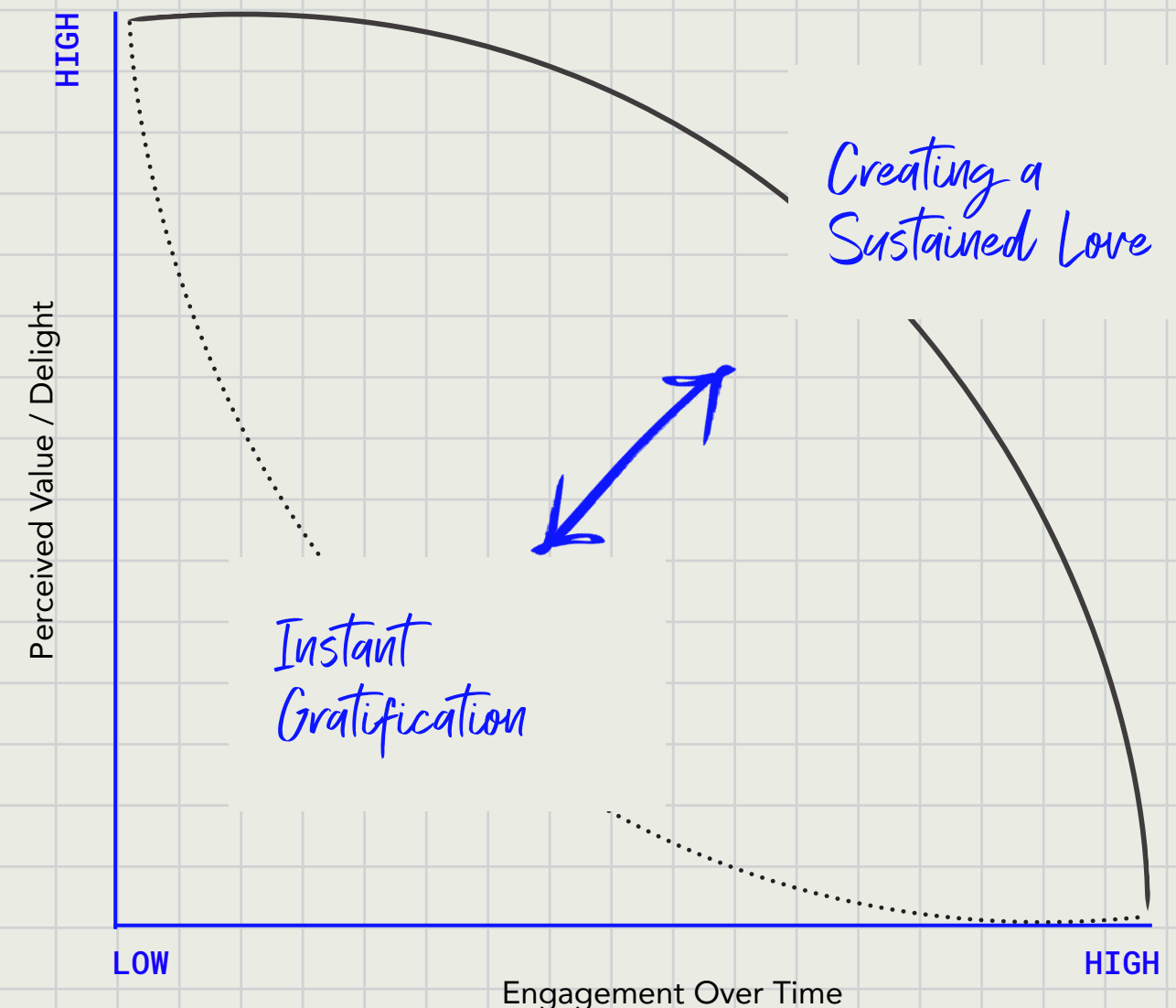
THE FUTURE

## Collaboration

Play-based engagement that drive relationship and focused attention.

\*Source: Harvard Business Review

## HOW TO WIN THE ATTENTION WAR



### Instant Gratification

First experience is super heightened in value and emotion, but over time their expectations turn the once novel into the expected and demanded.

### Sustained Love

Experiences that engage game mechanics and storytelling engage consumers more deeply over time as collaborators and active participants in the experience.

Play Nice

# The Opportunity

Playing w/ Fire

ForePlay

The opportunity is

# Play Nice

# Rewired for Karma.

Play is the perfect vehicle for consumers to explore new forms of social engagement and learn about themselves. It invites people to focus on being human again: getting involved in each other's lives, showing a little more kindness, and bringing back more good karma.

Play opens up opportunities for brands to be welcomed into consumers' lives, and has the advantage of increasing consumer retention. Brands that step into this opportunity with a playmate mindset will engage even more deeply with consumers, helping them to focus on enjoying life and incentivizing everyone to play nice.

## THE OPPORTUNITY:

## Become a Playmate

Play-based experiences can help consumers re-train their brains to seek out opportunities for kindness and empathy. When consumer engagements are designed with this game-based intention in mind, brands become an important catalyst for good in the world.

Playmate-inspired experiences support choice, empowerment, and social status associated with engagement actions. They create the rules and rewards necessary to guide and encourage positive action. The secret to successful karma-inducing game play is giving people 'choice.' Not all options must be good, but there is simply more reward and acknowledgement associated with those that are. Choice enables positive repeated actions that more deeply rewire the brain to seek out more good in the world.

Do business with kindness and you'll get 10x performance. By giving more, you get more in business.\*

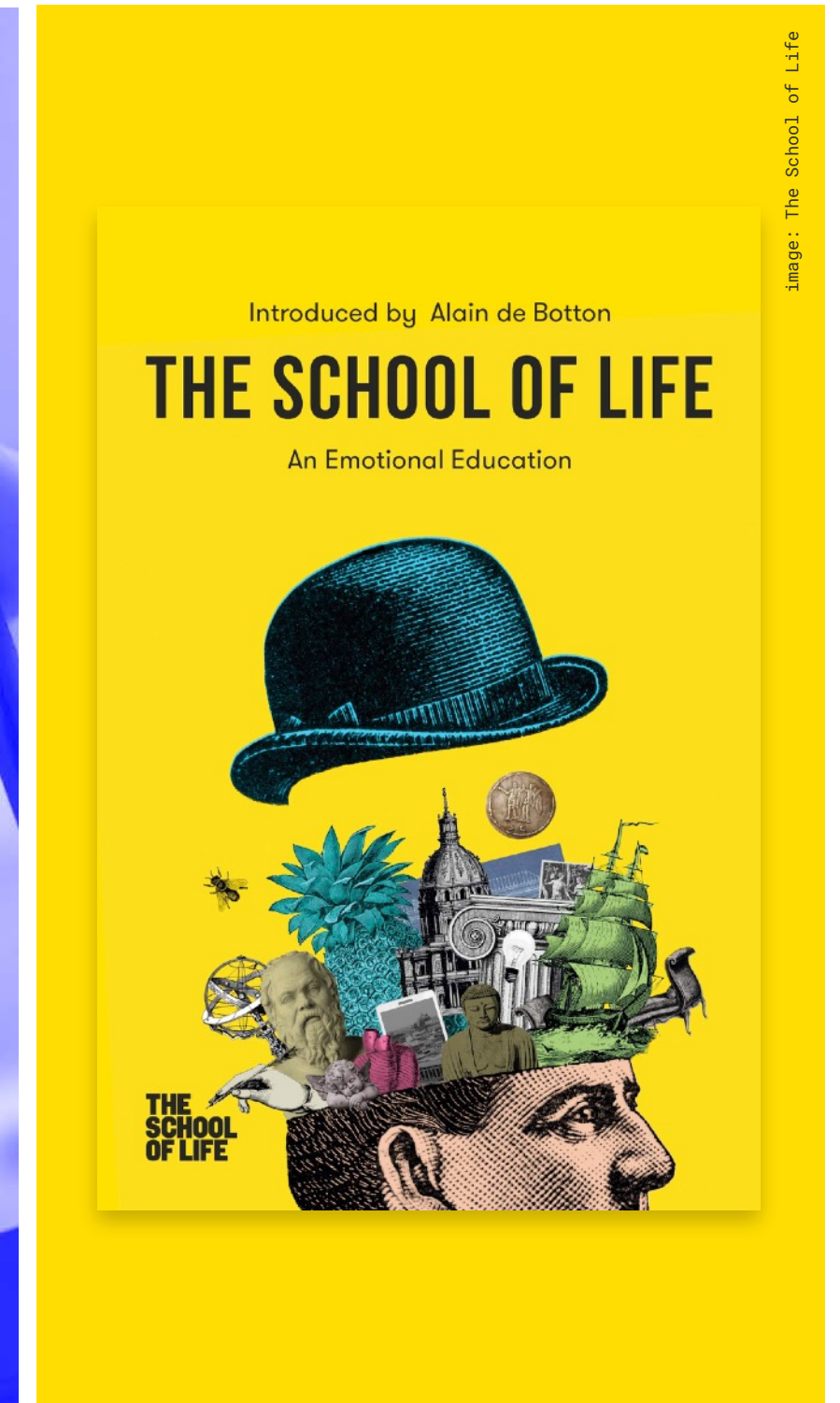
*Even small acts of kindness create emotional warmth by releasing the hormone oxytocin, promoting feelings of love, social bonding and well-being.*

\* Source: [medium](#)



# 2010-19

**SOCIAL & FEAR OF MISSING OUT**  
Facilitation of instantaneous social and consumerist connections.

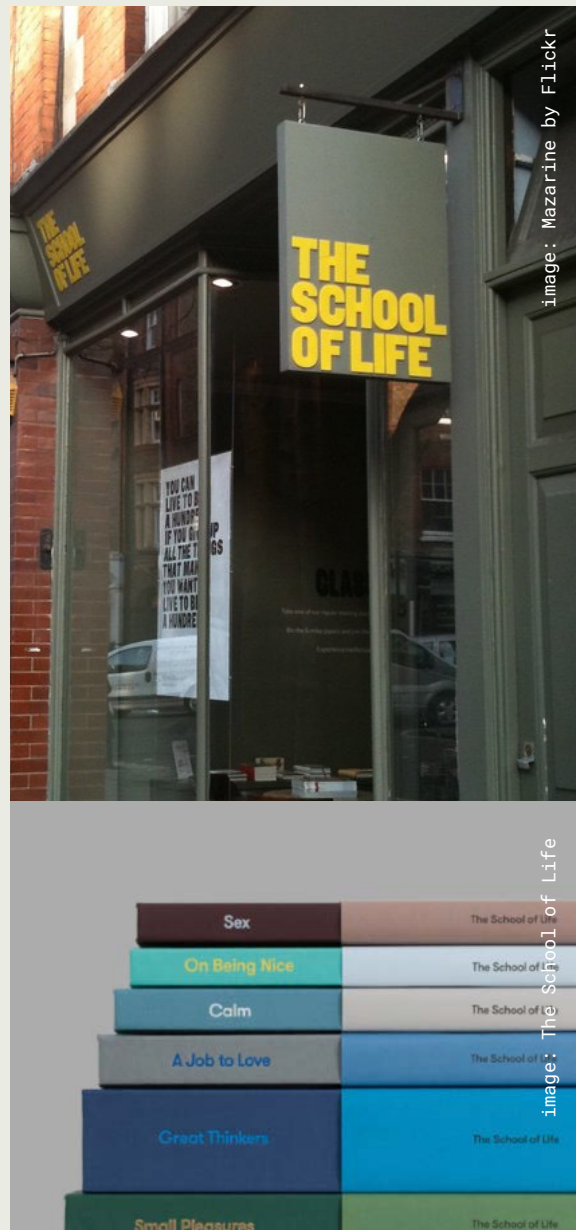


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# 2020-30

**EMPATHY & ADDRESSING REAL FEELINGS**  
Investment in and modeling of relationships and human engagement.

## Play Nice

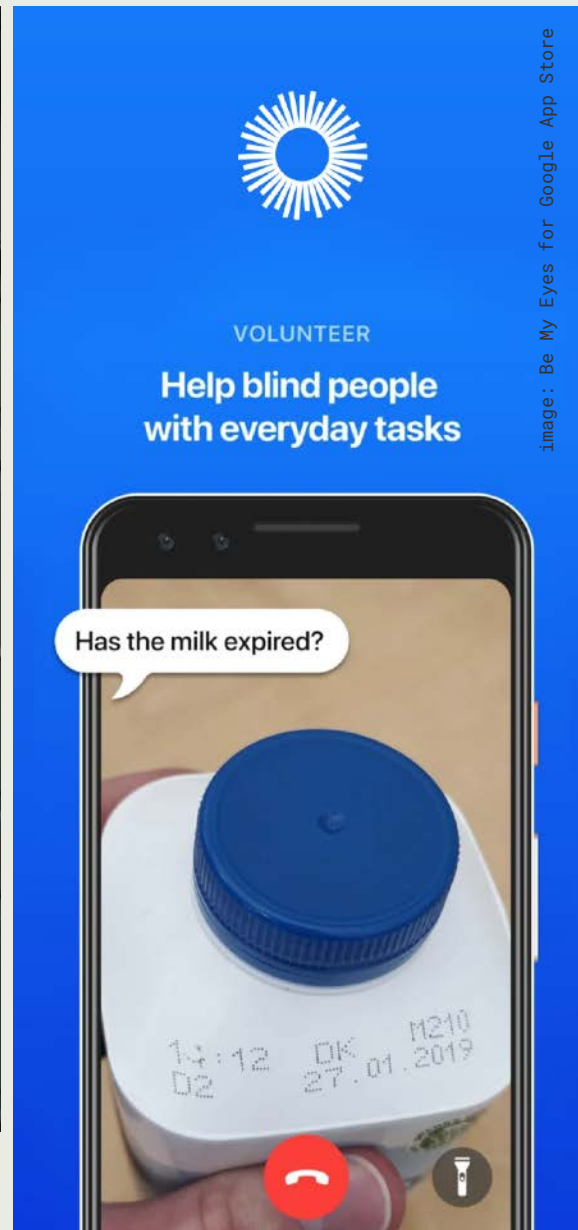


01

## SCHOOL OF LIFE

Wiser playmate plays school with you and imparts their life smarts so you too can build healthy relationships and live your best life.

[theschooloflife.com](http://theschooloflife.com)



02

## BE MY EYES

Digital kindness micro-connections where sighted and low-sighted or blind strangers get to see into each other's lives and see the world together.

[bemyeyes.com](http://bemyeyes.com)

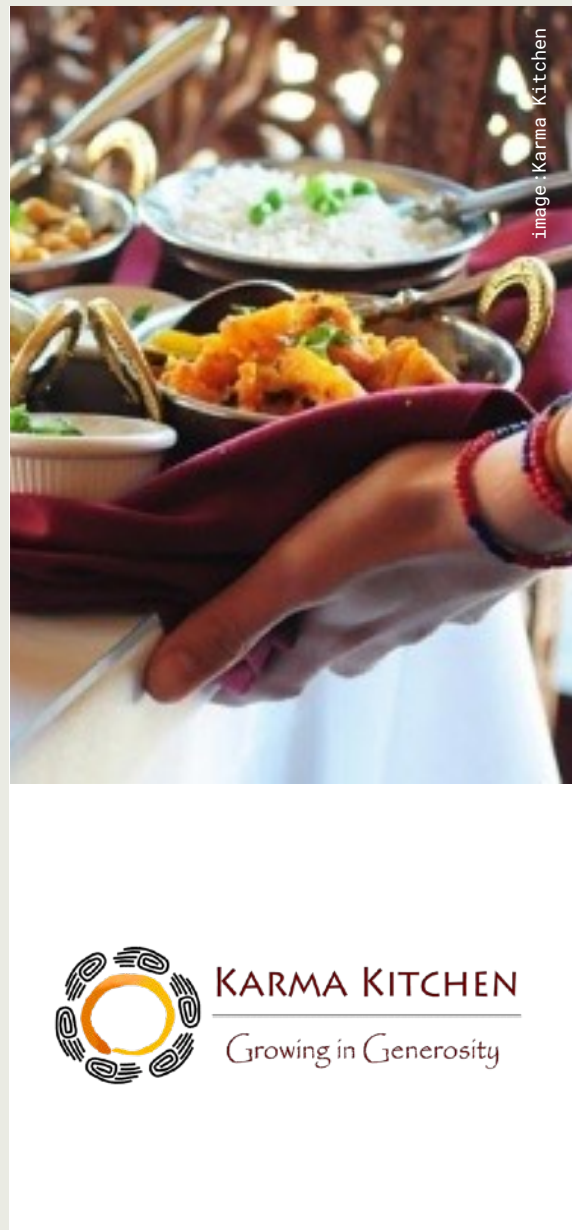


03

## KINDSNACKS

Kindness pollinator brand kindles conversations about kindness, courage, and comfort zones through video contests that offer charitable contributions as rewards.

[kindsnacks.com](http://kindsnacks.com)



04

## KARMA KITCHEN

Karma Surprise for supper with a side serving of food as good hearted community members play nice by paying for the person behind them.

[karmakitchen.org](http://karmakitchen.org)

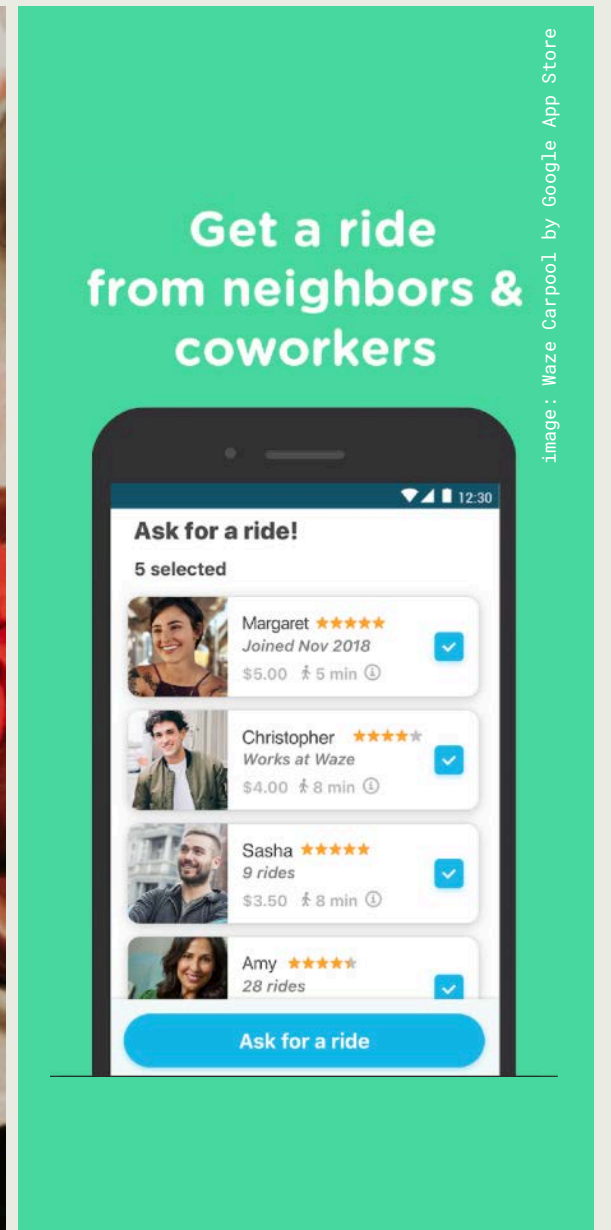


05

## SSEKO

One-to-one global sisterhoods where a playful trunk show experiences pay for the education of the Ugandan woman who crafted your item.

[ssekodesigns.com](http://ssekodesigns.com)



06

## WAZE CARPOOL

Cars, karma, and cooperative connections of drivers digitally bonding and banding together to reduce traffic, keep people safe, and make roads better.

[waze.com](http://waze.com)

The opportunity is

# Playing w/ Fire

Shattering Taboos in Sensible Shoes.

What's a little risk among friends?

Consumers are eager to get into the game, but risk-taking in an unstable world can feel destabilizing. Our conventional consumer-driven world places a premium on comfort and safety because that's what we think consumers really want - but is it?

Engagements at the intersection of safety and risky convention-busting play are on the rise. Brands that embrace experiences that give people new permission to safely exercise and experiment with their bolder, badder selves will win.

## THE OPPORTUNITY:

### Be a Gamemaker

Businesses that don't mind indulging their wild side, win big. Dominant brands are creatively leveraging storytelling and game-inspired experience design to set boundaries that are meant to be broken - tapping into consumers' craving for risk

and reward, and their need for taboo-shattering play experiences that help them feel more vital, alive, and human.

Brands forge lasting bonds when they invite consumers into the game to challenge conventions, break rules and exercise their creativity. Gamemaker brands leverage game mechanics to design experiences that have clear boundaries, yet still appeal to risk-hungry consumers, enabling them to experiment, explore, and totally shatter conventional taboos.

Brands establish fierce loyalty when 'players' feel safe in the knowledge that the game designers are on their side. Brands become allies and buddies, helping players discover things that give them a leg up and equip them to feel bold and win big.



## 2010–19

### BREAKING RULES

Simulation of violence, rule breaking, destruction.



## 2020–30

### RISKY BUSINESS

Physical and digital outlets that truly enable your mind and body to process and experience.

## Playing w/ Fire



01

## THE PERIOD GAME

Taboo-shattering board game normalizes menstruation in a fun forum that makes boundary breaking a little less uncomfortable.

[periodgame.com](http://periodgame.com)



02

## WRECK ROOMS

Primal stuff-smashing play 'therapy' that relieves stress yet still follows the rules: safety glasses and sturdy shoes required.

[demolitionzone.net](http://demolitionzone.net)



03

## REIMAGINE

Risky re-imagining of the uncomfortable. Face life and death with creative workshops, performances, and comedy shows.

[letsreimagine.org](http://letsreimagine.org)

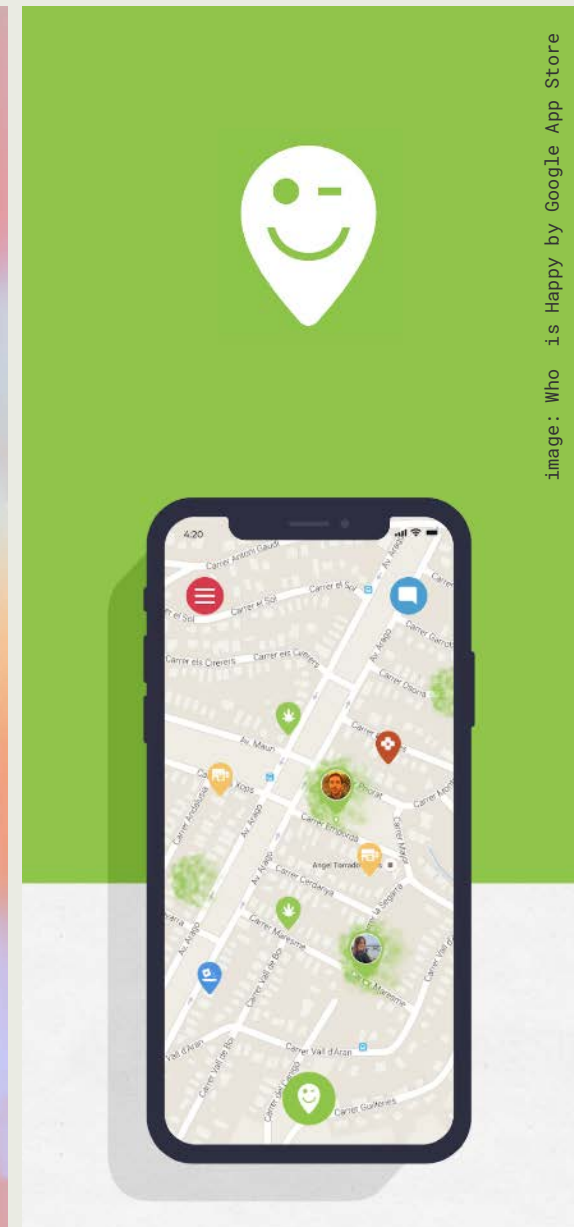


04

## RECESS

A convention-busting play break from real life. CBD laced carbonated beverages enhance focus and brighten mood.

[takearecess.com](http://takearecess.com)

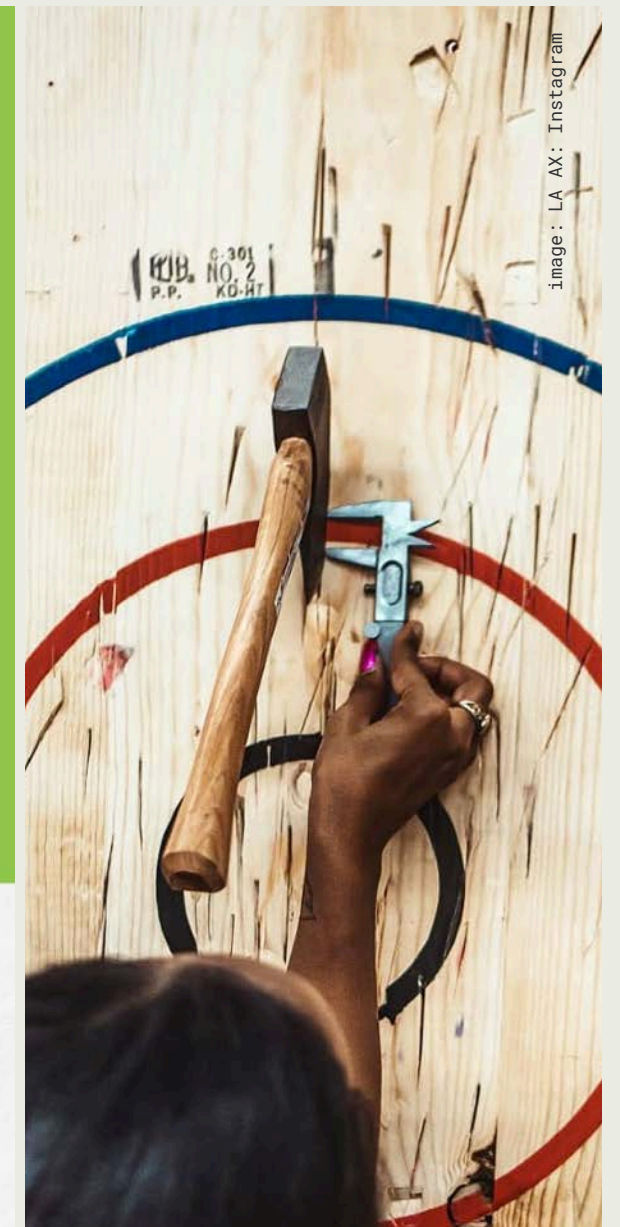


05

## WHO IS HAPPY

A geolocated social network connecting cannabis consumers to share their feelings in a game-like fashion.

[whoishappy.com](http://whoishappy.com)



06

## AX THROWING BAR

Axes, targets, alcohol, and temporarily unhinged friends gamify the leisurely hurling of otherwise dangerous and deadly objects, and they're opening up everywhere.

[la-ax.com](http://la-ax.com)

The opportunity is to do

# ForePlay

## Anticipation for Heightened Experience.

Consumers expect instant gratification, but immediacy alone isn't enough anymore. This once surprising perk has lost its thrill. Overstimulated, oversaturated, and "always on" consumers can't seem to break away long enough to focus, or even feel the way they used to.

Brands that play the role of Provocateur grab attention and captivate by creating consumer experiences that heighten anticipation, startle and surprise, and build suspense. Brands pique consumers' interest when they step in with pre-purchase enticements, teases, peeks, and foreshadowing. Provocateurs provoke feelings consumers didn't realize they could feel anymore, and distract them even if just for a moment from the burdens of life today.

### THE OPPORTUNITY:

#### Be a Provocateur

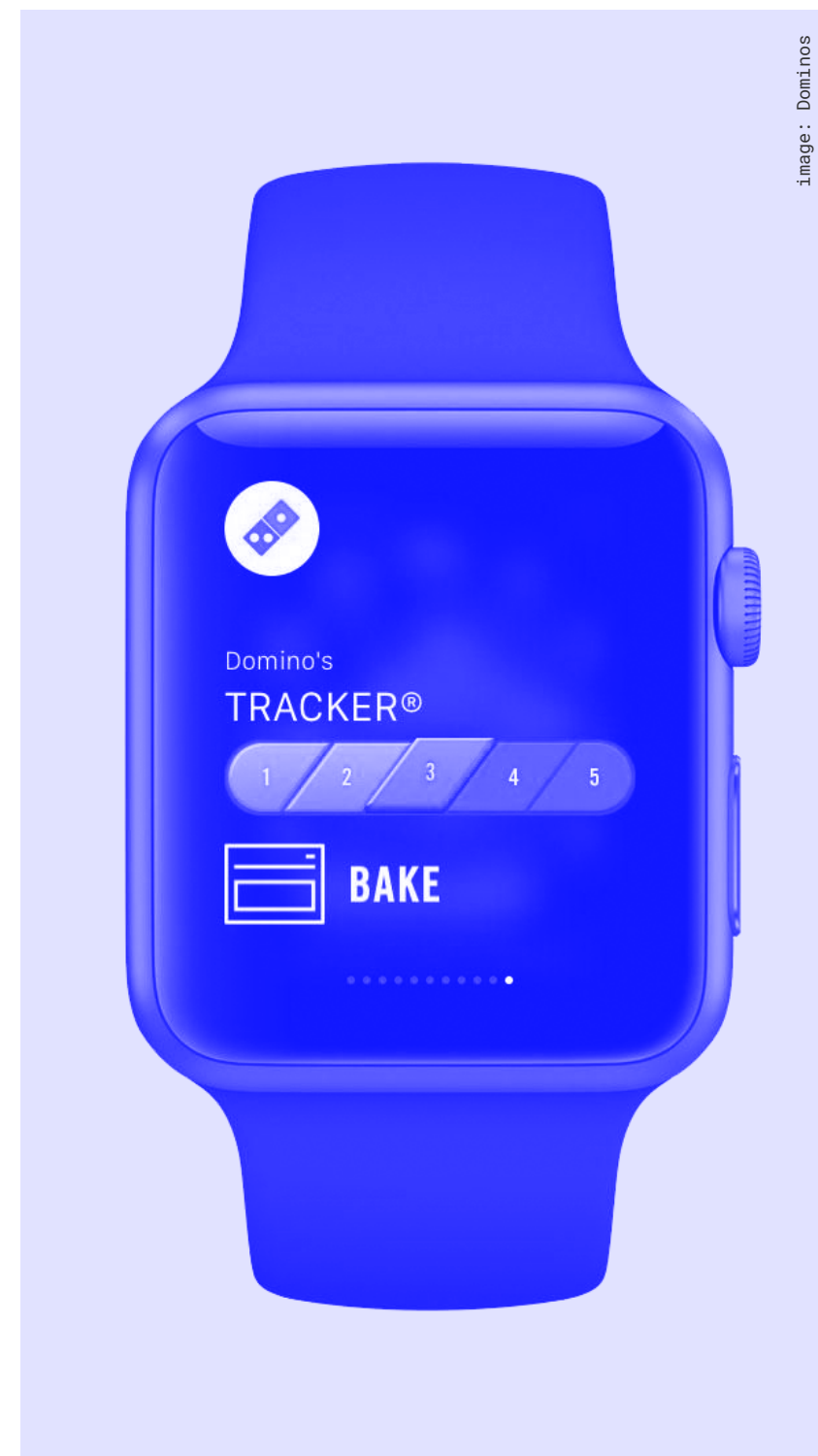
Anticipation is the game mechanic that brands leverage to capture the hearts and

minds of consumers long before the moment of purchase or use. As a primal force, anticipation pervades all aspects of human decision making and consumer behavior, and when used in play engages consumers at a spine tingling emotional level. Anticipation is the antidote for tired, ineffective drivers like instant gratification — it is the active, animating game mechanic that has the power to exponentially heighten the pre-purchase foreplay experience.

Innovative brands are identifying opportunities to start their engagement experiences earlier and extend the post-purchase experience as well. They scout for special moments to drop in surprises along the way. They set expectations that they can exceed, creating challenges and calls to adventure as part of the overall experience.

*Amidst the dull repetition of ordinary life, dominant brands strive to capture the consumer at just the right moment, marking and extending pleasurable moments in time.*

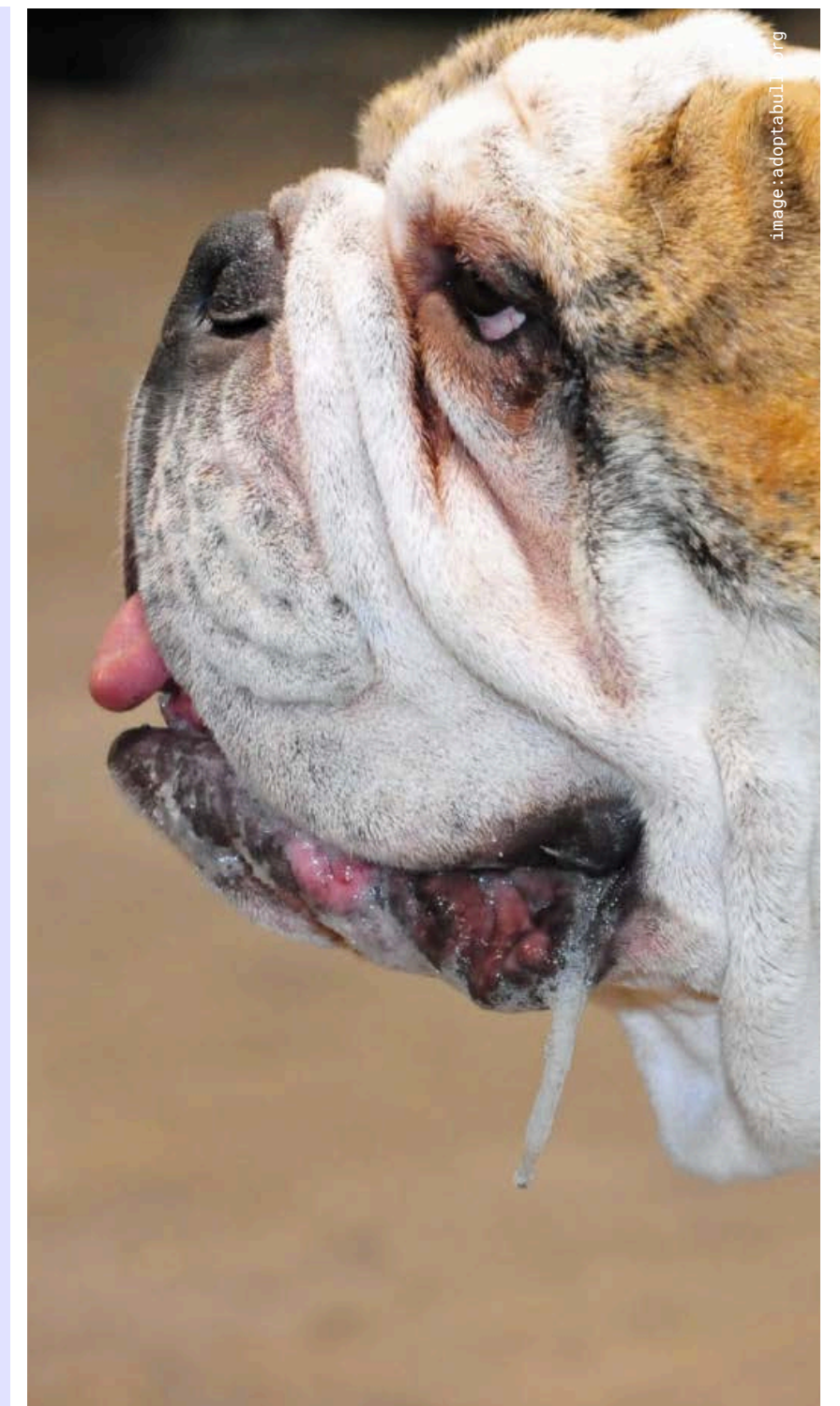
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## 2010–19

### GIMME GIMME

Delight in the moment of purchase devolves into an expectation for the immediate and the now.



## 2020–30

### MAKE ME DROOL

Anticipation is the new thrill.

## ForePlay

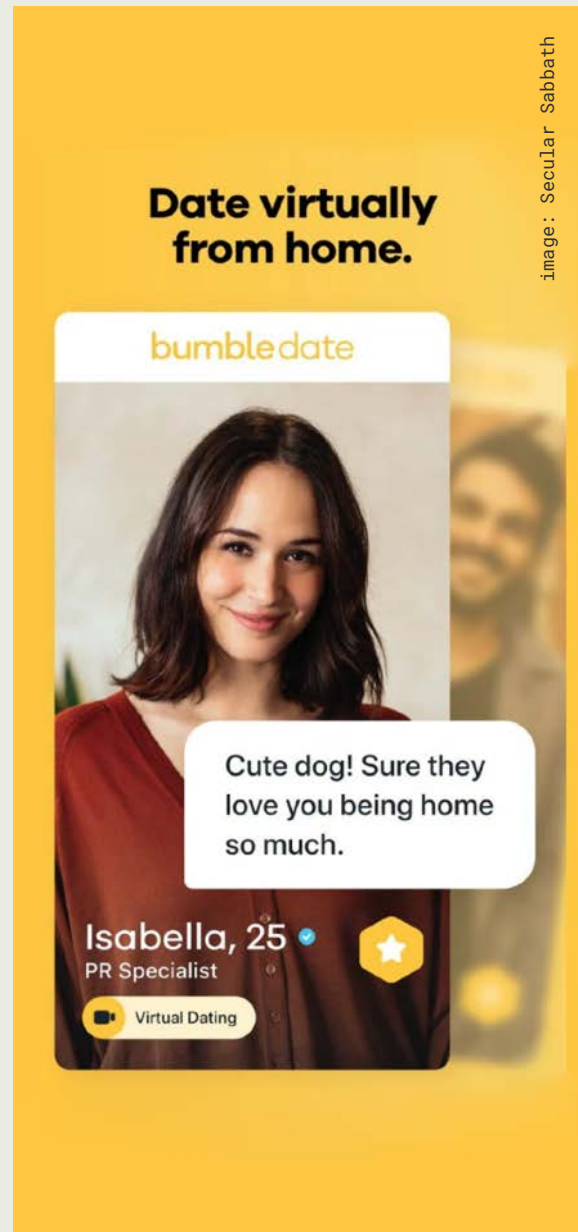


01

## SHOWFIELDS

Eye-popping layers of fore-purchase experiences generate a crescendo of excitement that ultimately peaks at the moment of purchase.

[showfields.com](https://showfields.com)

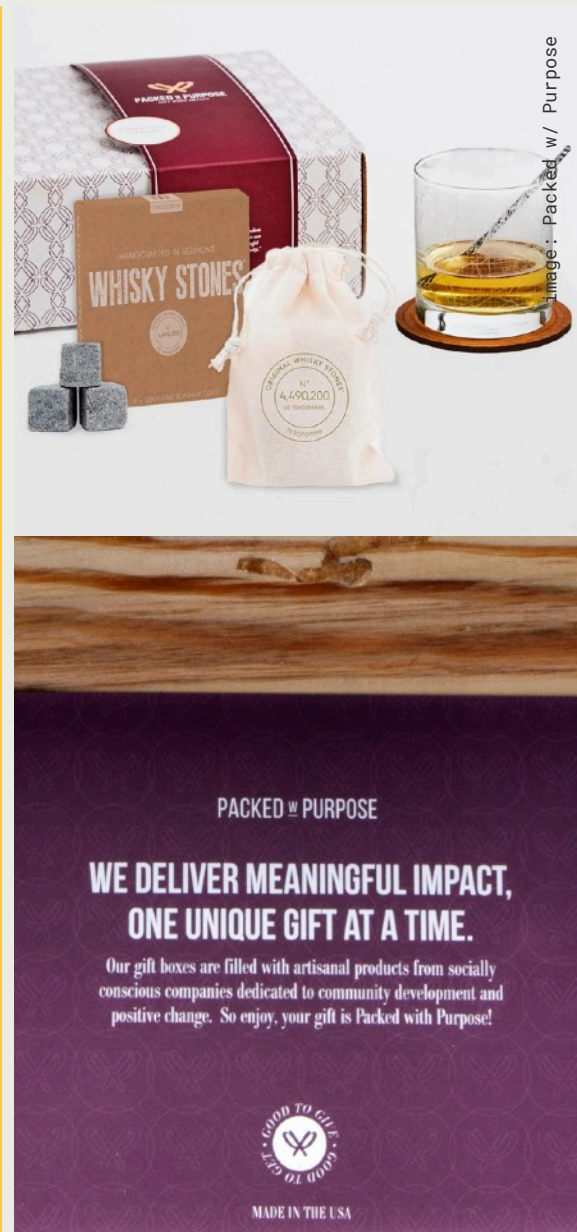


02

## BUMBLE

Teaser clues, sneak peeks, and partial reveals create a pre-connection suspense that might turn out to be the climax of the relationship.

[bumble.com](https://bumble.com)

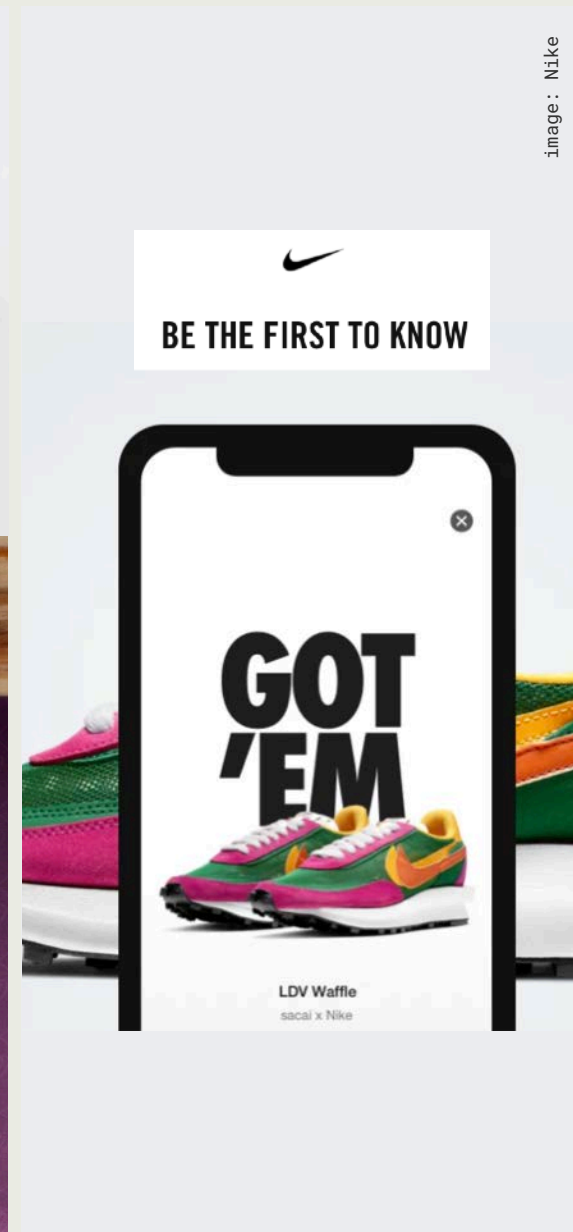


03

## COCKTAIL KIT

The joy's in the journey as you savor the delayed gratification of unpacking, arranging, concocting and finally savoring your favorite cocktail ritual libation.

[shop.packedwithpurpose](https://shop.packedwithpurpose)



04

## SNKRS

Anticipation fueled app where insiders squirm with excitement awaiting instant notification of a surprise shoe drop or promised release.

[nike.com/snkrs-app](https://nike.com/snkrs-app)

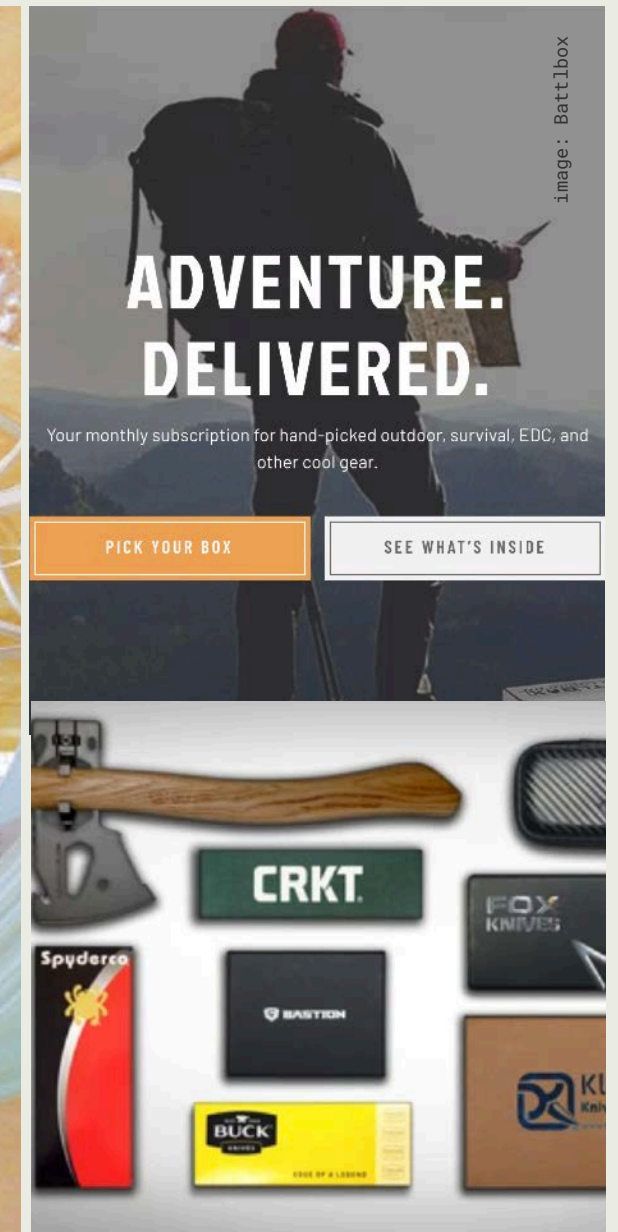


05

## SECULAR SABBATH

Prolonged and intensifying sensory surround sound arousal is a new kind of gentle, calming release with the intent to defrag and restore.

[secular-sabbath.com](https://secular-sabbath.com)



06

## BATTLBOX

Suspense and surprise as you rip open this subscription box to discover this month's mystery survivalist items intended to make the end of the world less of a big deal.

[battlbox.com](https://battlbox.com)

## Business Opportunities

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# Play Nice

Rewired for Karma.

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# Playing w/ Fire

Shattering Taboos in Sensible Shoes.

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# ForePlay

Anticipation for Heightened Experience.

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Play has the ability to increase retention NOW, enabling businesses to leverage EXISTING product and service offerings and combine them with playful experiences to delight consumers.

Consumers want brands to surprise and delight them.

## HOW MIGHT YOU REDEFINE YOUR PRODUCT & SERVICE OFFERINGS TO PLAY WITH & PROVOKE CONSUMERS TO ACTION?

Dominant brands in the next decade will build the discipline and rigor to play more in order to drive sales growth, build consumer loyalty, and access whole new markets for growth.

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

Source: Harvard Business Review

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 Consumption. 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](mailto:quantumclarity@ziba.com)

# Thank you

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