

# VISION 2021

*10 Trends That Will Shape the Future of Commerce*



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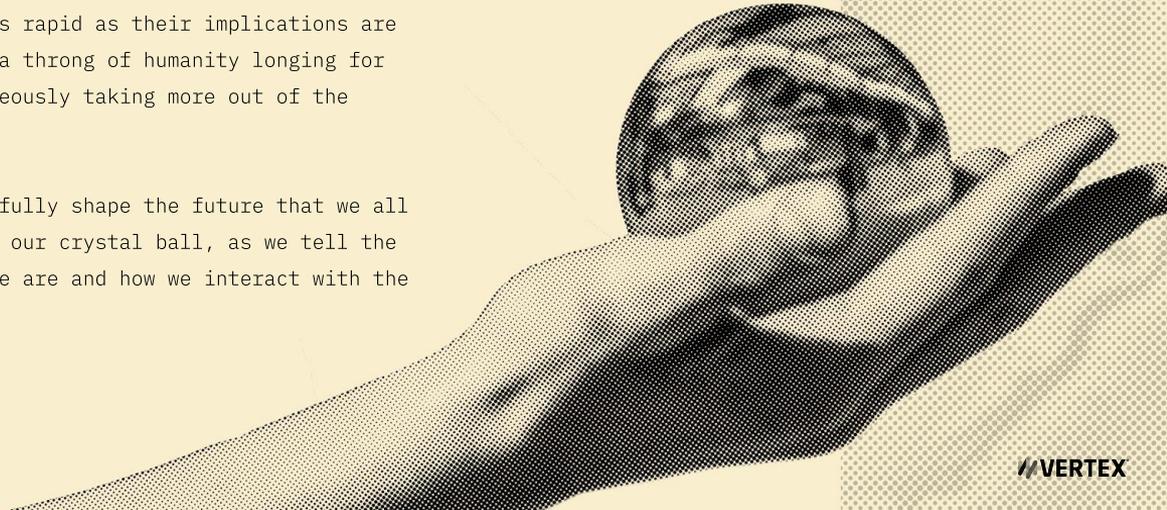
Convergence of the Meta  
and the Physical

# GLASS BENDS LIGHT. BUT A CRYSTAL BALL BENDS TIME.

To a casual observer, the image is distorted. It appears inverted. Up is down, wrong is right. But to a talented storyteller, a scryer, the glass becomes a portal where the future becomes clear.

In this report, we will be your guides, your soothsayers, discerning the shape of the **future of consumer retail, cultural shifts, and technological modernity**. To a new, accelerated, timeline where the changes are as rapid as their implications are profound. At this moment the world is adapting to a throng of humanity longing for the spotlight, amassing ever more things, simultaneously taking more out of the ground and burying more still.

What is to come, and how can retail brands meaningfully shape the future that we all will inherit? Step right up, and gaze with us into our crystal ball, as we tell the story of **ten emergent trends** that will shape who we are and how we interact with the world around us.



# CONSUMER

CONSUMER - TREND 01

# THE RISE OF MAXIMALISM

People now desire **more**, not less. Minimalism is out, Maximalism is in. Clashing, absurdist takes on everything from fashion to food. Deep, nerd-level collecting and hoarding that would terrify Marie Kondo.



**WE'VE BEEN HYPER-FOCUSED ON MINIMALISM FOR SO LONG AND IT'S CREPT INTO OUR PSYCHE. WE DON'T REALIZE THAT IT'S ONLY MADE A LITTLE TINY DENT IN OUR BRAINS. INSTEAD, MAXIMALISM CONSUMES OUR HABITS AND DESIRES. WE ARE COMING TO TERMS WITH THIS – AND AS A RESULT MAXIMALISM IS BACK ON THE RISE. WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT BEING MINIMALISTS, BUT WE'VE CONTINUED TO TAKE THINGS TO EXTREMES AND THE ABSURD. WE MAKE FUN OF OURSELVES BECAUSE WE ALL KNOW WE SHOULD BE MINIMALISTS, BUT MAXIMALISM IS WINNING THE STRUGGLE FOR OUR PSYCHE.<sup>1</sup>**

The more the outside world has access to our homes via video chat or in-person entertaining, the more they will become trophy cases of the former world. Maximalism in the home will serve many purposes: from “Zoom backgrounds” (books and trinkets, and paint, and built-ins) to education (whiteboards and star-charts, and maps, and posters),

**NORDIC MINIMALISM WILL BE CRUSHED BY AMERICAN MAXIMALISM.<sup>2</sup>**



# COTTAGE CORE AESTHETIC

The cottage core trend's intersectionality with maximalism took us out of the reality of neverending doom-and-gloom into the havens of our homes. From Animal Crossing to Taylor Swift's sister albums, to the making of banana bread and knitted hats, we're making our homes – **both real and virtual** – more comfortable and enjoyable to quarantine in.



## PROOF POINTS:

**TEXTBOOKS,  
HOME LIBRARIES,  
TCHOTCHKE-LADEN  
ZOOM BACKGROUNDS...  
OUR STEADY  
ACCUMULATION OF  
STUFF WILL MAKE  
MARIE KONDO WEEP IN  
MOURNING.**

**52%** FEEL THAT BEING WITH THEIR  
"STUFF" *MAKES THEM HAPPY.*

**60%** SAY SURROUNDING  
THEMSELVES WITH THINGS  
THEY LOVE *MAKES THEM  
FEEL SAFE/IN CONTROL.*

**22%** SAY THEY'RE *"COLLECTORS."*

# WHAT DID YOU BUY THAT WAS EXTRAVAGANT OR ABSURD IN THE PAST YEAR?



"A PICTURE OF ALEX TREBEK TO FRAME"

"A GOLD TOILET"

"HAND-FORGED KATANA SWORD"

"A LOT OF RAINBOW HIGH DOLLS"



"A RARE SKIN IN FORTNITE"

"A GOLD-PLATED CLOWN STATUE"

"AN OLD CANDLE"

"AN INSANE AMOUNT OF FABLETICS CLOTHES"

"COMPLETELY NEW SMILE MAKEOVER"

"7 PAIRS OF JORDANS AND VANS"

"AN 18-INCH IGUANA WHO IS REALLY MEAN"



## CONSUMER - TREND 02

# SHOPPING IS ENTERTAINMENT

Physical shopping is a group activity, digital commerce is not. The next 18 months will see a number of entrants into the fray. Asian influences are moving Westward as platforms and brands have increasing importance in global economies and culture.



IT'S NOT JUST LIVESTREAM SHOPPING.  
IT'S EVERYTHING. IF SHOPPING IS  
BORING – AS WE'VE MADE IT TO BE ALL  
THESE YEARS – WE'VE GOT BETTER  
THINGS TO DO WITH OUR TIME AND CAN  
JUST SET UP AUTO-REPLENISHMENT  
ON STUFF THAT WE ALREADY KNOW  
THAT WE LIKE. SHOPPING WILL HAVE  
TO BE RELATIONAL, FUN, ENGAGING,  
RELAXING, AND KEEP OUR ATTENTION.



# Andie

## ANDIE SWIM CASE STUDY:

**ANDIE'S HYPER-CUSTOMER FOCUS AND RELIANCE ON CX TOOLS SUCH AS GLADLY EMPOWERED THEIR EXTERNALLY-FACING STAFF TO MAKE THE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE ENJOYABLE, EVEN THERAPEUTIC.**

*"During COVID, we opened phone lines. We knew that there would be a big demographic shift of women who had never shopped online before who were probably more comfortable being able to speak with someone versus just clicking around on a website. These women were spending in some cases over an hour on the phone chatting with our Fit Experts. We found that people were really craving a human connection during that time. What they ended up **becoming basically therapists for people**. I think we made a lot of relationships that will last for the life of the company."*

*Melanie Travis, CEO at Andie Swim <sup>3</sup>*

PROOF POINTS

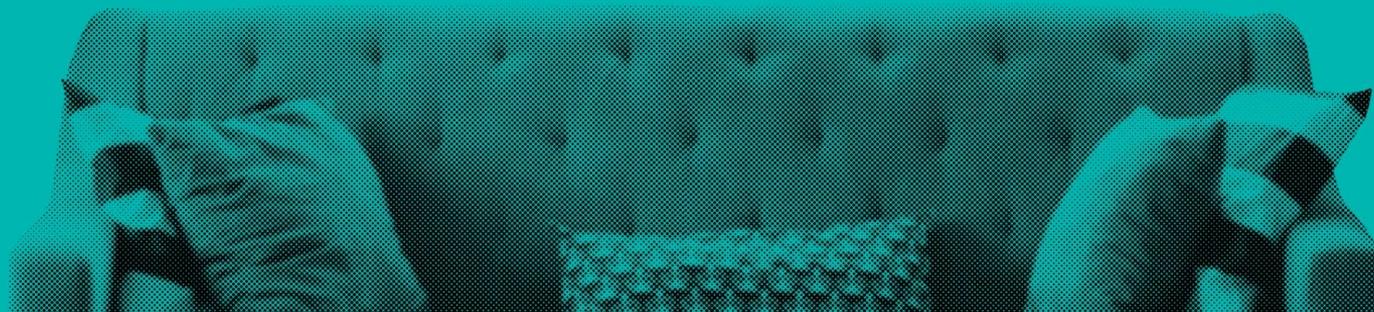
**CONSUMERS EXPRESS THAT SHOPPING AS A SOCIAL ACTIVITY IS SOMETHING THEY MISS**

**5 1 %**  
MISS "GOING SHOPPING"  
AS A WAY TO SOCIALIZE

**1 IN 4**  
**( 25 % )**  
REGULARLY TUNE  
INTO VIDEO SHOPPING  
CHANNELS LIKE GVC OR HSN



*“Netflix-but-make-it-shoppable.” **DTC-QVC can only survive if it is more Pinterest than it is Shopify.** Media moguls like Scripps understand this – HGTV and Food Network have direct economic impact on second and third-tier media markets based on the inspiration they provide to would-be Alton Browns or Joanna Gaineses.<sup>4</sup>*

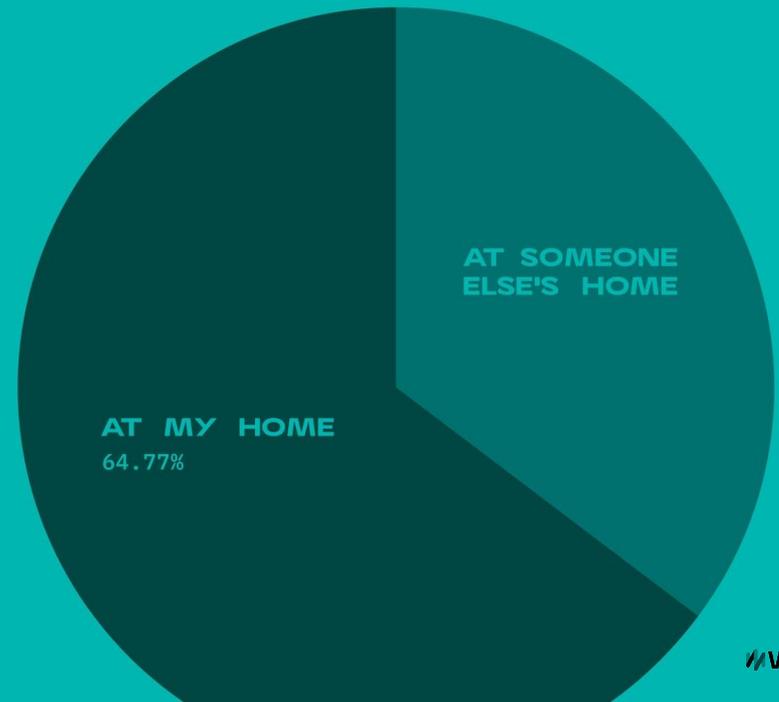


# THE NEW FORMAL

The experience economy isn't going away, no no no; **it's changing home field**. The scarier the world outside, the more appealing our homes become.

The more we invest in our homes, we'll **return to our formal living and dining rooms**. The year-long investment we've made into our homes will cause us to relocate those experiences once had in the bar and the club into our nests.

## WOULD YOU RATHER INTERACT WITH PEOPLE...





*By 2020, we had already created a new efficient world where price shopping, discovery, and checkout were optimized to death. What retail has lost in all of our optimization is opportunities to build relationships with people that we interact with on a daily basis.*

*As it is today, shopping has become depressing. **We used to shop for people and with people.** Now it's isolating, overwhelming. <sup>5</sup>*



CONSUMER - TREND 03

# BRANDS AS PERFORMANCE ART

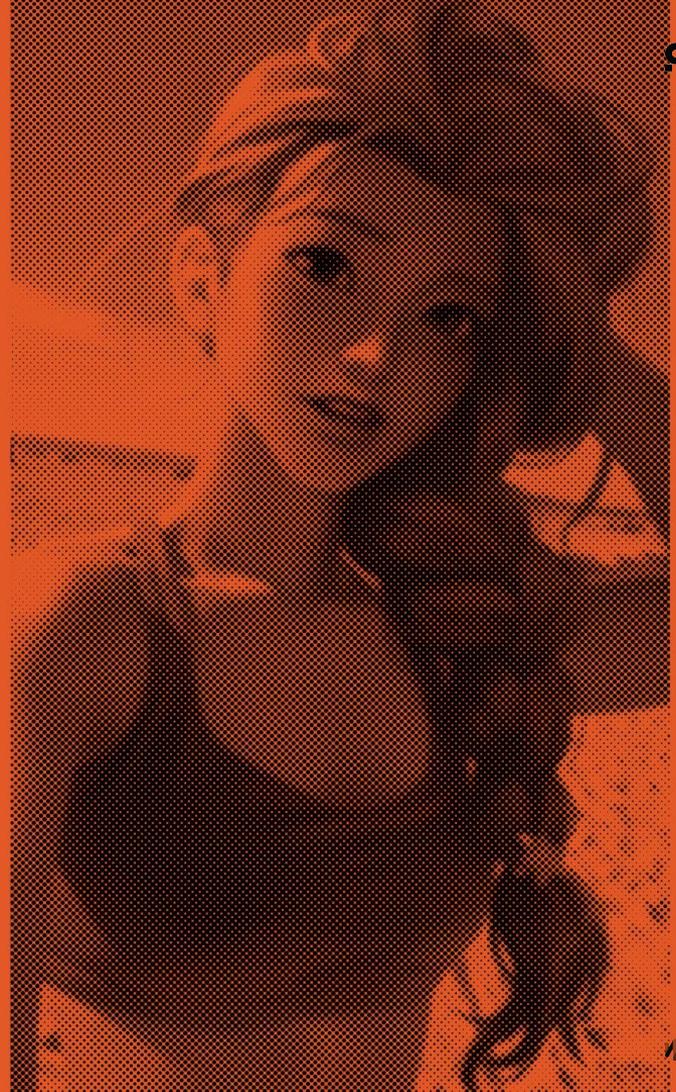
BROUGHT TO YOU BY VERTEX

If brands are artists and products are their canvas, what is the performance art expression of such a brand? Mr. Beast, MSCHF, "IYKYK", all examples of the intersectionality of meme culture, hype culture, and get-rich-quick schemes – or the very antithesis of it. Both apply.

# VIRTUAL INFLUENCERS & RISE OF "VELEBS" OR VIRTUAL CELEBS - *SERAPHINE*

Seraphine is the most popular new influencer you probably haven't heard of yet. Across all social platforms, Soundcloud, and Spotify she has over 1 million followers.

She is the creation of Riot Games - the parent company of the popular online video game League of Legends (LoL). A character who has taken on a real-life persona... one that can't cause a PR nightmare because, well, she isn't real.



**IN A NOT-TOO-DISTANT DYSTOPIC FUTURE,  
VELEBS (VIRTUAL CELEBS) WILL NEVER DIE BECAUSE  
THEY NEVER LIVED. THEY AREN'T SUBJECT TO  
THE BOUNDS OF CELEBRITY DEATH RIGHTS AND  
ESTATE OWNERSHIP, AND THEIR LICENSES NEVER  
REVERT TO PUBLIC DOMAIN (THANKS, DISNEY).**

**THE ULTIMATE BENEFIT WILL FALL TO THE  
CORPORATIONS WHO CREATE THESE  
VELEBS WHO NEVER BREATHE A FIRST  
BREATH, AND CANNOT BREATHE A LAST.<sup>6</sup>**

**ACCORDING TO MSCHF FOUNDER  
GABRIEL WHALEY, THE PATCHWORK  
SHIRT MAKES FUN OF "COLLAB  
CULTURE," A CULTURE IN WHICH BRANDS  
SEEK TO "OVERHYPE" THEMSELVES...**

*Whaley is well aware that he is violating the copyrights of nine brands, and says he welcomes their lawsuits, and will even fight it all the way to the Supreme Court if necessary. Whaley reminds me of the Dadaists in that he's rejecting a well-established path towards commercial success, choosing absurdity and, in the case of The Collab shirt, controversy in its place.<sup>7</sup>*



**THE RISE OF THE ABSURD, THE IRONIC, THE COMMENTARY, THE STATEMENT, THE WITTY, MEANS THAT IN 2021, BRANDS MUST BECOME SMARTER, MORE AWARE, MORE THOUGHTFUL, AND MORE ARTISTIC THAN EVER BEFORE. NEW MEDIUMS, NEW IDEAS, CULTURAL MOMENTS—BE PREPARED TO WRITE, TO SPEAK, TO JOKE, TO ACT, TO PERFORM IF YOU WANT TO GROW AND MAINTAIN YOUR BUSINESS.**

PROOF

# CONTENT CREATORS ARE OUR GENERATION'S PERFORMANCE ARTISTS.

Making a statement, attracting a crowd, but haven't yet attained broad recognition or made a significant mark on culture, despite their substantial commercial success.

The opportunity is to transcend performance into purpose.

POINTS

**40%**  
SAY THEY'VE PURCHASED  
SOMETHING PROMOTED  
BY SOMEONE THEY  
FOLLOW ON SOCIAL BUT  
DON'T KNOW PERSONALLY

**ONLY 1 IN 3  
( 37% )**  
ARE FOLLOWING TOP-  
RANKING INFLUENCERS

MR. BEAST IS **2X** MORE  
LIKELY TO BE PERCEIVED AS  
AUTHENTIC & TRUSTWORTHY  
THAN KYLIE JENNER



## CONSUMER - TREND 04

# THE PRODUCT ETERNAL

Consumers now care what happens to their product after it dies. And they care to bring buy from brands that bring products from the grave. Savvy brands are now taking this into their own hands, participating in the new circular economy.

**EVERY PRODUCT HAS A LIFE CYCLE. AND EVERY PRODUCT NEEDS A SECONDARY PURPOSE AFTER IT'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE IS FINISHED. BRANDS NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE UPSIDE DOWN OF MANUFACTURING AND HELP EDUCATE YOUR CUSTOMERS... BEFORE THEY EDUCATE YOU.**

## THE SECOND (AND THIRD AND FOURTH...) LIFE OF SECONDHAND GOODS

*Just because something is resale  
doesn't mean it's not luxury.  
Everyone is a seller today. Even  
people in luxury markets.<sup>8</sup>*



## patagonia®

Recently launched their Worn Wear line, which takes recycled Patagonia clothing and repurposes them into one of a kind pieces.



You can buy vintage, thrifted, and used denim through Levi's SecondHand marketplace.

## RECURATE

Recurate helps brands resell and recycle products

## girlfriend collective

ReGirlfriend is a line of products that collects old leggings and upcycles them into new pieces.



The Swedish furniture company is trying to rebrand itself from being the "fast-fashion" of the furniture industry by opening its first used furniture store.



Future Commerce is a proud partner of Climate Neutral, a company which partners with brands through three steps to show them how to better offset their carbon footprint.

# NESPRESSO BUY-BACK PROGRAM

## PURCHASE

*Purchase Aluminum Coffee Capsules*



## CONSUME

*Enjoy Nespresso Coffee*



## COLLECT

*Collect used capsules & send them back in a Nespresso recycling bag or take in to a local recycling point.*



## RETURN

*Capsules are sent to Nespresso recycling plant*



## SORT

*Coffee is separated from aluminum and made into compost*



## RECYCLE

*Aluminum is then repurposed into more capsules, bicycles, soda cans, etc.*

**I HAVE REDUCED MY WASTE FOOTPRINT DRAMATICALLY  
SINCE BECOMING A CUSTOMER OF NESPRESSO.**

***WHERE I ONCE HAD A PLASTIC LID, CUP,  
AND STRAW THAT WENT TO WASTE  
ONCE, SOMETIMES TWICE PER DAY,***

**I NOW HAD A FULLY RECYCLABLE FOOD-GRADE  
ALUMINUM CONTAINER THAT WAS BEING  
RETURNED TO THE MANUFACTURER FOR REUSE.**

*Phillip Jackson, Future Commerce* <sup>9</sup>



**81% OF PEOPLE HAVE ACTIVELY  
SECURED A SECOND  
LIFE FOR THEIR ITEMS**

**DONATING TO CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS OR PASSING  
ALONG AS A HAND-ME-DOWN ARE THE MOST COMMON  
WAYS TO AVOID THINGS GOING DIRECTLY TO THE LANDFILL.**

**Nikita**

@nikitabier

...

A subtle change that came with the ability to sell things instantly on FB Marketplace & OfferUp is that consumers can now expect some residual value on home items—like furniture—which used to be a total loss. And for many items, you can now get nearly 100% of your money back.

10:29 PM · Jan 22, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

# CULTURE

## CULTURE - TREND 01

# DIGITAL DYSMORPHIA: THE SELFIE INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

Consumers are more aware of their features and flaws than ever before, and marketers have more information on how to sell products to those consumers. What does it do to us as people to have stared at *ourselves* in a digital mirror for 9+ months? What does that do to our sense of self, our perception of beauty, our relationship with others? Has it made us more critical of ourselves?



In the future, people will have significantly more personal data than they do now. That's how trendlines work. And it's not just body data. We'll have real-time data about everything in our lives: how often we use things, wear and tear, gut microbiota, blood cell count, interactions with other people, home inventory, mood, movement, and so so much more.

**IN THE FUTURE, MANY PEOPLE WILL GENERATE MORE PERSONAL DATA OVER THE COURSE OF A SINGLE DAY THAN THEY GENERATED IN ALL OF 2020.<sup>10</sup>**

# OUR FOCUS WILL INSPIRE MORE MICRO TRENDS IN HEIGHTENED SELF BEAUTY

Details of beauty regimes such as lighting, applications, digital beauty, augmented reality, and even ai will evolve to meet new demands of digital interaction. New skincare products will enter the market specifically targeted at our faces. Bolder, more extreme, “statement” pieces will dominate spending. Virtual fashion and makeup will re-inspire the real world, in a continuing trend of sympathetic influence.



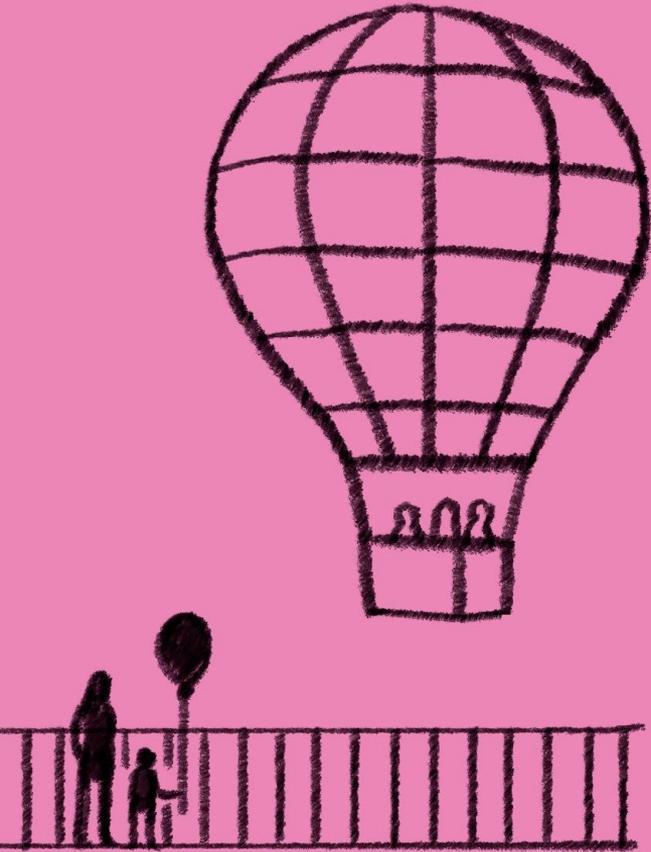
**"I BOUGHT A  
COMPLETELY  
NEW SMILE  
MAKEOVER"**

STUDY OPEN-END RESPONDENT

**50%** SAY THEY'RE MORE AWARE OF THEIR APPEARANCE AS A RESULT OF INCREASED FACETIME/ZOOM.

**38%** AGREE THEY'RE MORE CRITICAL OF THEIR APPEARANCE (AND OF OTHERS').

**26%** HAVE UPGRADED THEIR TECH FOR INCREASED ON-SCREEN TIME.



## CULTURE - TREND 02

# BRANDS & THE WIDENING CLASS SCHISM

Call it what you will, the “K-shape recovery” will spur further disparity between luxury and mass market experiences. There will be genuine new luxury experiences, and branded mass-market experiences, with less focus on “premium mediocre” middle class experiences and brands. A boom in entrepreneurship will fuel these new experiences.

**WHAT'S HAPPENING IS WE'RE SEEING TWO  
DIFFERENT TYPES OF MIDDLE CLASS EMERGE.  
IT'S NOT FULLY FORMED YET, BUT WHILE WE'RE  
SEEING THE MIDDLE CLASS SHRINK, MAYBE  
IT'S THAT THE MIDDLE CLASS [HAS] SPLIT.**

*Brian Lange, Future Commerce* <sup>11</sup>

The more commercialized and mass-produced that consumer brands become, the more they blend together and become homogenized. This phenomenon was explained in the oft-cited Ben Schott piece for Bloomberg, “Welcome To Your Bland New World.”<sup>12</sup>

This samey-sameyness of the millennial aesthetic began as a mark of luxury, aimed at affluent millennials. As the economic ills of the pandemic worsen, brands in this category – those with expensive, poorly differentiated products in highly-saturated categories – were supplanted by cheaper alternatives and whitelabeled house brand knockoffs. Turns out anyone can use the font Cooper Black? Target and Walmart will be the ultimate benefactors of the millennial pink era.

**What comes next is the real sauce.** In an economic depression, thrifty customers will gain new skills and make things for themselves. They will upcycle their way to economic independence, and sell their wares. And it’s not only for the crafty. Curation is a skill that is highly sought after by marketplaces such as Poshmark. Etsy’s core mission is to provide personal and unique items to the world.

## PREDICTION

**ETSY WILL PARTNER WITH A RETAIL CHAIN IN 2021 TO INCREASE ITS REACH AND PROVIDE A PHYSICAL CHANNEL TO SUPPORT LOCAL COMMUNITY REACH FOR NOTABLE CREATORS ON THEIR PLATFORM. LET’S SAY, BARNES AND NOBLE. THIS PARTNERSHIP ALONE WOULD ELEVATE HUNDREDS OF MAKERS INTO ENTREPRENEURS**

# ON THE RISE

THE NUMBER OF  
NEW BUSINESSES  
LAUNCHED  
IN 2020 AT  
THIRTEEN  
YEAR HIGH

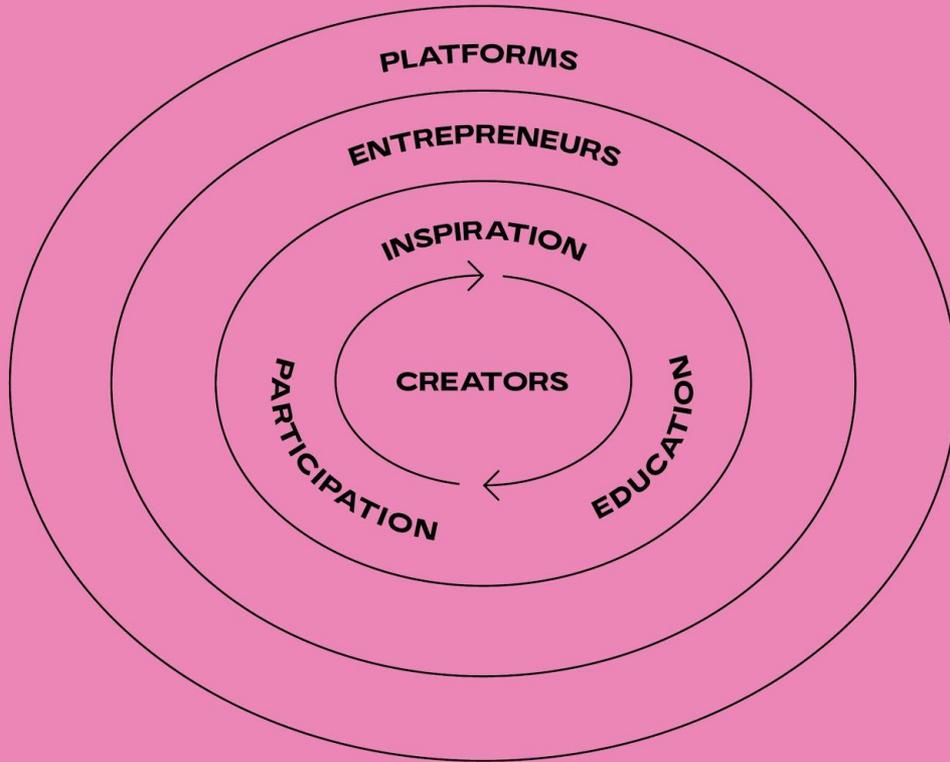
## NUMBER OF BUSINESS APPLICATIONS

Number of business applications during week ending in indicated date



Note: Data is not seasonally adjusted Chart: Madison Hoff/Business Insider Source: US Census Bureau, "Business Formation Statistics"

Source: Business Insider <sup>12</sup>



# THE NEW DIY

THE THIRD ORDER  
EFFECTS OF  
THE NEW DIY  
(MARKETPLACES)

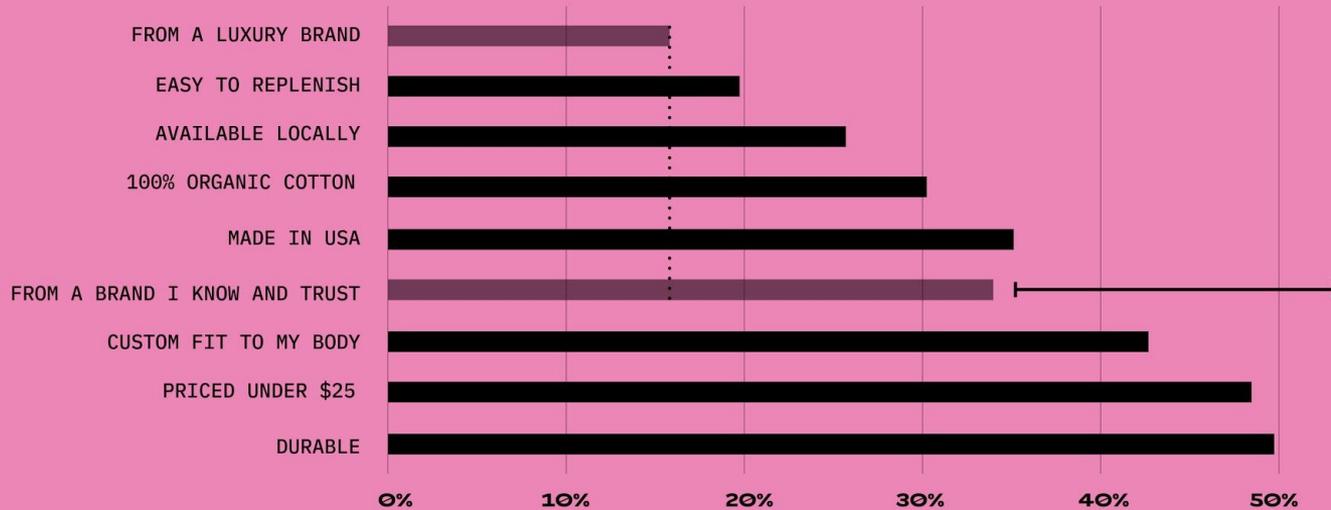
***In the era of self-isolation, consumers have become retailers, and I'm one of them.***

*I merchandise, I write product descriptions, I calculate pricing and shipping strategies to afford free shipping on items. I pack items, print shipping labels. I run to the post office before 6:00 pm to get boxes out the door.*

*This proves advantageous for the younger generation, who are **more entrepreneurial, more driven, and more willing to take risks** than their older counterparts.*

*Phillip Jackson, Future Commerce* <sup>13</sup>

## PROOF POINT:

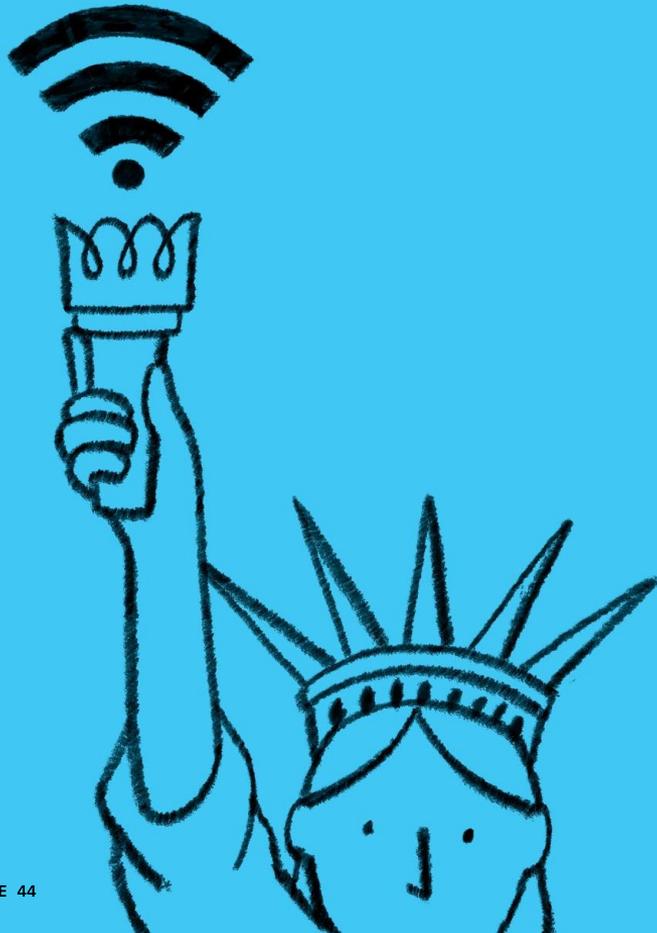
**"DESCRIBE THE PERFECT T-SHIRT" BY FACTORS OF VALUE, QUALITY, AVAILABILITY, AND PEDIGREE**

A "trusted brand" is **2X more important** than luxury pedigree

## CULTURE - TREND 03

# THE DEATH & REBIRTH OF NEUTRALITY

It's impossible to be impartial now. Lines have been drawn, and consumers are demanding that corporations take political sides. With a change in administration, we'll see the return to a conversation around network neutrality, and it will go hand in hand with new regulation/policies that will focus on what can and can't be published in public spaces. In turn, we will begin to recognize certain parts of internet infrastructure as utilities, not as platforms.



**"WE'RE SCARED BECAUSE WE DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY FAITH THAT A LARGE CORPORATION IS GOING TO ACT IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST. THEY MAY, BUT IT'S UP TO THEM TO DO SO OR NOT. AND THEY WILL MOSTLY SUBMIT TO MARKET DEMAND AS OPPOSED TO RIGHT AND WRONG. AND IN THAT SITUATION, IT'S A PART OF WHY WE HAVE GOVERNMENTS AND WHY WE ORGANIZE AS HUMAN BEINGS INTO SOCIETY."**

*Daniel Sepulveda, SVP, Policy and Advocacy at MediaMath <sup>14</sup>*



**Dan Pilver**  
@DPilver

@OneFreshPillow just curious what your thoughts on sedition and domestic terrorism were. I need to apparently ask these things before buying bedding in 2021.

5:35 PM · Jan 18, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



# CONSUMER EXPECTATION HAS EVOLVED BEYOND 2-DAY SHIPPING

Customers now **demand** that brands support their causes and commit to real and lasting change. Efforts like the 15 Percent Pledge, which asks brands to commit to 15% of their shelf space to black-owned businesses, have **attracted support from retailers like Sephora, Macy's, and Rent the Runway**. Activists like Sharon Chuter and her Instagram account @pullupforchange have been lobbying brands on social media for transparency in their hiring diversity, with stunning success.

Beyond becoming actively **anti-racist**, brands are now **combating disinformation**. Under pressure from their customers, brands have pulled political funding and support from Republicans falsely making claims about 2020 election fraud. Many have halted political spending altogether.

Brands can no longer play the Swiss defense. It's impossible to remain neutral in the post-2020 era. Money talks, as they say.

PROOF POINTS:

**CONSUMERS AREN'T CONVINCED THAT BUSINESSES ALWAYS ACT IN THEIR BEST INTEREST, BUT CONSIDER PRIVATE PLATFORMS AS ESSENTIAL SERVICES.**

**57%** CONSIDER FACEBOOK, AMAZON, AND GOOGLE *ESSENTIAL SERVICES* AT THIS POINT.

**ONLY 1 IN 3 (37%)** FEEL FOR-PROFIT ORGS HAVE A DUTY TO STEP IN WHERE GOVERNMENT FAILS.

**47%** BELIEVE THE INTERNET SHOULD BE TOTALLY FREE AND UNREGULATED.

MILLENNIALS HAVE THE *HIGHEST EXPECTATION* FOR CORPORATIONS TO STEP IN WHERE GOVERNMENT FAILS.

# MODERNITY



## MODERNITY - TREND 01

# THE AGE OF FRACTIONAL OWNERSHIP

Do you know what a Satoshi is? It's the smallest fractional unit of a Bitcoin. Bitcoin is the latest in hard-asset classes that are now able to be fractionalized for mass consumption.

What started with high-value tangible assets now is available to the masses. Rather than sharing the ownership of a yacht, a jet, or real estate, consumers now can own infinitesimally small pieces of, well, anything.

## "BUT WHY?"

Asset class diversification, of course. A looming inflation crisis, economic instability, and QE-forever have traditional investors rightfully worried. Ask any Bitcoin devotee and they'll remind you that the US Dollar has lost nearly 90% of its value since 1970. Gold, by comparison, has appreciated 400% in the past 30 years.

Invest in art with your friends on Yieldstreet. Invest in a classic Corvette with your cousin and 30 other strangers on Rally. Owning a Satoshi's-worth of game-worn 1985 "Shattered Backboard" Jordans is simple in the fractional ownership economy.

AUTOMOBILES &  
COLLECTIBLES

Rally

REAL ESTATE

CADRE

 roofstock

CULTURE

Otis

ART

MASTERWORKS

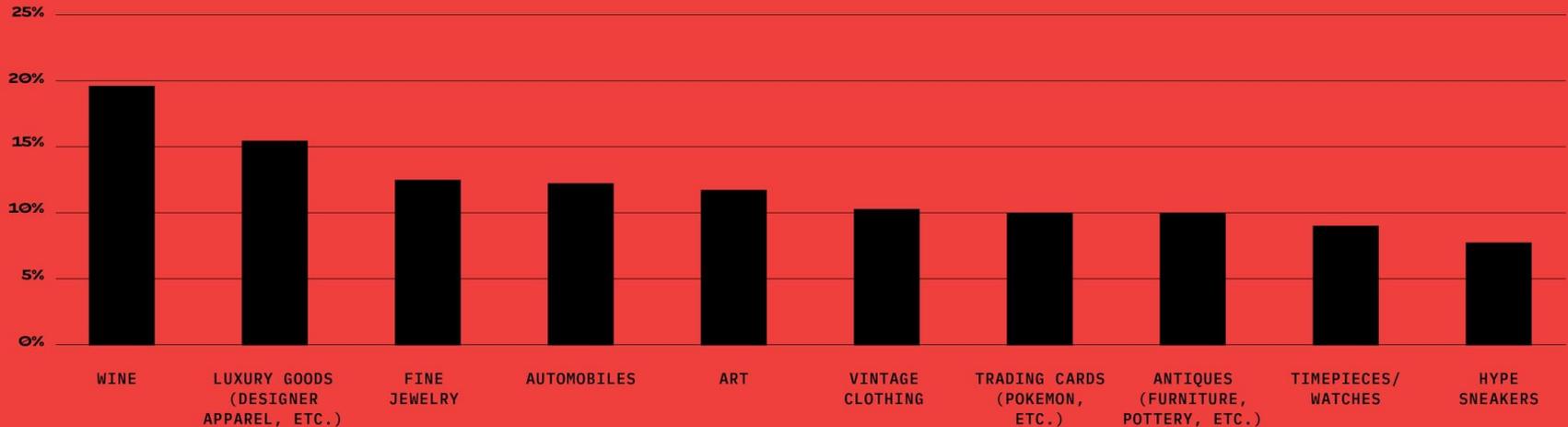
LAND

acretrader

**THANKS TO CHANGES FROM THE CARES ACT, THE DEFINITION OF AN "ACCREDITED INVESTOR" IS CHANGING TO BECOME MORE INCLUSIVE, MAKING NON-SECURITIES INVESTMENTS ACCESSIBLE TO A BROADER POPULACE. CROWDFUNDING LIMITS HAVE BEEN INCREASED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE BY THE SEC. NOW BUSINESSES CAN RAISE UP TO \$5M FROM CONSUMERS.**

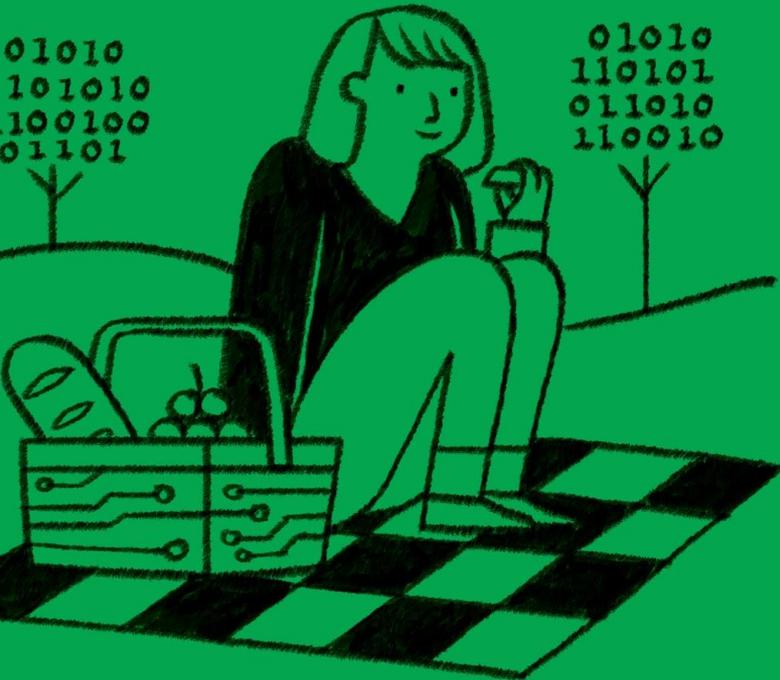
**PROOF POINT:**

**53% OF CONSUMERS REPORT INVESTING IN NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITIES THIS YEAR; WINE, LUXURY/DESIGNER GOODS, AND FINE JEWELRY TOP THE LIST**



## MODERNITY - TREND 02

# CAPITALISM & THE DIGITAL COMMONS



Private companies are focused on reducing risk and liability. Therefore they're becoming better self regulators than even public forums. The privatization of common spaces – both physical and digital – have left people without spaces to express opinions and converse about ideas without fear. The lack of common spaces along with increasing physical isolation is leading to growth in private and one to one interactions through digital channels.

# RETURN OF THE COMMONS

The mass consumerization of public spaces has disconnected us from reasonable public discourse.

As retail spaces lose their sheen, and commerce comes with us wherever we go, **we expect a return to the Commons**, shared public spaces.

## WOULD YOU RATHER INTERACT WITH PEOPLE...

ANSWERED:

997



**IF WE LOOKED AT RETAIL AS AN INTEGRATED PART OF OUR COMMUNITIES, THINKING OF HOW MUCH TIME YOU SPEND OUT AT RETAIL LOCATIONS IN YOUR COMMUNITY, IT'S A LOT OF TIME. IF WE ADD DIGITAL PLAY INTO THAT, THINK ABOUT WHAT WE COULD ACCOMPLISH.**

*Brian Lange, Future Commerce <sup>16</sup>*

## PROOF POINTS:

# THE NEWFOUND NEED FOR A NEW COMMONS IS SHARED ACROSS GENERATIONS, WITH SOME STRIKING DIFFERENCES

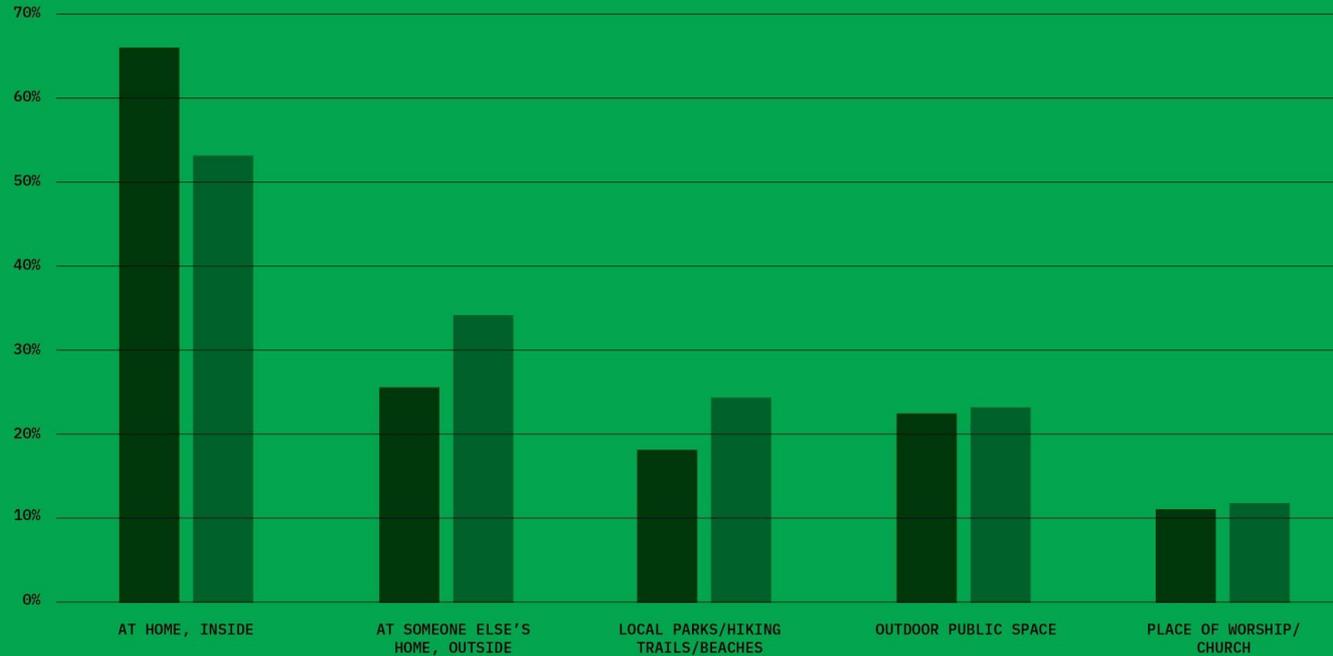
**Parks are preferred over Malls** for socializing, at a rate of 3:1

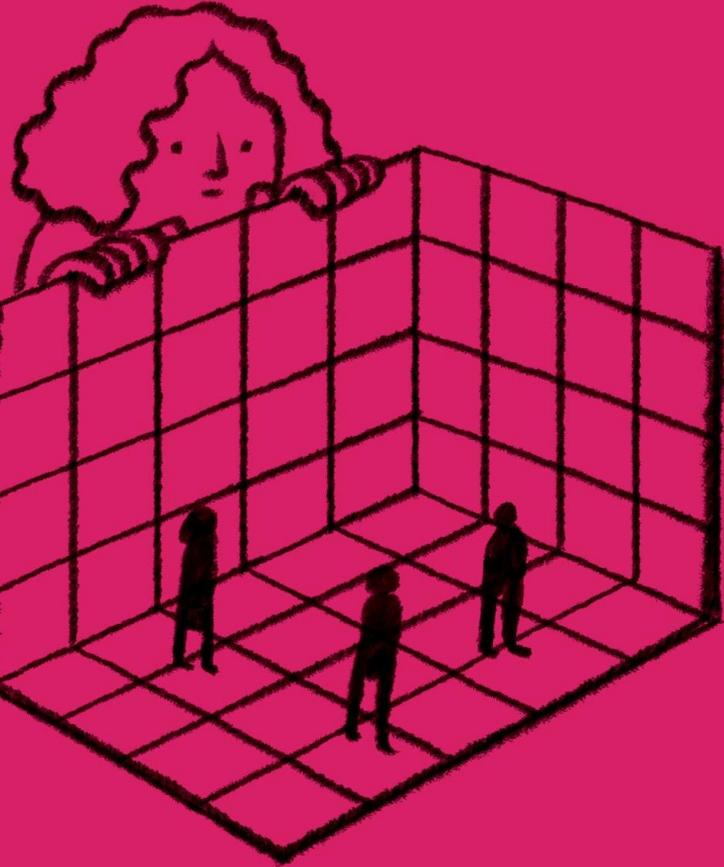
**89% have spent time with friends & family in person this year** – primarily at their homes, or the homes of loved ones – despite COVID-related challenges

**Women seem to be more cautious than men**, significantly more likely to have *not socialized in person in the past year*, and to over-index on meeting up **OUTSIDE** at another home.

Men, on the other hand, are staying put and staying inside.

## "WHERE ARE YOU LIKELY TO SPEND TIME IN THE COMING YEAR WITH PEOPLE OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSEHOLD?"





MODERNITY - TREND 03

# CONVERGENCE OF THE META & THE PHYSICAL

Traditional spaces are diminishing, and those that remain are changing. Place is no longer just physical. There are meta-places, and there are meta-people in that meta-place. The real world is now re-inspired by a anti-skeuomorphic digital world.

This trend has only been accelerated by the extended quarantine in 2020.

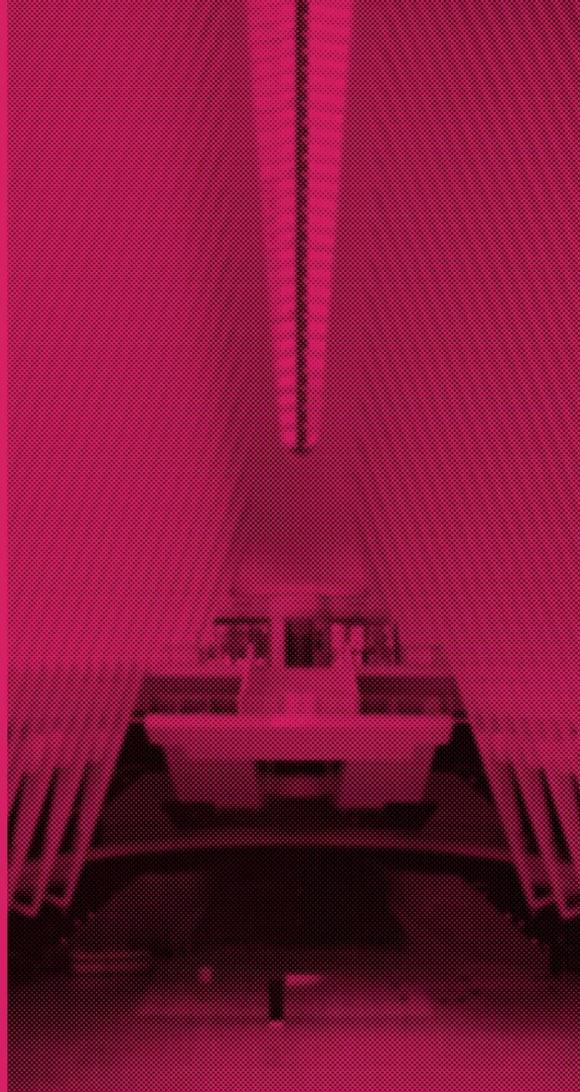
**DIGITAL NEIGHBORHOODS, OR META  
NEIGHBORHOODS, (METAHOODS?) THAT SPARK  
PURCHASE INTENT ARE THE NEW FUTURE. YOUTUBE,  
INSTAGRAM, AND PINTEREST ARE CITIES UNTO  
THEMSELVES THAT CONTAIN NEIGHBORHOODS  
OF LIKE-MINDED AND INTERDEPENDENT BRANDS.**

*Phillip Jackson, Future Commerce*<sup>17</sup>

## THE LIMITS OF THE PHYSICAL

*Capitalizing on the active shopping intent relies on the **concept of place**. In the physical world this is a mall. Places fall in and out of fashion, they slowly become undesirable, or fall into disrepair. **Demographics change and suddenly it's not 'the place to be' anymore.***

*Phillip Jackson, Future Commerce <sup>18</sup>*



## THE LIMITLESS POTENTIAL OF THE VIRTUAL

*"The concept of place is of diminishing importance in the post-COVID world. Offices are remote, ghost kitchens offer up virtual restaurant brands. Being in a place at a time is no longer a constraint."*

*Phillip Jackson, Future Commerce <sup>19</sup>*



# FORTNITE

*There is an emerging trend of very young kids in school who, after curfew or whenever they have to be home, will log on to Fortnite not to play the game, but to be with their friends on Fortnite for hours and hours and hours at a time..*

*Bringing experiences to Fortnite might be a way to bridge into the dichotomy of having to like be physically local somewhere, and you can be virtually local somewhere.*

*Phillip Jackson, Future Commerce <sup>29</sup>*

2 0 1 8

*Fortnite dances gain popularity and make a cultural mark.*

2 0 1 9

*Star Wars in-game event creates canonized history for the Star Wars Universe in a global crossover event.*

2 0 2 0

*Fortnite achieves cultural escape velocity by hosting an exclusive Travis Scott concert with over 12.3M in attendance.*

PROOF

POINTS

# FUTURE CONSUMERS AND THE PRESENCE OF DIGITAL AS PART OF THEIR IDENTITY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

**1** IN **3**  
CONSIDER THEMSELVES "GAMERS."

**1** IN **5**  
WOULD PREFER TO INTERACT WITH  
PEOPLE ON FORTNITE RATHER  
THAN IN-PERSON AT A COFFEE SHOP.

**6** **2** %  
FEEL ONLINE AND OFFLINE  
HAVE CONVERGED — THAT  
THEY PROJECT THEIR WHOLE/  
AUTHENTIC SELVES AT ALL TIMES.

**WITH COVID, WE'VE ALL TURNED  
TO DIGITAL AS OUR PRIMARY  
AND PREFERRED WAY OF  
ENGAGING WITH THE WORLD.**

Future generations will marvel that we once distinguished between online and offline realities.

# METHODOLOGY

Broad consumer research was fielded in January 2021. It included a nationally representative sample of consumers, and sample size was n=1093.

This study was conducted in partnership with Method + Mode research. Our research was compiled by the Future Commerce team over a period of 3 months ending January 2021. It included the feedback of our **Future Commerce Expert Network**, a group of expert retail and brand operators.

Based on the results of extensive qualitative surveys and interviews, we assigned value metric weight to each area of concern and developed a scoring system.

# INPUTS

- Statistical weighted appearance of recurrent themes in retail news and original opinion essays on Future Commerce media properties.
- Future Commerce Expert Network opinion polls and qualitative insights, interviews, podcast appearances, and writings across various media properties.
- Public sources of discourse and social engagement. Twitter, blogs, forums, and private community and user groups.
- Findings from primary research originating from Future Commerce consulting engagements, RFP and RFI reviews.

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