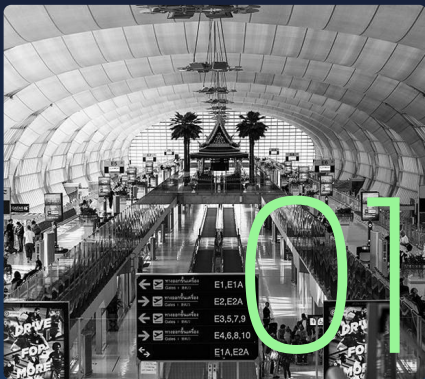


# EXPERIENCE INTELLIGENCE

BY GPJ

DECEMBER 2022

From airport runways to fashion runways and social media to social lubricants, long-unchanged experiences are undergoing societal shifts.



Airports are an unexpected launchpad for experience design



After a multi-year hiatus, designers rethink Fashion Week



Gen-Z is rethinking their relationship with alcohol



Users are taking back social media



**GEORGE P. JOHNSON**  
experience marketing

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# Airports are an unexpected launchpad for experience design

This trend was spotted by **Genny Tax** | Senior Strategist from Austin, TX

## As travelers demand more from their terminal time, brands are investing in airport experiences again

Pre-pandemic, airports were slowly but surely becoming launchpads for [innovation](#) and [brand activations](#). Now, as “[revenge travel](#)” booms, brands are returning to airports for unique and innovative marketing opportunities. [Savvy cities](#) are infusing local flavor, and [major airlines](#) are stepping up their game. [Lifestyle](#) and [entertainment](#) brands have reemerged as well, tempted by the promise of a newly-captive audience full of disposable income. With travel [exceeding pre-pandemic norms](#), opportunities to engage eager travelers throughout their journeys are proving plentiful—and valuable.

## What it Means

As the travel industry continues to thrive, airline experience design will continue to evolve and more brands will pop up in unexpected places. Travelers are hungry for new experiences and increasingly open to brands who can help relieve stress, ease boredom, or provide a moment of [luxurious escapism](#) during a moment where they are otherwise “trapped” in an unfamiliar place.

## Key Takeaway

After a period of limited traffic, airports are once again becoming locations for unique brand experiences. As travel hubs are actively redesigning for the next generation of jetsetters, there are new opportunities for companies seeking to reinvigorate their out-of-home marketing strategies.





# After a multi-year hiatus, **designers rethink Fashion Week**

This trend was spotted by **Genny Tax** | Senior Strategist from Austin, TX

## **Spring 2023 Fashion Week reflected the trials & tribulations of an industry outgrowing its elitist history**

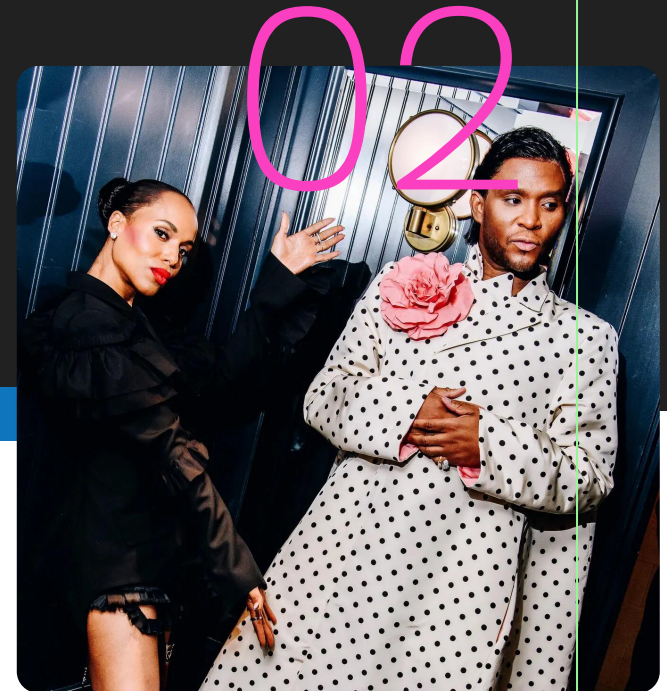
Fueled by the fire of [Gen Z's passionate belief systems](#) and the pressure to stay relevant, high fashion brands visibly grappled with themes of [diversity](#), [sustainability](#), and [inclusivity](#) at the Spring 2023 fashion weeks. The biannual spectacle, a format largely unchanged since 1973, seems to be having a bit of an identity crisis. But necessity breeds innovation, with the [most successful shows](#) pushing the envelope as they reimagine the future of the fashion industry. Designers approached all elements—[venues](#), [models](#) and [the clothes themselves](#)—from a fresh perspective.

## **What it Means**

Young creative leaders are taking the reins and turning high fashion on its head. How this trickles down to retail as a whole is still to be determined, but these fashion brands are in the business of trendsetting, so we're sure to see themes that bubbled up at Fashion Week continue to have a ripple effect on the industry.

## **Key Takeaway**

Brands finding themselves in a period of transformation can take inspiration from the fashion industry. Employing young, creative leaders with an attitude of playful experimentation and a willingness to take risks (while staying true to the DNA of your brand) can help ease the growing pains.







# Gen-Z is rethinking their **relationship with alcohol**

This trend was spotted by **Marc LeJay** | Strategist from San Francisco, CA

## **Sober-curious lifestyles are more popular among a generation redefining societal norms**

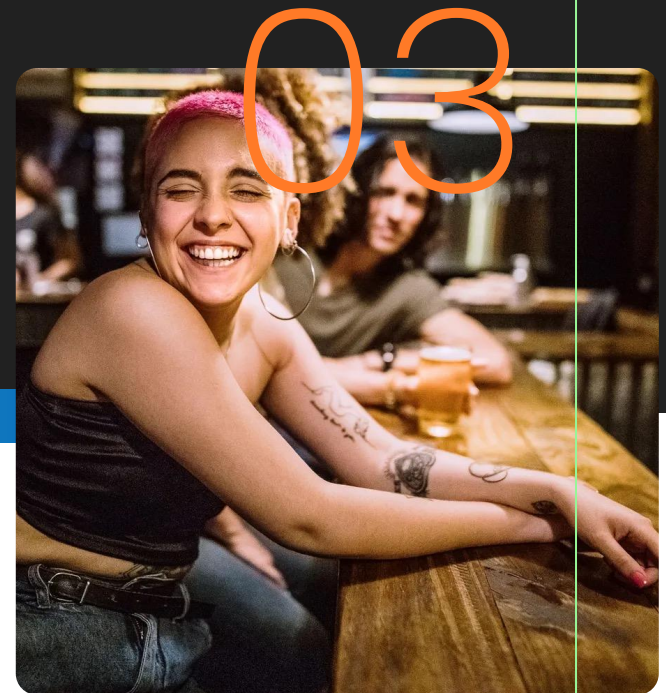
Gen-Z is challenging [society's relationship](#) with alcohol, and some are shifting towards more sober lifestyles. There's no single reason for this shift—rather a myriad of contributing factors. For example, Gen-Z was raised with a [heightened awareness of health](#), many turned 21 during the pandemic, and as they enter the workforce they're experiencing increased [costs of living](#). So, while “[sober curiosity](#)” and “[mindful drinking](#)”, may sound like buzzwords, visible evidence in the popularity of communities like [#SoberTok](#) and the [growth of the non-alcoholic beverage market](#) tells us that this isn't just a fad.

## **What it Means**

Gen Z is living more intentional lifestyles as they collectively move away from societal “norms.” More mindful approaches to alcohol allows them to explore alternatives to the status quo. Now, when they choose to consume, they have a number of options like [low to non-alcoholic drinks](#) and other legalized substances at their disposal—a luxury not as accessible to previous generations.

## **Key Takeaway**

As Gen Z acquires more purchasing power, the experiences we build should be increasingly inclusive. Sober-curiosity may be a subculture, but it's also an example of the opportunities we have to rethink how to pique Gen Z's interests with experiences that drive excitement and connection.





# Users are Taking Back Social Media

This trend was spotted by **Marc LeJay** | Strategist from San Francisco, CA

## Social media users want platforms to return to their intended purpose—being social

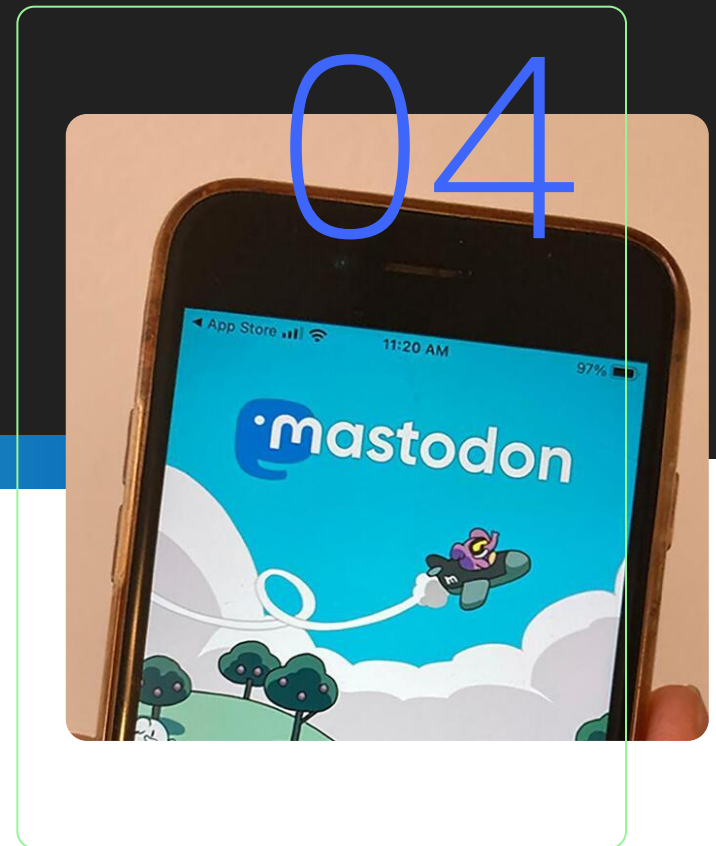
The ongoing [Twitter saga](#) and a continued [decline in Facebook users](#) are more nails in the coffin for OG social networks. FB's losing billions and Twitter advertisers are pulling out as power users tweet their goodbyes. Frustrated by social networks that prioritize [algorithms](#), data, and [profits](#), users are leaving established social giants and exploring stripped-down social networks like [Reddit](#), and the decentralized newcomer, [Mastodon](#). While reports claiming an end to social media are slightly exaggerated, we *are* witnessing an important shift away from platforms that have deprioritized their users.

## What it Means

Consumers aren't over social media – they just want it to be purposeful again. So, platforms with increasingly insufficient user experiences are only going to redirect consumer attention towards more purposeful, value-adding networks. While the social saga will continue to unfold, one thing is clear – audiences are taking back their power and taking control over the narrative.

## Key Takeaway

Humans crave the connection social media provides. But, brand loyalty only goes so far. If you aren't delivering experiences that audiences want, they'll seek alternatives elsewhere. As this trend continues to unfold, social platforms that get back to the root of user engagement will thrive.





# OUT-THERE EXPERIENCES

Brands and marketers continue to push the boundaries of physical and digital experiences, with new and creative executions popping up across the globe.



## Tumblr's Convincing Fictional Film

Tumblr users came together to nearly convince the internet that Martin Scorsese directed a completely fictional 1973 film, using fictional soundtracks, books and movie posters as evidence.



## Human Composting is the Latest Trend in Death Care

While a rebrand might be beneficial to the emerging industry, the concept of "human composting" is gaining popularity for those who wish to return to the earth after death.



## The Future of Human-Robot Relationships

Robots are being unleashed on the University of Texas campus in a new research study that aims to reveal how humans perceive and interact with automatons in public spaces.



## Generative AI is changing the way we create content

Generative AI is making a big impact on 3D WebAR content. Companies like DALL-E 2, Midjourney, and BariumAI are now making the ability to create textures much easier.