

# 2025 Trends in Events/ Experiential



## Introduction

Every year our experiential strategy team explores the influences that will shape our creative approach to events and exhibitions in the upcoming months\*. As you'd expect, there are a couple of overarching trends that influence everything we do.

However, what remains consistent is the value that experiences bring to our clients through emotional immersion and genuine expression of brand values.

\*See sources at the end of this document

# Macro trends – Broad trends affecting us in the next 5 years...

## There are four key trends affecting our world:

### Uncertain Times

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The IMF's **October 2024 World Economic Outlook** indicates a stable, yet moderate global economic growth projection of **3.2% for both 2024 and 2025**.

However, the recent US election and potential fallout for global trade, along with the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia, are still creating a climate of uncertainty. Weather changes in the Mediterranean, which are impacting raw materials, are adding to this lack of confidence.

Despite resilient global economies avoiding recession amid inflation and tightened monetary policies, certain regions, particularly low-income and conflict-affected areas, face significant challenges. We remain in a situation of cautious stability – **not doom and gloom, but certainly not driving growth**. This means continued caution in investment by clients and a period of budget scrutiny.

### Eco Shock

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With **global temperatures** in 2024 likely to average out at around **1.5°C above pre-industrial levels**, climate change is getting harder to deny. Even if we bring the increase under control, the base is still high.

This is starting to impact everything from [politics](#) to [paint](#).

Alongside searching for new energy sources and sustainable materials, in 2025 global populations start to look for ways to cope with **heat increases and extreme weather** events such as hurricanes and flooding, instead of trying to stop it. Affluent nations begin to experience internal migration.

In addition, scope 3\* reporting requirements become mandatory from 2025 meaning that businesses working in the EU will have to get to grips with the **impact that their supply chains have** on their carbon emissions and sustainability targets.

\*Scope 3 reporting is the process of accounting for a company's indirect greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that occur in its value chain, but are not owned or controlled by the company

### AI Approaches

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The hype continues, the impacts are starting to be felt in both work and leisure, but we are still uncertain as to the end results.

Businesses will **increasingly engage with AI** to determine what it can usefully provide and what should be avoided. AI will quickly integrate the tools that make work smarter and quicker. **Editorial abilities, people skills and presentation** will become ever more critical.

Virtual and in-person entertainment start to incorporate AI elements as extension of franchise, to deliver 'unreal elements' and for marketing purposes. This also enhances content.

### Global Disconnect

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Driven by increased use of technology, we know more about each other than ever, yet seem further apart.

The global loneliness epidemic only continues. **Nearly a quarter of people globally felt very or fairly lonely** in 2023, with young people feeling loneliest – 25% of 15 to 18-year-olds and 27% of 19 to 29-year-olds.

While some attempt to fill the connection gap with technology, others make moves to **recreate community** through purpose built buildings, making individual activities communal and doubling down on communities of interest.

# What is the influence on our experiential and live creativity?

On the following pages there are examples of how creative agencies and brands are responding to the macro trends. Each Experiential Trend may be influenced by more than one of the Macro Trends.

Experiential trend one:

# Climate Change Energy

Alongside searching for new energy sources and sustainable materials, in 2025 global populations start to look for ways to cope with heat increases and extreme weather events such as hurricanes and flooding, instead of trying to stop it. Wealthier nations are starting to experience internal migration.

## What's driving the change?

Extreme weather events are growing more frequent. Yet neither consumers nor governments are prepared or able to completely change our globalized culture's dependence on physical connection. Therefore, it has become obvious that we will have to cope with, not prevent, climate change.

## How might it impact events and experiences?

Clearly showing that your brand is addressing and adapting to climate change continues to be a theme in events and experiences.

We may see architecture and design begin to be influenced by climate-effective build styles such as Middle Eastern approaches to heat management.

We might see brands start to focus on ocean relationships – e.g. plastic reduction but also planting kelp forests – rather than replacing trees.

We will need to go further in our facts – reporting the numbers, and being confident about our contributions as legislation starts to catch up with clients.

More than **80%**  
of Americans considered  
climate risk before  
buying a home.

(Zillow, 2023).



## UEFA and LS events – A sustainable framework

LS Events worked with the A Greener Future (AGF) Event Sustainability Framework to scope and gather data for the event carbon footprint analysis, creating a sustainable event policy.

770 kg of food was salvaged by City Harvest, equating to approximately 1,824 meals provided to charities, soup kitchens, and more. Other donated items included 420 sqm of carpets, 2400 sqm of scrim, and over 450 lanyards, to charities supporting families in need, child development through play therapy, and children's hospice centres.



## Visit Copenhagen – Sustainable earning

Visit Copenhagen is piloting a scheme that encourages visitors to the city to engage in environmentally friendly activities, such as cycling instead of driving and working on urban farms. In return, they will be rewarded with perks like free lunches and museum entries.

Without adaptive measures, the number of people who lack sufficient water for at least one month per year will soar from **3.6 billion** today to more than

**5 billion**

by 2050.

(Mintel, 2025 Trends).



## GAN – Reversible

In 2022, Spanish brand Gan introduced its Reversible collection of rugs that can be flipped over to suit different seasons, with a cosy woollen side for winter and a cool linen side for summer.

The Sugo rugs by Recork (UK) are also woven from linen, recycled cotton and raw cork, which feels cool underfoot when temperatures rise.

By absorbing heat and slowly releasing it, cork acts as a natural heat moderator, reducing temperature peaks inside the home. It's also fire-retardant, water-resistant, elastic and doesn't stick to the skin, making it a comfortable upholstery option.

## Experiential trend two:

# AI?

Businesses will increasingly engage with AI to determine what it can usefully provide and what should be avoided, and will quickly integrate the tools that make work smarter and quicker. Editorial abilities, people skills and presentation will become ever more critical.

Ethics and legislation move front and center as people in power start to suffer from misinformation and biased AI. Craft and human connection become more desirable for some, particularly associated with luxury.

### What's driving the change?

AI businesses are starting to need finance, so they are making their way into the business world. On 1 August 2024 the EU AI Act came into force, focusing the attention of business on delivering.

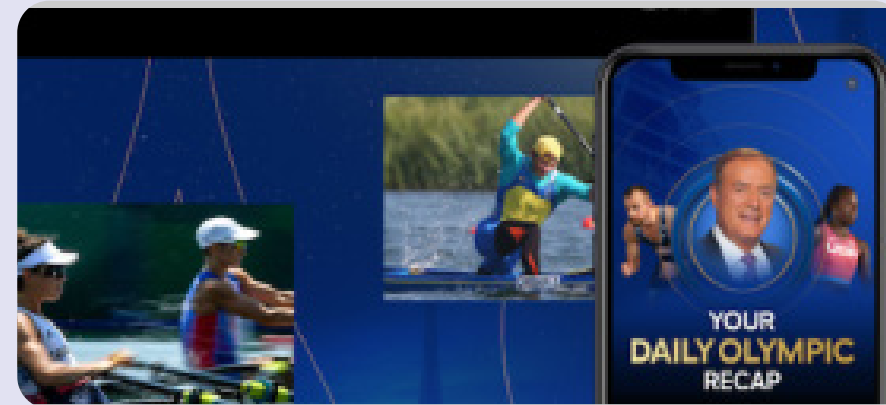
### How might it impact events and experiences?

Clients increasingly want AI involved – but look to agencies to define what that means. Designers will proactively present AI generated options for clients, but sit them alongside non-AI options to demonstrate originality.

There is a continuation of the superhero/fairy trend in film and tv story-telling made even more realistic through AI generation of world-scapes. A possible contrast to the desire for AI emerges with the return to craft films or historical tales that blend true stories with the need for realistic environments.

Globally, **51%** of consumers believe that AI will improve entertainment options in the future.

(Zillow, 2023).



### NBC – Olympic Recap

As part of its Paris 2024 Olympics coverage, NBCUniversal gave Peacock (NBC app) subscribers Your Daily Olympic Recap, a generative AI feature delivering personalized 10-minute highlight segments from the previous days' competition.

Opted-in viewers selected their sport preferences and extras like behind the scenes, team spotlights, and viral moments.\* The reels were narrated by an AI voice clone of legendary American sports pundit Al Michaels.

\*Stylus.com Life in AI Report 2024



**Character.AI** creates realistic voices and could be used for VoG, whilst ChatGPT can be used to write scripts.

**The Dalí Museum in St Petersburg** has recreated Salvador Dalí using AI. Visitors can interact with an engaging lifelike Salvador Dalí on a series of screens throughout the Museum.

The Museum began this immersive project by collecting and sharing hundreds of interviews, quotes, and existing archival footage from the prolific artist. The AI then generates a version of Dalí's likeness to match an actor's face and expressions.



### CoPilot+ PC

The first wave of Copilot+ PCs is powered by American semiconductor company Qualcomm's Snapdragon X series chips. They have a neural processing unit capable of 40+ trillion operations per second, enabling industry-first AI features.

Along with Microsoft's Surface devices, brands like Asus, Acer, HP, Lenovo, Dell and Samsung have all announced Copilot+ PCs.

As of 2023, **37%** of people globally trust AI to be as accurate as a human in customer service scenarios – so concepts blending AI with specialist human curation are valuable.

(Salesforce, 2023).

# Experiential trend three: Tech Tonic

Technology continues to impact health and wellness on multiple fronts. AI is speeding up drug discovery, with investment set to reach a staggering \$3bn by 2025 in pharma as a whole. Biotech, information systems, processing power, AI and new platforms are converging. But because the sector is moving at speed, companies are finding it hard to keep up.

Meanwhile, innovative techniques such as CAR-T therapy hold out the hope of actual cures for types of cancer that were previously unconquerable. More personalized medicine, more patient input and control, and multiple modalities are likely to begin impacting our clients' businesses through purchase, development or competition.

But can we help them maximize those opportunities whilst ensuring equitable access?

## What's driving the change?

Greater understanding of the importance of the patient and the individual experience are even having an impact on medicine.

The desire for individuals themselves to have personalized experiences means we are happy to respond. In educated, ageing and affluent Western populations there is already a market for such products.

## How might it impact events and experiences?

New biotech businesses coming to market may bring an injection of difference and creativity to the trade show market.

This drives larger, more conservative clients to expect more creativity.

There may be opportunities for increased digital wellness and patient experience that need explaining in consumer-friendly ways.

## McKinsey see

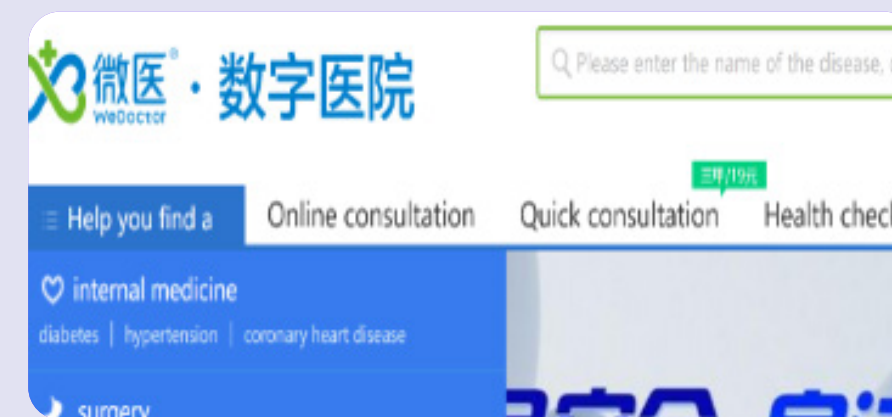
# \$250bn

## worth of care services moving into the home by 2025.

# 51%

of UK adults agree that technology will improve people's personal health outcomes.

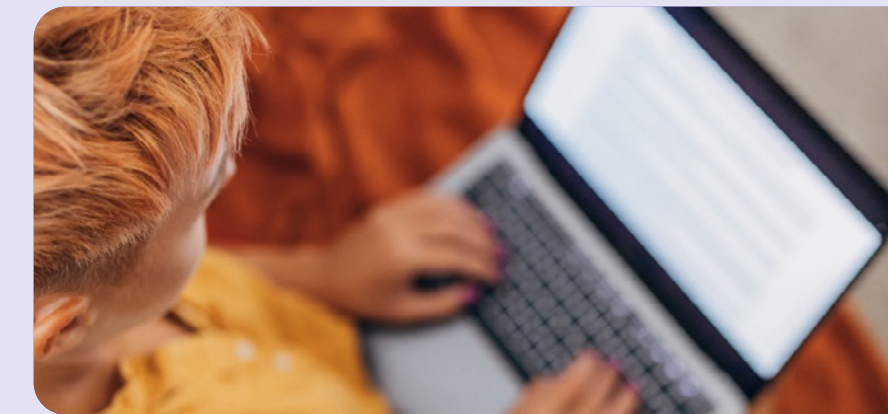
(Mintel, 2024).



## HCPs and Patients – Wechat

In China, where 70% of physicians spend more than 30 minutes a day on WeChat, the platform's WeDoctor program connects users to more than 270,000 healthcare providers and 7,000 hospitals offering telehealth.

\*Bain, 2022



## TrialJectory - Increase in clinical trial take up

US start-up TrialJectory is an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered decision-support platform helping to democratize access to advanced cancer treatments. Its unique model empowers cancer patients to own their treatment journey by creating a personalized treatment plan that enhances physician point of care.

The SaaS Optimizer platform delivers actionable insights that directly influence trial design, improve operational processes, and marketing communication strategies, while ensuring alignment with patients' needs and expectations.\*

\*Stylus.com Life in AI Report 2024



## Bmind

The first AI powered smart mirror for wellness. It claims to determine the user's mood and, in response, offers affirmations, visuals and more to improve it. The mirror utilizes a combination of AI and natural language processing (NLP) to analyze the sentiment of the user through expressions, gestures and tones, adapting to their current mood for a tailored experience.

\*Stylus.com Life in AI Report 2024

Experiential trend four:

# Meta-realities

Apple and Meta are both focused on delivering on the promise of wearables and XR/VR environments. Google has partnered with Samsung and Qualcomm to work on a headset, but are not delivering anything exciting imminently.

Roblox and other platforms are no longer the buzzword of choice for marketers, but are simply the digital water for Gen Alpha to swim in.

The idea of being completely immersed in an actual reality gains strength – with a desire for in-person connection, in person uniqueness and being inside a ‘dream world.’

## What’s driving the change?

Affordability. As of July 2024, the Meta Quest 3 was on sale for as little as \$429.

When the world is uncertain, the ability to enter ideal universes and playful states provides a release. These are safe, controllable environments that reassure and inspire. Plus they can educate in emotional, memorable ways that drive impact, making them attractive to brands who need to cut through.

## How might it impact events and experiences?

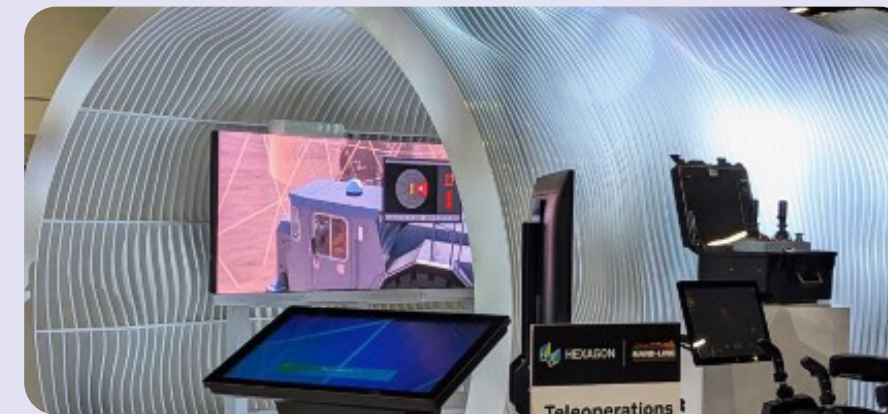
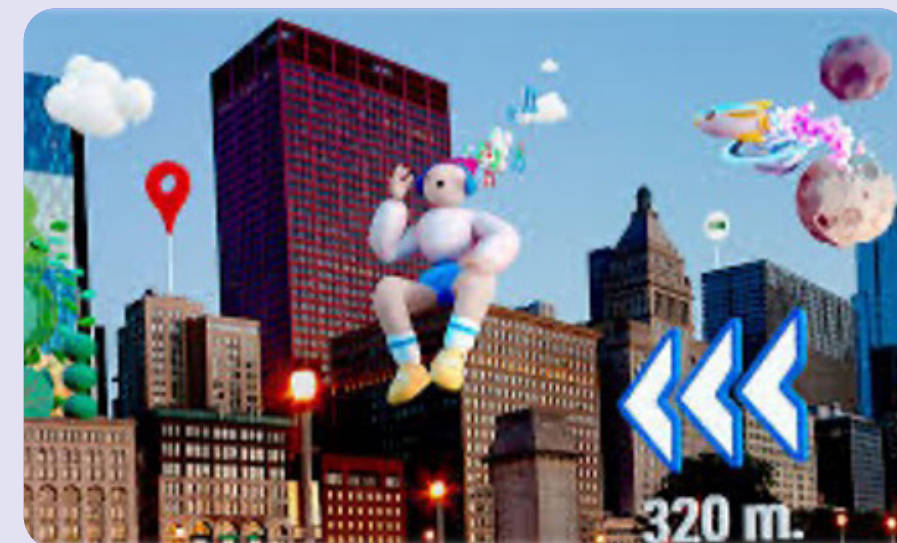
Expect to see more AR than VR on stands and in spaces – making interesting immersive content more usable.

It’s most likely to be used for:

- Navigation
- Product showcases
- Scientific presentations

**55%** of global consumers would like to use augmented or virtual reality as they shop.

(IBM, 2024)



## Taco Bell – The Cantinas

An “early retirement community” where anyone, no matter their age, can ditch the daily grind in favor of the laid-back life. The sold-out experience which popped up in San Diego, California in 2024, invites Taco Bell rewards members to sign up and “embrace their inner old”. Senior-inspired activities on offer include afternoon aerobics and pickleball, crafts and bingo, alongside “elevated dining experiences.”

\*Mintel Consumer Trends, 2025



## KFC – Colonel’s Lodge

In July 2024, KFC Australia offered fried-chicken fanatics the chance to win a cozy staycation at the Colonel’s Lodge, a wood-paneled, branded holiday retreat set in the picturesque Blue Mountains. The “Christmas in July” promo included a KFC butler and an unlimited supply of KFC Christmas food.

To be eligible for one of three prizes, fans had to spend at least \$30 AUD on the KFC app in the month of July.

\*Stylus, Brief Post



## E.L.F – Roblox Elfstore

E.L.F’s Roblox activation is designed to encourage pro-social behaviors and entrepreneurship through rewarding collaboration and empowering anyone who plays to develop and run mini-Roblox experiences that mimic real life business building. Players play to grow, not to win – creating a super store to attract customers, upgrade and personalize to get income – earning tickets for UGC. The evergreen game will evolve as the brand solicits community feedback.

Initial KPIs focus on community feedback and sentiment – quantifiable success metrics will be developed at a later stage.

Worldwide, **75%** of consumers are expected to be active users of augmented reality apps and other experiences by 2025, highlighting an immersive storytelling channel with high user familiarity.

(Snap Inc, 2022)



Experiential trend five:

# Connection Re-Connection

Despite our hyper-connected digital world, there's a growing hunger for authentic human connection. Post-pandemic isolation has created a "counter-COVID culture", where face-to-face experiences are valued more than ever.

Physical events are being reimagined as essential spaces for genuine human connection, moving beyond pure business objectives to address fundamental social and emotional needs.

The pendulum is swinging back from virtual-first to a more balanced approach, with in-person experiences becoming a premium offering in our digital age.

## What's driving the change?

Digital fatigue has reached a tipping point, with people increasingly aware of the limitations of virtual interactions and the need for authenticity.

The post-pandemic era has highlighted the irreplaceable value of human touch, spontaneous conversations, and shared physical experiences. Meanwhile, rising global anxiety and loneliness are pushing both individuals and organizations to seek more meaningful ways to connect.

## How might this impact events and experiences?

Events and physical spaces are evolving to become 'connection catalysts,' with designs that deliberately foster meaningful interactions. Traditional conference layouts are being replaced by more fluid, organic spaces that encourage spontaneous meetings and natural networking. Programming now emphasizes quality of interaction over quantity of content, with fewer presentations and more facilitated discussions, workshops, collaborative activities and greater personalization in experience and agendas.

Sensory experiences are being amplified to emphasize the irreplaceable nature of physical presence – from interactive art installations to shared dining experiences, from collaborative problem-solving challenges to immersive storytelling environments. These tangible, shared moments create bonds that virtual interactions simply cannot replicate.



## Uniquely in-person experiences

"You had to be there" is something we'll be hearing much more as the allure of digital fades and in-person experiences continue to draw in younger people looking to explore something new, and an older generation recapturing a more analogue youth.

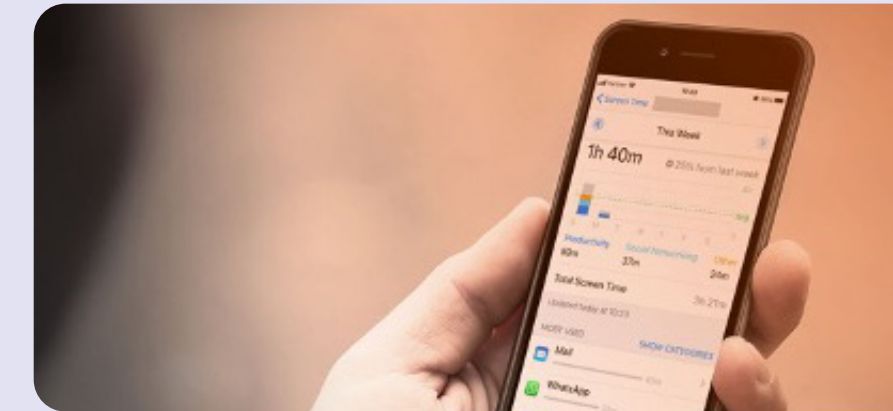
It's the time of art installations to collaborate with brands. 18 different brands are drawing inspiration from variants of Yayoi Kusama's "Infinity Mirrors" concept.

## Monthly social engagement with friends decreased by a huge

# 20 hrs

## between 2003 and 2020.

(The US Surgeon General's Advisory, 2023).



## Proactive effort to reduce screen time

It's not just the kids who are getting square eyes from the TV these days; there's a drive across all generations to reduce their own addictions to screens.

Products such as the Minimalist Phone are built around the concept of taking tech backwards.

They offer essentially a pricier version of a 20-year-old phone with Google Maps.



## Laundromat Sports Bar

To solve the problem South Korean UEFA Champions League fans face of having to wake up in the early hours to watch live matches, Heineken's LaundroMatch campaign transformed WashEnjoy 24-hour laundromats into sports bars.

\*Intel Consumer Trends, 2025

To find out how these trends could affect your world, get in touch to arrange a conversation.

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# Emota

Inizio Engage