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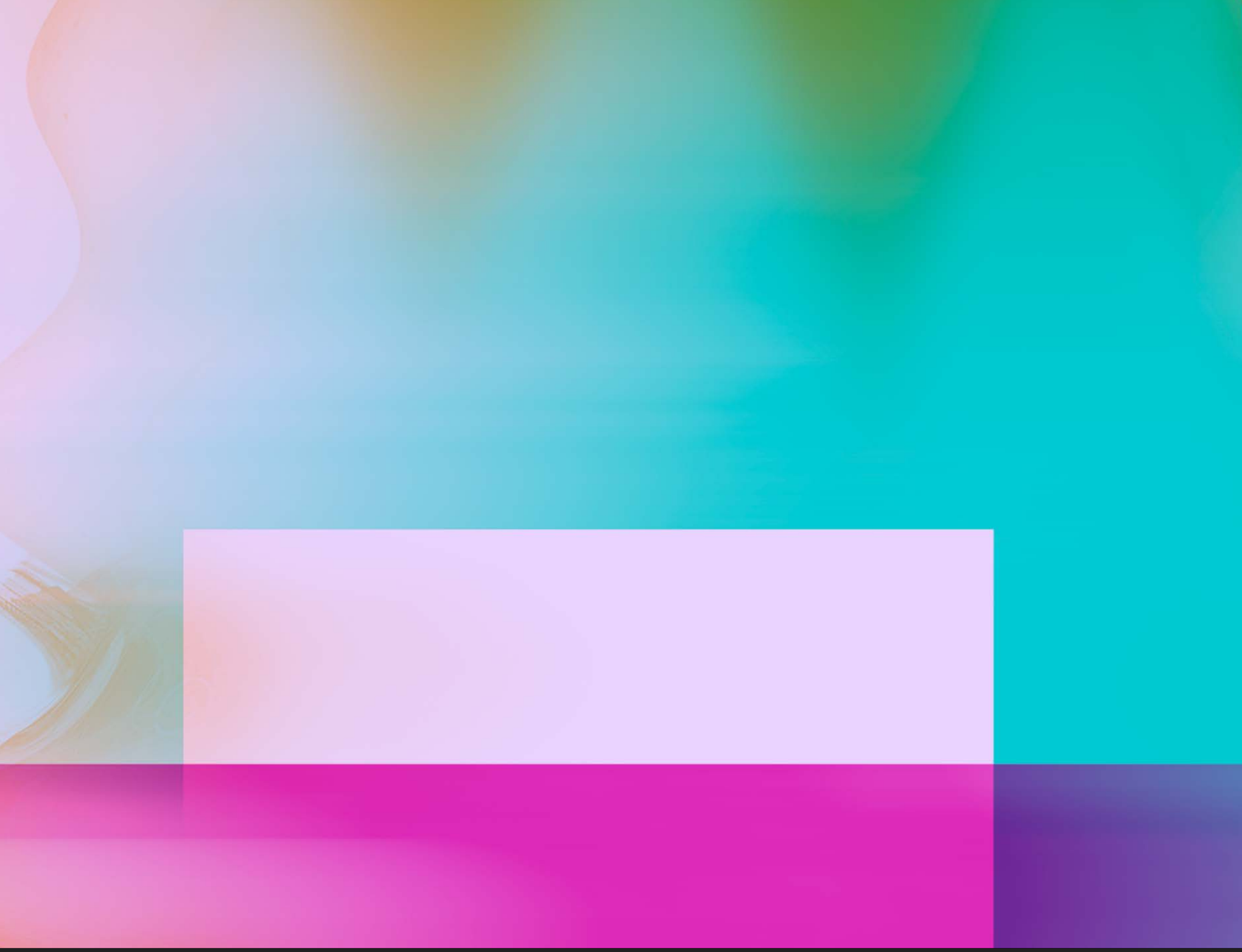
Number Four



CONNECT TO YOURSELF
ENGAGE WITH OTHERS

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Connection

READING TIME
2:02

KEYWORDS
#Connection
#Tchai
#Tchi
#SustainableBond
#People
#Brands
#ConnectToYourself
#EngagementWithOthers

HELLO, NUMBER FOUR!
So nice that you are finally here. It has been two years since the release of our last magazine, number three.

We never set out to make an annual release, we simply want to share things that interest and inspire us. Now feels just right to launch a new edition. Over the last period we have been really busy with incredible projects for clients, while at the same time focusing on further clarifying and strengthening Tchai's vision and purpose.

We believe in creating more genuine connections between people and brands. Finding our 'why' is one thing, implementing it into our operations is another. To define what it means for each and every one of us in our

daily work, that's the process we are in right now. Instead of merely focusing on sales targets, we believe in balancing corporate performance with personal development and personal growth. Once you truly connect to yourself, you clear the way to a much deeper engagement with others. Whether it is colleagues, clients or anyone else.

Once people start to grow everything else will follow, that is my deepest conviction. I see it around me every day. By focusing on the human perspective, we have been doing great things business-wise, connecting well-being with operational excellence.

Until now we have built up every magazine around a central theme. It did not take us long to come up with a main topic for number four: connection. Connection in the widest sense is what drives us.

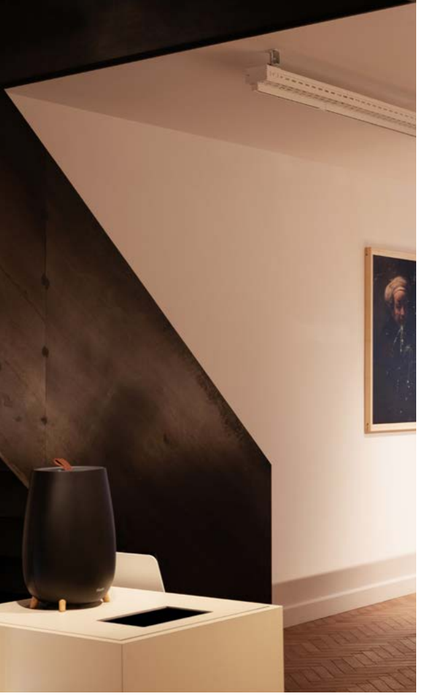
Bringing people and brands together in the most physical way possible, addressing all senses in real-life brand experiences. Helping brands to really relate to their core values, their roots and distinctive identity. Bonding people with people, linking the right professionals to create the best team for every project.

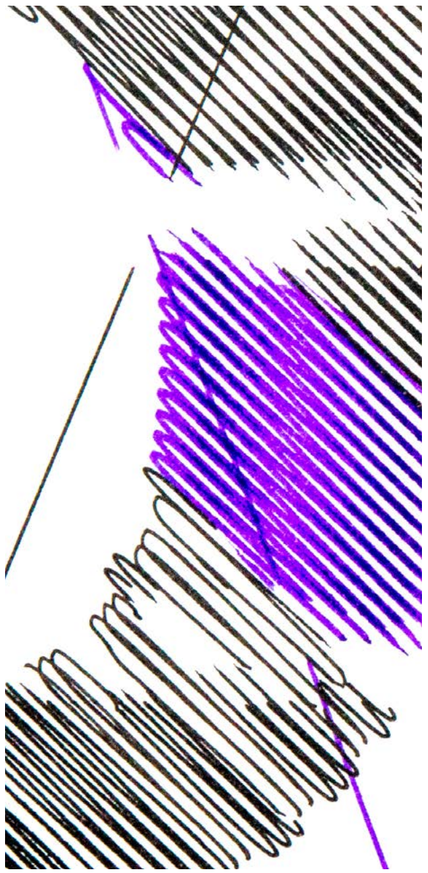
And for each of us individually: finding a way to connect to ourselves. I believe I have done just that. Exploring, recognizing and accepting who I am. Not just acknowledging my weaknesses and embracing my strengths but learning to understand and embody all the different sides of myself and balancing them out. Running Tchai in a way that brings out the best in everybody.

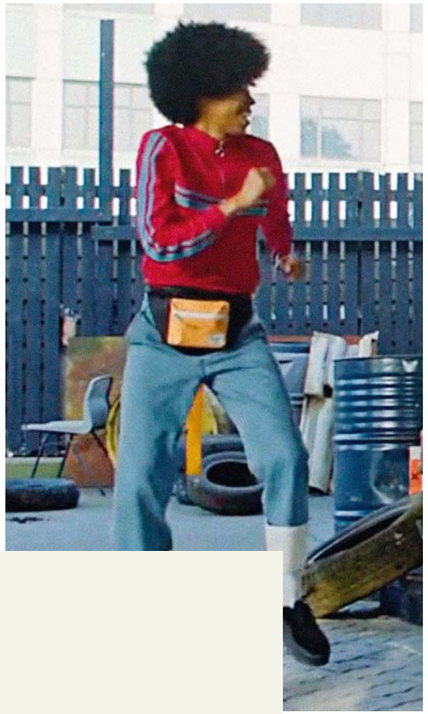
All this focus on connecting the dots, personally and professionally, has certainly led to the most amazing magazine we have made so far! We have gathered so many great stories and visuals, all bound by the central theme of connection. Not all articles are cheerful, but there is a lot of food for thought for you to chew on. Like the report on the rise of artificial intelligence and how human flaws might well be our rescue (page 55). For a more uplifting feature, simply read the article about The World Piece (page 31) and say goodbye to the cynic in you. Here are 61 alluring and diverse human beings being connected by one single tattoo!

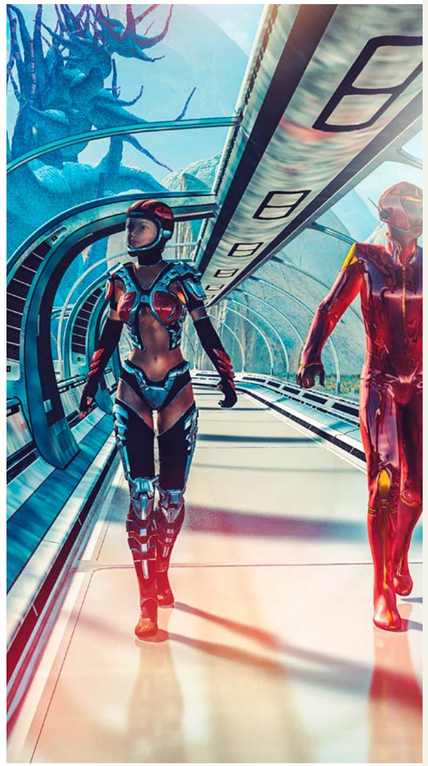
And that is just two of our stories, I love them all. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have and I hope to connect to you soon in real-life.

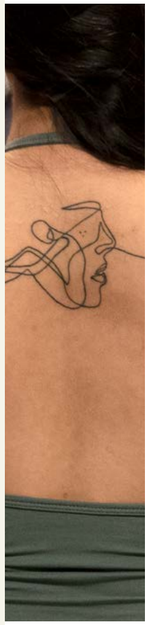
Kim Tchai

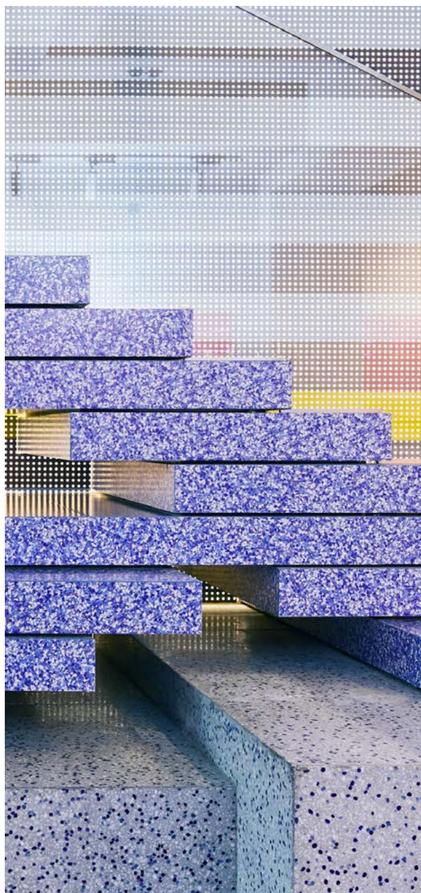












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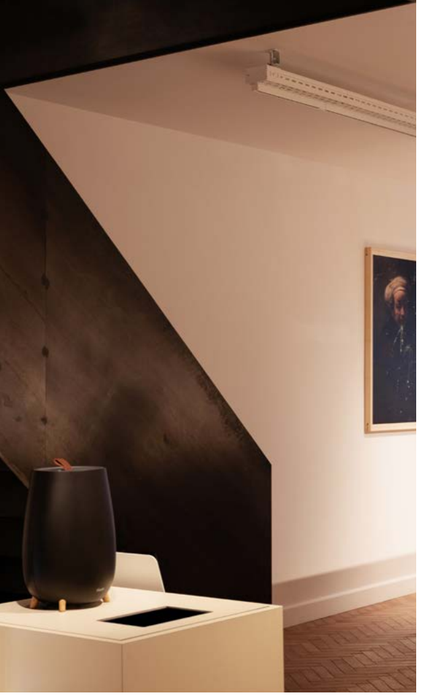

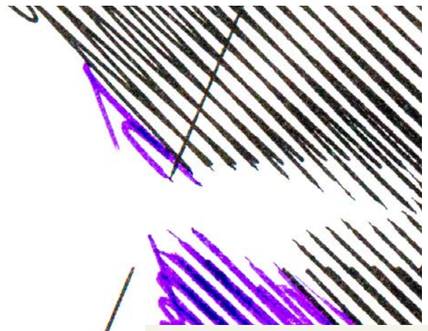

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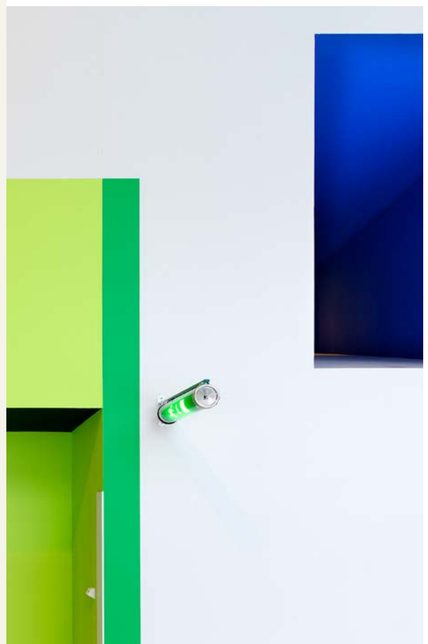
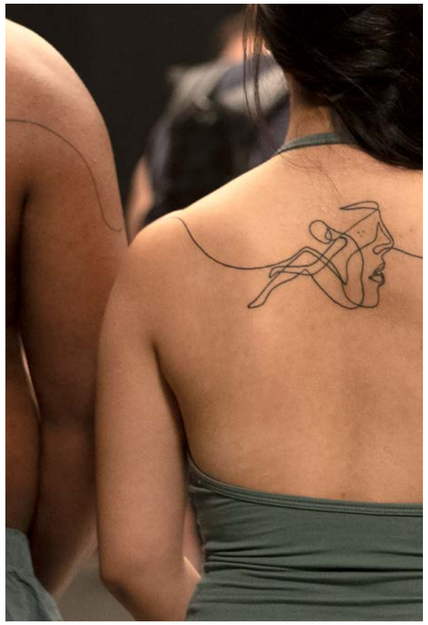




DO YOU FEEL CONNECTED?

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Organizational evolution

READING TIME
4:23

KEYWORDS
#WildDogPack
#Behaviours
#SocialEvolution
#ValueDrivenCompanies
#HorizontalConnection
#VerticalConnection
#EmpoweringPeople
#PersonalGrowth
#InternalDrive

THE WAY YOU CONNECT TO OTHERS HAS A HUGE IMPACT ON THE WAY YOU BEHAVE. WE DARE TO TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER AND STATE THAT WHO YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH LARGELY DEFINES *WHO YOU ARE*.

THE ANALOGY OF A WILD-DOG PACK ILLUSTRATES THIS STRIKINGLY.

BENJI, DOG! YOU'RE A SERIAL KILLER NOW, OR WHAT?

Members of a wild-dog pack develop complex attachments to each other that affect their individual behaviours. The way they behave is passed on from one generation to the next and attacking and killing other animals is an evolutionary developed means of survival. Do you know what happens when you allow Benji, Bella, Buddy and some other friendly, domesticated dogs to roam free and aggregate in close proximity? Without much warning and faster than you think they form a pack that acts in unity, ultimately attacking other animals and humans and even killing them.

It's nearly impossible to imagine your family dog would succumb to this behaviour so quickly, but it would. It's not in its genes, it's not in its training, it's the group connection that would radically change your dog's behaviour and identity.

THUG OFFICE LIFE

However powerful the wild-dog example is, surely we are not comparing civilized human beings to a pack of canines? No, we are not, but the way we connect as humans does have a big impact on our identity and the way we live our lives.
Now consider the fact that we have only just recently started to flock together in businesses and organizations, but nevertheless spend a huge part of our lives there. Evolution has yet to catch-up, so we have to deal with the perils of everyday office live ourselves. In order to do so it might be a good idea to have a quick look at the way humans have connected over the centuries.

FROM DRAGON-SLAYER TO TAX-PAYER

Humans are social animals and the family was and still is our basic social unit. Family members develop emotional attachments over decades that bind them together. In ancient times a group of related families used to form a clan that often had a powerful clan identity. Several related clans may develop a transcending tribal alliance and in turn, these tribes have learned that if they form alliances with each other they quickly dominate individual families, clans, and tribes. So, we see the rise of states with a defined territory and permanent structures that are vigorously defended. And there you have it: the connection of one human-being to thousands or even millions of other tax-paying, law-abiding fellow countrymen and women. Some feel a strong connection to the nation and everyone in it, others will only wave a national flag during major sports events.

TAKE A GOOD, LONG LOOK AROUND YOU

The point is this. In group animals we see emotional attachment from each member to each other and to the group. In humans these emotional attachments extend to an idea, an institution or even to an object. Our ability to connect is a really powerful thing that has spurred social evolution and made us the most successful species on earth. That brings us back to you and your colleagues. Ask yourself: how connected are you? To each other and to the company you work for?
A lot will depend on the evolutionary stage your company is in.

Since the industrial revolution businesses have evolved tremendously from static hierarchic companies to result-driven organisations on a never-ending quest for efficiency. Today we see the rise of value-driven companies that focus on shared purpose and self-realization for staff and stakeholders. Although companies in all different evolutionary stages still co-exist today, we believe the 21st century will see the end of companies who fail to realise a meaningful personal connection with their employees and the world around them.

We'll tell you why.

EGO IS NOT DEAD, IT'S JUST OVERFED

In a traditional company with formal structures and organization charts people can only identify with their position and the role they play, regardless of their personal needs and ambitions. In a company that focusses on growth and KPI's the general idea is that employees strive for the same kind of growth as a professional, increasing their salary and status with every promotion they make.

Economist and publicist Kate Raworth describes this rational economic employee as *"a guy standing alone, with money in his hand, ego in his heart, a calculator in his head and nature at his feet. He hates work, he loves luxury and he knows the price of everything."*

Pretty shallow, huh?
So let's really connect at the office. And let's do it horizontally and vertically.

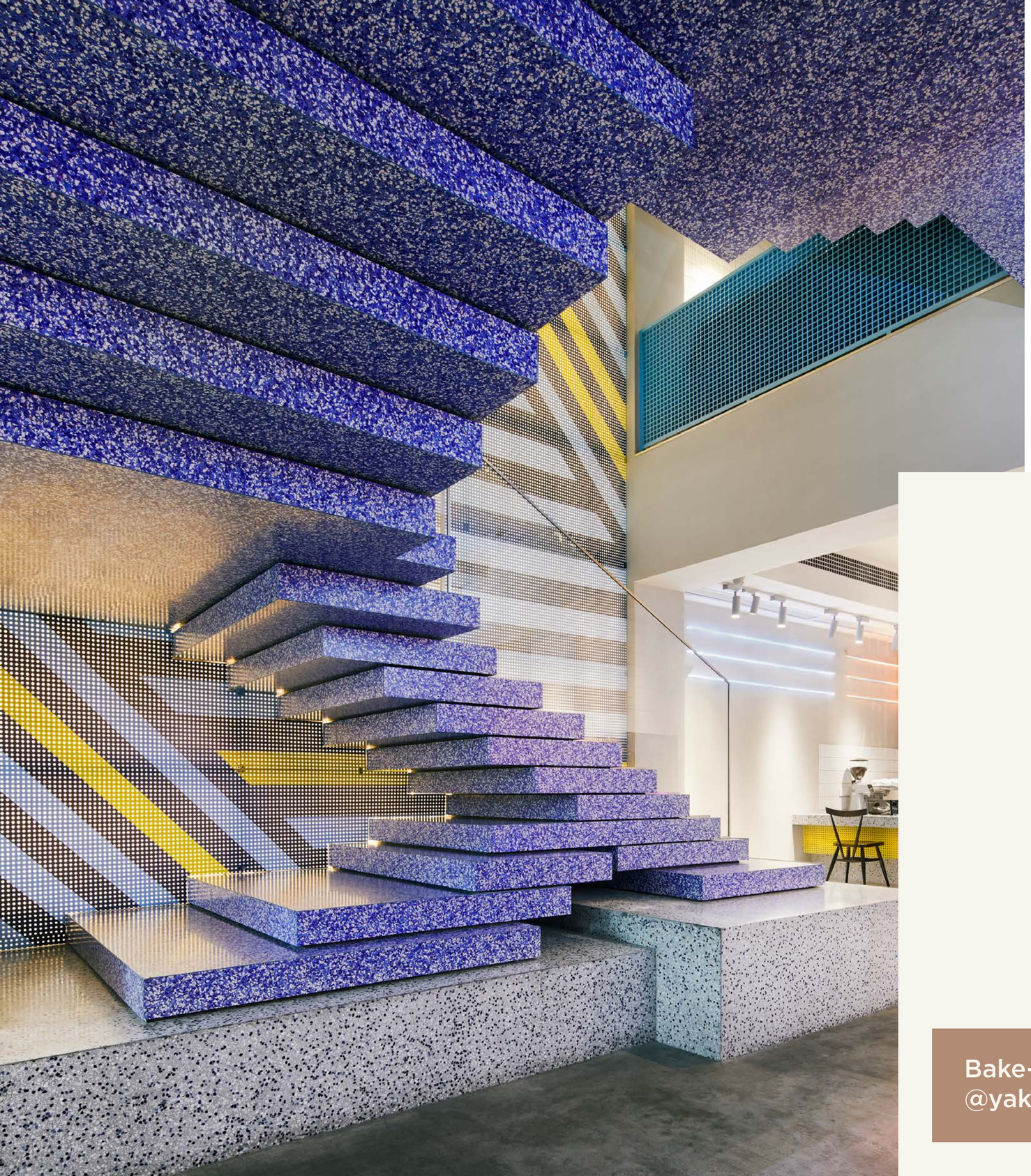
DRIVEN BY PEOPLE AND PURPOSE
People do not just have a great ability to connect, it's a basic need. We need connection and in the workplace there are basically two ways to do so: horizontally and vertically. A horizontal connection is the connection from one person to another, not just your closest colleagues but also management and everyone else. This connection is about attachment and wholeness. Do you feel safe around the other person? Can you truly be yourself?

A vertical connection is a mutual drive or purpose you share. This doesn't have to be a profound or spiritual thing, it can be really practical and down-to-earth. It's about understanding the company's 'why' and really embracing its value proposition for employees, customers and partners.

We believe that truly successful companies acknowledge the need for horizontal and vertical connection and let go of old business models to create an organization that truly connects with its staff and other stakeholders. Breaking down hierarchy and empowering people on all levels to thrive in equality and a sense of community. Value-driven not money-driven. Working together towards an all-inspiring goal, adding purpose and meaning. This will create true ownership with everyone involved and attract new people that commit to everything the company stands for.

MAKE THE CONNECTION
The ultimate goal in life is not to be successful and looked up to, it's to become who we really are through self-development and personal growth. To achieve that we need to connect with what drives us internally and find an environment that matches our identity. If who you surround yourself with defines who you are, imagine what happens if you surround yourself with people that you totally resonate with.

At Tchai this is exactly what we've been doing over the last four years and we would love to tell you a little bit more about it. All you need to do is make the connection. You're invited.



INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Food

READING TIME
1:06

KEYWORDS
#BIY
#Yakafu
#Bakery
#China

BIY

Bake-it-yourself
@yakafu

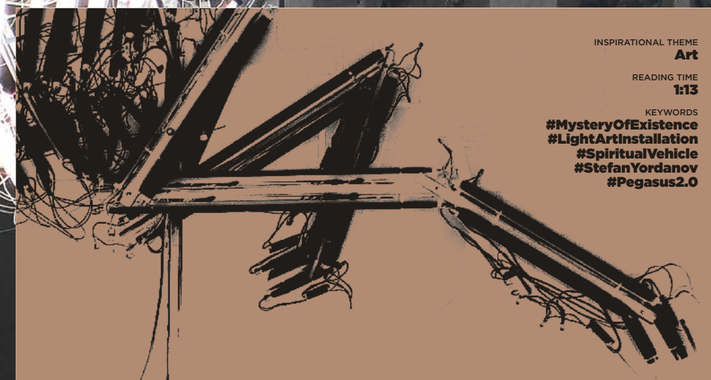
Consumer appetite for artisan products has reached China. Food has to be as "rooted" as it can be. This designer bakery in Anji, a quaint little town near Hangzhou, might actually be an inspiration to hip(ster) places in European cities, whereas before, China would 'traditionally' copy their concepts.

On the ground floor of the YAKAFU bakery people can buy delicious pastries and bread, as in many other bakeries, but on the first floor they can bake it themselves. It is a Bake-it-yourself, BIY-bakery so to say. One massive open plan kitchen where amateur bakers can come together, connect and work dough. Also, the setting is very Instagrammable. The design by Shanghai- and Athens-based studio KCA, led by Kostas Chatzigiannis, is clean with graphic lines, defined by using different colours and materials. Giant terrazzo blocks add playfulness to the store. It is a hospitable lab in which to experiment with the joy and chemistry of baking and to form a community at the same time.

Traditionally, Chinese breakfast doesn't include baked goods, and in most regions of China the 'breadfast'-cult hasn't embedded yet. Yakafu Bakery enables people to make - or in this case: bake. This concept lets people become more familiar with freshly baked bread and pastries. By slowing down and making the process more artisan, people will have the chance to reconnect with the food they eat and with their neighbours.

If you want to bake your own at Yakafu Bakery, you'll find them at:

No.449 Middle Dipu Road
Anji, Zhejiang Province
China



INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Art

READING TIME
1:13

KEYWORDS
#MysteryOfExistence
#LightArtInstallation
#SpiritualVehicle
#StefanYordanov
#Pegasus2.0

PEGASUS 2.0 UNIFYING THE IRRECONCILABLE

As a young boy growing up in an artistic family, Stefan Yordanov loved to spend hours drawing taxidermy creatures in the National History Museum of Sofia, his hometown in Bulgaria. Now based in Amsterdam, he is an internationally renowned artist who makes giant light installations. His enlightening creatures travel the world, from Australia to China and Europe to the U.S.

The impressive, almost four meter long light installation Pegasus 2.0 connects Greek mythology to the art of his late father (Liubomir Jordanov 1934-2012). He often presented a winged horse as a 'spiritual vehicle'.

IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO UNIFY THE IRRECONCILABLE, SUCH AS THE SPIRITUAL TO THE MATERIAL WORLD, LIFE TO DEATH, NATURE TO CULTURE

Pegasus 2.0 symbolizes Yordanov's connection to his father as in the Greek myth, the winged horse flies from heaven to earth bringing thunder and lightning. It is an attempt to unify the irreconcilable, such as the spiritual to the material world, life to death, nature to culture. This provokes the spectator's imagination and demands the use of this very essential human quality.

By displaying animal anatomy, the artist tries to uncover the 'mystery' of our existence. Originally, Yordanov wanted to incorporate a genuine horse skull, as he normally uses skulls as the opposite to light in his art installations. However, due to the size of the Pegasus 2.0 a plexiglass cranium was used for aesthetic reasons.

Light replaces the bone structure in this reformed 'spiritual vehicle'. Wires and cables become nerves and veins. Yordanov loves shaping his structures with components that are familiar and which anyone can buy in a local hardware store. It represents everyday life and realness in his art. There is energy in both life and death. What is the form of all life energy... LIGHT itself.

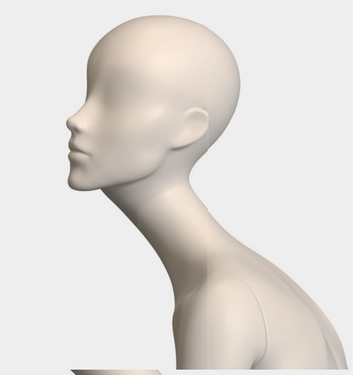
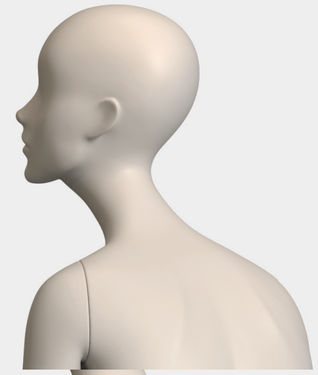
When visitors approach sensors trigger the installation to illuminate and to come to life. Pegasus 2.0 will be on display worldwide. Follow his flight plan here: stefanyordanov.com.

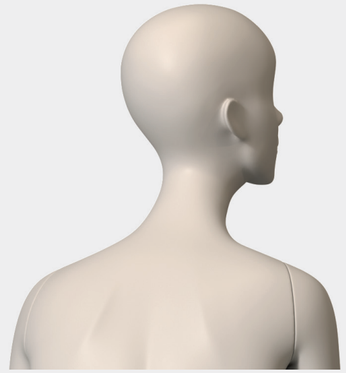
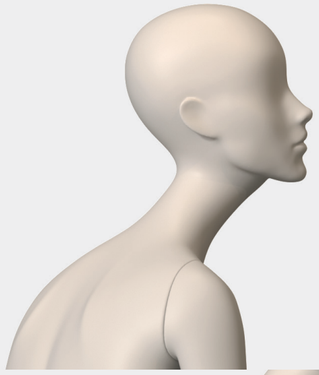
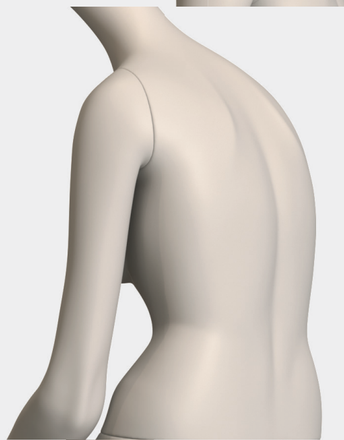
INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Communication

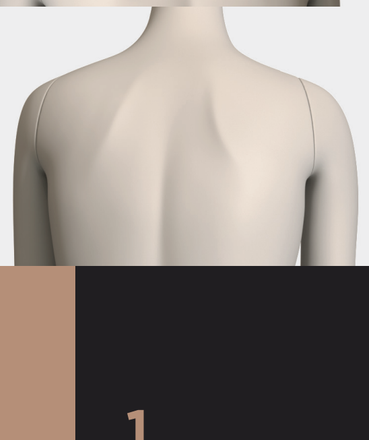
READING TIME
5:36

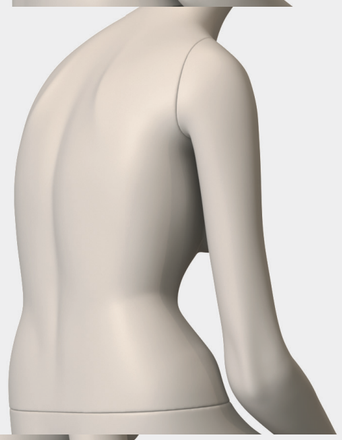
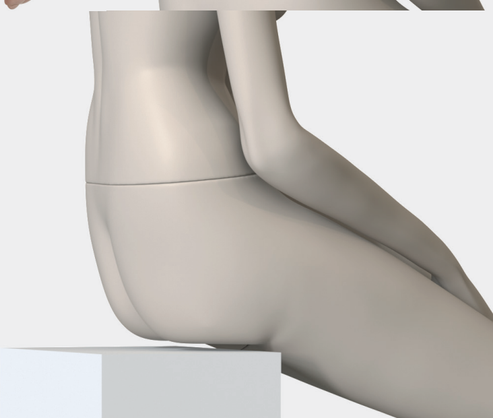
KEYWORDS
#ReplacedByRobots
#CommunicationGuide
#HumanToHumanSkills
#BodyLanguage
#SmallTalk
#KeepItReal

Speak Human To Me



Imagine a world in the not too faraway future in which most of our human interaction has been replaced by interaction with AI. Seems like a stretch? We thought so... But then we went down a list of ordinary day-to-day human interactions:

You step out of your house and greet the postal worker. You walk on and see dogs being walked in the park. You arrive at the shop and are greeted by a sales assistent. You chat with the shop employee at the checkout. You bought more than you can carry so decide to take a cab home. The driver is a chatty person who gives you just a little bit too much personal information, but you will remember that for tonight when you're having dinner with your friend who will bring another friend that they hope to set you up with. Nothing out of the ordinary. Except that all of those people will be, or are already, replaced by robots. From self check-out or no checkout (Amazon Go) to robots managing your online orders to dating apps and even sex-bots. A lot has been taken over by AI and it's only the beginning. So we thought we would come up with a handy little guide on how to communicate. Face to human face. Might seem redundant now, but read this and store it somewhere safe. We think you're going to consider this your CPR for human interaction in the future.

1

SMALL TALK WHEN TRAVELLING

Your taxidriver may be replaced and even your flight attendant will probably become a robot. However, the person sitting next to you on the plane, a shared ride or any form of public transport will probably be of flesh and blood. There are different ways to interact with them, mostly depending on the level of your intimacy. Do you know this person or are they a stranger to you? As a general rule of thumb, remember that when interacting with strangers, it's best to keep a polite distance until your familiarity has changed significantly.

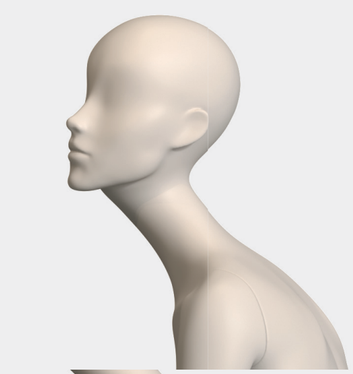
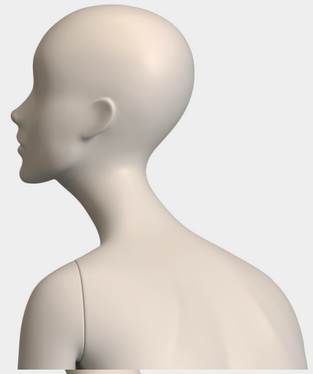
When travelling, and making light conversation, here are some basic principles for small talk:

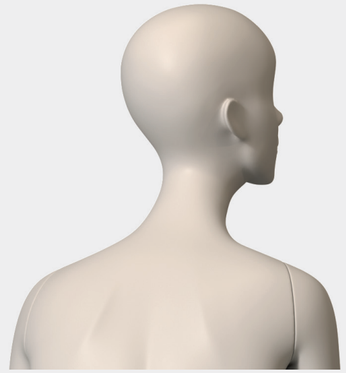
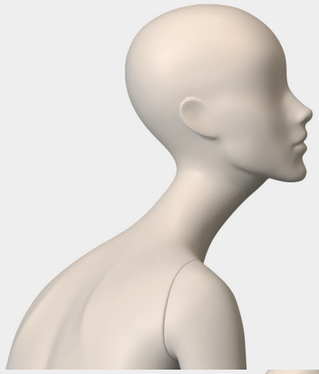
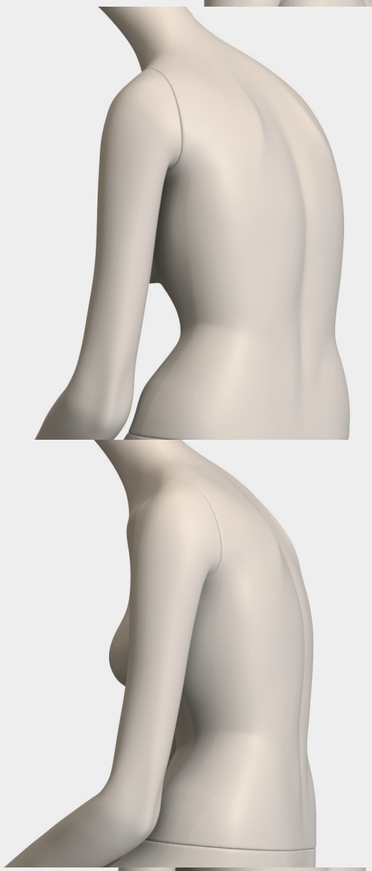
• **Show interest in the person you are talking to.** By slightly bending your head to one side and nodding, you are signalling that you are listening and receptive to the other person.

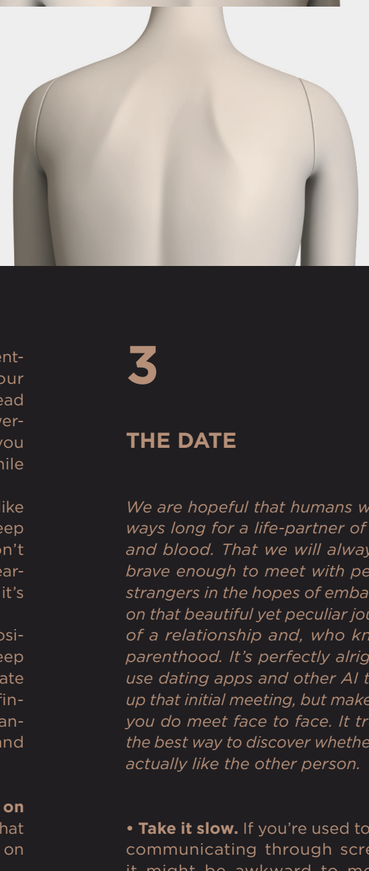
• **No eyes akimbo. Meaning: keep them straight.** The polite area to focus is somewhere between the eyes and the nose of the other person. If you let your eyes wander further down, you're indicating that you're interested in an intimate way. And this is not always appreciated nor appropriate. So look into someone's eyes. But don't give them that hard stare either. That's just freaky. Find that perfect middle. Practice in a mirror.

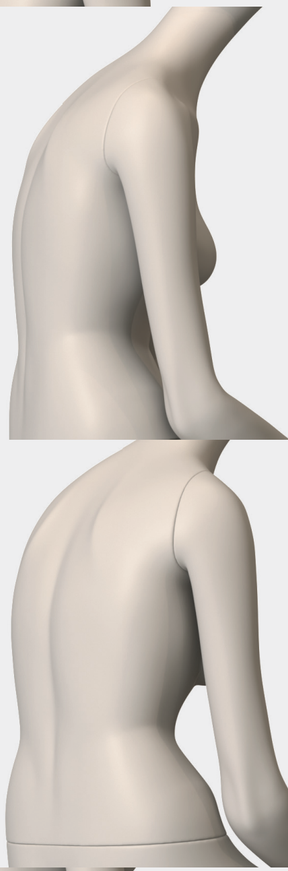
• **Respect personal space.** This is the space surrounding a human being that they like to reserve for themselves. Don't come too close, don't touch someone you don't know or for no good reason. If you can smell the other person, if you can feel their body heat or if you simply see them backing into their chair to move away from you... you are probably too close.

• **Stick to topics that are perfect for small talk.** The weather, the journey, the food you're both eating, trends you have noticed... basically experiences that you share right now, even when you don't know each other. Do not overshare personal information. Do not ask personal questions without a clear invitation to do so.





2

THE BUSINESS MEETING

When meeting clients or business partners, whether they are strangers or well known, it's important to start with an appropiate greeting. Depending on the country of your meeting, this may vary.

• **Greet appropriately.** You may shake hands (most of Europe), give a loose hug (America) sometimes followed by a pat on the shoulder, or a polite bow (most of Asia). Read up on where you're going in order to avoid confusion. Americans will be taken aback by a sudden bow the same way Chinese will be by an unprompted embrace.

• **Speak with your feet.** Once you start speaking it's important that you express your pleasure about being there. Therefore, make sure your feet face your audience. Feet speak louder than words, they really do. If you're saying with your words you love being there, but your feet point to the door, your audience will sense you're wishing to make a run for it. So control those trotters.

• **Adjust your pose.** When presenting, stand up straight, pull your shoulders back and keep your head up high. This is an open and powerful pose, communicating that you are confident and in charge while receptive to your audience.
Make sure your arms don't hang like dead meat next to your body. Keep them actively engaged but don't wave them around like a three-year-old on a sugar-high either. Again, it's all about that sweet spot.
Fold your hands in the prayer position with your thumbs up, and keep some buoyancy to them. Alternate with "the steeple": put all ten fingertips together and make a triangle shape, indicating wisdom and conviction.

• **Finally, never turn your back on your audience.** That just signals that you, well, want to turn your back on your audience...

Important side note! *Depending on the country of business, the meeting might take place outside of a board room. A golfcourse in England, a sauna in Finland, a dinner in Asia...don't let the environment throw you. It might seem similar to the settings of a date but that has a very different intention and very different rules (see THE DATE). Keep in mind the purpose of the meeting, despite the location.*

3

THE DATE

We are hopeful that humans will always long for a life-partner of flesh and blood. That we will always be brave enough to meet with perfect strangers in the hopes of embarking on that beautiful yet peculiar journey of a relationship and, who knows, parenthood. It's perfectly alright to use dating apps and other AI to set up that initial meeting, but make sure you do meet face to face. It truly is the best way to discover whether you actually like the other person.

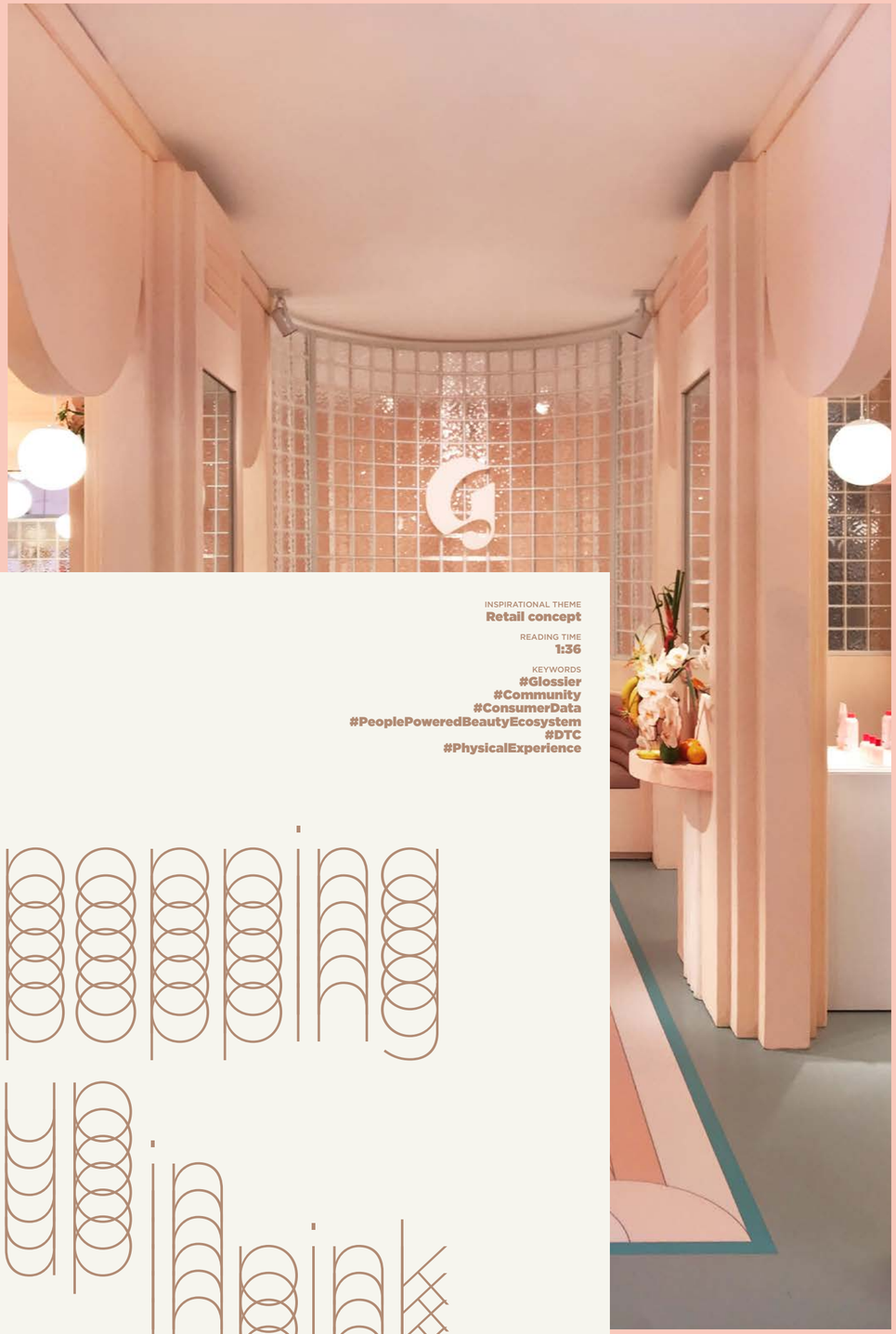
• **Take it slow.** If you're used to only communicating through screens, it might be awkward to meet a stranger, especially someone you would like to be cozy with. Our best advice is to take it slow. Meet in a setting that is both intimate yet public. For example a park, a digital museum, a 3-D concert, a restaurant or, if you dare, a sauna.

• **Keep it respectful.** Communicating on a first date is very much like making small talk, but instead of just passing time politely you actually want to try and get to know the other person. Therefore, show real interest but respect personal space. Seeing that you are on a date, you may let your eyes wander a little, but keep it respectful. Especially on that sauna date. Always return to the eyes and don't linger on other body parts. Eye contact is actually considered to make another person more attractive.

• **Show confidence.** What makes you most attractive? Confidence! So keep sitting up straight, shoulders back. You're not presenting or preaching, so don't use the steeple or fold your hands. Unless you're begging the other person to stay, but we do not recommend this on a first date. Or ever, really. Self-respect is equally important.

• **Show you are interested.** Finally, laughter and a light touch are powerful ways of communicating your interest. Laughter says you are relaxed and a friend. A good laugh is hugely attractive. A light touch initiates crossing over from complete strangers to a more intimate relationship. But make sure there is consent. In case you are unsure, just verbalise that question. Yes, this will ruin the flow of your communications a little, but nothing ruins the flow more than a slap in the face due to unwanted physical intimacy. So err on the side of safety.

We highly recommend you keep working at your human interaction skills. Practice makes perfect. Try to see other humans interacting in the wild, after all, learning by observing has a proven track record. If all else fails, we recommend you try one of the absolute best AI replicas we could find. They look, act and feel like humans do. In fact, you might say they are more real than the real deal. Specialised in mimicking human interaction and facial expressions, sold exclusively by Hans Boodt. Connect with us for more information in case you're interested.

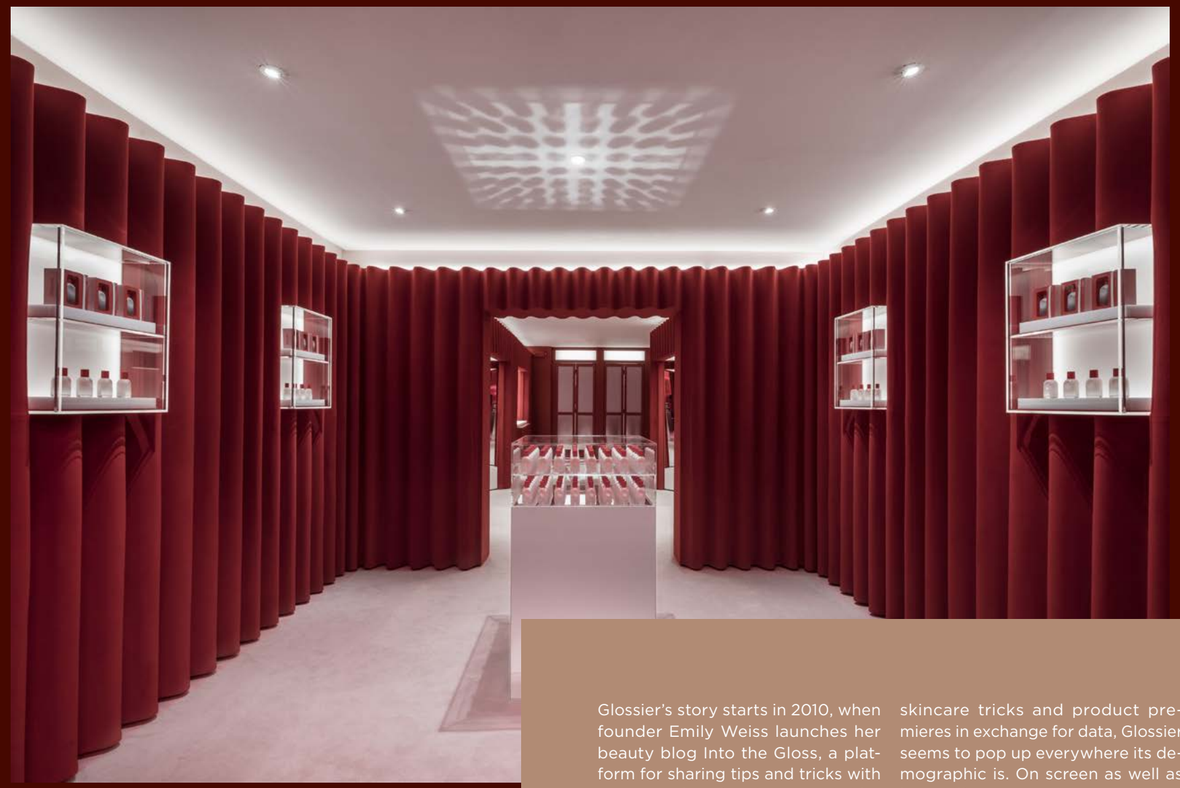


INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Retail concept

READING TIME
1:36

KEYWORDS
#Glossier
#Community
#ConsumerData
#PeoplePoweredBeautyEcosystem
#DTC
#PhysicalExperience

popping up in pink



Glossier's story starts in 2010, when founder Emily Weiss launches her beauty blog Into the Gloss, a platform for sharing tips and tricks with a community of make-up and skincare lovers. While working within the fashion industry, Emily builds her brand, approaching investors to help transform her beauty blog into the $1 billion cosmetics company it has become. Glossier seems to be doing things a little differently, focusing on social media to build a cult of personality. Thereby, doing something few brands ever accomplished: creating desire for being part of a community, without actively promoting that.

The beauty brand, famed for its skin first, make-up second ideology, seems to apply the perfect marketing strategy, knowing exactly what this generation wants: DTC (Direct to Consumer) goods that are affordable and above all Instagrammable. In fact, Instagram launched around the same time as Into the Gloss and the desire for a good-looking life has boomed since then. Glossier ticks all boxes: pretty products, packaging and people in a glossy world. It's picture perfect content for the company's feed: A simple, but aspirational mix of pastels, brand ambassadors and user generated content, feeling more like a mood board than a sales platform. By, at the same time, offering free stuff such as beauty tips, skincare tricks and product premieres in exchange for data, Glossier seems to pop up everywhere its demographic is. On screen as well as in real life.

Though DTC stands for skipping the middlemen (offline) and selling products directly to the customer (online), many DTC brands are becoming aware of the value of creating opportunities where online and offline connect. In a disconnected world like ours, people long for physical places where they can get their hands on the goodies, meet their favorite influencers and simply experience the brand in real life.

By collecting lots of online data and carefully getting to know its online community, they created the perfect physical pop-up in some of the biggest cities in the world, with walls, plants and products hued in that iconic Glossier shade. Think of a pink dream world, in which we can actually hang out, buy bestsellers, test limited editions and experience the concept in a highly Instagrammable setting, screaming to be shared. A fine example of offline reinforcing online. Those queues will be massive. But hey, anything to be part of this "people-powered beauty ecosystem".

Where on earth does data estimate Glossier to pop up next?

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Marketing

READING TIME
2:17

KEYWORDS
#RoyalTreatment
#ValueIntegrity
#Authenticity
#BrandStory
#TacoEmoji
#PhysicalSpace
#Goldmine
#PledgedLoyalty

CUSTOMER IS KING ...or isn't it?

AUTHENTICITY RULES!

The Customer is king.

An old adage which has been thrown around since retail started booming. But the clientele seem to have always wondered:

really?

Because let's face it, customer service has been dwindling at best. Until now, that is.

AUTHENTICITY

Since the rise of online shopping, shopper loyalty is at an all-time low. Brands have to stand out with exceptional service and a seamless online/offline brand experience. The overwhelming majority of brands offer an online shopping experience, and if you don't like their treatment, it only takes a scroll and a click to move on to the next (better) deal. You don't even have to get up, it's that easy.

So how to hold on to that new royalty? A lot of research has been done to discover what customers value most. And in this chaotic, stress inducing mixture of online and analogue realities, it turns out authenticity tops the list. According to a recent study by the PR agency Cohn & Wolfe, 89% of consumers expect companies to be honest and authentic at all times. They even value integrity over product quality and innovation. In other words: don't try to be anything you're not.

Today's customer can smell that out like a hound on a hunt. Interestingly though, a brand doesn't have to be small and innocent in order to be authentic. McDonalds, Taco Bell and Patagonia proved this when their sales went up by being transparent and on brand. McDonalds listed their ingredients, Taco Bell started a petition for a taco emoji (which they got) and Patagonia spoke up about difficult environmental issues.

It turns out that in order to be your best kind of authentic, you must truly know your clientele and connect with them. Understand what they value and how your brand works for them.

THE VALUE OF A COMMUNITY

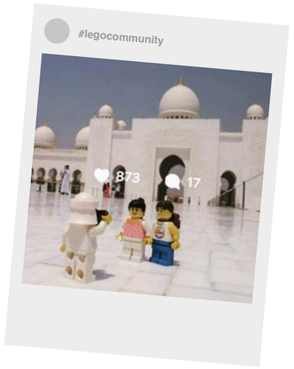
Many digitally native brands, who are naturally more inclined to a DTC (Direct to Consumer) approach, have discovered that there was something to that brick-and-mortar thing of the past. And with foot traffic taking a nose dive for traditional brick-and-mortar retailers, malls closing down and the prices for Google and Facebook ads being sky-high, physical space has become a cheap and recognizable way for brands to directly connect with their customers.

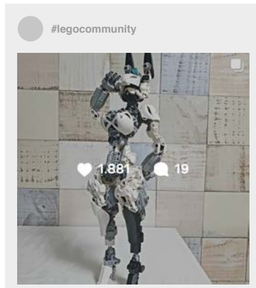
DON'T TRY TO BE ANYTHING YOU'RE NOT

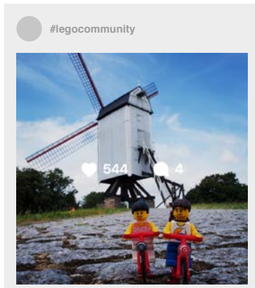
Stores, pop-up or more permanent, don't have the same function for brands as they used to: it's not so much about selling a product as it is about selling a brandstory. A physical space where clients can experience a brand, give feedback and feel heard. It's a perfect place to discover who your client is, and what they value. Loyal customers expect a brand to become an extension of their self-image. They want community, a customer-centered space, whether this is online or offline. Which, if you are able to offer that, is an absolute goldmine for a brand. Not only will you have a regular buyer who will help sell your product through recommendations, gifts and by being an unpaid ambassador, you also have the opportunity to tap into customer data.

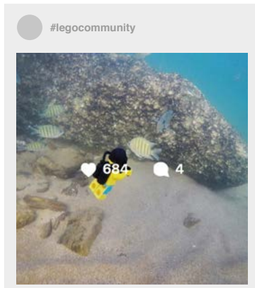
And that, it's been predicted, will soon be a more valuable commodity than oil. Read more about brandstory-telling and tracking shop floors on page nr. 65.

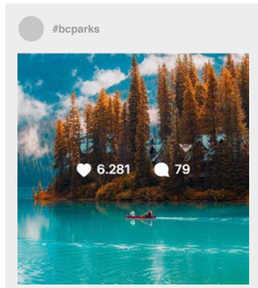
So, if you're a brand looking to be successful: be honest. Make sure you know your clientele better than your own mother. Connect with them by personalizing, royal treatment. And they might just pledge their loyalty to you.

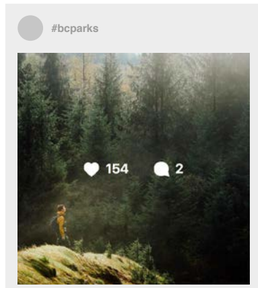


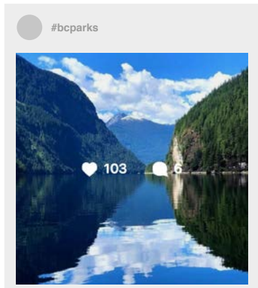


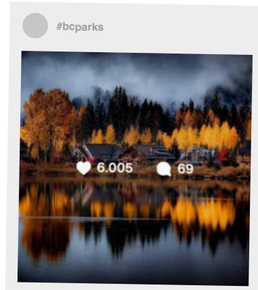


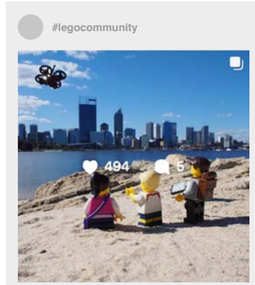


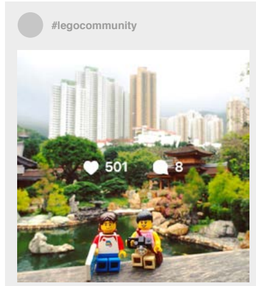


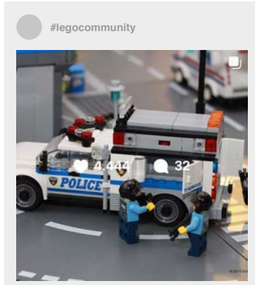


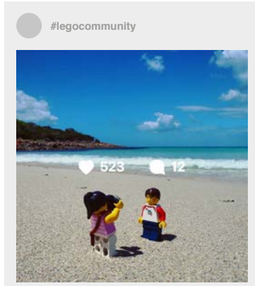


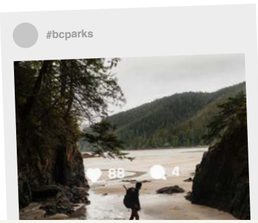


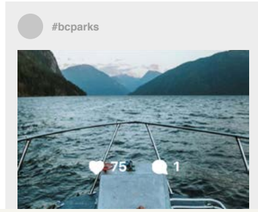


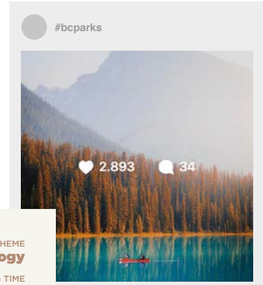


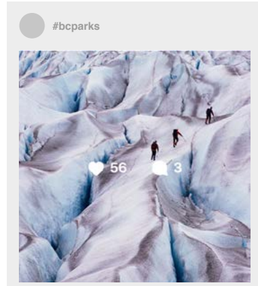


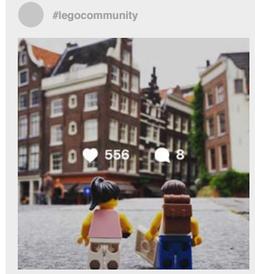


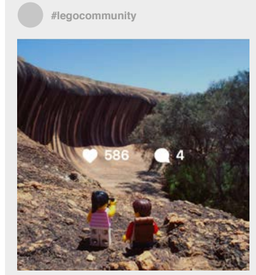


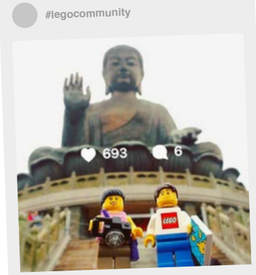


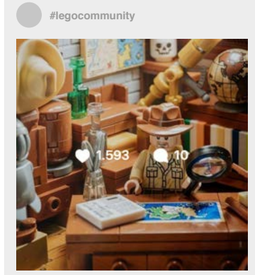


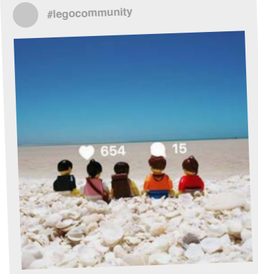


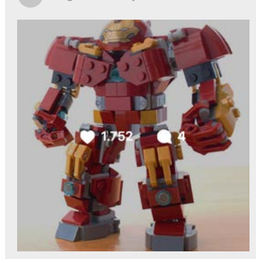


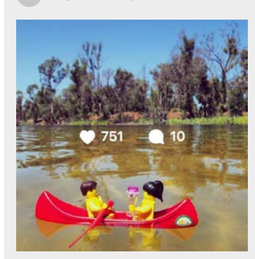


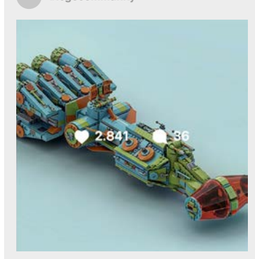


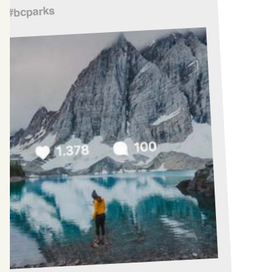


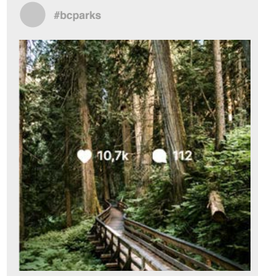


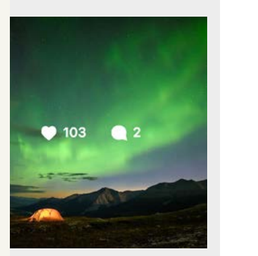


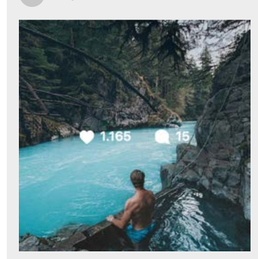










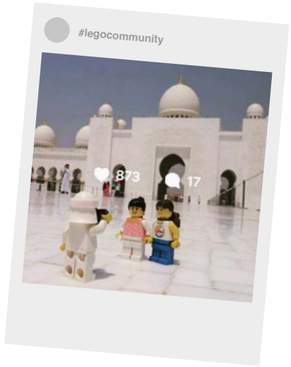


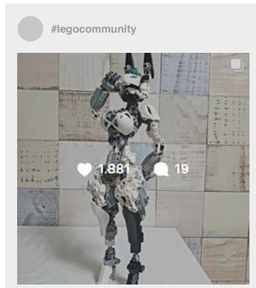
INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Sociology

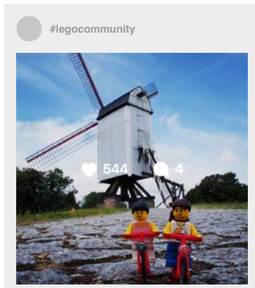
READING TIME
1:36

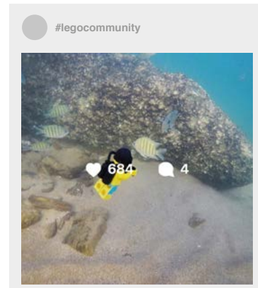
KEYWORDS
#Communities
#CommonGround
#NoManIsAnIsland
#Crowdsourcing
#PowerOfPeople

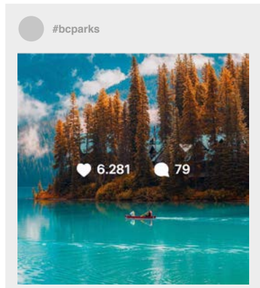
BOOMING COMMUNITIES

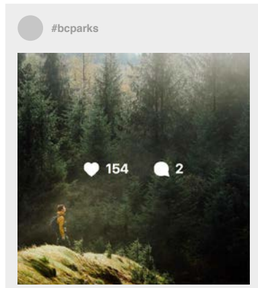


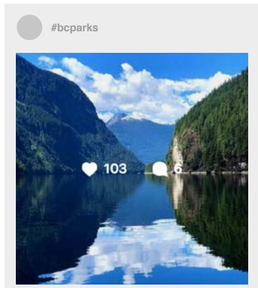


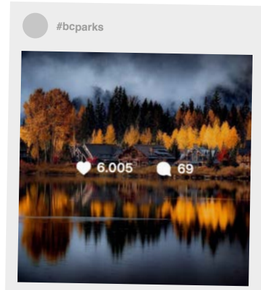


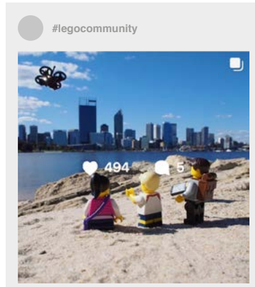


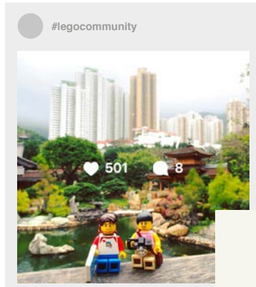


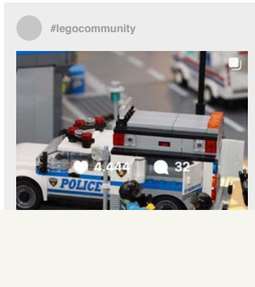


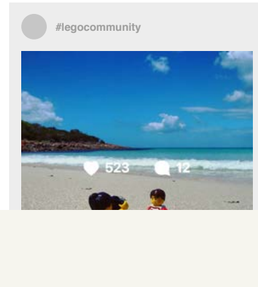


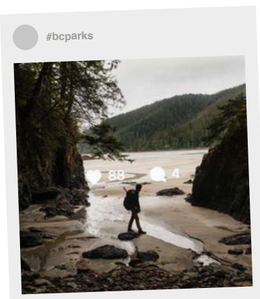


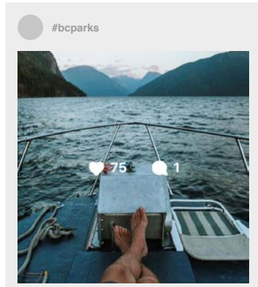


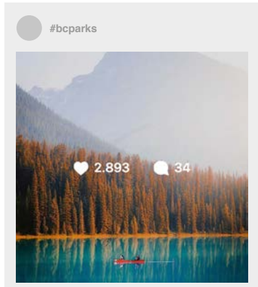


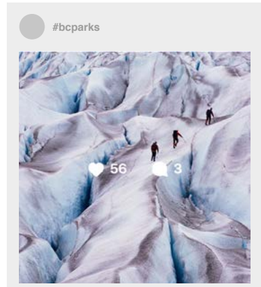


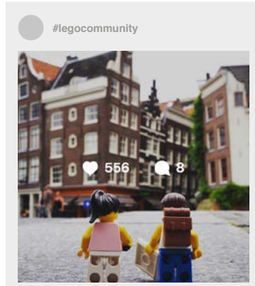


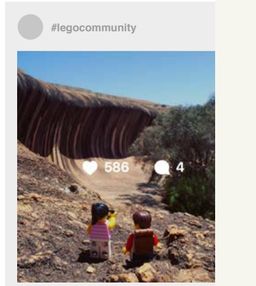


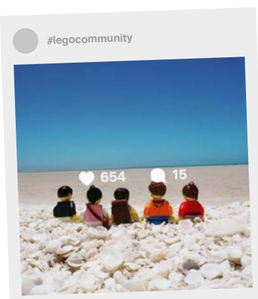


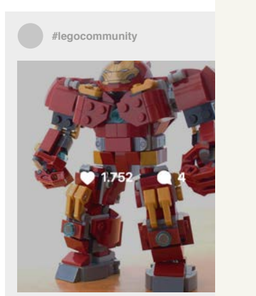












Humans. If you follow the news it becomes easy to believe that we're the type of creatures who will always find differences amongst ourselves, and then love to pick a fight over them. But then you discover something like The Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster (which makes the case for freedom of religion and equal treatment under the law), with thousands if not millions of active Pastafarians and you realise: humans actually like to look for common ground.

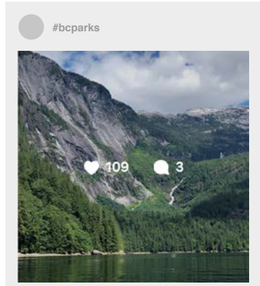
We'll always find others to connect with. Whether it's over something as essential as, say, the environment, or something that's seemingly small and insignificant, such as love for a certain lipstick or toy. And when we do find that common ground, we build an engaging community around it.

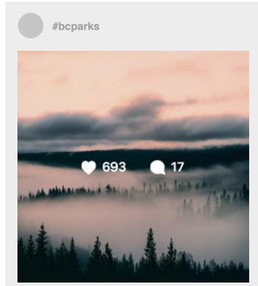
The power of people coming together on a shared subject is incredible. Businesses have known this for some time and have put it to good use. Sephora has one of the worlds best brand communities designed around a common love for beauty products, resulting in a thriving business.

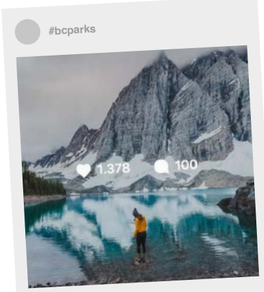
Lego also built an incredible brand community with Lego Ideas. Lego enthusiasts of all ages (literally!) are offered the opportunity to put their design ideas forward. Other enthusiasts vote on their favorite options and give feedback. The most popular designs are put into production and the designer is rewarded with a percentage of the product sales. It's a brilliant move: Lego gets free design ideas and a ton of valuable consumer data. On top of that it keeps its community actively engaged and feeling relevant.

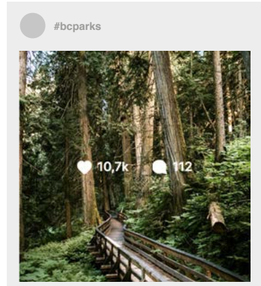
Another example is the crowd sourcing campaign by a Canadian community in September 2019. They raised 3 million Canadian dollars for the British Columbia Parks Foundation to buy nearly 2,000 acres in Princess Louisa Inlet to save it from being bought by forestry companies and developers. Likewise, tiny NGO's (Non-governmental organizations) such as Because We Carry have a huge impact on the lives of stranded immigrants in Lesbos, because of the many individuals that support its cause.

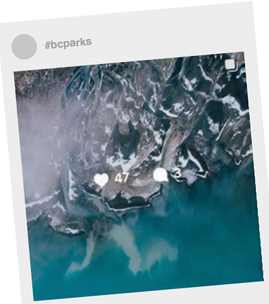
Turns out that truly no man is an island. And for that matter, no brand or cause is either. For anything to flourish, a community, whether on- or offline, is its necessary fertile soil. Haven't found yours yet? No worries. If The Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster proves anything, it's that no matter how niche, we will all fit in somewhere.

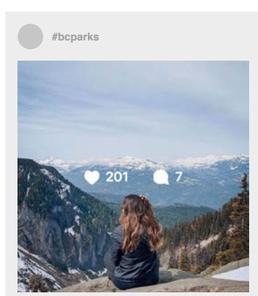


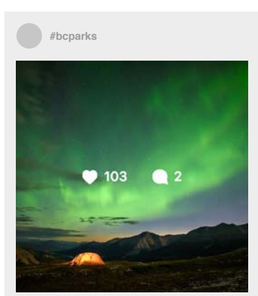


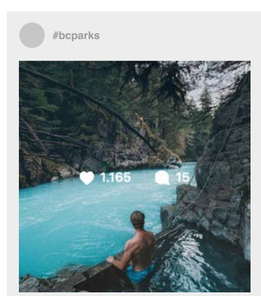












INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Neuromarketing

READING TIME
2:32

KEYWORDS
#Smell
#Emotions
#Neuromarketing
#Smellvertising
#NewTechnology
#Implants
#TailorMade

led by the nose

A subtle scent of a honeydew melon to put visitors in a relaxed state, a whiff of lemon to convey a feeling of cleanliness, an aroma of a field of flowers to boost moods... we all know about this aromatic nudging, yet we're hardly ever aware of it. The nose is a gemstone in sensory marketing, increasingly used by brands to forge a connection between them and consumers. New technologies can take this to the next level.

Although the human sense of smell isn't as well developed as that of many animals, it is still quite acute. First developed in the womb, our sense of smell can discern thousands of different odours, even in small quantities. Our senses are linked to the limbic system of our brain that is responsible for memories, feelings and emotions. And, as it turns out, 75% of our emotions are generated by smell.

AS IT TURNS OUT, 75% OF OUR EMOTIONS ARE GENERATED BY SMELL

Sensory marketing often refers to ambient scent, the one emitted from (invisible) dispensers in hotels, retail stores, casinos or restaurants. It's assumed these aromas have the potential to create positive mood states, which will lead to consumers spending more time in these spaces, be more favourable towards them and, ultimately, spend more money.

Since the field of neuromarketing has shown that we make buying decisions not based on facts, reason and logic, but emotions, feelings and intuition. Aromatic influencing is perceived as subtle, because we often only perceive them on a subconscious level. That's precisely why they are powerful. While we can easily tune out when we hear a radio ad, or look away from a massive billboard, we can't block our noses (unless you use a laundry peg). But it is successfully used as such, for example in South Korea, where Dunkin' Donuts launched a campaign on local buses. A subtle whiff of coffee aroma was sprayed during the time the company jingle played on the radio: coffee sales near bus stops increased by 16%.

AROMATIC INFLUENCING IS PERCEIVED AS SUBTLE, BECAUSE WE OFTEN ONLY PERCEIVE THEM ON A SUBCONSCIOUS LEVEL

There's a downside to this 'smellvertising' though: a smell is indiscriminate, it reaches all who are close by. While many people would enjoy the scent of freshly brewed coffee, some people would be turned off by it. A more extreme example is the American billboard showing a gigantic piece of steak on a giant fork, which pumped out the smell of cooked steak during rush hour - all to promote a new kind of beef. The campaign made stomachs turn, to put it mildly.

This is where new technologies could play a role in the (near) future. We already customize products, so why not also customize the sensory experience surrounding them? Through the collection of data, algorithms will start to know consumers better than they know themselves. Who knows, perhaps one day we'll even walk around with implants to precisely monitor our bodily sensations? It's a spooky thought now, but not an unlikely scenario. What if these implants made it possible to perceive a smell on an individual level?

Explorations on how technology interacts with our senses are already underway. In the Milan Design Week, SONY organised the exhibit "Affinity in Autonomy", where a world was presented in which intelligence and technology were integrated more in our day to day lives, and the impact they had on our emotions and senses. Sensory design will become reactive rather than proactive: it goes from guessing (we think person X will like this) to knowing (we have gathered information that person X will like this).

Let's start fantasizing about the different possibilities, when one can smell, see, feel, and hear something completely different to the person standing next to him or her. Based on their preferences, memories and behaviour, they experience a tailor-made palette of sensory stimuli, just for them.

THE WORLD PIECE

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Art

READING TIME
0:16

KEYWORDS
#WorldPiece
#Tattoo
#BodyCanvas

HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO TO BRING THE WORLD TOGETHER?

Scan the QR code and find out why this living artwork has crucial meaning to us humans.

www.tchai.nl

World-renowned tattoo artist Mo Ganji united 61 total strangers from different countries and cultures through one continuous single-line tattoo. The design runs freely from body to body, reflecting both the personal and universal.

Putting things in perspective

Four panoramas on the future of mobility

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Future

READING TIME
5:54

KEYWORDS
#MobilityTechnology
#EthicistDilemmas
#SelfDrivingCars
#SharingCars
#ScarcityOfElectricity
#SocialCreditSystem
#SpaceAvailable
#RedesigningTheCity

In a magazine that is all about connecting, let's not forget the most basic meaning of the word: getting from A to B

GLOBAL DEMOGRAPHIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES ARE FUELING RADICALLY NEW APPROACHES TO TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

As fascinating as the development of autonomous cars and passenger drones may be, innovation stretches far beyond mobility technology. In this story we examine the future of personal transport and logistics from four totally different panoramas. Hop on and travel with us to the far corners of your brain...

PANORAMA 1

The self-driving car ethicist

The car is set to undergo a massive transformation in the coming years, as automation gradually eliminates the need for drivers. Among many challenges, self-driving car design also raises fascinating moral dilemmas. When a driver slams on the brakes to avoid hitting a pedestrian crossing the road illegally, he or she is making a moral decision that shifts risk from the pedestrian to the people in the car. Self-driving cars might soon have to make such ethical judgments on their own. This requires programming autonomous vehicles with a moral code. A daunting task, as programmers will have to decide how a car will react in many different situations. Choosing the life of a human over an animal is relatively easy, but how about deciding between saving the life of a successful business man and a homeless person? Or an incurably ill child and a seventy year old? What complicates things tremendously is the fact that there is no universal moral code. A global survey shows that many of the moral principles that guide a driver's decisions vary by country. The survey laid out 13 scenarios in which someone's death was inevitable. Respondents were asked to choose who to spare in situations that involved a mix of variables: young or old, rich or poor, more people or fewer. In countries with different cultural, economical and social backgrounds different choices were made. For example, in a scenario in which some combination of pedestrians and passengers will die in a collision, people from relatively prosperous countries with strong institutions were less likely to spare a pedestrian who stepped into traffic illegally. Will we see a future in which autonomous cars in different countries will make different moral decisions? Barbara Wege, who heads a group focused on autonomous-vehicle ethics at Audi in Ingolstadt, Germany, argues that self-driving cars would cause fewer accidents, proportionally, than human drivers do each year - but that events involving robots might receive more attention. "We need to come up with a social consensus," she says, "about which risks we are willing to take." We advise extending development teams with philosophers and social scientists who are able to transcend cultural backgrounds in order to reach a global viewpoint on the morality and ethics of self-driving cars.

PANORAMA 2

The car owner (RIP)

While the first panorama made us gasp for air, this one is pretty straight forward. The car owner seems to be hitting a dead-end street. Soon. Some researchers predict private car ownership in the US will drop by as much as 80% by 2030. To us it seems a lot of people might be resistant to the idea of giving up their own car and the sense of freedom and independence that comes with it. But evidence suggests that people seem ready to accept the loss of car ownership, provided alternative transport goes fast and far enough. A shift away from privately owned vehicles towards a service – owned and run by public or private ventures – is a smart and efficient solution that's going to revolutionize the way traffic flows through cities. It's likely that autonomous cars will operate as part of a networked system. This will enable them to avoid congestion, thus reducing pollution and minimizing the time people spend on the road. Congestion is often caused by too many drivers all trying to take the most direct or convenient route at the same time. Only drivers who take the route early will benefit, while the rest will get caught in traffic.

Working as a system, driverless cars will be able to distribute themselves across a range of routes to prevent traffic jams and move through the city more efficiently. In such a system and with the sharing economy on the rise it is also very likely more people will be sharing cars than they do today. This will lead to a lot more human connection; meeting new people on your way to the same part of town or a mutual event. Initiatives like UberPool (sharing an Uber with someone going in the same direction) are already running. If self-driving cars ultimately mean we will be traveling together more, to us that seems like a great side-effect.

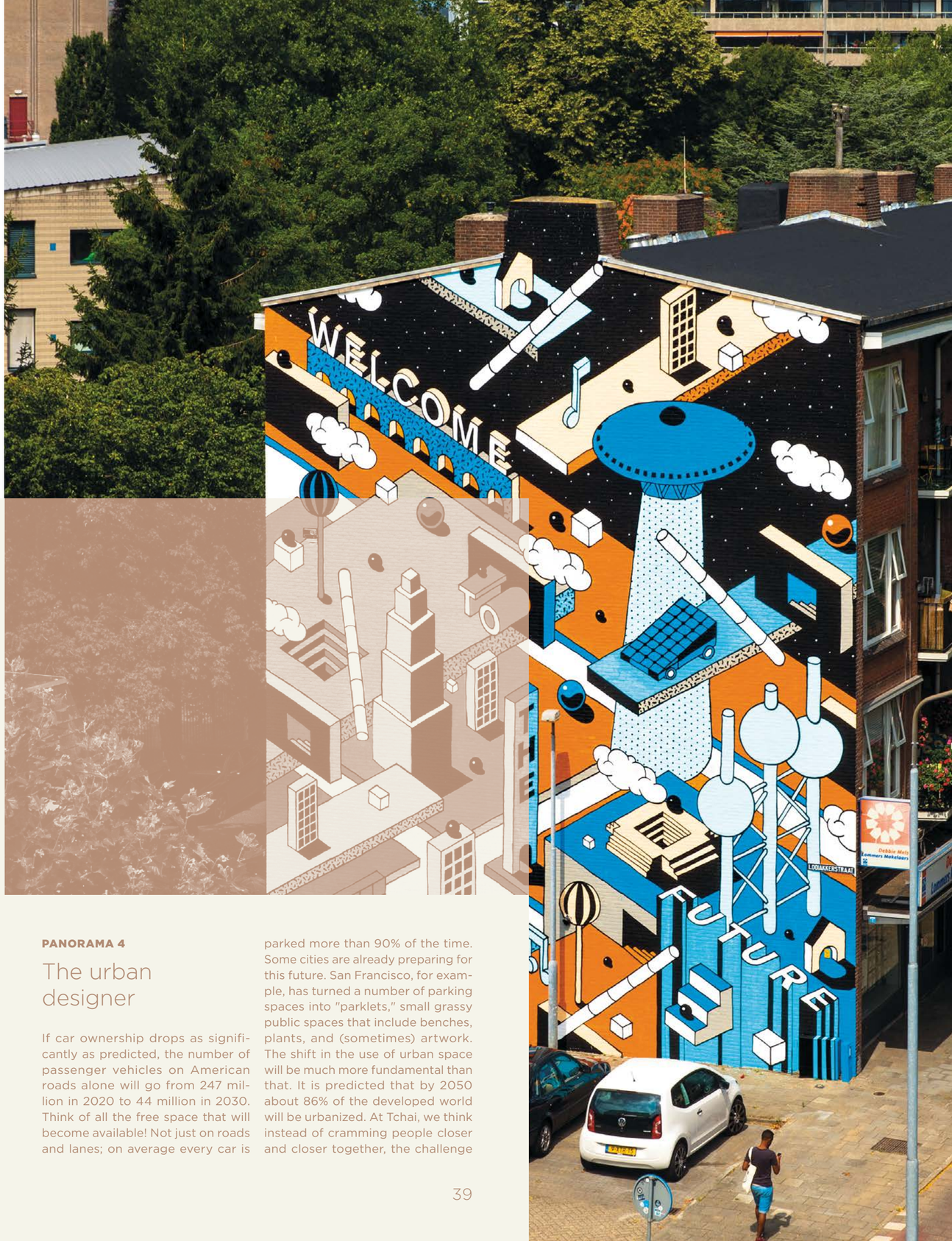
The car owner seems to be hitting a dead-end street. Soon. Some researchers predict private car ownership in the US will drop by as much as 80% by 2030.

PANORAMA 3

450 kW Mad Max

Remember Mad Max? The dystopian action thriller is set in a world where oil is extremely scarce. In total anarchy Max has to fight for every drop of petrol. With the way things are moving forward, fossil fuel might not be the energy source we should be concerned about. In a future where everything is driven by electricity, will there be enough to make the world go round? And maybe even more critical: will there be enough batteries to store all that energy? What solutions could we as a society come up with to distribute and allocate electricity once it is no longer abundantly available? Do we assign it to government and emergency services first and leave it to the market to distribute the rest? So, the wealthy will always be able to travel and the general public will have to save up? Or do we implement a social credit system in which we score points for good behavior and get rewarded with electricity? In case you are considering this merely a philosophical thought experiment – it is not. In 2020 a social credit system goes into effect across China, where every citizen is scored based on their behavior. Good actions, like volunteering, and bad, like littering, are tracked using algorithms, artificial intelligence and facial recognition — and there are real consequences for a high or low score. In total, over 200 million surveillance cameras are being installed. A large scale pilot has already run (participation was obviously mandatory). As many as 9 million pilot participants with low social scores were already 'punished' with travel restrictions. Until their score improved, they were not able to book internal flights or train tickets. It is not hard to imagine this kind of system being used when the world's electricity supply is lacking.

Luckily, between a Big Brother like totalitarian system and the anarchy of the Mad Max movie there is a lot of room for the positive and sustainable future we see before us. These two extremes just go to show the impact mobility can have on our society and it will certainly effect the way we design our future cities.



PANORAMA 4

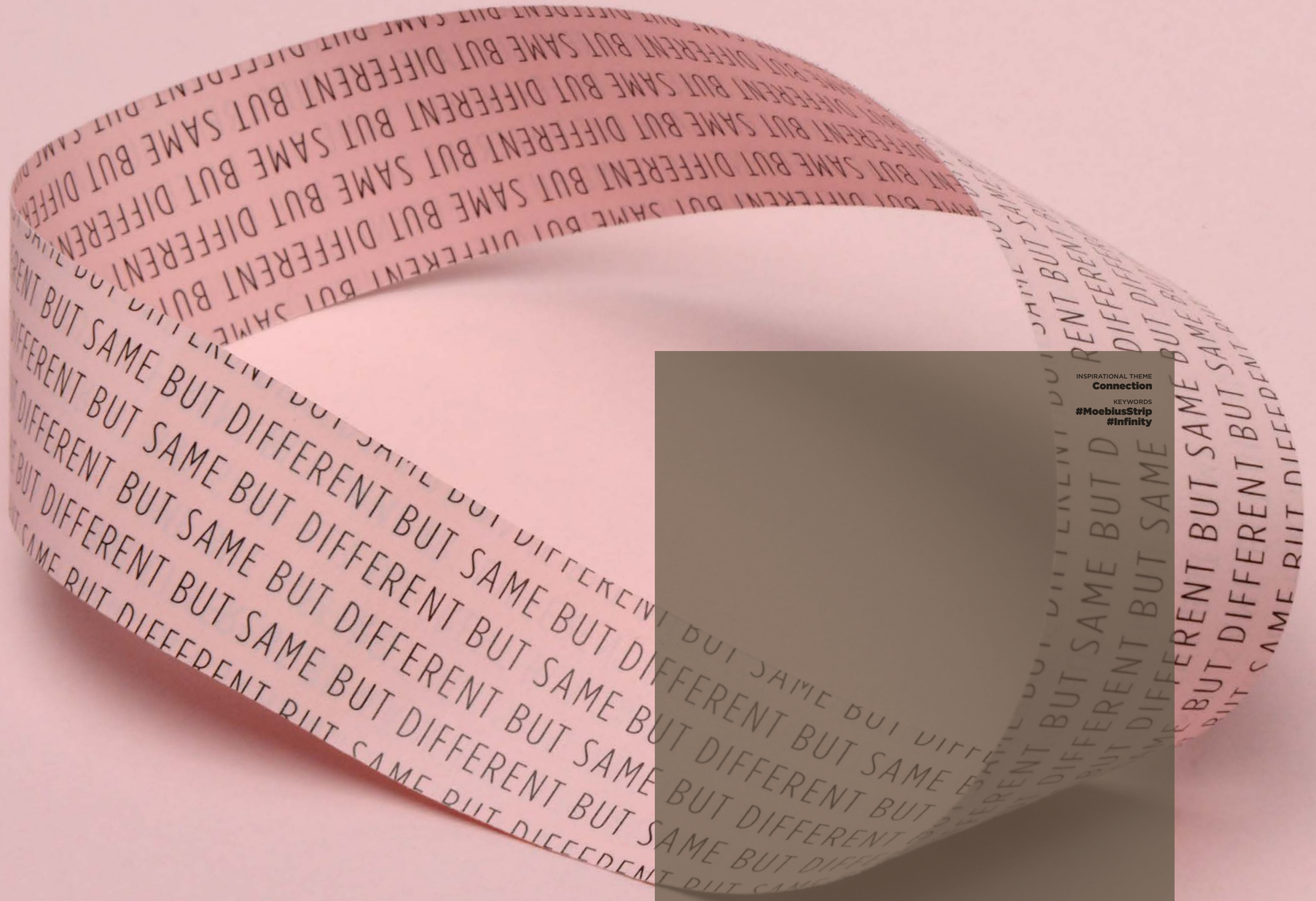
The urban designer

If car ownership drops as significantly as predicted, the number of passenger vehicles on American roads alone will go from 247 million in 2020 to 44 million in 2030. Think of all the free space that will become available! Not just on roads and lanes; on average every car is parked more than 90% of the time. Some cities are already preparing for this future. San Francisco, for example, has turned a number of parking spaces into "parklets," small grassy public spaces that include benches, plants, and (sometimes) artwork. The shift in the use of urban space will be much more fundamental than that. It is predicted that by 2050 about 86% of the developed world will be urbanized. At Tchai, we think instead of cramming people closer and closer together, the challenge

is new development at reasonable densities, protecting open spaces, respecting the need for privacy and supporting community cohesion. All the city dwellers switching to autonomous, electric ride-shares could prove a real blessing. It opens up vast tracts of land for new uses, like wider pavements and more housing, parks and zones where cars are banned. When we think of the possibilities for retailers, our inspiration goes through the roof. With an advanced backbone of online shopping, sharing rides, pick-up points and autonomous delivery we can use urban retail space to make genuine connections and create profound brand experiences. Not just being commercially present, but adding value to inner-city life with urban farming, co-creation and services that build communities and add to well-being. Fast forward to this future, please!

We believe human beings moving across the planet will keep changing the dynamics of the planet itself. And we will most certainly find new creative ways to do so. As Einstein said: “Logic will get you from A to Z; imagination will get you everywhere.”

All the city dwellers switching to autonomous, electric ride-shares could prove a real blessing



INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Connection

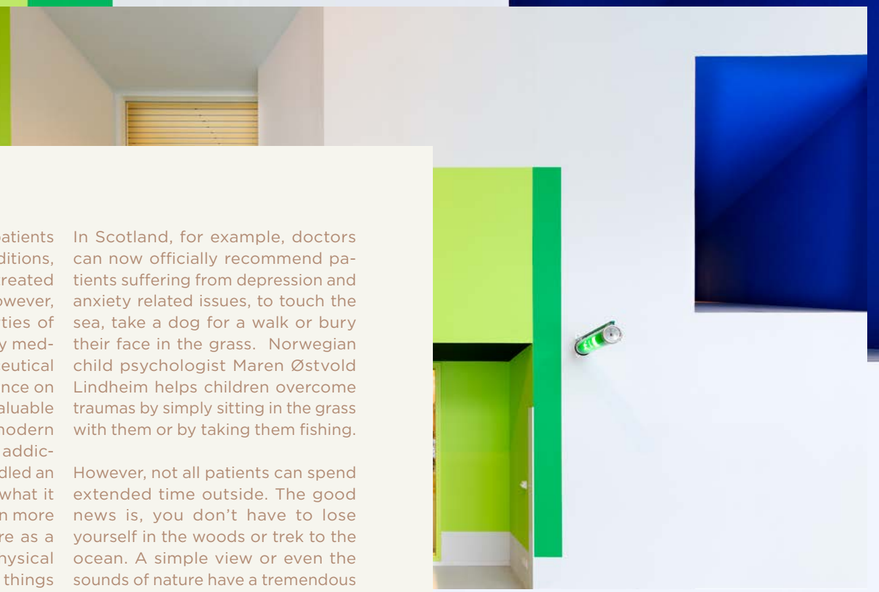
KEYWORDS
#MoebiusStrip
#Infinity

Aren't we all on the same side?

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Nature

READING TIME
1:48

KEYWORDS
#LostConnection
#ContemporaryParadox
#ReconnectToDisconnect
#GoodOl'Nature
#ScreenTime
#BiophilicDesign



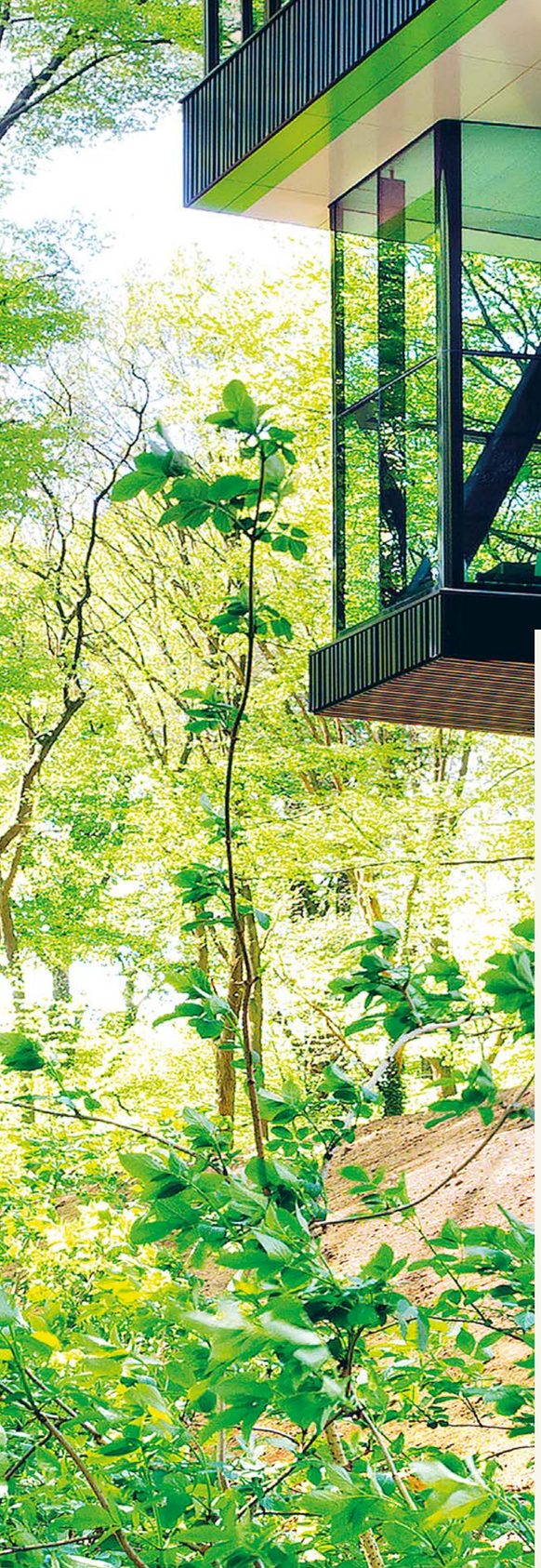
We are suffering from a contemporary paradox: never before were we so technically connected, yet never before did we feel so disconnected from ourselves. Research shows that depression rates, stress levels and feelings of being completely out of touch with our own lives have never been so high and are all directly linked to our screen time.
The answer to this problem comes in the form of another paradox: to reconnect we need to disconnect. And the best way to do that, is to soak up some good ol' nature.

From the Alps for asthmatic patients to the Dead Sea for skin conditions, physical malaise has been treated with nature for centuries. However, most of the healing properties of nature have been replaced by medicine offered by the pharmaceutical industries. And with this reliance on pharmaceuticals, we lost a valuable connection to nature. But modern ailments resulting from our addiction to our devices, have rekindled an appreciation for nature and what it can do for the body and, even more so, the mind. Because nature as a backdrop to mental and physical restoration can literally put things into perspective.

In Scotland, for example, doctors can now officially recommend patients suffering from depression and anxiety related issues, to touch the sea, take a dog for a walk or bury their face in the grass. Norwegian child psychologist Maren Østvold Lindheim helps children overcome traumas by simply sitting in the grass with them or by taking them fishing.

However, not all patients can spend extended time outside. The good news is, you don't have to lose yourself in the woods or trek to the ocean. A simple view or even the sounds of nature have a tremendous and positive impact on our health.

LOST CONNECTION



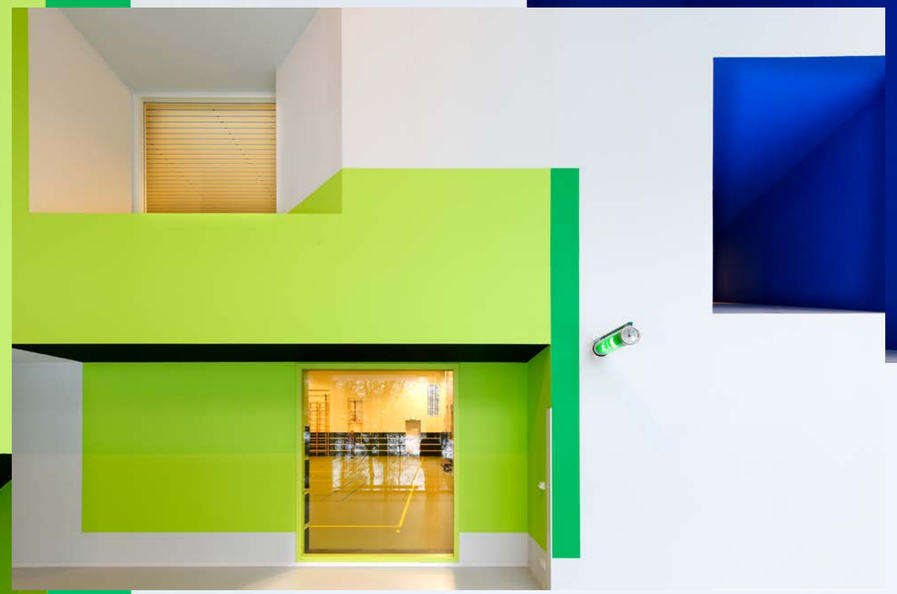
Therefore Lindheim, Oslo University Hospital and the Friluftssykehuset Foundation built a part of the hospital in the woods, resembling a cabin or tree house. While it has all the hospital facilities inside, the outside experience and sensation of nature permeate the entire space. Similarly, the Dutch Rehabilitation Centre Groot Klimmendaal is set amongst trees and built so that patients always have a view of the woods. The scenic premises, which you can see in the imagery, is a striking design by Koen van Velsen Architecture.

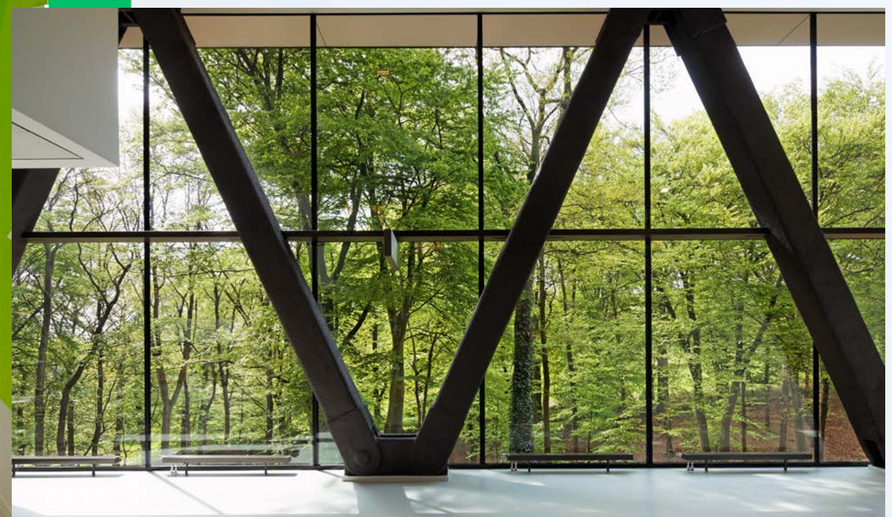
More and more hospitals, learning environments and big companies are embracing the benefits of biophilic design. Amazon famously brought the forest into its headquarters with The Spheres Building. There employees can work from 'tree houses', relax in 'birds nests' and enjoy a sense of nature. Stress levels go down, productivity and joy go up.

So, if you're feeling the burden of your connectedness, put down that phone, step away from our buzzing society and find a tree to hug. You'll feel a lot better.

For more inspiring biophilic design scan here.

www.tchai.nl





...AND YOU

...AND YOU

...AND YOU

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Self-awareness

READING TIME
1:33

KEYWORDS
#InsideOut
#Cartoon
#SubPersonalities
#VoiceDialogue
#Emotions
#HumanPsyche
#Behaviours

INTRODUCING VOICE DIALOGUE

HELLO, NICE TO MEET YOU...

In 1972, psychologist couple Hal and Sidra Stone developed a method for getting to know the many selves who live inside us. In 2015, Disney Pixar released the brilliant motion picture *Inside Out*. Both explore how different subpersonalities determine our behaviour and teach us how understanding their motivations can lead to a more balanced existence.

The method is known as Voice Dialogue and it is founded on the premise that we are not a single entity but consist of numerous subpersonalities who each view the world from a different perspective.

A delightful example of Voice Dialogue can be found in the animated adventure movie *Inside Out*. The film's protagonist is 11-year-old Riley and the story takes us deep inside her head. We see how Riley is controlled by her five emotions Joy, Sadness, Anger, Fear and Disgust. As we follow her throughout her day and throughout her childhood, we are witness to these five different personalities influencing her actions and responses to the situations she is faced with. It soon becomes clear that the control panel inside Riley's head can be operated by only one of these personas at a time and that time spent at the controls is by no means divided equally between her different selves.

Although the human psyche is much more complex than the mind of a cartoon character, the film still expertly portrays how we go about forming our outlook on life. As we grow, we experiment with certain behaviours driven by our various subpersonalities. Depending on our experiences, we decide to hold onto some and to let go of others. By doing so, we are mapping out our own survival strategy, deciding which behaviours are deemed acceptable and which ones have harmed us in some way.

Mastering the technique of Voice Dialogue is about conversing with our many subpersonalities, allowing them all to exist and understanding when they are causing internal conflict. Instead of letting our loudest voice run the show, this method asks us to stop, listen and create space between opposing selves so that new choices may arise. The more insights we gain into what drives us, the more often we can actively call upon a particular self to take over when we need them to. And, ultimately, the easier it becomes to live life free of self-imposed limitations.

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Sociology / Trend

READING TIME
4:44

KEYWORDS
#SocialeGamers
#VirtualWorld
#QuitStigmatizing
#HeartwarmingFriendship
#E-sport

WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER

The Rise of the Social Gamer

Since the dawn of videogames in the early 1970s there have always been negative attitudes towards gamers. Even today, there are still many negative stereotypes, nearly all of which have been debunked by science. In this article, we investigate the most stubborn gaming stereotype of all. Spoiler alert: gamers are not lonely, socially inept nerds, they are actually more social than the rest of us. Get your game on!

21st Century Skills

Experts agree that parents need to change their mindset about the seemingly obsessive gaming behavior of their kids. Obviously, climbing trees is nice, but in the digital era gaming seriously helps develop 21st century skills. We won't bore you with arguments about why gaming is the greatest thing ever, but it obviously improves coordination, problem-solving, attention, concentration and social skills. Wait, what? Social skills? Yes sir!

A report based on a United States survey by research and consultancy firm LifeCourse Associates shows that gamers have more positive attributes than their non-gamer counterparts. The survey specifically revealed that gamers consider family a top priority (82% vs 68%) while also placing a high importance on friends (57% vs 35%) than non-gamers. In terms of values and norms, gamers are more likely predisposed to making a positive impact on society (76% vs 55%). And they prefer businesses that promote social causes (58% vs 36%).

In good company

Okay, so gamers are not as unworldly and self-centered as myths might have us believe. That still doesn't make them great company, sociable and amicable. Right? It's true gamers are sometimes stigmatized as being too insulated, but again the opposite is actually true. They sometimes choose not to express their interest, for fear of shaming and stereotyping, so some may decide to move the social aspect to the online space. Others find camaraderie with other gamers. The rise of multiplayer experiences online has given way to a new form of socializing in which players work together to solve problems. But studies have shown games can also be the catalyst for friends to gather in person: roughly 70 percent of all players play with real life friends at least some of the time.

Let's party

Gamers do not just play together in the comfort of their own home, they actually get around and visit public gaming events, ranging from E-sport tournaments to conventions and LAN-parties. Those of us who have never been to a LAN-party, tend to think it's a lot of guys staring at monitors all day (and night). Again: drop the scepticism! U.S. researchers travelled to more than 20 public gaming events in Canada and the U.S. to observe the social behaviour of gamers and survey another 375 playing massive multiplayer online games. In tracking both online and offline behaviour, they found that gaming was just one aspect of social behaviour at these events. "We found that gamers were often exhibiting many social behaviours at once: watching games, talking, drinking, and chatting online," said Nicholas Taylor, lead researcher and professor of communications. "Gaming did not eliminate social interaction, it supplemented it. "This was true regardless of which games players were playing, and whether a player's behaviour in the online game was altruistic. For example, a player could be utterly ruthless in the game and still socialise normally offline." What she is actually saying is: someone could be the most-feared serial killer in an online game and still be the gentlest person you will ever meet. Honestly? Deep down, we already knew that to be true.

Read this, you cynics!

For all the sceptics reading this, thinking: mwah, these gaming relationships are just substitute friendships for people who fail at connecting in real life, we have four heartwarming examples of gamers really getting in touch with eachother.

Guy makes Xbox friend his best man

There isn't a stronger piece of evidence that online friends are exactly like real life ones than this story. It's about an in-game friendship that lasted for 15 years and reached its peak when one of the guys decided to make the other one the best man at his wedding. Mind you, at that point in time they had never seen each other outside of the virtual world. The immense amount of trust they shared shows that establishing strong bonds doesn't necessarily require physical contact.

Couple gets engaged in game…. and then in real life

Getting married in a video game is not unheard of. In fact, many players were doing this kind of thing in popular games like World of Warcraft. Marie and Jay Coulbeck crafted some killer avatars for themselves in a 3D chat room and after interacting almost daily, they decided to get engaged, virtually. Even though their real life personas didn't physically match the perfection of their online ones, these two lovebirds ended up getting married in real life. It's one of the most heart melting love stories online gaming has ever seen.

Rapper and grandma spell f-r-i-e-n-d-s-h-i-p

Spencer Sleyon (22) and Rosalind Guttman (81) have a very unusual friendship that would have never bloomed if they had first met in real life. What brought them together was the Scrabble-like game Words with Friends. After playing more than 300 games together, aspiring rapper and hip-hop producer Spencer finally went to Florida to meet his new best friend in the flesh. Word up!

Online friends meet after one of them gets terminal cancer diagnosis

A group of six men had been playing online titles together since meeting on the internet over five years ago. Like many gamers, they had formed a close friendship despite never meeting in person. But the group finally came together after one of them, 23-year-old Joe, started treatment for cancer. David Miller shared the story and the image of the group at Joe's bedside and it immediately went viral. Speaking to the BBC, Miller said: "We played pretty much everything. We played all the time. Even if we weren't playing games we would be just hanging out, talking about anything." While meeting people in real life having only known them online isn't always easy" Miller said it didn't even feel like this was the first time they'd met. "We just hung out like we had done it a thousand times before."

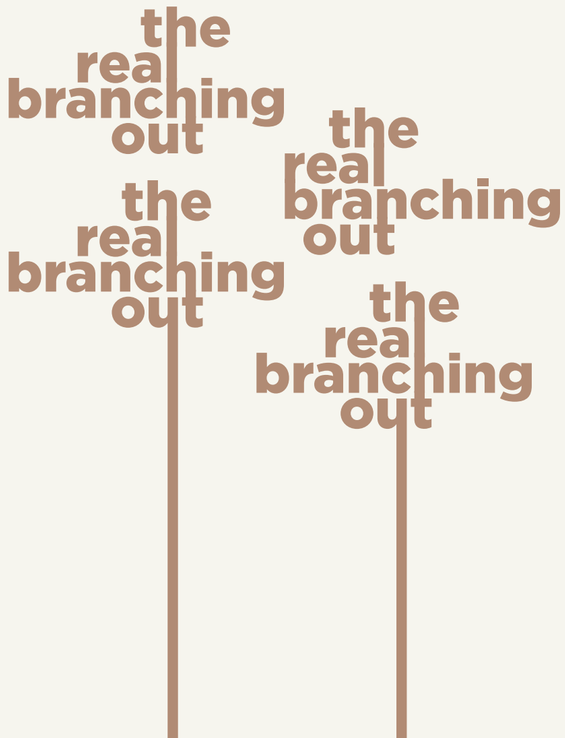
If such moving stories do not convince you of the connective powers of online gaming, you cannot be saved. And that's the end of it.

Game over.

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Nature

READING TIME
1:32

KEYWORDS
#WoodWideWeb
#Trees
#MycorrhizalNetwork
#Communicate
#CrownShyness



We all use the World Wide Web to branch out. To gain knowledge, share information, connect to others, donate to people in need and learn what we need to do in case of an impending emergency. The internet has changed the way we think of ourselves, our communities and connectivity. And it seems pretty impressive.

However, the World Wide Web fades in comparison to something known as the Wood Wide Web: the intricate, massively expansive underground network that connects trees.

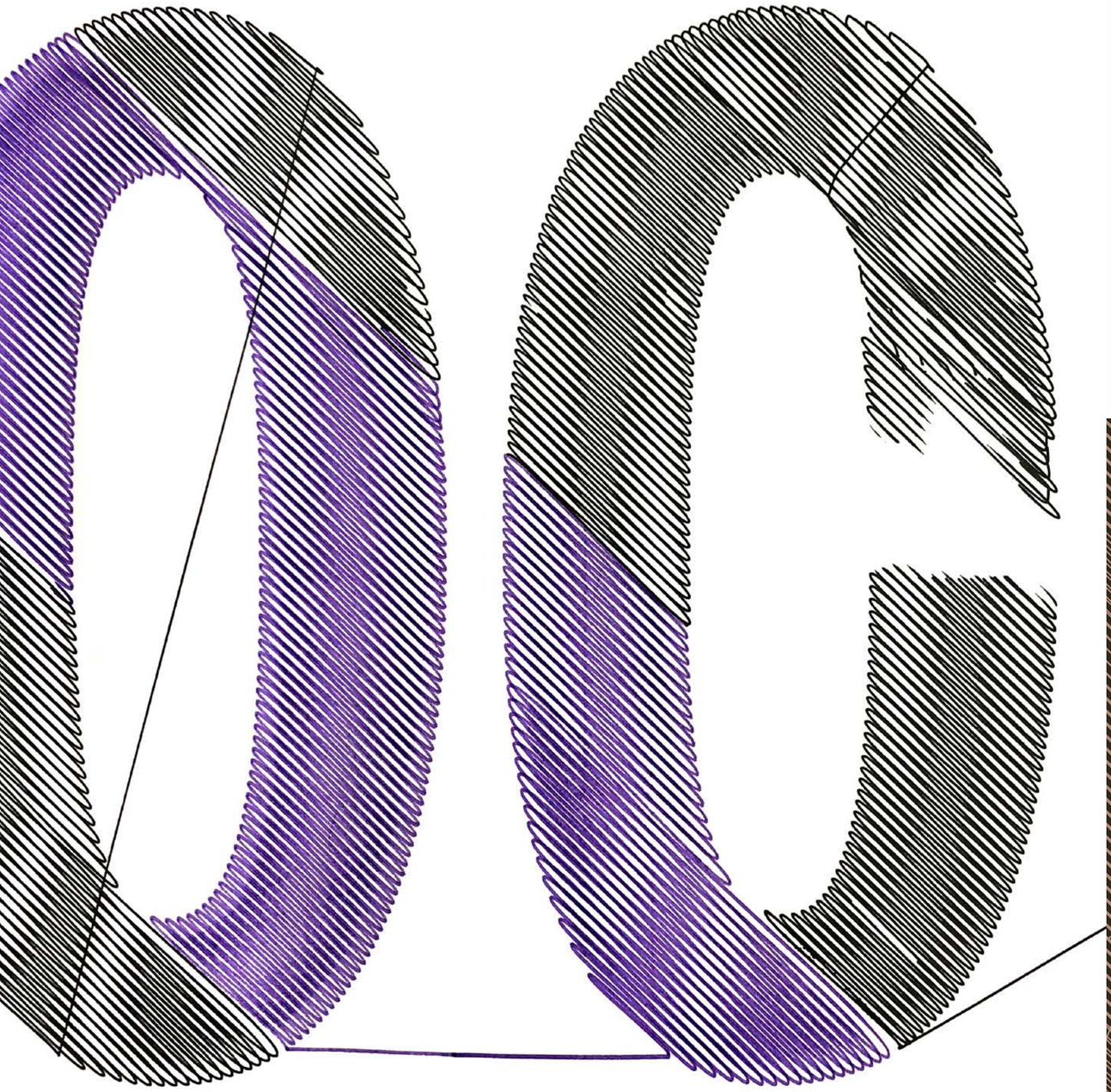
The Wood Wide Web is a mycorrhizal network: a network of fungi connected to the roots of trees which webs endlessly to other trees. It transfers water, carbon, nitrogen and other nutrients and minerals. It's a way for trees to communicate across great distances. They share knowledge and information, for example when a tree is experiencing drought or the attack of a pest, other trees respond. In the case of drought, trees who do have access to water will send it to the tree without. In case of a pest, the other trees will send chemicals to their leaves which will make them less tasty for the pests to eat.
Higher trees who are able to photosynthesise more, will feed sugars into the network which are shuttled to the roots of seedlings who stand in their shadows and cannot photosynthesise enough themselves.

But our friendly giants are as caring as they are cunning. Beech and Oak trees will communicate about lean and fat years. Together, they decide on a couple of lean years, starving the swine and deer that eat their nuts. Once the lean years have resulted in a smaller population of these animals, they will have fat years in which they'll produce and drop so many nuts that the chances of some of them surviving and taking root are much higher.

A SENSE OF PERSONAL SPACE

On top of all this, trees also display a sense of personal space. Crown shyness is a phenomenon in some tree species where the uppermost branches in a canopy avoid touching each other. If you look up, you'll see the spaces between crowns snaking like rivers.

The knowledge about the Wood Wide Web is only just unfolding. But we're hopeful that, as knowledge grows, a love for trees will take root in many.



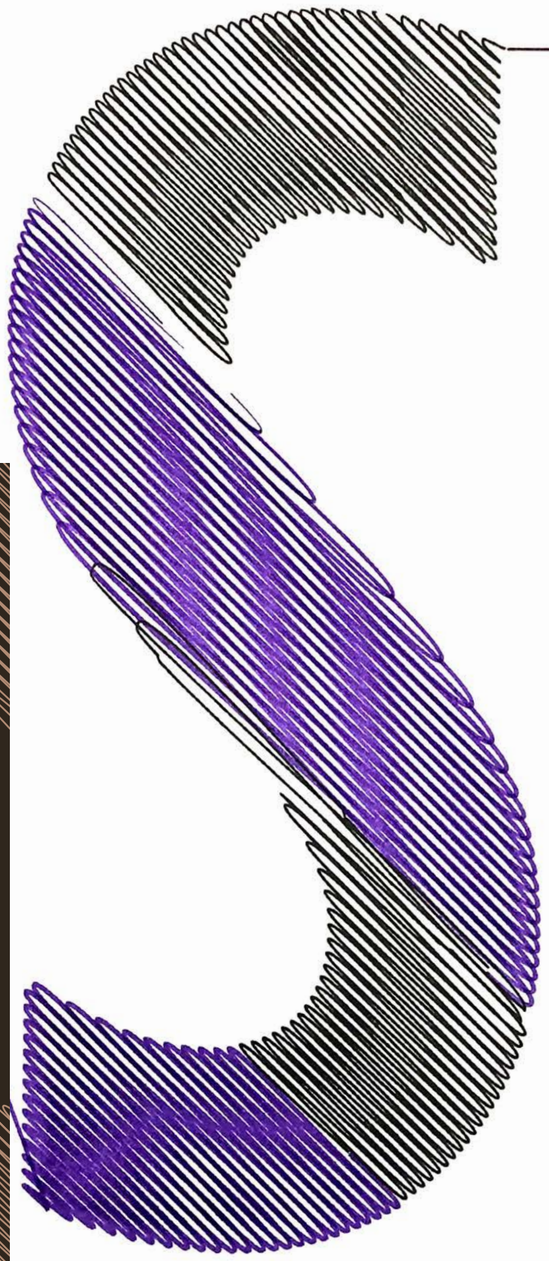
INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Future

READING TIME
5:54

KEYWORDS
#HumanMistakes
#AI
#WipeOutHumanity
#AISafety
#TeamHuman
#BeUnpredictable

OUR FUTURE MIGHT DEPEND ON MISTAKES

and that's actually a good thing



IN A WORLD THAT'S INCREASINGLY DRIVEN BY ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, A SINGLE MISTAKE COULD WIPE-OUT HUMANITY. ON THE BRIGHT SIDE: MAKING MISTAKES MIGHT ACTUALLY BE THE VERY HUMAN TRAIT THAT SAVES US.

Before you turn the page on this article, thinking it's just another apocalyptic prophecy on how robots are taking over the planet, consider this: why are so many tech billionaires funding institutes that focus entirely on AI safety strategies and so called "friendly AI"? Make no mistake, "friendly" has nothing to do with robots that greet the neighbors or cuddle your children. "Friendly AI" simply means future machines that will not eliminate mankind in their quest to attain their goals.

If the co-founders of Skype, PayPal and Tesla founder Elon Musk take AI safety this serious, NOT reading this article might be the mistake you don't want to make...

THE RISE OF AI (60 YEARS IN A 1 MINUTE READ)

Flashback to the 1950s when the term 'artificial intelligence' was coined, only a decade after the creation of the first electronic digital computers. Initially, scientist and engineers were really excited, but AI did not live up to the early expectations. So by the late 1960s, at the height of flower power and 'the summer of love', we also see an 'AI winter' setting in. It would take quite a long time for things to heat up a little. A major contributing factor is the rise of video gaming in the eighties. The graphics processing units (GPU's) in arcade machines have evolved from mainly gaming use towards general computing purposes (where they proved well-suited for the processing of massive amounts of big data for machine learning purposes). Today we face a decade in which AI will continue to rapidly gain momentum. It is already trending across healthcare, biotech, autonomous vehicles, social media applications and many more areas and it will not be long before AI is as omnipresent as the internet.

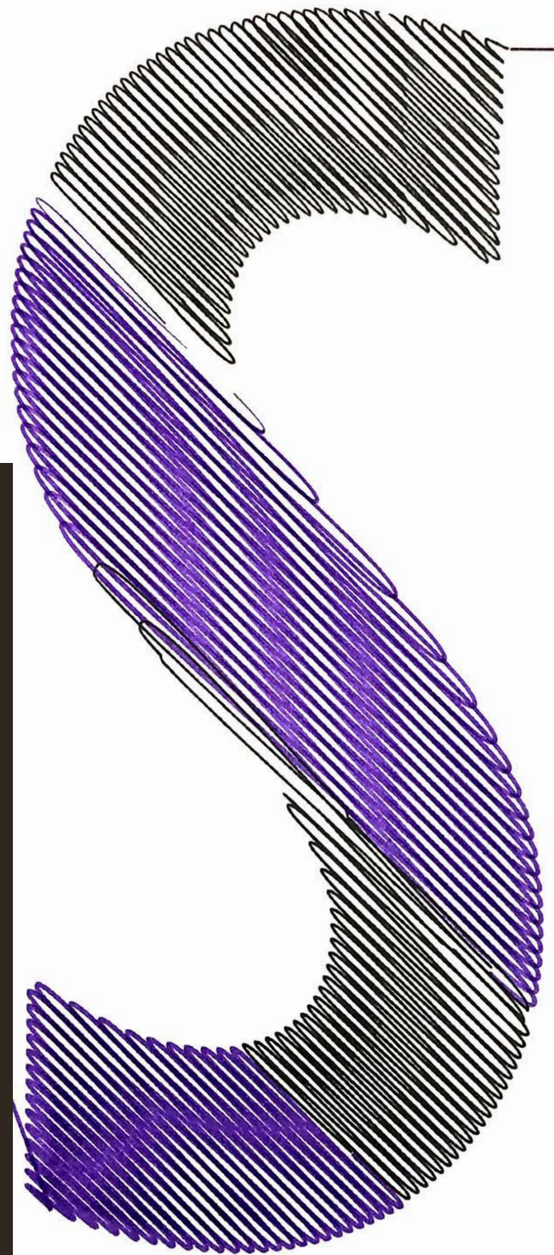
PLAYTIME IS OVER

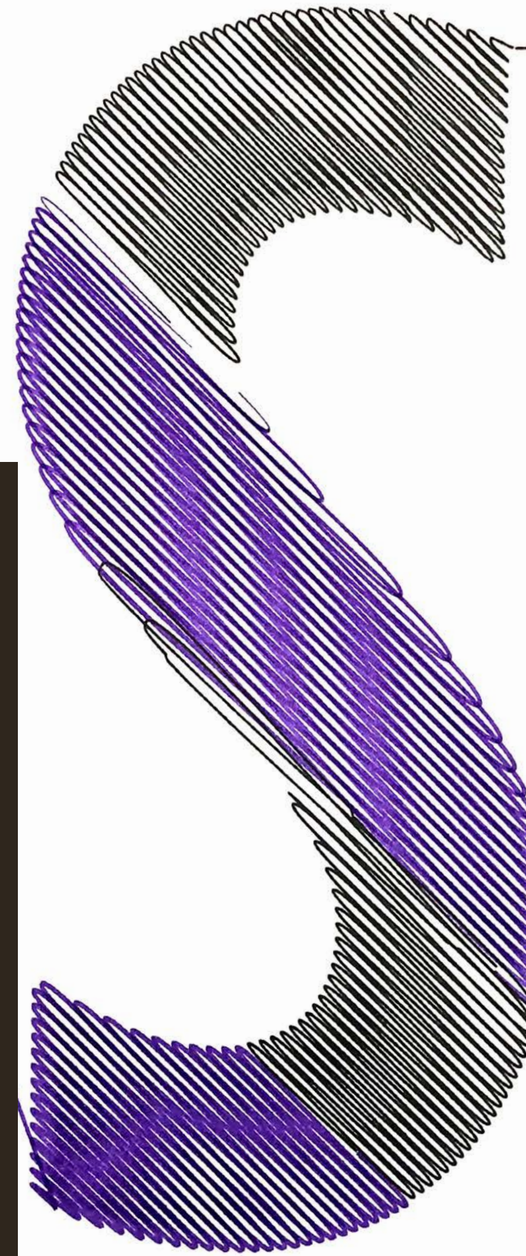
At first scientists were developing AI's that excelled in specific areas, such as winning at chess or cleaning the kitchen floor. These AI's were programmed to self-learn and problem solve their 'programmed' mistakes. Such "narrow" AI's have superhuman capabilities, but only in specific areas (trust us: you do not want a chess-playing AI to clean your kitchen floor). In the-not-so-far future however, superintelligent AI will combine a wide range of (human) skills in one entity. This will bring forward great progress in many domains, but it's this superintelligence that an increasing number of people at the forefront of technology find a little "unsettling" as well. Some fear ultrasmart general AI's will achieve greater longevity at first but will ultimately dominate or even exterminate us.

But how on earth could this ever happen? What could actually go so terribly wrong?

TURNING HUMAN BODIES INTO PAPERCLIPS

At the heart of the AI threat is this: every AI is driven by outcomes. Programmers assign these goals, along with a series of rules on how to pursue them. Advanced AI wouldn't necessarily need to be given the goal of world domination in order to achieve it – it could just be accidental. Oxford University philosopher Nick Bostrom has a great example. In his book "Superintelligence" a fictional machine is directed to make as many paperclips as possible. The AI then decides that the atoms in





THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF AI-SAFETY RESEARCH IS TO CREATE MACHINES THAT ARE ETHICALLY AS WELL AS COGNITIVELY SUPERHUMAN

human bodies would be better put to use as raw material...

If the reward structure of a superhuman AI is not properly programmed, even really simple objectives could have unimaginable ends. Too abstract for you? How is this: years ago a programmer taught an AI everything it needed to know to play Tetris on Nintendo. Determined not to lose at the game, the AI simply pressed pause. And kept the game frozen. The AI outsmarted the programmer by deciding in the end the only winning move was not to play at all. Let's hope us humans never get implants with a pause button...

KILLED BY A MACHINE DESIGNED TO HEAL

Unexpected things can always happen, even if you think you thought things all the way through. But there's something else: a simple mistake could make things far worse. The history of computer programming is jam-packed with examples of small errors with dramatic results, and we are not just talking about financial catastrophes here. A well-known example is the Therac-25 disaster. For six unfortunate patients in 1986 and 1987, the Therac-25 radiation therapy machine did the unthinkable: it exposed them to massive overdoses of radiation, killing four and leaving two others with lifelong injuries. During the investigation, it was determined that the software controlling the machine contained bugs which proved to be fatal. What did not help: the design of the machine relied on the controlling computer alone for safety. It still baffles experts that Therac-25 had no hardware interlocks or supervisory circuits. When it comes to controlling AI we definitely need those!

ARE YOU DRUNK RIGHT NOW?

There are many different approaches to developing AI safety that are currently being researched by specialist around the globe. Solutions range from boxing AI (by building an actual structure to contain it or by programming in limits to what it can do) to a big red OFF button when all else fails. The approach that most excites researchers is finding a way to make AI adhere to human values – not by programming them in, but by teaching AI to learn them. In the process, an AI would need to learn and appreciate humans' less-than-logical side: that we often say one thing and mean another, that some of our preferences conflict with others, and that people are less reliable when drunk. As Cambridge philosopher and co-founder of the Cambridge Centre for the Study of Existential Risk (CSER) Huw Price puts it: "The ultimate goal of AI-safety research is to create machines that are ethically as well as cognitively superhuman". Merging human brains with AI is closer than you might think. Companies like Elon Musk's Neuralink are currently developing scalable implants that connect human brains with computers and have already successfully done so with rats. Eventually AI will get to know us better than we know ourselves, including intangible traits like creativity and intuition. Once these are unraveled what can prevent AI from outstripping human intelligence?

WE, THE PEOPLE, HAVE A SAY IN THIS

What seems to be missing in the scientific discussion on AI safety is the human side of things. In other words: what can we, the people, do to keep the upper hand in our interactions with AI? While the technological elite decides on how to program their algorithms, we will increasingly be dealing with AI and robots in our everyday life. Obviously, the first thing is to be aware of the rise of AI and the impact is has on us. Since you are still reading this, you are already doing a great job. High-five!

Our schools can be the real counterforce in our search for AI safety. The main thing they will have to

BEING STUBBORN, RECKLESS OR
SIMPLY BEING ABLE TO MAKE HUMAN MISTAKES
MIGHT PROVE TO BE DECISIVE TRAITS

teach future generations is the ability to deal with change, to keep on learning new things and to make up our own mind. Humans are essentially social creatures. We achieve our greatest aspirations when we work together - not as individuals. That's why we love Douglas Rushkoff so much. The New York professor, writer and lecturer is the initiator of "Team Human", a platform to amplify human connection. We suggest you visit teamhuman.fm and listen to some of the podcasts with people who are themselves hacking the AI machine to make it more compatible with human life.

The key to our predominance over AI machines may lie in the lack of virtues and bad habits we have. Qualities like unpredictability, aimlessness, stubbornness, inefficiency, recklessness and fickleness are not likely to be programmed into AI. But they have led the way to unexpected solutions and spontaneous discoveries, like the invention of electricity. You have to be pretty stubborn to fly your kite in a thunderstorm, as Benjamin Franklin did in the 18th century. His famous experiment proved that lightning and tiny electric sparks were the same thing. Franklin understood this fact when a spark jumped from the key on the kite string to his wrist shortly after lightning struck his kite. Talking about electricity: two centuries later a researcher plugged the wrong resistor into a machine that records heart sounds. It accidently began giving off a rhythmic electrical pulse, thus the pacemaker was born. So who knows, being stubborn, reckless or simply being able to make human mistakes might prove to be decisive traits in a world of evermore perfect AI.

Let's make unpredictable human mistakes, stay critical and team up to use all the great things AI has to offer and keep the dark side firmly under control.

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Recycle

READING TIME
1:18

KEYWORDS
#ResidualWaste
#PowderCoating
#Reuse
#NewLife
#Design

a new light on powder coating waste material

HOW CAN THIS BE **RECYCLED?**

Any company that "makes stuff" should look critically at diminishing its residual waste. What is left can be repurposed in many creative ways. Turning residual leftovers into a new material is a best case zero waste scenario. We all want to counter global warming, so our frame of mind is now set on reforming waste into all kinds of useful new products.

When Maikey van Eck, a young product designer, toured the production floors of Tchai during a job interview he stumbled upon a solid material in a variety of colours. It was residual waste from a powder coating machine for metals, a substance that has no further use. How can this be recycled? thought Maikey. The material also intrigued him because marbled effects or piled layers of colours can be created with it. He began experimenting to determine if this waste substance could be used on an industrial scale as new material. After much trial and error Maikey concluded that it could be carried out in practice. The waste can be kneaded into any tri-dimensional form. Using a heat press mould with a silicon coating would generate a smooth result. Although the material is fragile, it is perfectly useable for manufacturing products that endure little physical stress.

Maikey is now developing conceptual designs for lifestyle products such as lamp fixtures. The effect of light shining through this product is luminous because the material is slightly translucent. What is special is that each product is one-of-a-kind, because the composition of the powder coating is always different, as are the marble effects. We are looking for more designs for this sleek industrial waste to connect the loose ends of raw industrial material and create a sustainable loop.

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Brand

READING TIME
1:34

KEYWORDS
#JBL
#Sound
#Unite
#OnlifeRetail

JBL: “IT’S THE SOUND THAT AMPLIFIES LIFE”

Once, when marketing merely referred to ‘going to market with products for sale’, target markets would be customers defined by a certain age, class or geographical location. But as the world becomes smaller and ever more connected, all kinds of people with all sorts of stories, unite in communities, sharing communal loves and crossing borders in every sense of the word. Rolf van Dongen, Manager Retail Operations EMEA at Harman International, truly believes that music is one of those binding factors. In fact, JBL, part of Harman’s house of brands, is all about connecting people through music: “Our mission is to shape the memorable moments in life on the beat of the best sound.” Rewind with friends on Queen or The Fugees and flash back to your first kiss on U2’s ‘One’. It’s the music that connects people and brings back those beautiful memories.

Founded in the 40’s by James Bullough Lansing, a pioneering American audio engineer and loudspeaker designer, JBL has always been an innovative audio brand. Its three core values (energetic, expressive and authentic) attract a likewise crowd. People with passion for music, choosing the everyday extraordinary and valuable experiences over possessions of little value. Rolf explains how the company connects with its community by creating engaging experiences, instore and beyond: “A headphone for example, doesn’t sell itself from the shelves. It needs to be heard, felt and experienced in an interactive and convincing environment. Our on-the-go generation wants to push a button and play. Preferably its own music. JBL provides it all: mobility, technology and ease of use, creating the ultimate customer journey.”

The seamless connection between online and offline Rolf affectionately calls ‘onlife retail’ - which could also be with a V: “Live music literally sets the tone for our brand and its community to connect. JBL Fest, JBL’s Snow Party and Tomorrowland all turned out perfect opportunities to unite fans with the brand, ambassadors and influencers, grounding emotional affinity and long-term loyalty. Speaking long term, Rolf, any future plans in a connected world like ours? “We dream of creating more touchpoints to offer engaging experiences and tell our story. Think of events, shop-in-shops and brick-and-mortar stores, just like our big brother Harman. Furthermore, we are slowly exploring alternative modes of production, building bridges with the environment and the next generation.”

INSPIRATIONAL THEME

TCHAI Retail Concept

READING TIME

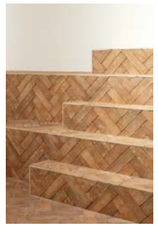
3:43

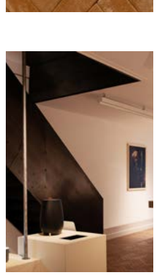
KEYWORDS

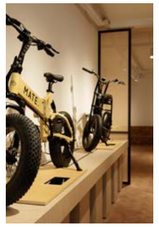
#Productpine
#BrickAndMortar
#NextFavouriteThing
#InnovationPlayground
#Futuristic
#LowTech

RE SHAPING RETAIL

One company's quest to connect the dots







What does the future look like for brick-and-mortar stores? Ask three ambitious entrepreneurs from Amsterdam and they'll tell you it probably looks a lot like Productpine, a new retail concept that's tapping into the way we shop, 21st century style.

To many people, a start-up aiming to sell products to the public through physical retail locations could sound like a foolishly outdated idea at a time when e-commerce is booming. But for Camiel van Dooren, Dimitar Maslarov and Vincent Hulshoff, the three young founders behind Productpine, it is today's consumer who is shaping their vision for a new kind of shopping experience.

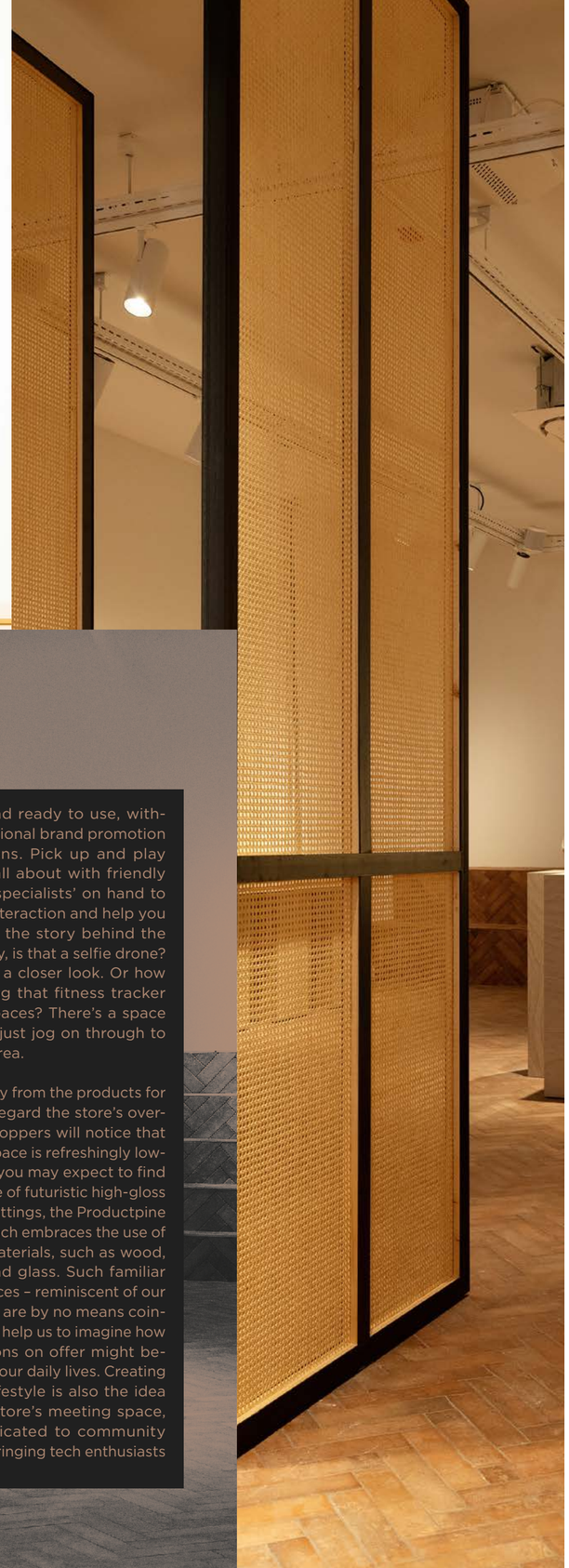
A shift in perspective often breathes new life into traditional concepts. At Productpine it is the shift from viewing the retail store as a distribution channel to re-imagining it as an experience platform. Instead of competing with online retailers by asking shoppers to simply come in and buy products from their store, the starting-point is an invitation to get hands-on with some of the most innovative consumer goods around. Most of which you probably didn't even know existed. That is, until you discover them in a Productpine store near you.

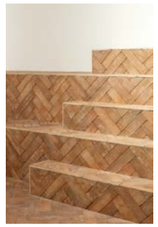
At its core, Productpine is about connecting the right audience – let's call them the early adopters – with new tech-enhanced products from around the world. If you're the type of person who can easily spend hours browsing Kickstarter or perhaps you're just intrigued by gadgetry in general, then Productpine feels like the place where it all comes together. Because, let's face it, no matter how many product descriptions we read or the number of slickly edited promo videos we watch, such product interactions remain distant and impersonal. Above all – and this is especially the case for innovative products – nothing beats getting to touch and try before deciding to buy. And here is where Productpine really comes into its own, by offering an immersive shopping experience online-only platforms cannot match. Turning everything on its head in this way means that the idea for a retail store translates into what you could call a 21st century playground of innovation. With the added bonus of being able to take home whatever takes your fancy at the end of your visit.

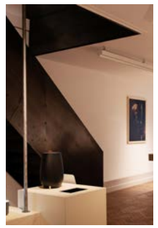
How does this approach play out on a shopping trip? Well, perhaps a friend told you they sell fitness trackers here. But most likely you're strolling through your city's shopping district and it's curiosity that gets you through the door. After all, it does say: *discover your next favourite thing* on the storefront. Inside, there's a laidback vibe; it doesn't really feel like a shop at all. Each innovation is presented out of its box and ready to use, without any additional brand promotion or distractions. Pick up and play is what it's all about with friendly 'experience specialists' on hand to encourage interaction and help you engage with the story behind the products. Hey, is that a selfie drone? Time to take a closer look. Or how about putting that fitness tracker through its paces? There's a space for that too, just jog on through to the try-out area.

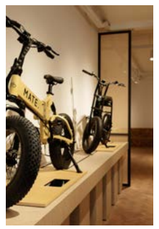
> Nothing beats getting to touch and try before deciding to buy

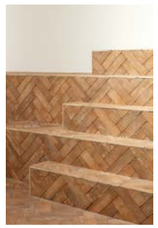
Stepping away from the products for a minute to regard the store's overall design, shoppers will notice that the interior space is refreshingly low-tech. Where you may expect to find an abundance of futuristic high-gloss fixtures and fittings, the Productpine store very much embraces the use of traditional materials, such as wood, stone, tile and glass. Such familiar material choices – reminiscent of our own homes – are by no means coincidental; they help us to imagine how the innovations on offer might become part of our daily lives. Creating this link to lifestyle is also the idea behind the store's meeting space, an area dedicated to community building by bringing tech enthusiasts

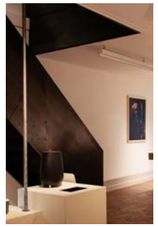


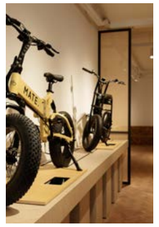












While shoppers go about testing goods on the shop floor, there's more going on than meets the eye

together in a living-room like setting. Furthermore, Productpine's ambition to open stores in more major European hubs presents another design opportunity: the chance to connect with the city and its story. For the flagship store in Amsterdam that design story touches on the seventeenth-century Golden Age, a period when the city flourished through trade, art and science.

Yet stimulating design and experience is only half of this story. While shoppers go about testing goods on the shop floor, there's more going on than meets the eye. Productpine is, in fact, a double testing ground. Throughout the store sensors and electronic devices are tracking shopper activity, interaction and opinions. For young companies the experience store is the place to see how their products perform in an offline retail environment and to gain valuable insights into consumer behaviour. For more established brands the store provides a platform to optimise the experience and marketing surrounding their product. In both cases, product makers get to analyse this data and even compare results with similar products in store, then adapt accordingly for the most effective results. Online too, Productpine plays a part in boosting engagement through its social commerce platform – described as a hybrid between a social media channel and webshop. Here, shared experiences can lead to an increase in sales, while honest customer feedback provides manufacturers with the opportunity to address any product issues.

So will this kind of experience-driven shopping bring new purpose to the high street? Only time will tell. But for now, we do know one thing for sure: Productpine is right up there at the forefront, challenging established ideas on what a brick-and-mortar retail space can be.

The Productpine flagship store is located at Rokin 58 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

INSPIRATIONAL THEME
Travel

READING TIME
1:04

KEYWORDS
#TheFlyingNest
#Wanderlust
#TravellingHotel

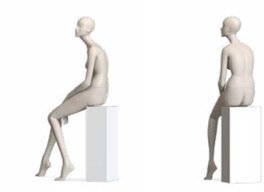
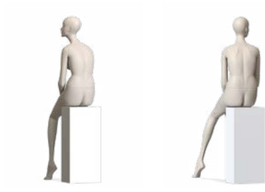
THE FLYING NEST

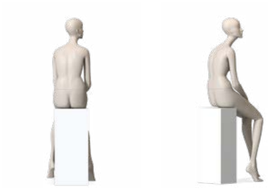
ROOMS WITH WANDERLUST

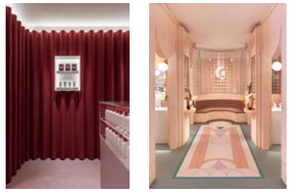
A CONNECTION WITH A SPECIFIC PLACE IN THE WORLD

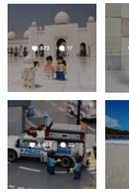
Staying in a hotel is usually part of the travelling experience. And we are accustomed to travelling towards them. But what if hotels have wanderlust themselves and can offer a connection with any specific place in the world?

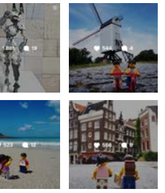
Scan this QR to read more about this nomadic concept Flying Nest and see where it pops-up in the world.

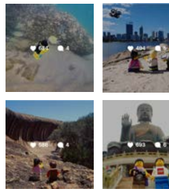



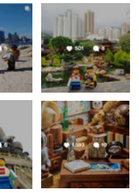












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Number Four

January 2020

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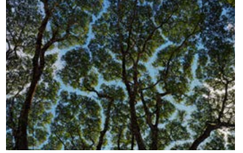

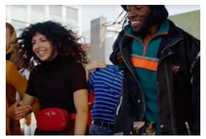
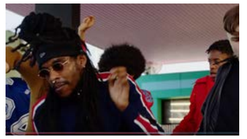

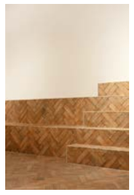

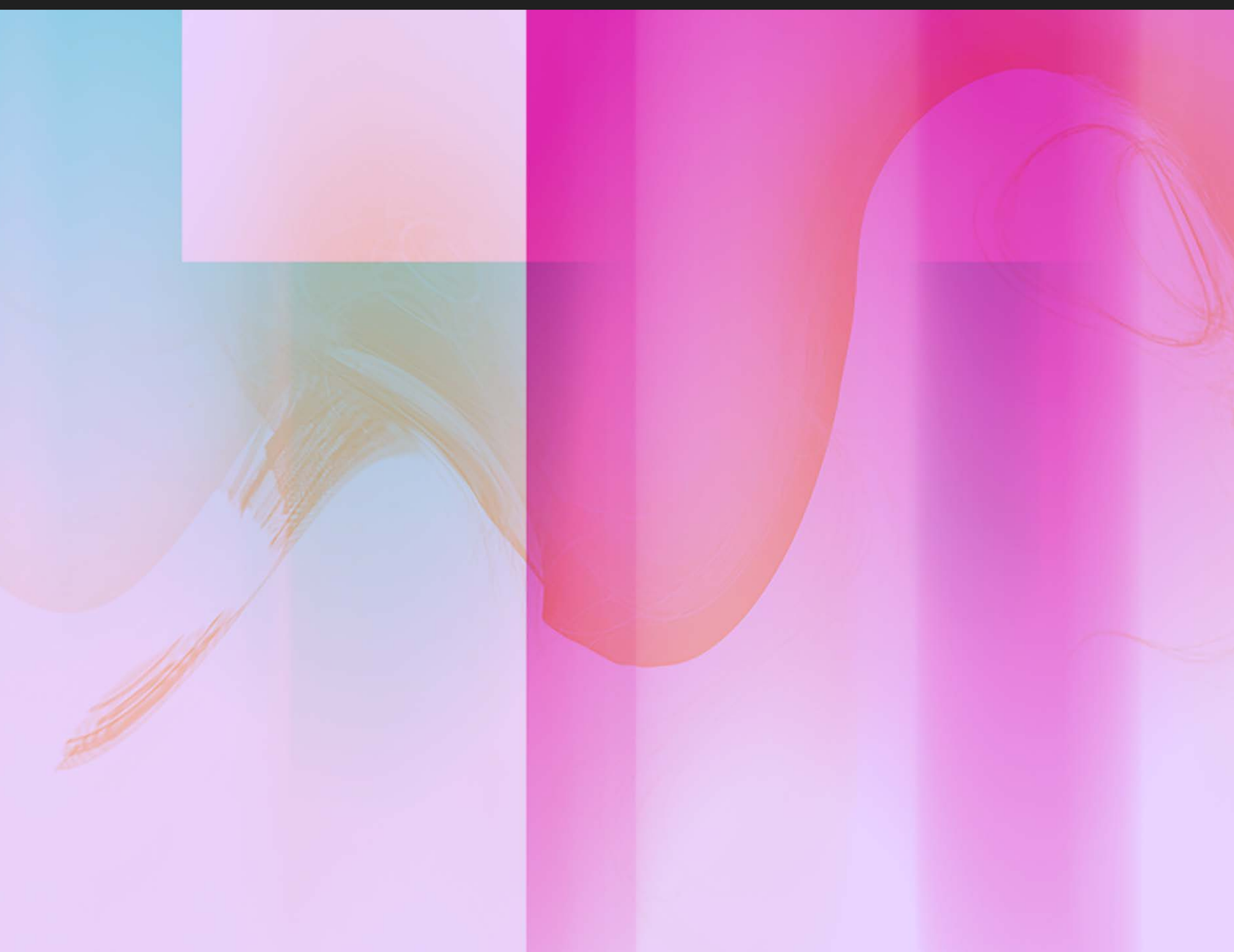

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