

THE : FUTURE : LABORATORY

Neo-collectivism Macrotrend 2022



Introduction

Society is facing a mass re-organisation. United by values of empathy and community, consumers are shunning individualism in favour of alliances that are decentralising industries and redistributing power at scale.

Democracy in its current state isn't working. Throughout the **Turbulent Teens** and **Transformative Twenties**, citizen uprisings have spread like wildfire across continents, from the political clashes of **The Dislocated World** to demands for a socially just **Post-growth Society**, and most recently an urgent climate reckoning from citizens who have yet to reach voting age.

What links these movements is the role that togetherness plays in the fight to dethrone institutions. To rebuild collapsing systems, citizens are wasting no time in forming unions and alliances, recognising that, ultimately, individual action is ineffective when compared to the capabilities of collective bodies, skills and imaginations.

Working together is vital when we could be moments away from future pandemics, climate disasters or an imminent recession. As David Ehrlichman, author of the 2021 book *Impact Networks*, puts it: 'Given the increasing complexity of our society and the issues we face, our ability to form, grow and work through networks has never been more essential.'

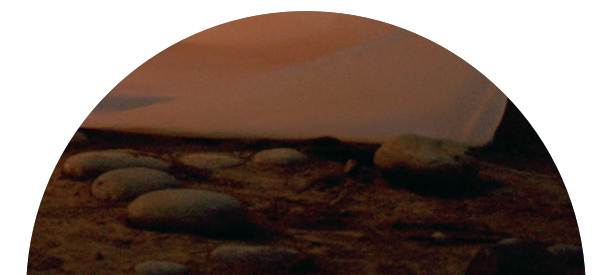
Consequently, community is a more valuable resource than ever. The **Edelman Trust Barometer** recently found that 'people in my community' (62%) are more trusted than CEOs (49%). But while citizens make progress in assuming collective behaviours – think back to the mass displays of solidarity during lockdowns – businesses lag behind.

The commercialisation of the sharing economy, for example, has 'strayed a long way from its original ideals of community, cooperation and collaboration', Simon Lovick, content manager at **Founders Factory**, reminds us.

Luckily, a new model has the potential to reroute power from organisations: Web3. In this digital laboratory, decentralisation reigns: citizens become squads, profits are dispersed and community is king. It represents a fresh start, an **Alternet Economy** that allows us to imagine how systems rooted in consensus, equity and care can be reproduced in offline societies too. How, for example, could cities, wealth and even entire organisations be shaped by solidarity?

'The new normal will include a greater awareness of systemic dependencies and the need for social goods,' predicts Greg Sherwin, vice-president of engineering at **Singularity University**. 'Linear thinking and highly individualistic, reductionist approaches to society and the planet will shift towards communitarianism.'

This means that brands, which are nothing without their communities, will make the radical move from being sellers to coordinators. To genuinely place collectivism at the heart of their products, campaigns and workforces, brands should prepare for a future in which they invite customers to run their businesses, design infrastructure as a service, and blur the boundaries between a company, a community and a collective.



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Drivers

As our collective priorities move from immediate Covid-19 concerns to larger social, planetary and technological inequalities, people are exchanging individual desires and demands for group consensus.

Crowd Mentality

We may associate future populations with a strong sense of self, thanks to the hyper-individualist narrative pushed by social media. But young members of the **Zalpha** generation – where Generations Z and Alpha intersect – are dispelling this myth, recognising that collaborative thinking is essential for a better future. Two-thirds (67%) of young people in Britain would like to live under an explicitly socialist economic system, according to the **Institute of Economic Affairs**.

Online, alliances built around shared interests, ranging from gardening to sneaker resale, have become powerful armies in places like **Discord** and **Bilibili**, transforming the way we connect, collaborate and develop community ties with strangers. **Konnect** recently found that members of Gen Z have an average of six friends they’ve never met face to face.

Community has also been a lifeline for groups historically excluded from mainstream society, such as LGBTQ+ people, Indigenous groups and people of the global majority. With the Zalpha generation set to be the most diverse yet – the number of white Americans has declined for the first time on record, and one in six young people in the US now identify as LGBTQ+ – we can expect to see community values play a central role in our future society (sources: **US Census Bureau**, **Gallup**).

Global Driver :
Evolving Demographics

Experimenting with new forms of affiliation, the community-curious next generation identify as group members as well as individuals



The Brand Catalyst: David Ehrlichman

Describing himself as a ‘catalyst’, David Ehrlichman is the co-founder of **Converge**, a network of systems strategists that helps businesses operate as collaborative networks, facilitating online and offline meetings that bring individuals and brands together.

He’s also the author of *Impact Networks*, a 2021 book predicting the future of collaboration. ‘As a powerful and flexible organising system that can span regions, organisations and silos of all kinds, impact networks underlie some of the most impressive and large-scale efforts to create change across the globe,’ he explains.

Meet the Marni is a photographic documentary of the Marni brand family for **Highsnobiety**. The brand’s definition of family extends to community members and consumers. Photography by **Piotr Niepsuj**, Italy

Systemic Endemic

As concerns about coronavirus recede, the mental, eco- and economic dread that it caused have shown no signs of abating. Now, the collective energy we used to withstand the pandemic is being refocused on issues such as wealth inequality and climate justice.

According to Ipsos, Covid-19 has fallen to third place in a global ranking of the world's top worries, with poverty, social inequality and unemployment now the top concerns for global citizens. These issues are still wrapped up in pandemic discourse, however. Those

who were already struggling financially pre-pandemic, including lower-income workers and people of colour, face even more economic instability, reports McKinsey & Co.

Some experts believe this widespread fear and anxiety we have experienced together will have positive results in how we move forward in addressing these problems, pushing us to a more consensual, integrated mindset. 'People will be more environmentally conscious than ever before and will engage en masse in efforts to regulate corporate

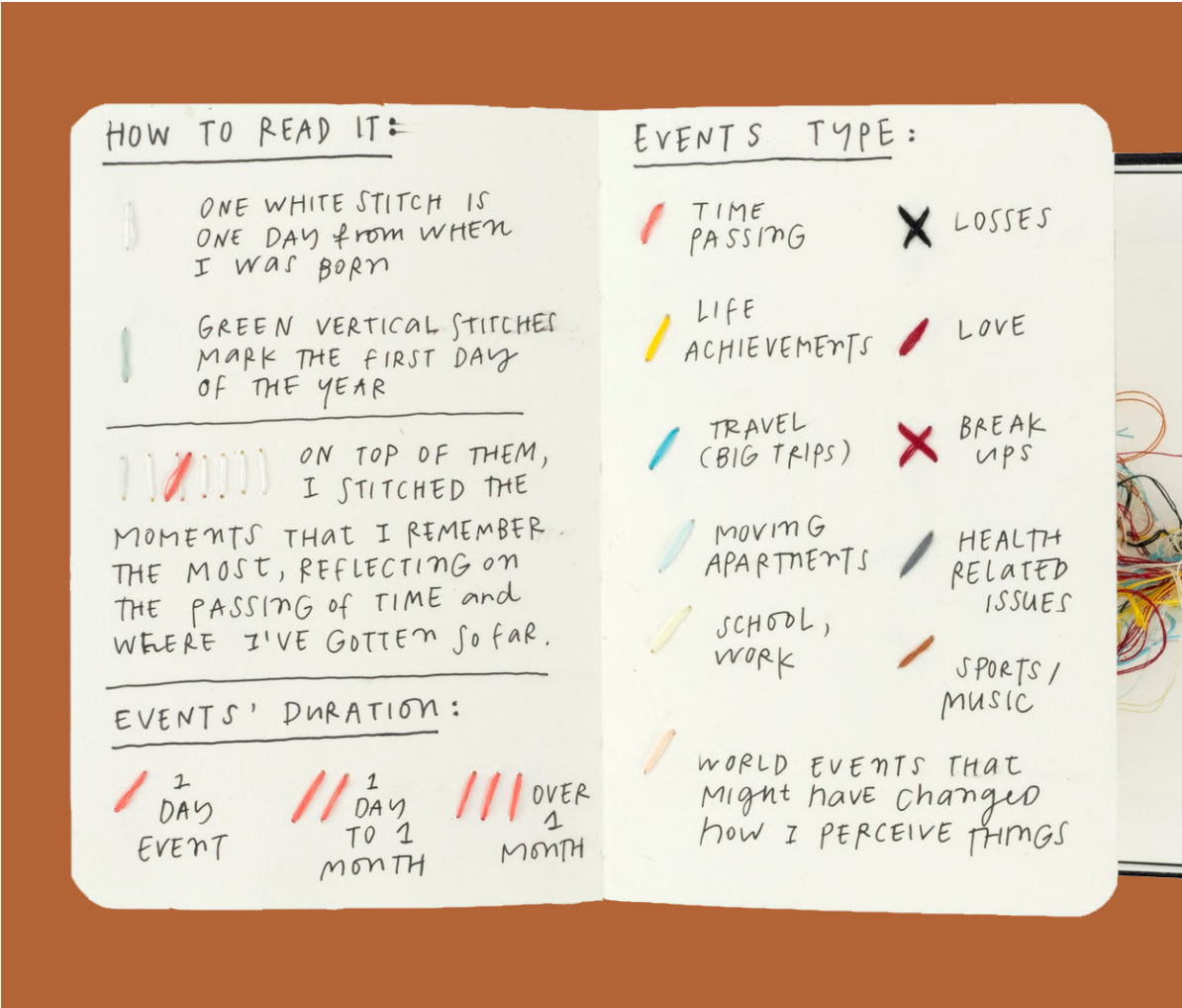
resource extraction and pollution,' says Abigail de Kosnik, an associate professor at the University of California, as well as showing 'a collective willingness to adopt less environmentally harmful lifestyles'.

Global Driver :
Climate Change and Resource Scarcity

The conversation has moved on from individual micro-actions such as recycling to larger, more collaborative ways of lessening climate change.



Photography by Cottonbro



Georgia Lupi has created Book of Life, a story of personal data that questions her existence and purpose, New York

Re-engagement Rising

Individuals once extracted a great deal of their purpose from their jobs, resulting in a cult of 'workism' and a burnout epidemic. But a new movement dubbed The Great Resignation, in which millions have quit their job without a new path in mind, offers a chance for change.

This major shift in priorities is the manifestation of the **Pleasure Revolution**, a trend predicting the rise of positive idleness. Now, 1.7m of such 'idlers' have assembled on Reddit's anti-work forum, backing up Oracle's finding that 88% of people say their meaning of success has changed since the pandemic started.

But as millions of people privileged enough to do so rethink their career paths, many are re-engaging with larger interconnected systems – whether these are environmental or

socially driven – to find fulfilment. For 42% of young people in India, it's family that has become an important source of happiness since the pandemic (source: **MTV India**). Taking a global view, a major study by **HSE University** of young people in countries including China and Russia found a positive association between collectivism – particularly with regard to family ties – and life satisfaction.

Global Driver :
Dislocated World

The pandemic helped people recognise the personal limitations of aligning career with purpose, motivating people to find life satisfaction closer to home, and within more localised communities and collectivist opportunities.

‘[People] will show a collective willingness to adopt less environmentally harmful lifestyles’

Abigail de Kosnik, associate professor, University of California

Sensationalised Youth

Tropicana by **Josh Aronson** explores the hopeful and gentle counter-narrative of youth communities in Florida, US



The Decentralised Web

In the same way that collectives have fought to gain autonomy in real-world systems, the battle for control of virtual spaces rages on between big tech and Alternet rebels.

Decentralisation is one of the driving forces behind Web3. This re-imagined internet is intended to be governed by its users, and its collectives are flourishing in gaming platforms like **Roblox** and decentralised autonomous organisations (DAOs) like **Friends with Benefits**.

But this sense of ‘freedom’ that Web3 promises is already being disputed. Ed Zitron, CEO of media relations company **EZPR**, argues that Web3’s veneer of equity is being rubbed away to resemble the hierarchies of Silicon Valley – an idea exemplified by **Facebook’s** acceleration into the metaverse. ‘These systems are not ‘free’ or ‘owned by the people’, but owned by the people who created the systems,’ he writes.

It’s important to remember that it’s still the early days of Web3, and such spaces are currently populated by exclusive groups of early adopters. For every expert like Zitron highlighting its limitations, there are many future thinkers adapting the formula to build better eco-systems of community.

Global Driver :
Accelerating Technologies

The technology needed to make products, services and communities fairer and more equitable is finally here, and will eventually decentralise power in the real world too.

Insight

Neo-collectivism is not only motivating consumers to create their own systems of commerce, care and community, but leading brands and organisations to reconfigure their own anatomies too.

Next-door Commerce

The pandemic may have reinstated the act of popping to a neighbour's house for provisions, dog walks or friendly check-ins, but these casual transactions – which are typically based on kindness as opposed to financial gain – are now being formalised to reach the masses.

Hyper-local platforms such as **Nextdoor** are booming as our everyday environments morph into **Equilibrium Cities**. The app, which is used by nearly one in five households in the UK and more than 66m worldwide, recently found that 73% of US respondents believe neighbours are their most important community (source: Nextdoor).

New initiatives are applying this sense of localism to the retail market, using communal sharing models in order to

decouple consumption from capitalism. The reciprocal nature of **Buy Nothing**, for example, has turned heads in the retail industry with the launch of its own app in November 2021. The community began as a series of **Facebook** groups encouraging people to request and collectively share objects for free with the goal of reducing consumption.

Neighbourhood commerce can be based on economic transactions too, meaning retailers without physical spaces could use their customers' own homes as stores. Launched at Dutch Design Week, **Vrienden** is a furniture brand that operates as a social design network, positioning strangers' living rooms as showrooms where they can buy furniture.



Vrienden, The Netherlands

The Family Hotelier: Amahra Spence

Identifying the systemic problems that prevent artists – especially those of colour – from living freely, social organiser Amahra Spence founded the **MAIA Group**, building congregational art spaces in her home city of Birmingham.

Spence draws inspiration from the collective thinking of her ancestors. Like many Britons of Caribbean heritage, she comes from a line of organisers. ‘My grandparents were migrants who had to create their own structures for getting through the day,’ she explains. Such structures range from community-building raves to shared food and childcare responsibilities.



Left: Obsidian Experience is a virtual interior design concept re-imagining domestic settings among Black communities, designed by **Black Artists and Designers Guild (BADG)**, Oakland; Above: **Human Hotel**, Copenhagen

Humanity Hospitality

As the platforms that promised to disrupt the hospitality sector begin to resemble corporate monoliths in their own right, family-style services that nurture local communities as well as guests are emerging.

Data shows that short-term letting platforms can have detrimental effects on a social level. Simon Lovick, content manager at **Founders Factory**, recently commented on **Airbnb** driving up rent prices in certain neighbourhoods and cities: ‘Not only does this become counter-intuitive for tenants looking to reduce their rent costs through short-term sub-letting, it also creates a dependence on the platform for income.’

Dubbed a ‘non-corporate Airbnb’, the **Climate Homestay Network** is positioned as an antidote to this, returning to the original values of home-sharing. Launched by **Human Hotel** in response to the skyrocketing cost of accommodation during COP26, it gave generous locals the chance to freely open their homes to those attending – or protesting at – the event, and is now partnering with charities such as **Extinction Rebellion** to globalise its services.

Taking a more speculative approach is social organiser Amahra Spence, who is using a hotel as a moniker to represent civic infrastructure. The design for her concept hotel, **Abuelos**, replicates the experience of her grandparents’ living room, creating a vibrant, chaotic space for marginalised communities and artists to assemble. ‘Hotels should be these sites of imagination, this amazing amalgamation of people who would never ordinarily share the same space together,’ she tells LS:N Global.



‘Hotels should be these sites of imagination, this amazing amalgamation of people who would never ordinarily share the same space together’

Amahra Spence, founder, MAIA Group



Community resorts

House of Aama re-imagines a Black community resort, inspired by the beach towns where African Americans would holiday in the early 1900s during segregation. Photography by Myles Loftin, US

People-powered Networks

Where citizens once relied on Silicon Valley powerhouses to spearhead better technologies, they are now taking control, forming human networks that rely on groups of people working in tandem.

Trust is vital to the effectiveness of these self-governed collectives. Take **Solar Protocol** as an example. It's creating a 'naturally intelligent network' of people who have access to solar panels and are willing to use them to collectively host a low-impact internet. With servers across time zones, seasons and weather systems, the project can only work if enough people commit to the cause.

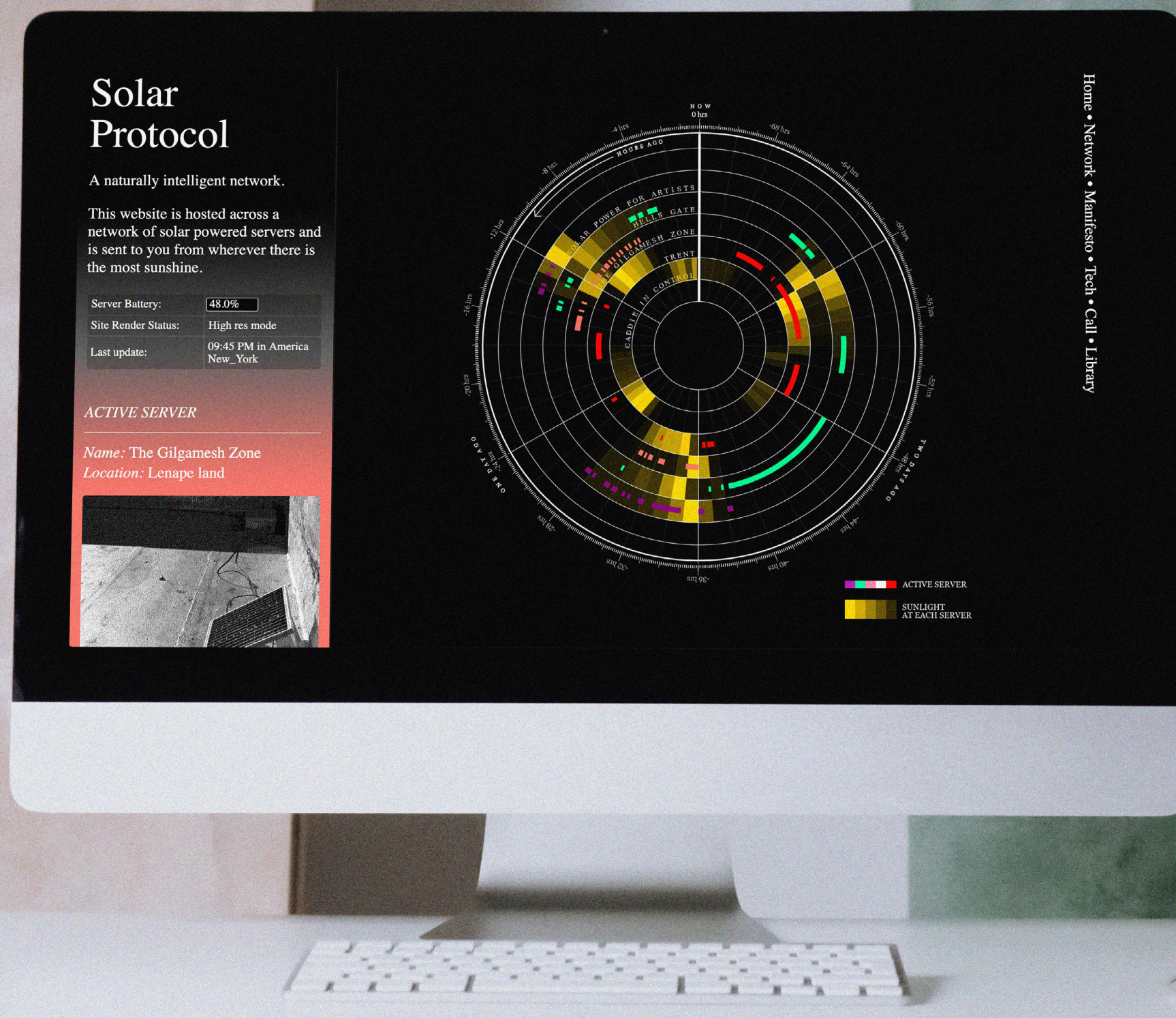
Helium is also on a mission to make the internet lighter – and faster. Its next-generation **LongFi** wireless network depends on a community of people buying a hotspot router for an investment of £366 (\$495, €438). Those who do so will earn a cryptocurrency token that Helium promises will be valuable in the future, as well as knowing they're powering a greener internet that offers 200 times greater wifi range at a fraction of the cost of cellular data.

What makes this movement unique is that acts of cooperation are no longer considered anarchist but everyday behaviour. 'The pandemic strengthened our model of collaboration between people, government and the private sector, deepening what I call 'people-public-private' partnerships,' writes Audrey Tang, the digital minister of Taiwan, who has been the driving force behind **g0v**, a collective of thousands of 'civic hackers' that allow citizens to participate in public affairs.

Solar Protocol by Tega Brain, Alex Nathanson and Benedetta Piantella

'The pandemic has strengthened our model of collaboration between people, government and the private sector'

Audrey Tang, digital minister of Taiwan



58% of US Gen Z report two or more unmet social needs, compared with 16% of people from older generations

Source: McKinsey & Co



Matthew Avallone has designed a space for La Sagrada Familia, a new family formed of artists, designers and musicians who come together for impromptu congregation and self-expression



Kenzo's Utopia is Possible campaign is a celebration of harmony, optimism and community. Photography by Vicki King

The Community Educator: Lenéa Sims

Using her unique background as a sociologist and energy coach, Lenéa Sims is exploring how compassion can not only exist but flourish online, using her platforms **Inner Play** and **Outer Work**. Individuals can become members according to sliding-scale fees that take race and economic privileges into account.

Inner Play acts as a 'virtual summer camp' for friendship-building as well as workshops on everything from breath work to fermentation. Outer Work, meanwhile, is focused on uplifting anti-racism, with a community for Black, Indigenous visionaries of colour and non-Black, Indigenous co-conspirators of colour to unite, learn, reflect and act.

Care-mmunities

As the micro-societies we unveiled in **Decentralised Care** come to the fore, the virtual realm is becoming a testbed for new structures of kinship that undercut toxic social media platforms.

Let down by healthcare systems, young people are pegged to be the benefactors of peer-to-peer care. According to **McKinsey & Co**, 58% of Gen Z in the US report two or more unmet social needs, compared with 16% of people from older generations. It's ironic that this generation are also the biggest users of social media.

Already, social networks are beginning to move away from individualism.

BagiKata, an Indonesian app for venting and confiding, hires therapists and young experts to foster a confessional atmosphere and 'give a human touch, to be just like that one friend you can rely on', explains its founder Baskara Putra.

Reciprocal forms of kinship have been observed globally for centuries. But in the West, a self-care endemic means we must find ways to incentivise

people to look out for others – for example, by positioning community care as a form of wellness. 'I wish I saw people making an effort in practising mutual aid like they practise yoga – on a regular basis and with the desire to make a change,' Lenéa Sims, energy coach and founder of **Inner Play**, tells **Well+Good**. Similarly fed up with social media's optimisation rhetoric, Sara Weinreb launched **IMBY**, an anti-capitalist community centre that allows people to nourish one another online.



Louis Vuitton Men's spring/summer 2022 digital campaign

Wealth Squads

It's not just cryptocurrency that will upend the way we earn and spend money. Web3 innovators are also experimenting with the shared mechanisms of DAOs to disrupt the banking sector.

In future, research organisation **Other Internet** believes we won't necessarily interact with money as individuals but as collective 'squads'. Whether between housemates or **Discord** friends, the article demonstrates how such squads 'allow social currency and financial capital

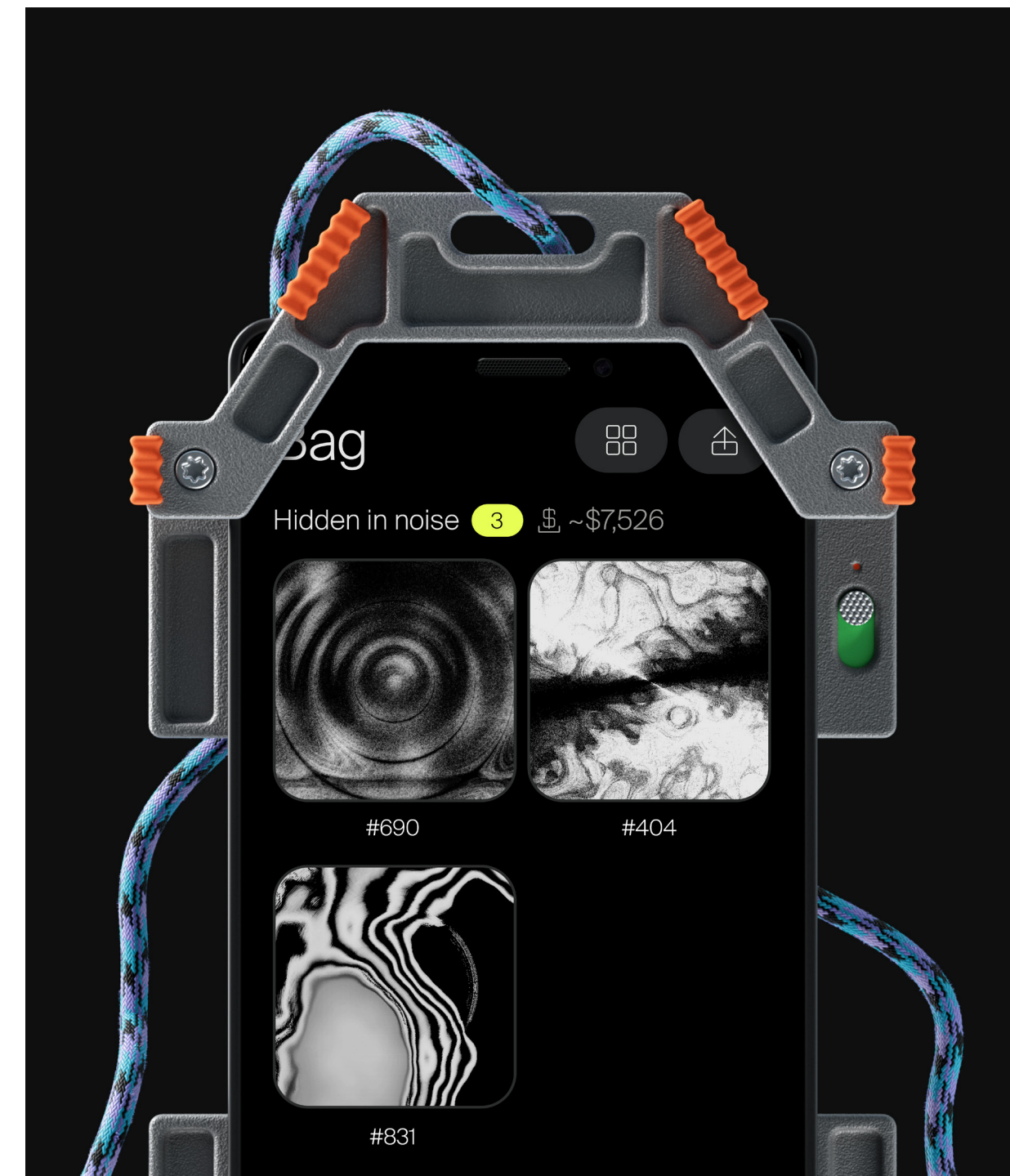
to inter-convert, creating opportunities and group resilience that would have been impossible to achieve alone'.

In practice, this means groups of people can club together to buy something they normally could not afford. This is the concept behind **PartyBid**, an app enabling squads to combine their capital and purchase NFTs together. It not only normalises fractionalised ownership but hints at a future in which we roam the wider web in teams, much like we do in games.

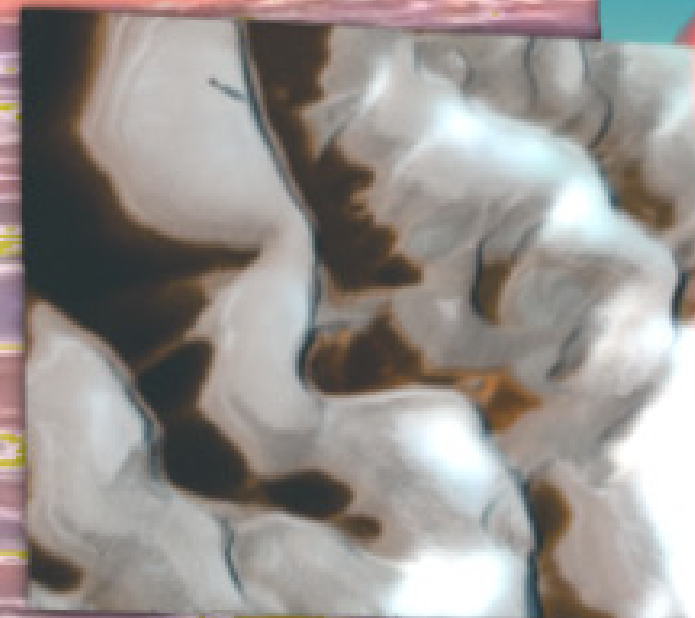
The concept of co-building wealth can also aid societal problems such as the housing crisis. Using blockchain technology to empower the working classes and turn one million families into first-time home-owners, **Commonlands** is building the world's first autonomous housing cooperative: 'If we applied the best aspects of DAOs to co-ops, we could create a scalable solution to meet community housing needs and massively transform home-ownership for low-income families who face economic barriers to home-ownership.'

'Let's match community-focused behaviour with community-focused ownership'

Nathan Schneider, professor of media, University of Colorado Boulder



Surreal is a mobile app that makes it easy to track and use your NFT loot across wallets and chains that you care about



‘The informal nature of peer-to-peer institutions, often composed of neighbours and friends, reveals the central role that trust plays in squad logic’

The Ownership Anarchist: Nathan Schneider

Having written books on cooperative enterprises, the Occupy movement and God, Nathan Schneider is an expert on how to create united economies that are free from monopolies and exploitation.

The associate professor of media studies has been working to sharpen his Exit to Community model, which investigates ways for startups to transition from investor-ownership to community-ownership. Building out the accompanying **Metagovernance Project**, Schneider is hoping to 'replace the stakeholders who are only owning the business for financial gain, with those who are participants in it, with a broader set of values and interests.'



This Is Not the Horizon by **Anne-Iris Espinat Dief** is an installation that encourages less powerful people to speak as much as they listen, and for the more powerful to listen as much as they speak, The Netherlands

Unbound Brands

As leaders wake up to the vital role communities play in their businesses' success, the most forward-thinking will unravel their brands entirely and be run by their consumers as opposed to a central presence.

While this movement began in the youth and media industries, decentralisation is becoming a less intimidating proposition. After all, as media professor Nathan Schenider argues, brands have been, perhaps superficially, presenting as community-centric for years. 'Let's match community-focused behaviour with community-focused ownership, so that it's all the more powerful,' he tells LS:N Global.

This model, shifting ownership away from a CEO and towards peripheries, is a major change in how we run organisations. But cooperatives such as freelancer network **Braintrust** are demonstrating how tokens can be a straightforward way of incentivising participation while benefiting the brand. Members equally make key business decisions, including the amount of commission fees taken by Braintrust, and negotiate benefits for freelancers, such as insurance.

In Schneider's larger **Exit to Community** mission, he proposes that the end goal for start-ups should not be acquisition but a self-functioning community, like the one built by Braintrust. To achieve this, user-friendly voting tools are essential for empowering people to make decisions. That's the idea behind **Modpol**, a voting tool that mimics metaverse spaces. 'Participating is exhausting,' he explains. 'How do we design tools that create that avenue of participation, but don't overwhelm us with it?'

Foresight

As collectivism becomes a fundamental principle of the 2030s, citizens will co-exist with brands, families and Web3 communities in new ways.

Egoless Marketing

As individualism becomes less prominent among consumers, brands will follow suit and retire their larger-than-life egos. Many will choose to opt out of insincere self-marketing altogether – encouraged by the culture of post-purpose set to infiltrate the 2030s – and become amplifiers of social justice movements instead.

Today, 53% of people around the world say they are willing to pay more for a brand that takes a stand, according to **Havas'** 2021 **Meaningful Brands** study. In future, consumers will expect brands to act as blank canvasses for more important causes and communities.

Demonstrating how this can be taken literally is **Casa Lumbre**, a Mexican American spirits company using blank labelling as a space to uplift community initiatives. With a vodka called **The Community Spirit**, **Wieden + Kennedy** was tasked with utilising the typically forgotten marketing channel that is packaging to 'redirect marketing dollars' to other causes. 'Designing something intended to highlight causes and communities is a tightrope to walk because it's so easy to come off as feeling exploitative and disingenuous,' says design director Julian Flood. 'At the end of the day we're selling vodka, and we wanted to be honest about that.'



The Community Spirit by Wieden + Kennedy for Casa Lumbre, Mexico



Non-demographic Futures

Since the 20th century, market researchers, designers and advertising agencies have been using the binaries of consumer demographics – and the hyper-specific behaviours and habits associated with them – to market products and services.

But as collectivism begins to take hold, and citizens sharpen their understanding of themselves as members of wider, more complex groups as opposed to consumer types, such false dichotomies will no longer be relevant.

This could mean entire generational labels are phased out. In 2021, hundreds of science researchers signed an open letter urging **Pew Research Center** to dissolve its use of generational terms, such as Baby Boomers and Gen Z, arguing that these create stereotypes that ultimately shape people's behaviours. The movement is headed by sociologist Philip Cohen, who writes for **The Washington Post**: 'People experience history differently based on their backgrounds... So throwing everyone together by year of birth often misses all the glorious conflict and complexity in social change.' As a result, Pew is in a period of reflection.

Creative research lab **IAM** predicts the design world will adapt too. In a recent manifesto, co-founders Lucy Black-Swan and Andres Colmenares called for 'design for plurality', which they described as 'designing against the polarisation of societies by dissolving the binarism of us vs. them'. It's an idea that, in practice, could use design to ease our reliance on lazy segregations, from gender to political leaning.



Station, Global

Everyman Internet

One of the problems with Web3, and the plethora of terms it encompasses, is how steeped in jargon it is. If these spaces remain opaque and unwelcoming to outsiders, it will take longer to make the shift to decentralised forms of community.

Tina He, one of the co-founders of Web3 onboarding platform **Station**, likens this transitional period to the 1990s, when people entered the workforce with little understanding of how to

use a computer: ‘Similar things will happen with Web3; if you are not as fluent in using these economic opportunities that are enabled by crypto, you may feel disadvantaged.’

To help people make the plunge into the world of DAOs, NFTs and the metaverse, it won't only be educational programs like Station multiplying, but also channels that offer brands a seamless entry to the Alternet, like Web3 consultancy **Parachute**.

What's more, changes in the language surrounding this space are necessary to achieving wider adoption. **Syndicate** is a DAO services start-up that has launched a new product, **Web3 Investment Clubs**, which essentially uses Wealth Squads to allow up to 99 people to pool their funds. Alongside its step-by-step guides, the club's branding and use of traditional terms like ‘investments’ represent its mission to demystify DAOs for a larger group of users.



Wooyoungmi spring/summer 2022 campaign juxtaposes Parisian romanticism with technological engineering, France

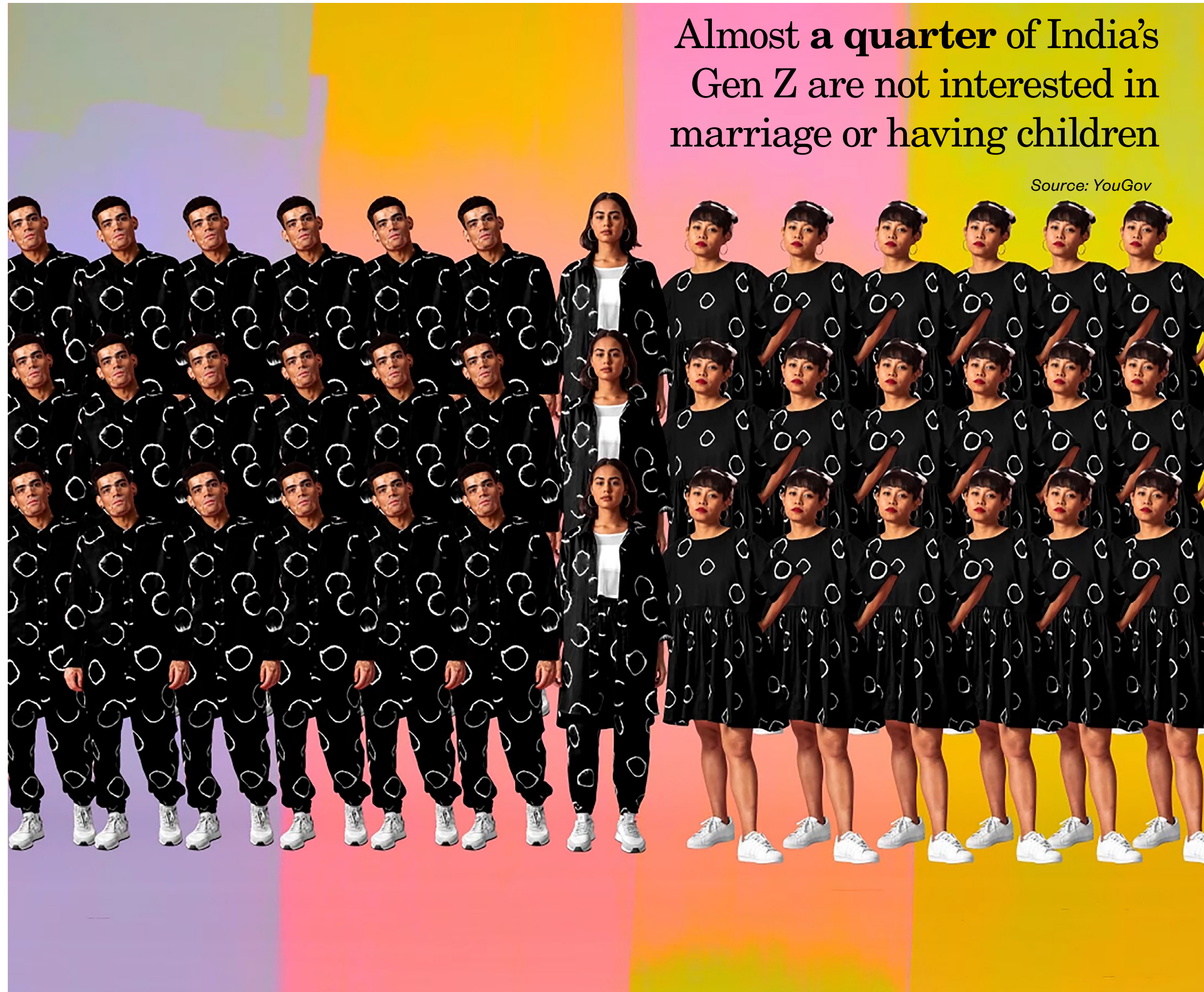
Post-family Kinship

As we become better neighbours, community members and even strangers, the family could lose its position as the dominant emotional structure. Drawing from LGBTQ+ and Indigenous cultures, the concept of the chosen family will allow us to look after one another while reducing our reliance on ancestry.

Already, the nuclear family – and the natural care systems it produces – are being ruptured. Children and spouses were traditionally leant on to support ageing relatives, but with **YouGov** finding that 23% of India's Gen Z are not interested in marriage or having children, and **The New York Times** revealing that older couples are opting for living apart together (LAT) relationships to avoid full-time care-giving, the need for non-familial care will become ever-more pressing.

Such alternatives could be based on currency systems, providing a source of income for those affected by the forthcoming recession. In Japan, a country where over-65s make up a record 29.1% of the population, Fureai Kippu, or 'caring relationship tickets', act as a credit currency to encourage intergenerational care work (source: **Internal Affairs Ministry**).

If we do indeed become rewarded for acts of empathy, this could invoke a broader definition of care to include everything from erotic needs to raising children. This is something **ME O'Brien**, a trans communist writer, is calling for: 'In place of the coercive system of atomised family units, the abolition of the family would generalise what we now call care.'



Strategic Implications

The shift from individualism to collectivism is challenging brands, particularly in the West, to prioritise community facilitation over corporate innovation.

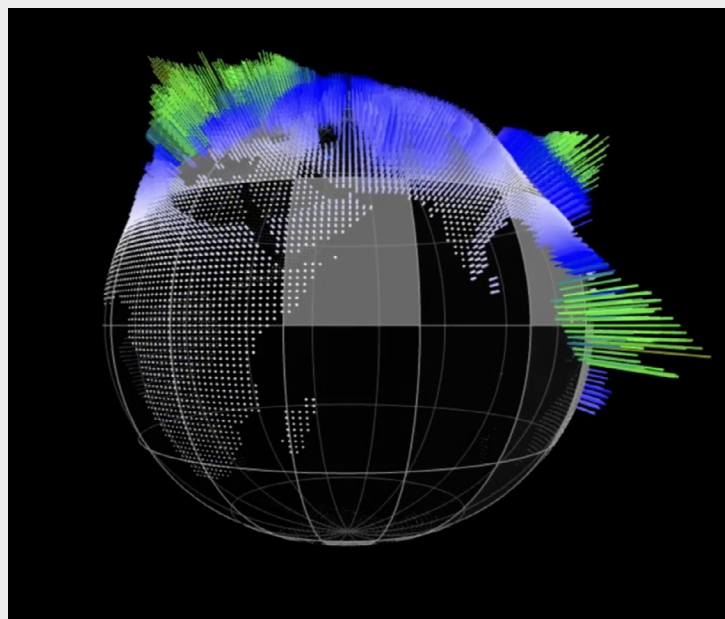


Strategic Actions

To engage with growing consumer communities rather than just individuals, these are the actions brands will need to take to navigate a neo-collective future.

Facilitate stakeholder collectivism

People are seeking an active stake in the brands they engage with, and expect businesses to prioritise the needs and growth of the community over financial growth aimed at the C-suite. Re-examine the hierarchy of your business and instead of paying lip service to your community through marketing initiatives, shift tangible power and control to the collective to share in ownership and brand direction.



Global Sequencer by Yuri Suzuki

Offer fractionalised goods and services

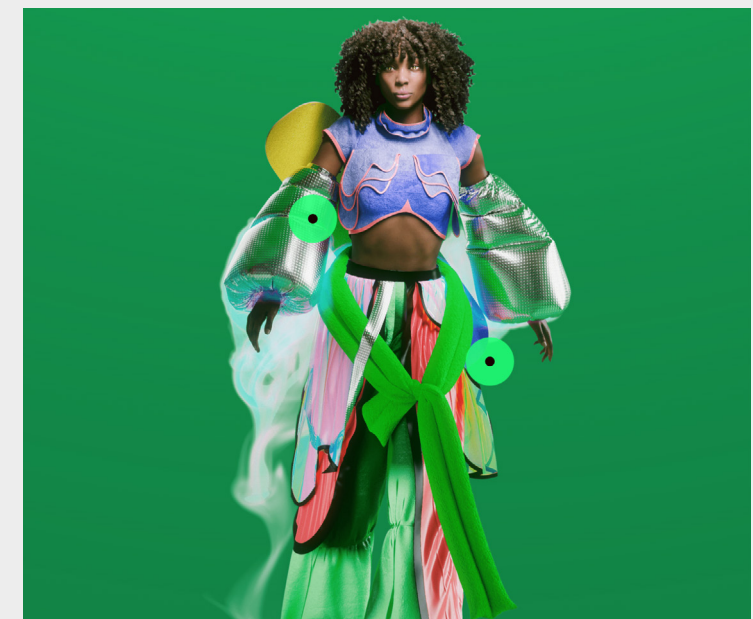
Groups of consumers are self-assembling around shared financial and cultural values, rejecting individualist systems on their journey to becoming better neighbours and communities. To support them, create opportunities within your business using fractionalised shares and cooperative finance models, allowing collectives of people to access high-value goods and services that would typically be impossible to achieve alone.



Lick Click Bite Spit by Bianca Schick, The Netherlands

Align with niche consumer values

Rather than binary consumer demographics that perpetuate irrelevant stereotypes, people are defining themselves by their collective attitudes and values, and are uniting through these across borderless networks. Ensure that your own brand values are aligned with the collective and determine the direction in which your business is going. Don't be afraid to be niche, authentic and real to resonate with a community.



Coming Out To A New World by Squarespace

Thought-starters

For brands to embrace a neo-collectivist future, they will need to make community the foundation for their business decisions and progress, removing central power structures and inauthentic intentions.

Consumer: Swap consumption for coordination

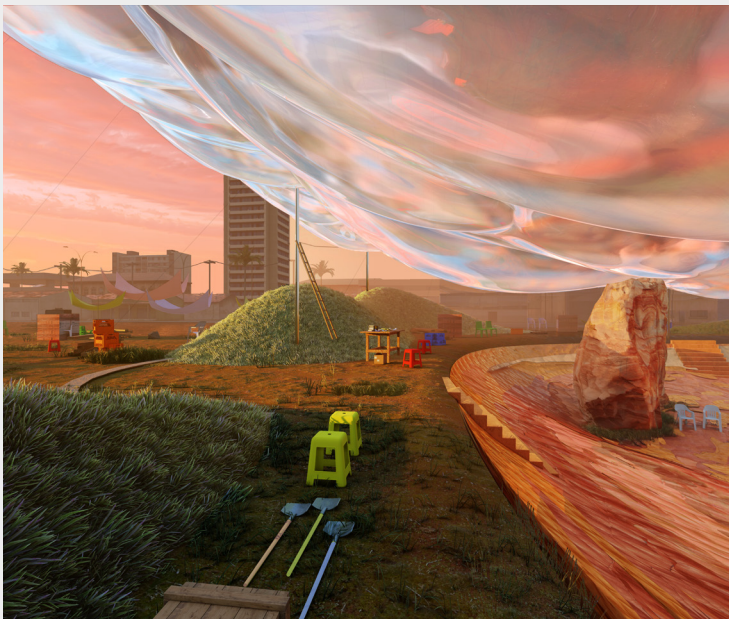
With the rise of people-powered networks and wealth squads, people are motivated by the benefits of collaborating and being part of a self-sufficient community. How do the ways in which you show up as a brand – whether that’s your store, marketing strategy, product or service – actively benefit and bring value to the broader community and culture?



Deem magazine

Culture: Advocate for community agendas

Collectivism has historically been integral to many global societies such as Indonesia and China, but the emergence of Web3 and new technology is changing the way in which it is assembled. How can your brand’s marketing and messaging account for the cultural nuances of collectivism, and amplify an individual community’s agenda rather than appropriating or pushing your own motives?



La Sagrada Familia by Matthew Avallone

Business: Promote civic collectivism

In this emerging future, the brands to which consumers collectively direct their spending will be expected to participate in positive societal progress. Rather than establishing values as an organisation, consider the values of the community who make up your business. What role can you play in driving collective progress and leaving society in a better state than you found it?



Caroline MacKintosh and Gavin Mikey Collins for Document Journal

Related Macrotrends

New Bricolage Living

In 2015, our sense of identity began to fracture. As globalisation broke down borders, it also challenged the very notion of selfhood, allowing rootless individuals to engage with new nationalities and learn about collective ways of thinking.



Kenzo spring/summer 2015 campaign by Toilettepaper

Post-growth Society

Three years later, the focus shifted from individual change to societal change. People questioned capitalism with increased intensity, prompting brands and governments to explore slower, more sustainable metrics of growth.



Let it Grow by Thomas Traum

Community Commerce

It wasn't long before the retail sector responded to this push-back against conglomerates, creating dynamic channels for peer-to-peer retail in which co-creation and micro-communities reigned.



Zalando sneakers autumn/winter 2019 by Superimpose

Alternet Economies

The decentralised models of Community Commerce truly came to the fore last year, in line with the formation of a new internet – Web3. It's in this virtual new economy that collective ownership will thrive.



Dell XPS Youniverse by MPC and VMLY&R

Strategic Worksheets

These strategic worksheets are to help you apply this macrotrend to your business.



Prioritisation

Consider the following:

Which human need is most relevant to your brand/business?

- Attainment
- Belonging
- Curiosity
- Identity
- Purpose
- Security
- Fulfilment

Which driver will have the most impact on your brand/business?

- Urban Mindset
- Dislocated World
- Accelerating Technologies
- Evolving Demographics
- Climate Change & Resource Scarcity
- Global vs Local



Influence

Consider the following:

How will this trend affect how you fulfil that need?

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What impact could these drivers have on the business?

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Select two insights that feel most relevant to your brand/business:

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How do these insights align with your brand’s trajectory?

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How could you apply these insights to your business?

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Which foresight scenario is your company least prepared for?

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What is most surprising about this foresight scenario?

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Consider how this macrotrend could affect the following pillars of your brand:



01 Culture

What cultural conversations are emerging and who are the tastemakers?

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How do we add value to culture?

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What will our consumers pay more for in the future?

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02 Category

What’s our greatest opportunity?

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How is the competition evolving?

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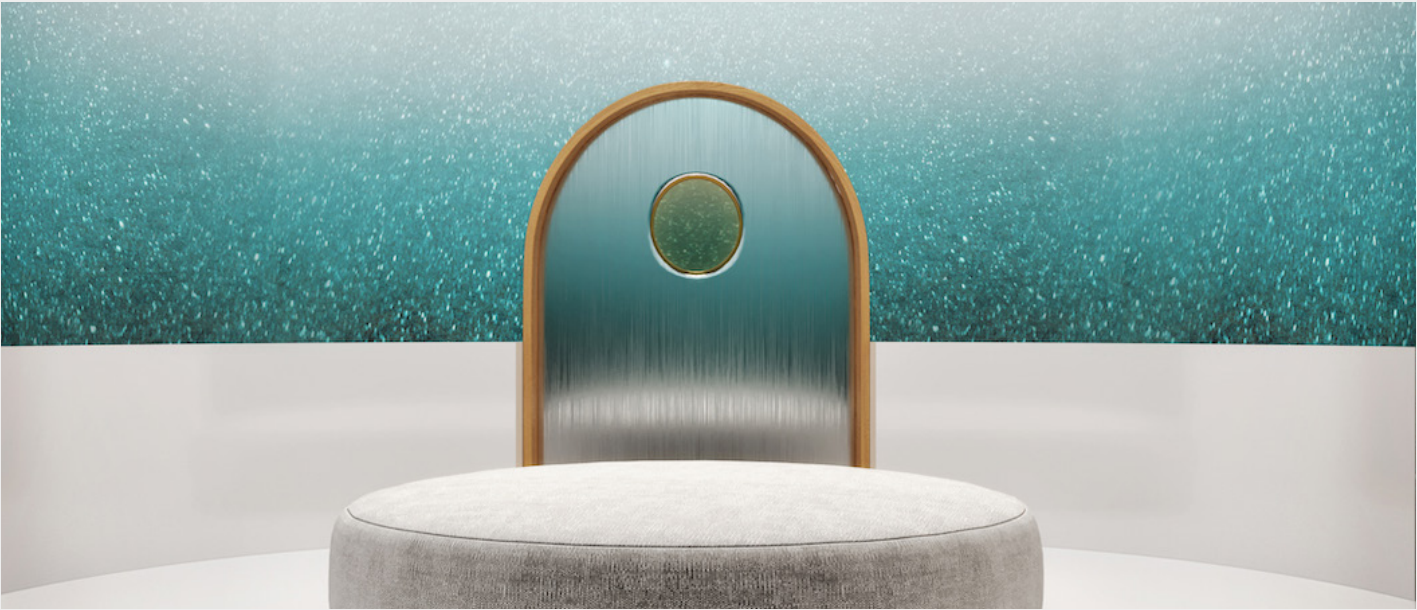
How can we differentiate?

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Consider how this macrotrend could affect the following pillars of your brand:



03 Consumer

What’s our greatest opportunity?

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How is the competition evolving?

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How can we differentiate?

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04 Business

What are our biggest challenges?

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What part of the value chain will add the most and least value?

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What are the strengths of the brand in this future?

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Planning

YEAR 1

Over the next 12 months, how will this
macrotrend affect your team?

YEAR 2

In three years, how will this macrotrend change the brand?

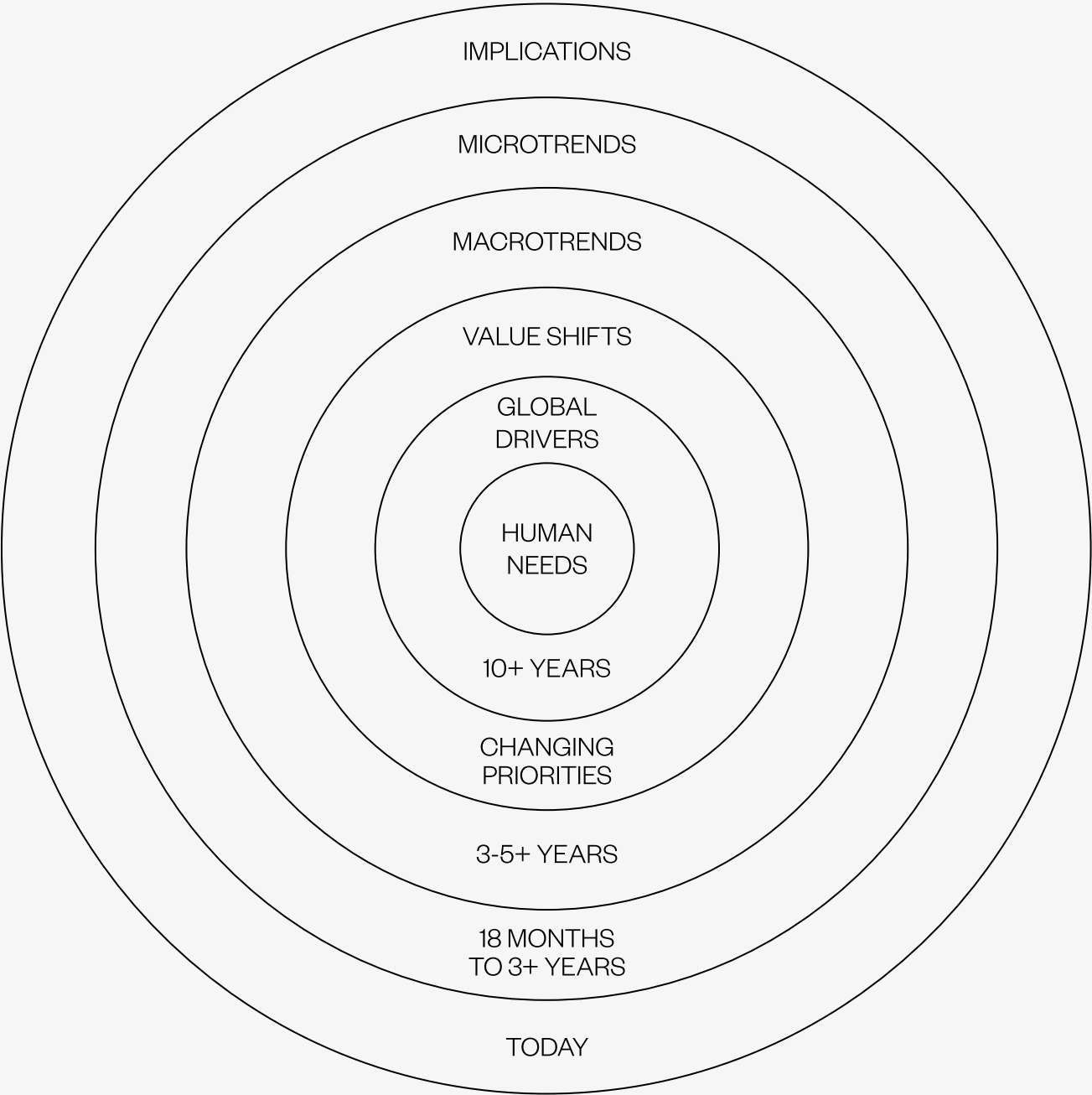
YEAR 3

In five years, how will this macrotrend change the business?

Methodology

The Future Laboratory's unique proprietary methodology allows us to track, monitor and determine the key drivers of change affecting future consumers, culture and business. Here is how we identify our trends.





Introduction

Strategic foresight is the most valuable tool you can adopt to identify future prosperity. Despite our reputation for getting it right, we can’t predict the future. There is no crystal ball.

However, our methodology enables clients to interpret and frame all their decisions about future risk within a brand, consumer or organisational context that is provable, practical and minimises uncertainty.

We do this by understanding the influence of six global drivers causing profound, consistent – and therefore relatively predictable – change.

Their impact is assessed against seven core human needs and the ensuing value shifts that change consumers’ attitudes and behaviours.

This leads us to identify emerging macrorends and microrends, and ascertain what their implications are for the future landscape.

Futures Taxonomy

At the heart of The Future Laboratory is a taxonomy that our teams have used since the millennium to shape the strategic thinking and foresight capabilities of FTSE 100, Fortune 500 businesses, and progressive brands and disruptors.

We use this methodology to map, monitor and interrogate the future. It serves as the foundation for everything we do as a business, and is based on six layers of hindsight, insight and foresight:

1 Human Needs

Static and universal needs, based on a value system that supports human nature's physical and emotional programming

2 Global Drivers

The shifting social, technological, economic, environmental and political landscape reshaping the world we live in, affecting everyone and everything

3 Value Shifts

Consumers' changing attitudes and behaviour – a reaction to their contemporary context

4 Macrotrends

The cultural manifestations of new and emerging attitudes worldwide

5 Microtrends

Influential short-term signals indicated by innovation

6 Implications

Future implications for brand and business growth



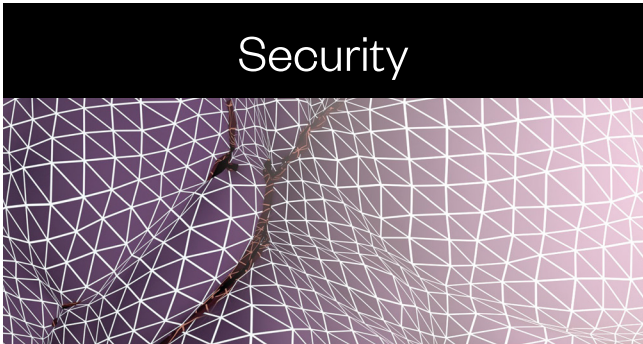
The Seven Human Needs

The seven human needs are timeless and universal. Based on a value system that supports human nature's physical and emotional programming, each human need is of importance to us as individuals and together they form the foundation of society as well as that of our methodology:

Why they matter:

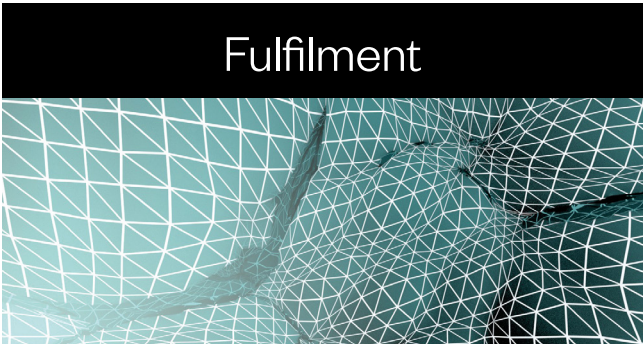
Every day consumers make decisions based on what they feel and believe is most important. By aligning our research with these static needs, businesses gain a deeper understanding of how the needs of early adopter consumers will translate into product and service needs as their values shift with the global drivers.

The Seven Human Needs



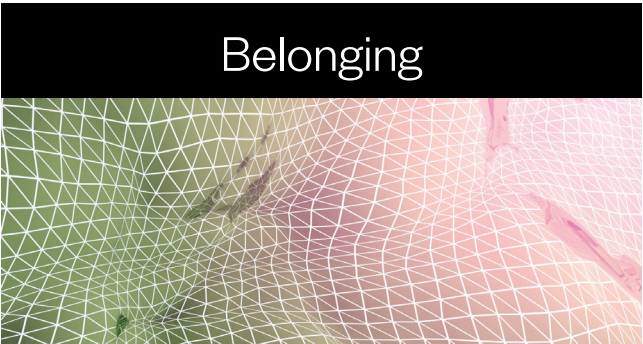
At the core of humanity is a fundamental need for structure, control, certainty and stability. It is a basic human survival instinct to protect ourselves and our loved ones from perceived physical, emotional and economic threats

KEY ELEMENTS
Finance, Health, Food, Shelter, Employment, Safety, Environment, Wifi



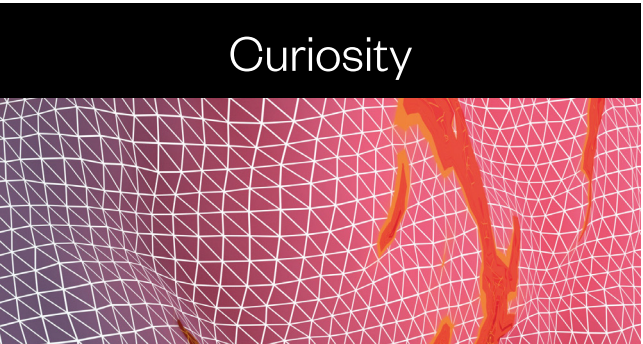
There is a human desire to direct our own lives, to create forms of freedom and to find deeper meaning and balance in life. It is the psychological need to fully realise our personal potential with the resulting feeling of satisfaction

KEY ELEMENTS
Wellness, Spirituality, Love, Emotions, Self-esteem, Beauty



It is a social need to be physically connected to a group of like-minded people. We have an emotional urge, on an individual level, to create support systems and relationships that provide us with acceptance and approval

KEY ELEMENTS
Nationalism, Tribalism, Roots, Conviviality, History, Culture



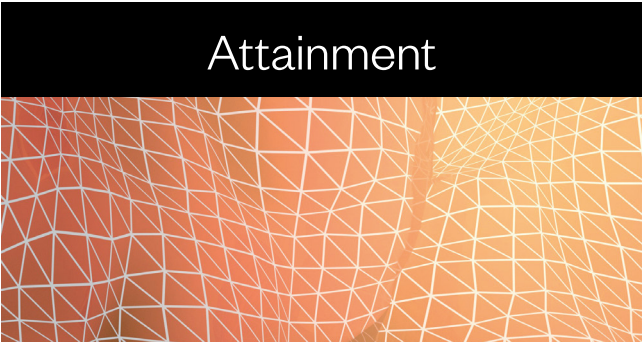
To both create and co-create makes us push the boundaries of what is ultimately humanly possible. Our in-built intuition makes us inquisitive beings with a shared inclination to discover or challenge the norm

KEY ELEMENTS
Exploration, Education, Connoisseurship, Discernment



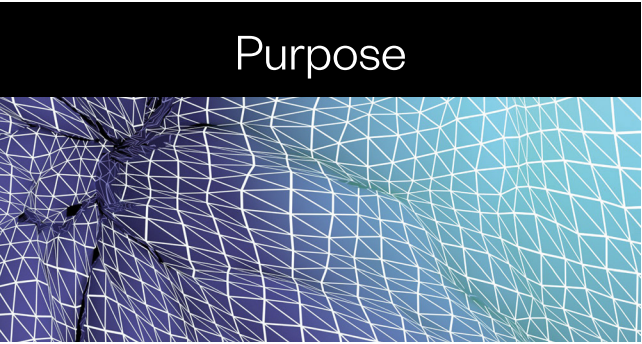
We have a need to distinguish our character or personality from others and to feel unique and respected for who we are. We build our sense of who we are through a personal exploration of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and age

KEY ELEMENTS
Gender, Age, Ethnicity, Religion, Nationality, Self-image, Language, Collectivism, Morals



All human beings need to feel respected and recognised among their peers, which drives the desire to constantly express our significance and success, our knowledge and tastes, with our achievements often reinforced through the acquisition of symbolic goods

KEY ELEMENTS
Knowledge, Taste, Work, Respect, Prestige, Connoisseurship, Ownership



It is in the interests of the human species for all of us to contribute, participate and add collective value to progress. Each day we plan for a better tomorrow, aligning our passions with our purpose to grow and achieve collective betterment

KEY ELEMENTS
Meaning, Ethics, Mastery, Learning, Collectivity, Sustainability, History, Culture

The Six Global Drivers

Global drivers represent the cultural, social, economic, political, technological and environmental eventualities reshaping the world we live in. They are factual, objective and long-term structural forces that are pervasive, powerful and transformative.

Why they matter: What's next

These are the fundamental shifts or external forces that have the potential to reshape the future trajectory of a brand or business. They help to contextualise decision-making by considering why and how the world is being reshaped. They enable clients to rethink what kind of world consumers will live in and therefore what will drive the businesses of tomorrow.



The Six Global Drivers



The digital and offline worlds are converging. For millions of people around the world, living a day without technology is almost unthinkable. On the cusp of a Fourth Industrial Revolution, new technologies are fusing the physical, digital and biological worlds, creating new data streams and altering the way society operates.



Climate change is the biggest global risk, according to the World Economic Forum. The stresses and conflicts created by this force have far-reaching impacts for our planet, resulting in eco-system degradation, more frequent and harsher weather patterns, competition for resources and new migratory flows.



The Covid-19 pandemic unearthed pervasive inequalities and divisions on a global scale. People are experiencing unprecedented turbulence as political instability and extremism, polarisation between rich and poor, new health epidemics, global trade wars and rapid technological advances contribute to economic and social upheaval.



Today's interconnected world, in which goods, services, information and culture are rapidly spread, instantly creates an impact in one global region that has a knock-on effect on others. Simultaneously, supply chain shocks, sustainability concerns and economic protectionism are leading to localism being prioritised across many regions.



In the next decade, a number of forces will begin to change the global population, contributing to major social and cultural shifts that will affect how we measure and use traditional demographics – including ethnicity, gender, sexuality and age. From new household models to more fluid forms of identity, these shifts will transform our cultural values and day-to-day lives.



In the past four decades, the number of people living in cities has more than doubled to over 4bn today, more than half the world's population (source: Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania). The Covid-19 pandemic revived anti-urban sentiments, but the broader global trend of rapid urbanisation continues.

The Value Shifts

We know that our needs are prioritised, expressed and pursued differently as time, culture and social requirements change.

The evolving forces sitting above these needs are changing our value expectations, transforming our aspirations and priorities, and beginning to reveal the role, the purpose and the direction that brands and businesses can take as they move towards 2030.

Identifying how societies and culture are changing provides the sociocultural context for our macrotrends.

Why they matter: What to plan for

As consumer values shift from year to year, we track their evolution through the lens of our global drivers and human needs to help businesses stay ahead of the cultural curve and understand the trajectory of the trends they have invested in or should be investing in.



Macrotrends

We can identify future macrotrends by studying the behaviours of innovators and early adopters who signal the cultural manifestations of new and emerging attitudes globally.

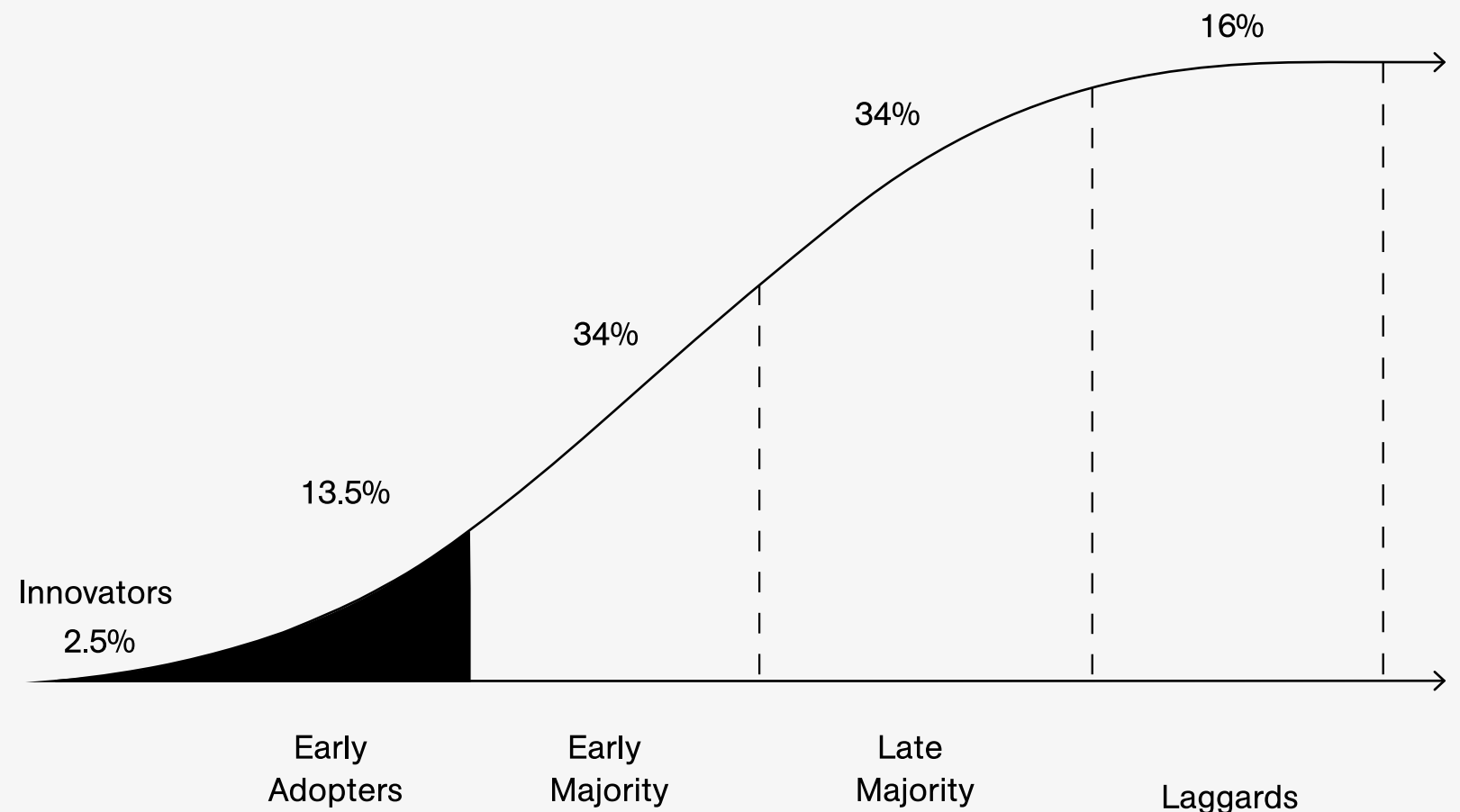
Why they matter: Where to play

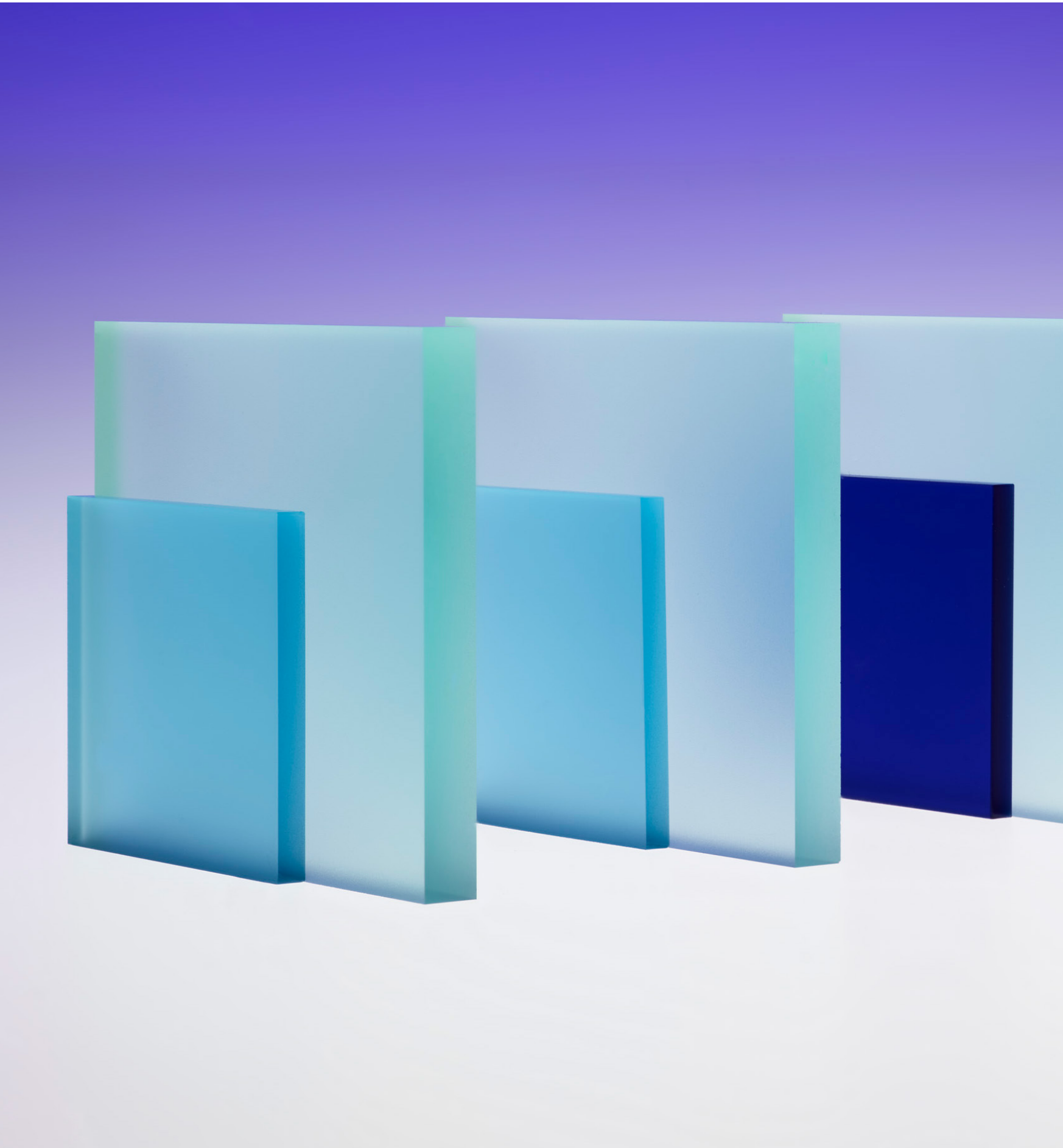
To understand revenue-driving early and late majority consumers, we focus on innovators and early adopters who determine today what the rest of us will be doing tomorrow.

By understanding these consumers, we can help our clients deliver a business strategy that appeals to early adopters and the late majority – ultimately future-proofing your business

The Diffusion of Innovation curve

Seen here is a simplified version of the mapping process used by Bryce Ryan and Neal Gross to describe how an idea, innovation or product development passes from the fringes of our culture into the late majority mainstream





Microtrends

Where macrotrends chart the next 3–5 years, microtrends are tangible examples that are emerging now.

Supported by new consumer-facing innovations, microtrends are evident in new start-ups, products, services and experiences. Manifesting in the short term, microtrends emerge in local and regional variations.

Why they matter: How to win

Microtrends highlight specific shifts in consumer behaviour that change the business environment in the short term.

They enable businesses to see what's happening now across industries, regions and markets, allowing them to re-align new workstreams and help articulate a proposition from local insights.

Strategic Implications

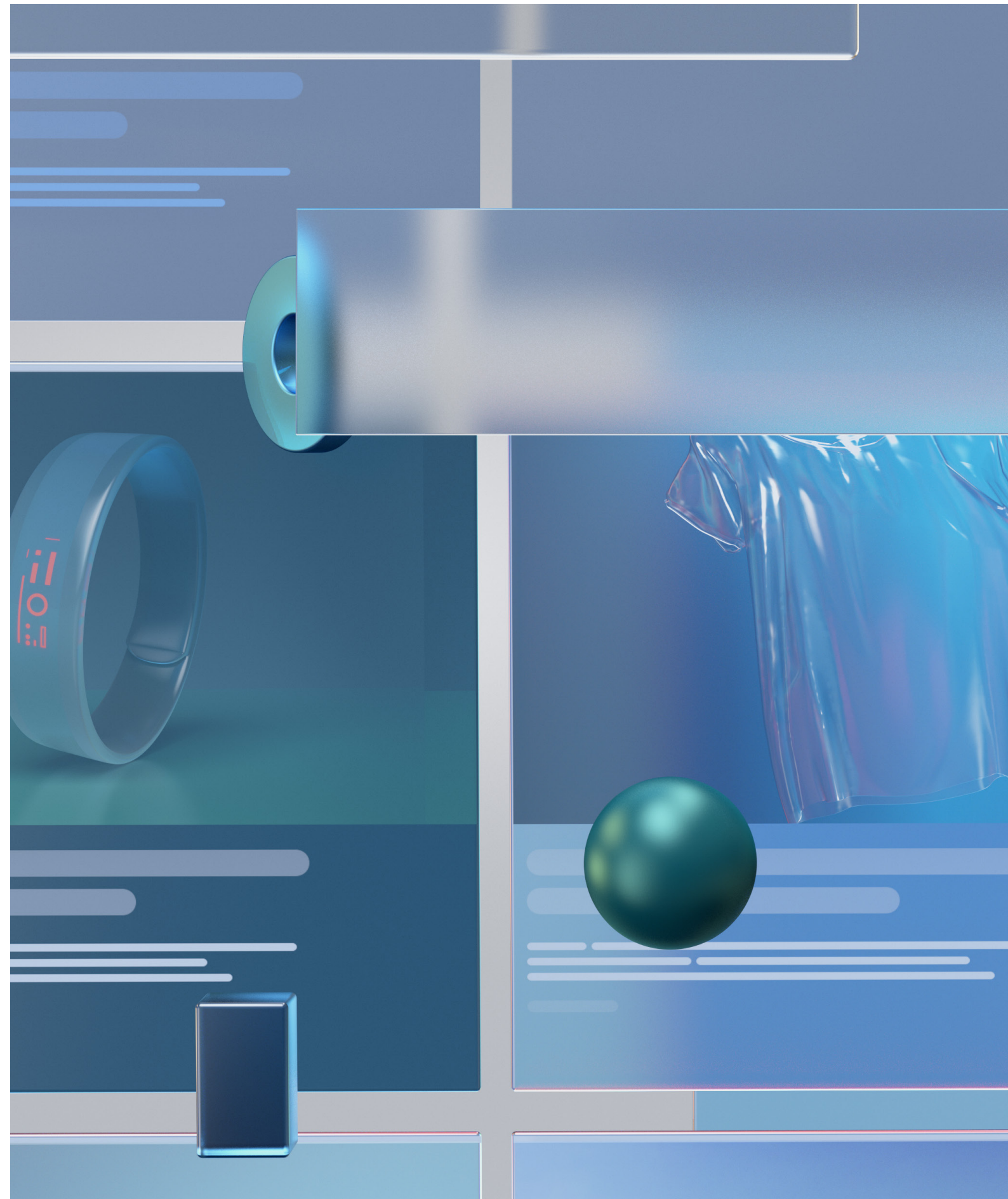
As you can see, we don't predict the future. But through Strategic Foresight we can track global shifts to understand the key drivers of change and mine the evidence of today's world to preview what the future could look like.

Our Strategic Implications enable clients to contextualise, navigate and find opportunities by highlighting how a macrotrend might affect them and refocus their outlook.

They act as recommendations to help clients discover future growth and set a series of positive actions about what they can do today to apply the trends.

Our team of strategists are always on hand to dig deeper and build a personalised Foresight Framework for you. Get in touch to understand how our human needs, global drivers and macrotrends will affect your organisation.

BOOK A STRATEGIC
CONSULTATION



Carolina Carballo for The Future Laboratory

Make a better future happen

This report is based on macrotrend research from The Future Laboratory's trends intelligence platform, **LS:N Global**.

Did you know that members get free access to all of our trend reports?

We can also deliver our research to your business in a number of ways, from **virtual presentations** to **strategic workshops** and **bespoke reports**.

If you want to find out more, say
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The Future Laboratory is one of the world's foremost strategic foresight consultancies. Members of our trends intelligence service LS:N Global get exclusive access to the mindsets defining tomorrow and the early adopters driving global change across eight industry sectors.

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