



Consumer Trends



Consumer Trends Shaping Loyalty & Engagement In Retail

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Xplore Studio | IKEA

ELISAVA

Master in Business Design

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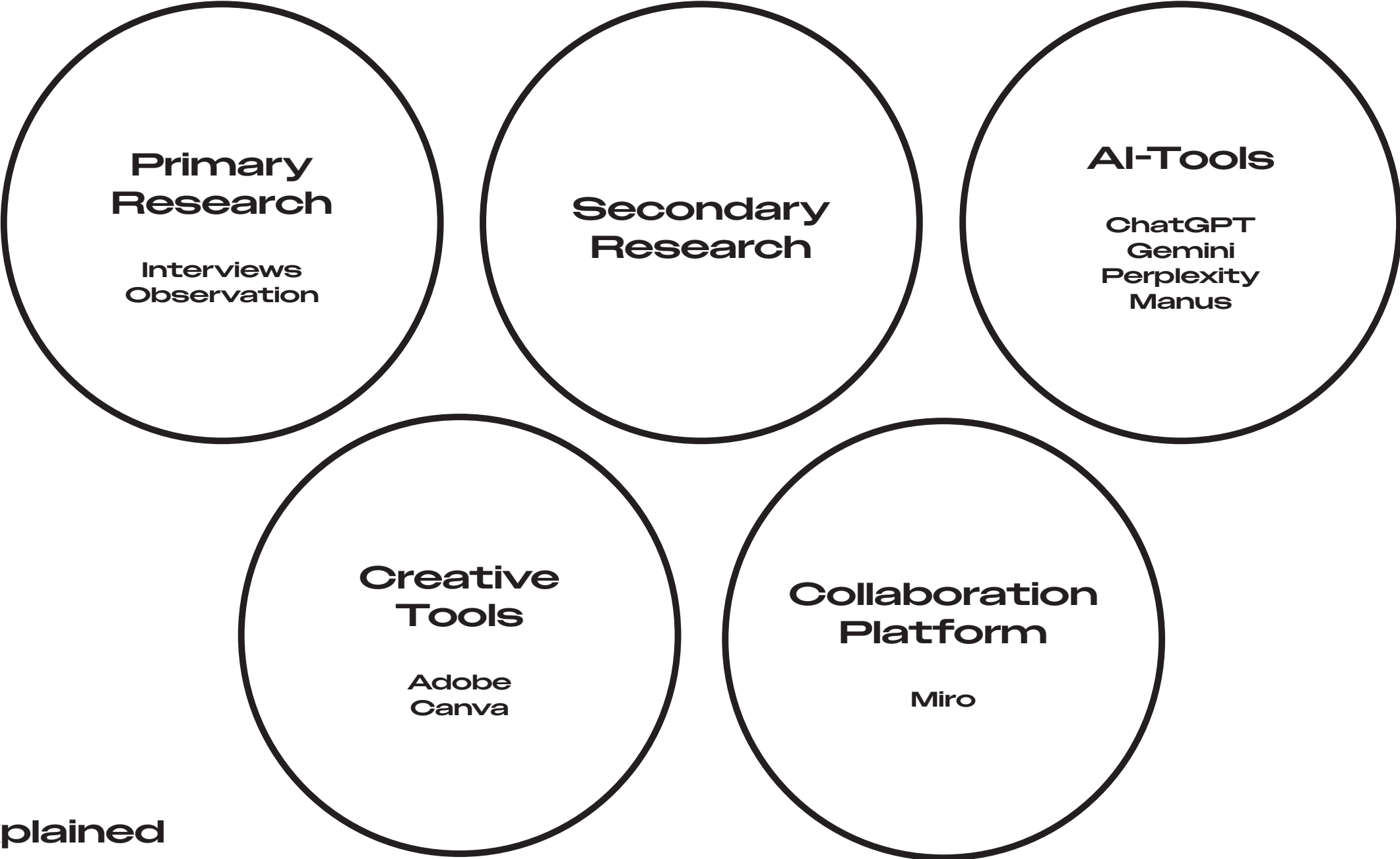


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Methodology



Use Of AI Explained

We used AI as collaborative tools for this project. The tools assisted us in accelerating the research process, analysing complex patterns, clustering our findings, and refining our writings. This collaboration allowed us to move faster with repetitive tasks and look deeper within challenging parts. While still ensuring that our own critical thinking and creativity leads all strategic conclusions and interpretations.

Xplore Studio x ELISAVA

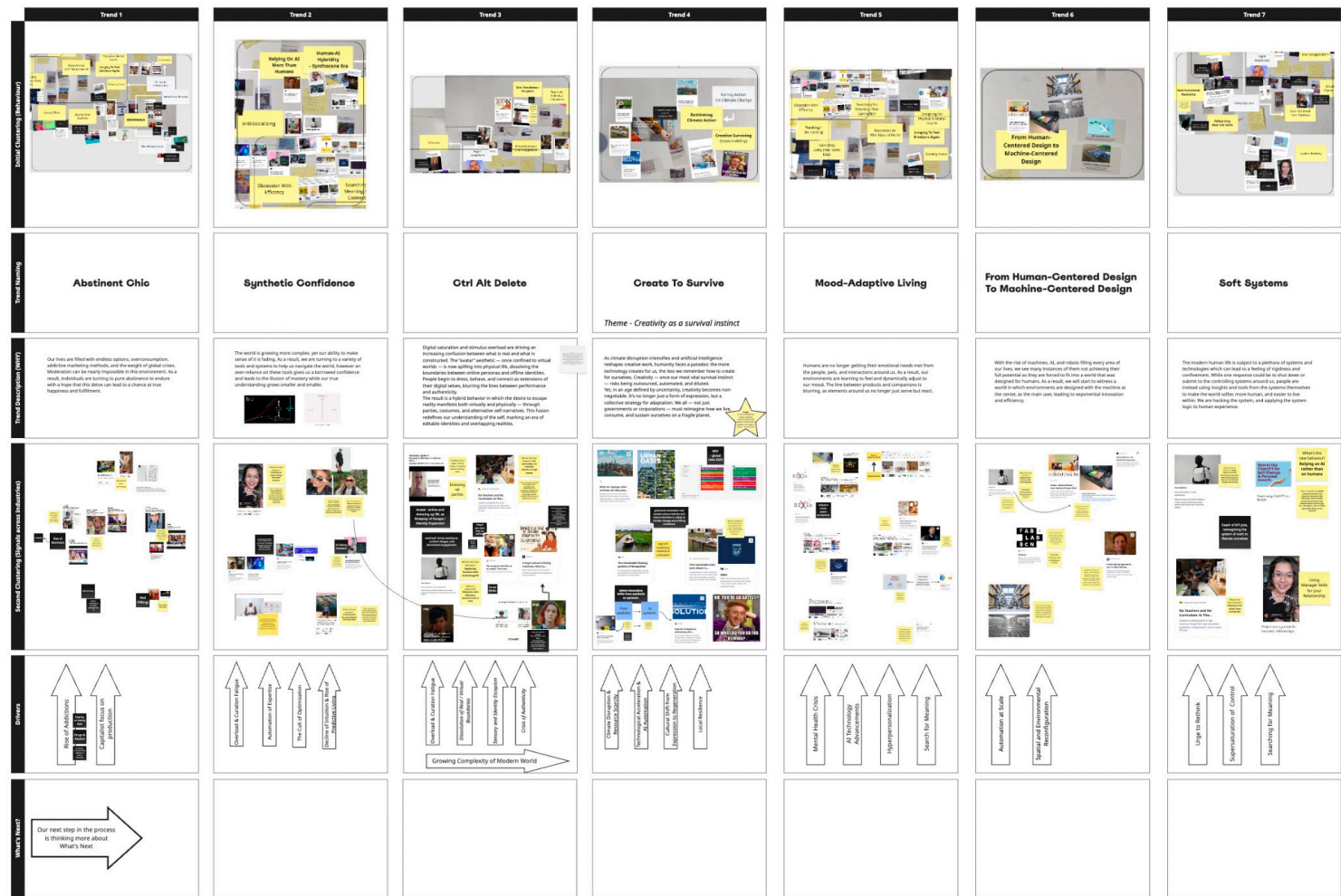


Matching Signals (Group Work)		
Signal 1 Viarte  Viarte  Viarte 	Attention / Change in Context Roan Why valuet Good values with 30 minutes Viarte Humanless Services Viarte gradually personalised	Signal 2 Anya  Roan  Viarte 
Viarte 	Viarte Functional design for Physical and Mental Health Viarte 	Viarte 
Viarte 	Viarte With AI rethinking your physical workday habits Viarte Symbiotic confidence in your physical space	Viarte 

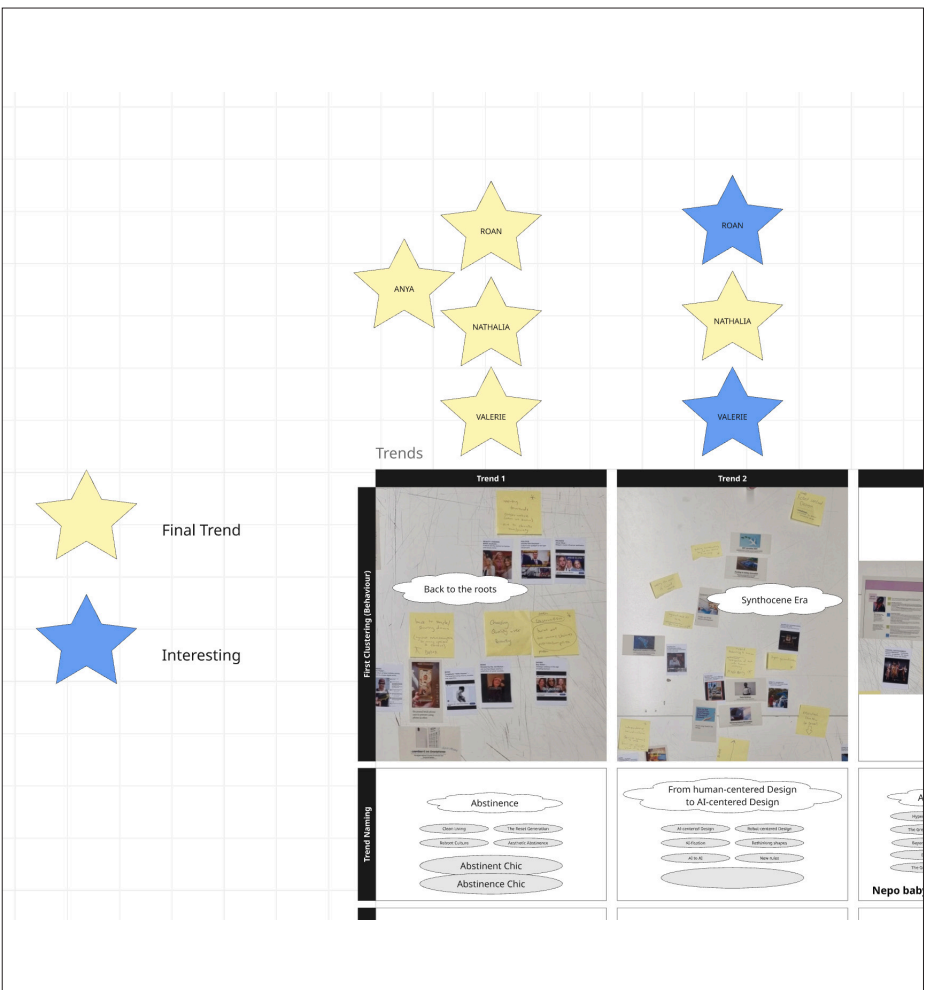
Matching Signals (Group Work)

Our process began with broad environmental scanning. Each team member gathered 20 relevant signals from different industries. We placed these on a large table and grouped them based on observed human behavior. This is how our Wall Of Evidence emerged. We digitized the clusters and added more signals. We designed a small group exercise to uncover connections that were not immediately visible. The exercise worked as follows: one team member presented signal A, a second member presented signal B, and the third member synthesized the link between them. In the end, we identified 7 initial patterns in our Wall Of Evidence.

Trend Research Process



Trends Structure

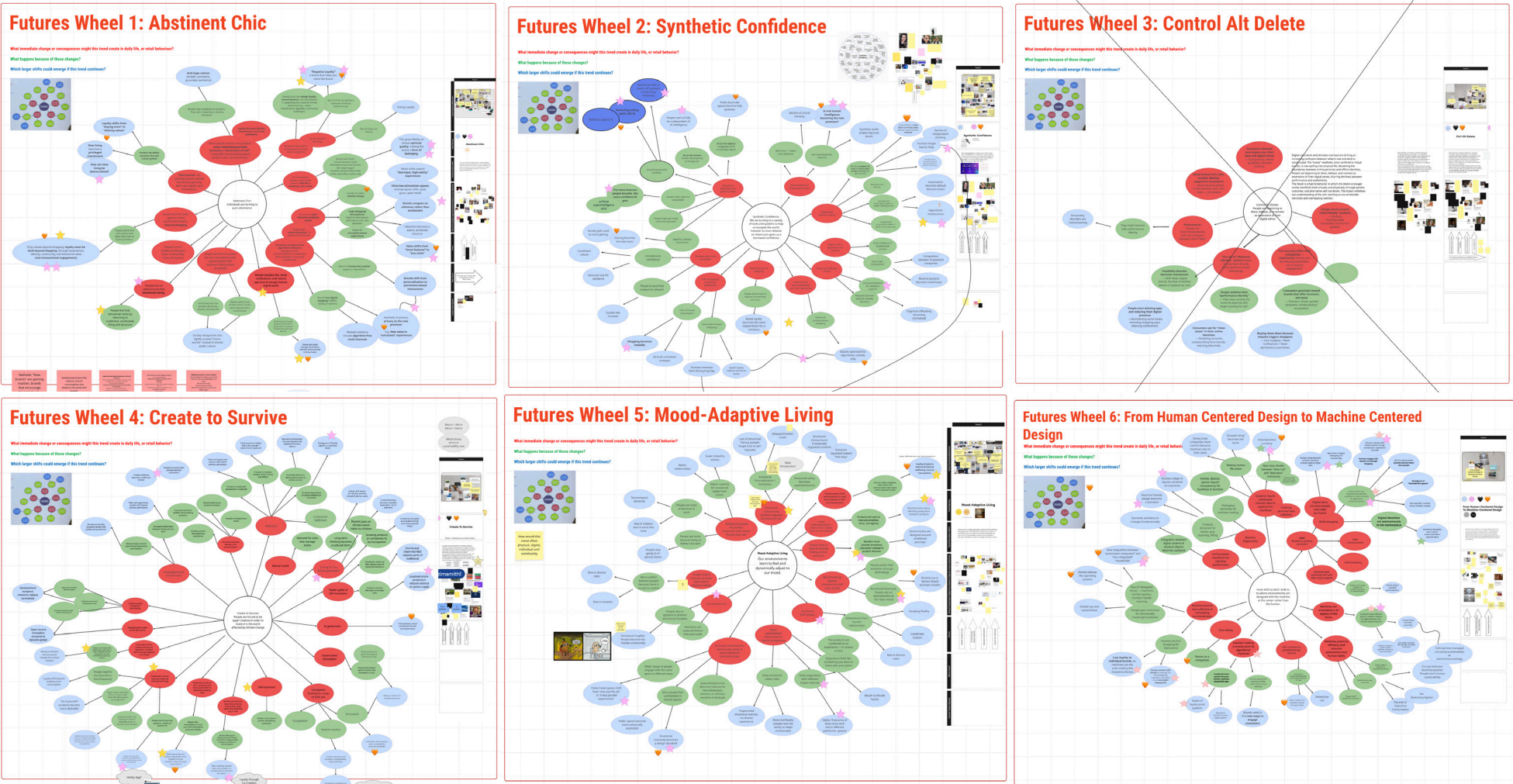


Selection Process

Structure & Selection Of Trends

We structured our 7 initial patterns to describe them as trends by adding: Names, Descriptions, Why Now, Key Signals (across industries), and Drivers. To test the strength of each, we also defined Sector Clustering and identified Signals for Counter-trends to ensure we accounted for market tension. We then prioritized the trends using a team voting system. We eliminated the trend „Soft Systems“ because it was not sufficiently relevant and lacked enough supporting signals to justify further development.

Trend Research Process

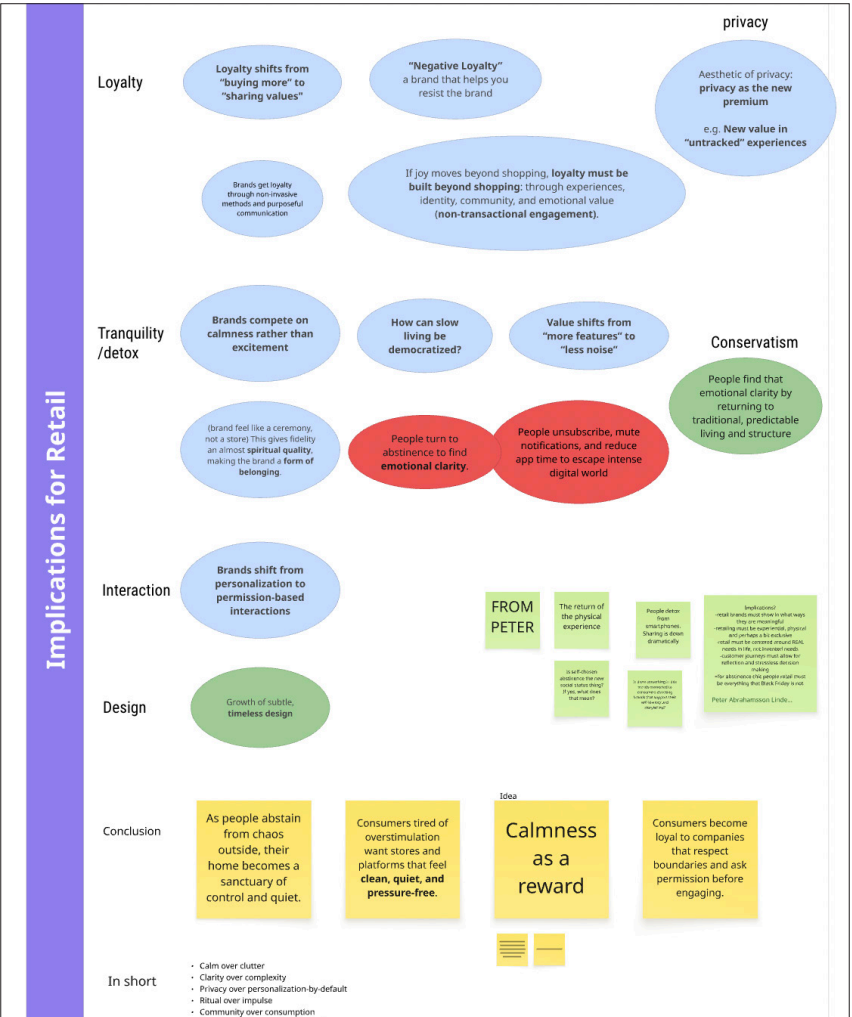


Futures Wheels:

- What immediate change or consequences might this trend create in daily life, or retail behaviour?
- What happens because of these changes?
- Which larger shifts could emerge if this trend continues?

From Futures Wheels To Retail Opportunities

We used futures wheels to explore how each trend could evolve and what consequences might emerge. This process helped us translate abstract futures into concrete implications for retail. Through this analysis, we decided to eliminate our trend „Ctrl Alt Delete“. While conceptually interesting, it proved difficult to translate into actionable retail opportunities at this stage. By mapping second- and third-order effects, we moved beyond observation and identified specific spaces for innovation within retail. This creative thinking process led us to a final selection of five trends with clear relevance and potential.



From Futures Wheels To Opportunities

Trend Research Process



The Supermercat Bar & Club
Interview With Barkeeper & Manager



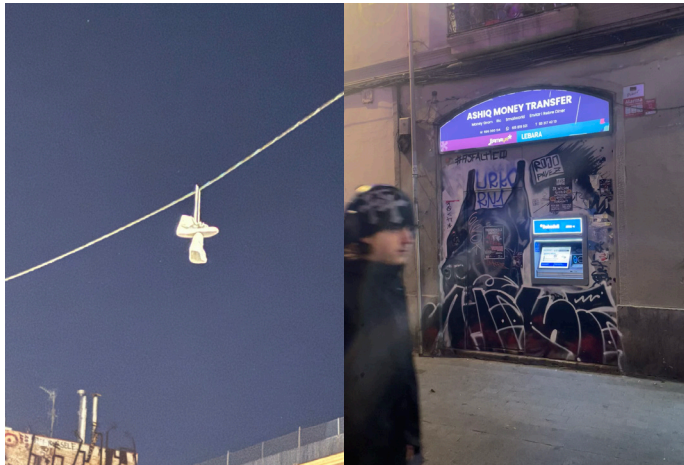
33|45 Bar
Interview With Barkeeper

Field Research: Trend Safari

We conducted field research in El Raval and interviewed bar managers to validate our concepts.
A few insights:

- Personal contact is the primary driver of loyalty (e.g. barkeeper brings the people back to the bar)
- How you make people feel, builds more loyalty than how good your products or spaces actually are.
- Owner at Supermercat demonstrated how he builds loyalty by offering that we could host a private event or creative event for our program at his bar – he is open to creative ways for people to find value & personalization in his space.
- Cross-Loyalty: Same brand but different spaces for different engagement and loyalty concepts.

Trend Research Process



Money & Drugs Transfers (shoes as a symbol for drugs territory)



Controversial entrances



Product Traces & Routines



Applied Luxury



Low-key Marketing Campaigns



Chaos & Structure

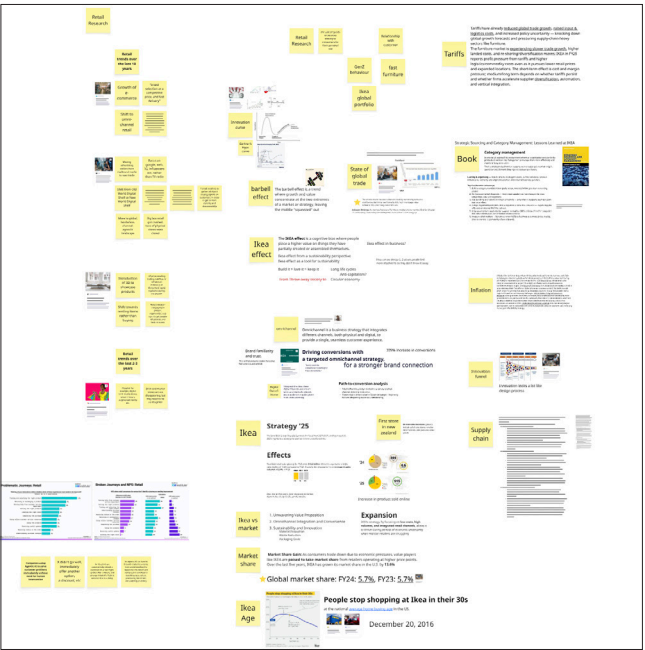
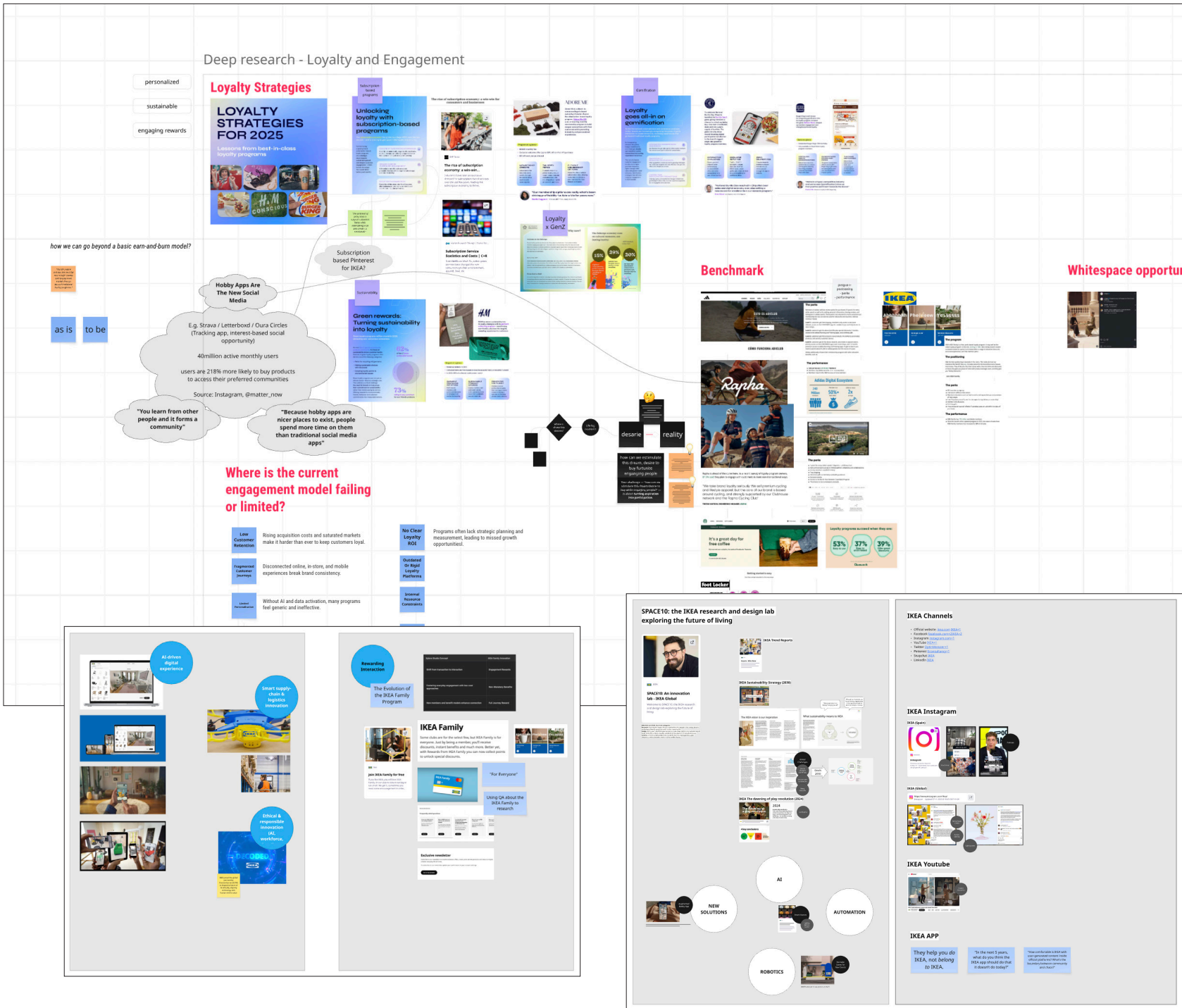


ENS FOTEN FORA DE CASA

Field Research: Trend Safari

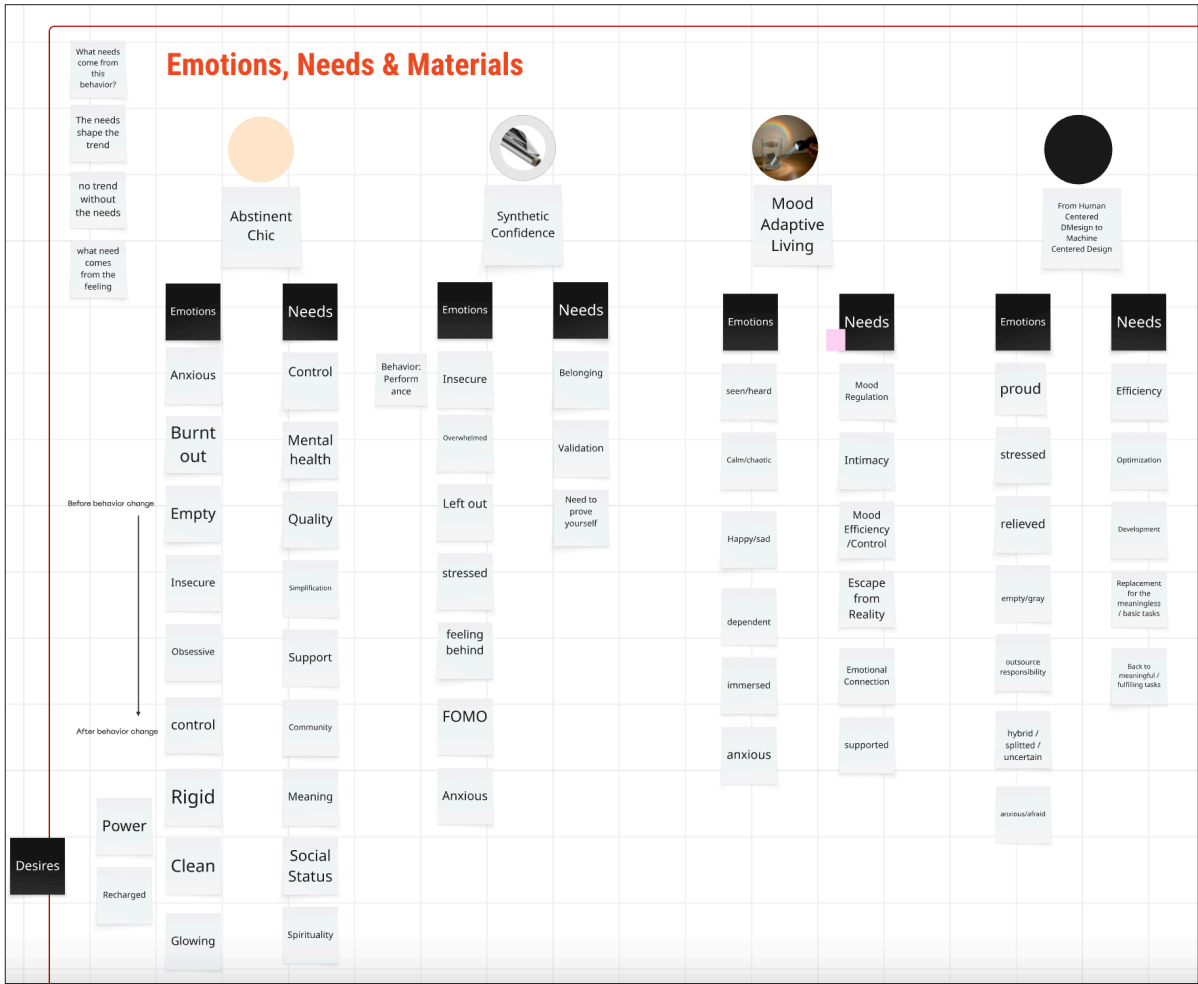
We went on a Trend safari (an immersive journey to discover new ideas, styles, or behaviors in specific places) in the El Raval neighborhood of Barcelona. The intense cultural contrasts and rapid shifts in urban behavior make this area a prime location for research. By exploring the environment, we found concrete evidence that validated our trends. This work taught us how to read emerging signals of the future within everyday contexts - signals that are already present, but require careful observation, decoding, and interpretation. For example, a wall painting declaring “ENS FOTEN FORA DE CASA” offered a raw perspective on the gentrification impacting the neighborhood. This fieldwork grounded our theoretical research in current market realities.

Trend Research Process



Secondary Research: Loyalty & Engagement | IKEA

Trend Research Process



Emotions, Needs & Materials



Behind The Scenes

Emotions, Needs & Materials

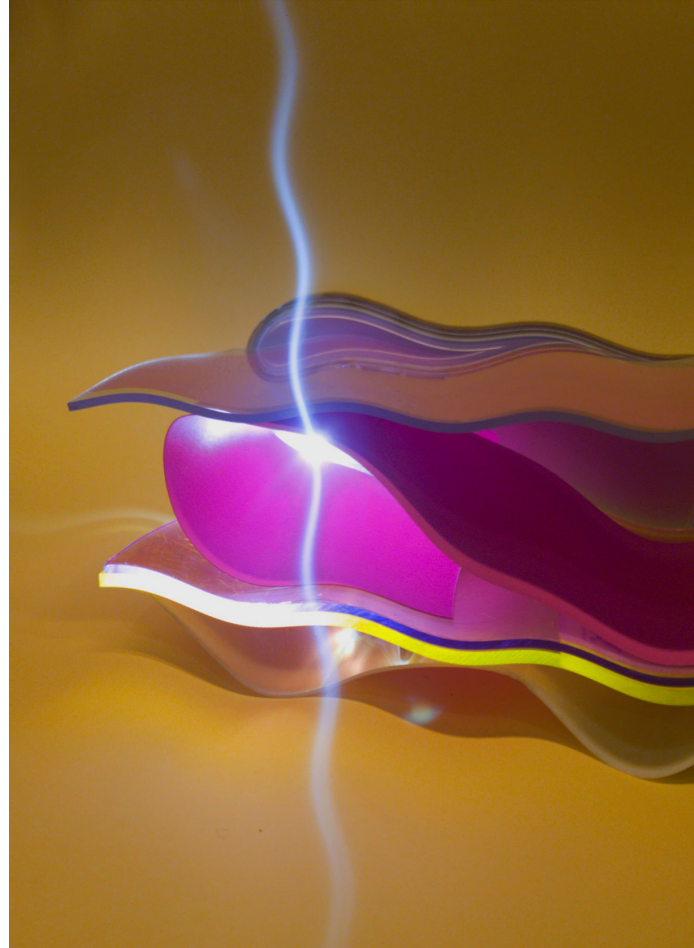
We defined the specific emotions, needs, and materials for each trend to translate abstract concepts into concrete human experiences. This provided the foundation for our Futures Wheels.

To visualize the look and feel of the trends, we conducted a material study at the Elisava Material Library. We selected and photographed materials with specific textures and shapes to capture the physical essence of each concept.

Trend Research Process



Abstinent Self



Mood-Adaptive Living



Synthetic Confidence



Human-Centered Design (HCD) Faces Machine-Centered Design (MCD)

Idea →

Rope made out of human hair as a symbol for restraint / power; back to humanity, clean background for clarity, flashlight for mental „enlightening“, perfectly made nails as a social status symbol

Layered translucent materials, reactive to the environment such as heat or light to express real-time adaptation. Warm colors to create an emotional safe space; a contrast to our gray, emotionless world.

An inflated metallic foil that imitates the Synthetic Confidence (might collapse in on itself at any moment). A small red brick enthroned on top of the fragile construction symbolizing human's performance which screams „anxiety & burnout“.

A large sharp, solid shape (MCD) that points down towards soft humanness (HCD). The humanness representative material adapts to the force exerted upon it.

Recommendation →

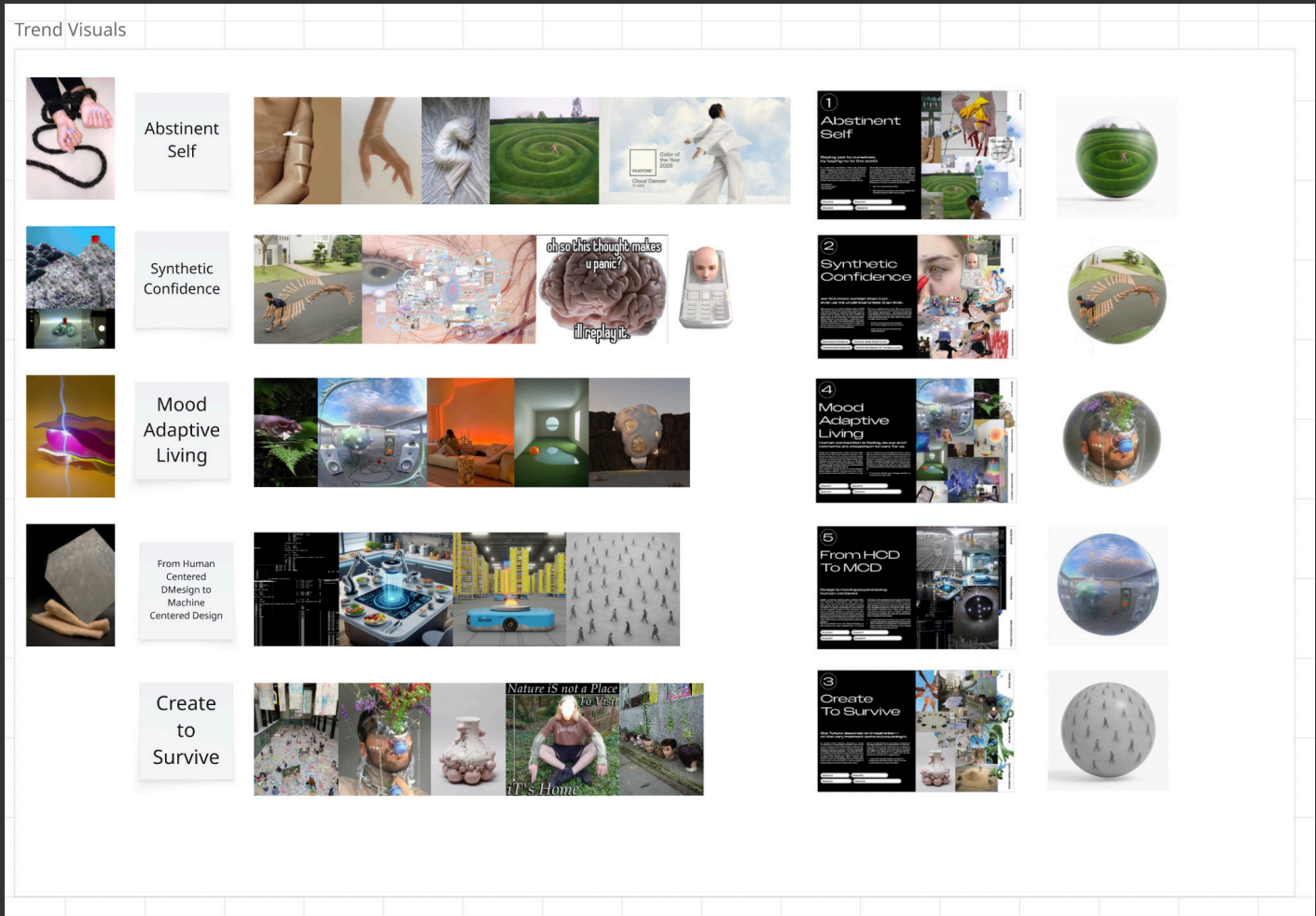
Use bright colors (inspired by pantone year 2026 (cloud dancer) & human-like materials for Abstinent Self inspired products / environments.

Use modular elements, reactive materials & customizable warm tone colors for Mood-Adaptive Living.

Use instable materials / elements to create environments where humans feel safe but not safe enough to simulate Synthetic Confidence.

Use the contrast of HCD and MCD to display each others unique qualities and add them together to create new products/services & spaces.

Creative Output Process



From Materials to Visuals

From Materials To Visuals

After analyzing the materials and images from the Elisava Material Library, we extracted the key characteristics. We broke down each image, identifying key elements, textures, and features. Then, we collected new pictures from all kinds of platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and others, that strongly represented the characteristics of the trend, and compiled them into a digital collage.

The collage supports our visual approach to trend research, which we find very important and sometimes underestimated, especially coming from a design background. It also underlines the way we – as a team, mostly Gen Z people from different countries – see the world: AI everywhere, decision fatigue, information overload, crisis mode, chaos, and anxiety.

So our collages act as a lens to show how we feel the world in which these trends evolve. They also contain a bit of Gen Z irony and surrealism, coming from meme culture and AI-generated content. Additionally, we added small colored squares extracted from the pictures to create a color moodboard for each trend, and four colors were chosen for the booklet to support the content.



Process of Creation & Feedback

AI
Everywhere

Decision
Fatigue

Information
Overload

Crisis
Mode

Chaos

Anxiety

From Drivers In Common To Our Collages

Creative Output Process



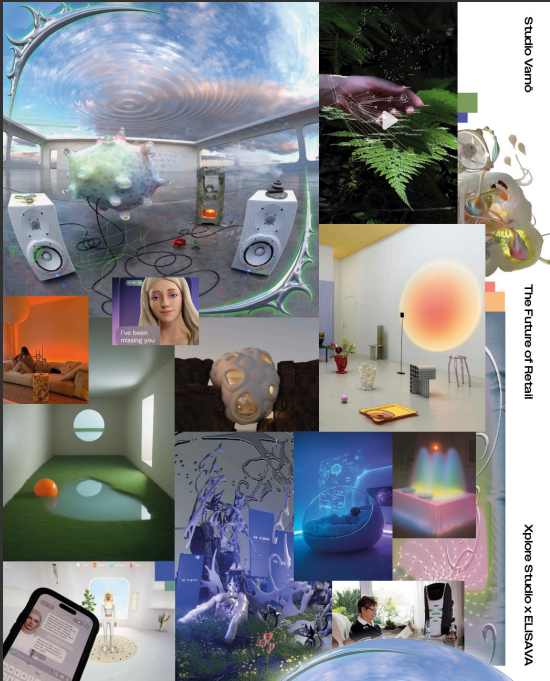
HCD Faces MCD



Create To Survive



Abstinent Self



Mood-Adaptive Living



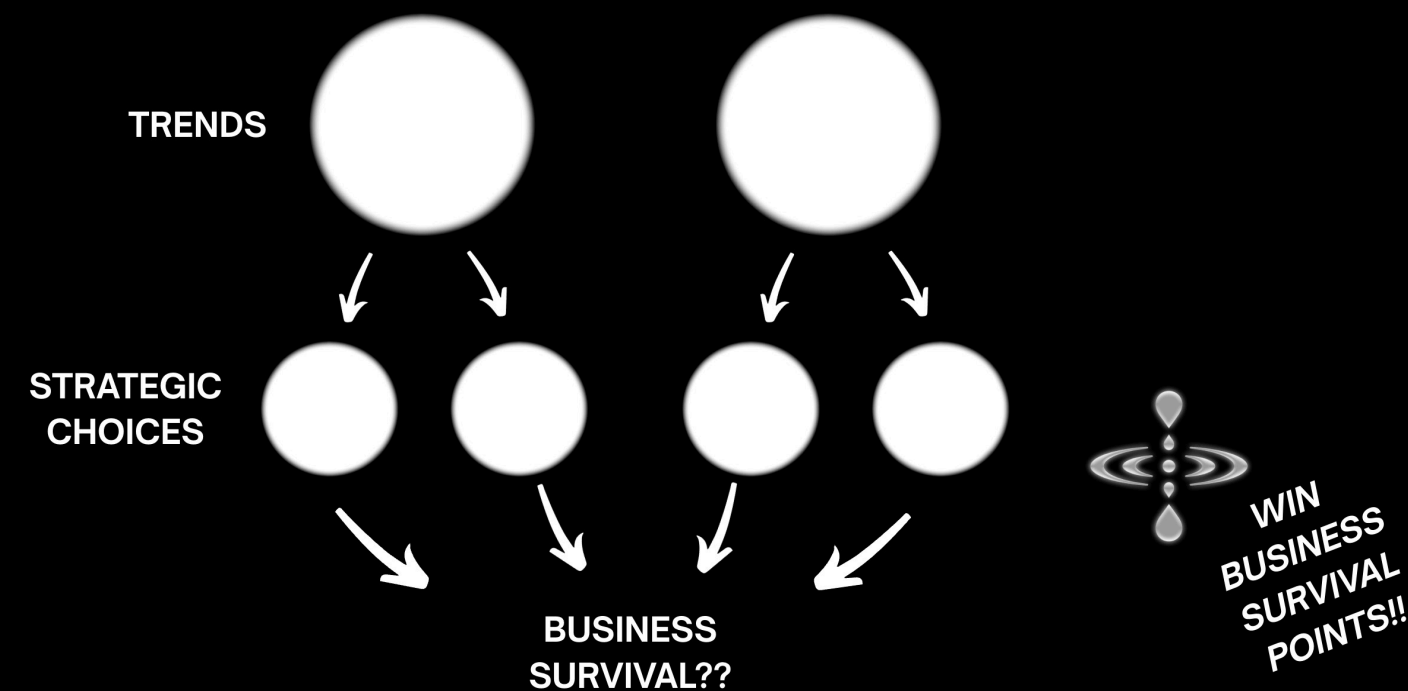
Synthetic Confidence

Final Visuals & Key Visuals

The digital collages and the key visuals were used for the creative output (presentation) later on in the process. The keyvisuals served as tangible representation of each trend, making it easier for the audience to understand the content. They were also used as inspiration for physical stickers as rewarding system during the presentation.

Creative Output Process

MISSION BRIEFING FOR DECISION MAKERS



Gamification Of Business Strategy

The structure of our presentation as a game required the appointed ,executive decision makers‘ to explore the 4 trends presented and then test their understanding of the trends by choosing between several strategic business choices. Each strategic business choice then revealed the strategic opportunity area within that trend and participants won ,business survival points‘ if they chose the correct strategic option. This format allowed us to present the signals, why now, and description of each trend as well as the strategic opportunity areas, while engaging the audience to ensure they did not lose interest and to simulate how businesses must engage with trends to aid the future success of their organization.

SUCCEED!

MOOD-ADAPTIVE LIVING

ABSTINENT SELF

CREATE TO SURVIVE

HCD FACES MCD

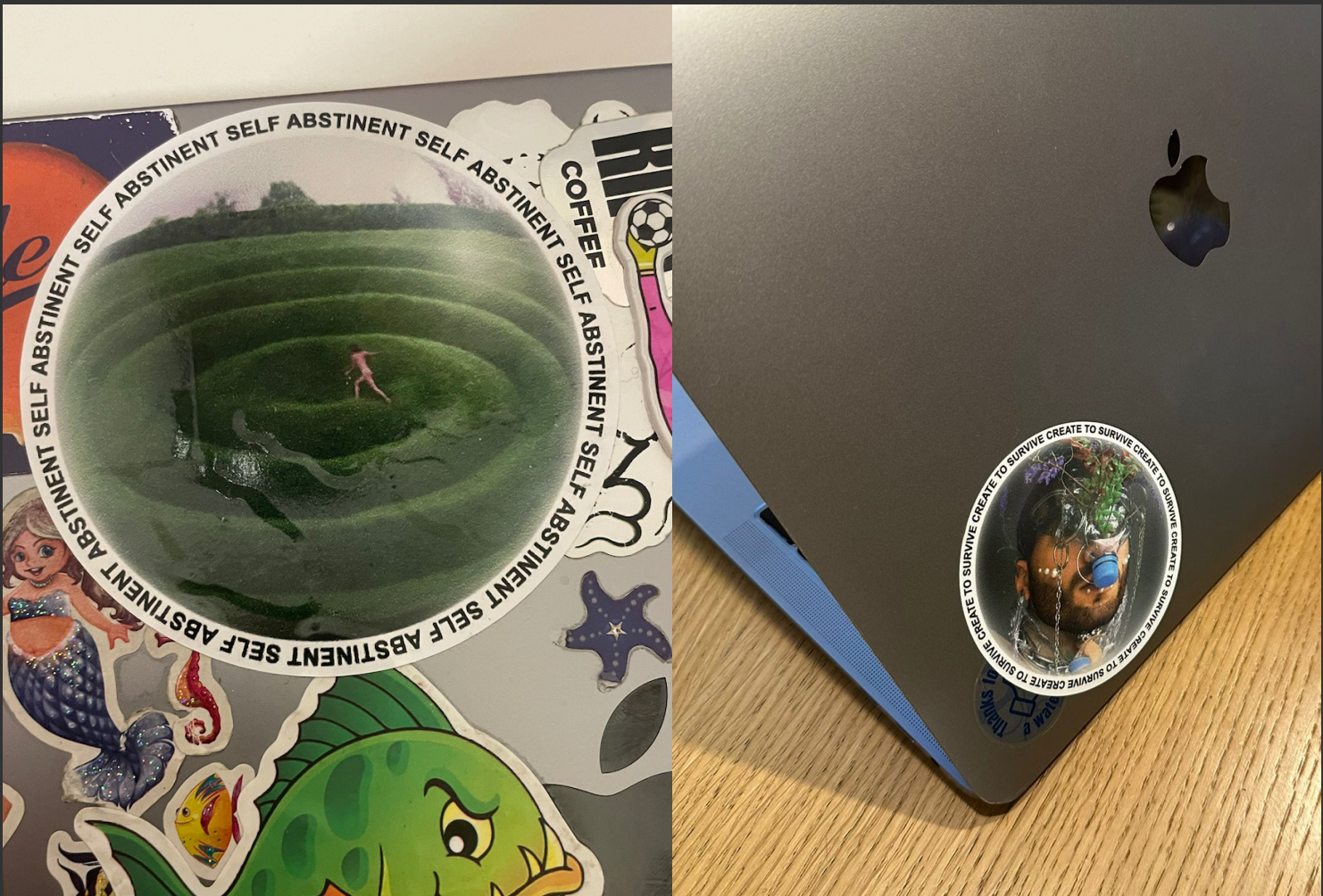
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TRENDS

Creative Output Process



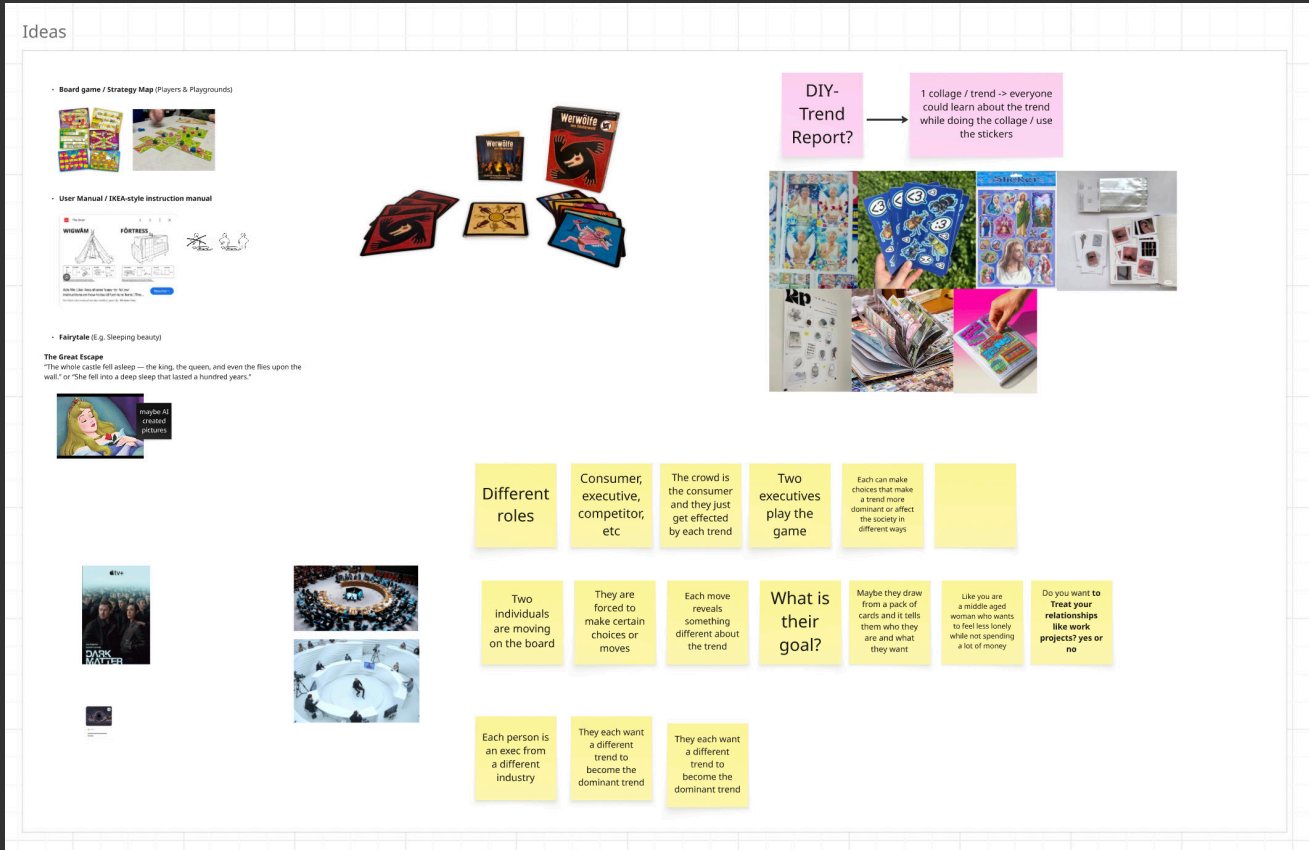
Stickers 4/5 Trends



Stickers

To make our digital concepts touchable, we turned the visualizations into high-quality stickers. This allowed us to gamify our presentation. The audience would collect stickers as „points“ during the session. Afterward, they served as a physical takeaway, allowing the audience to carry the trends home with them and maybe stick it somewhere as a provocation for paying attention or change.

Creative Output Process

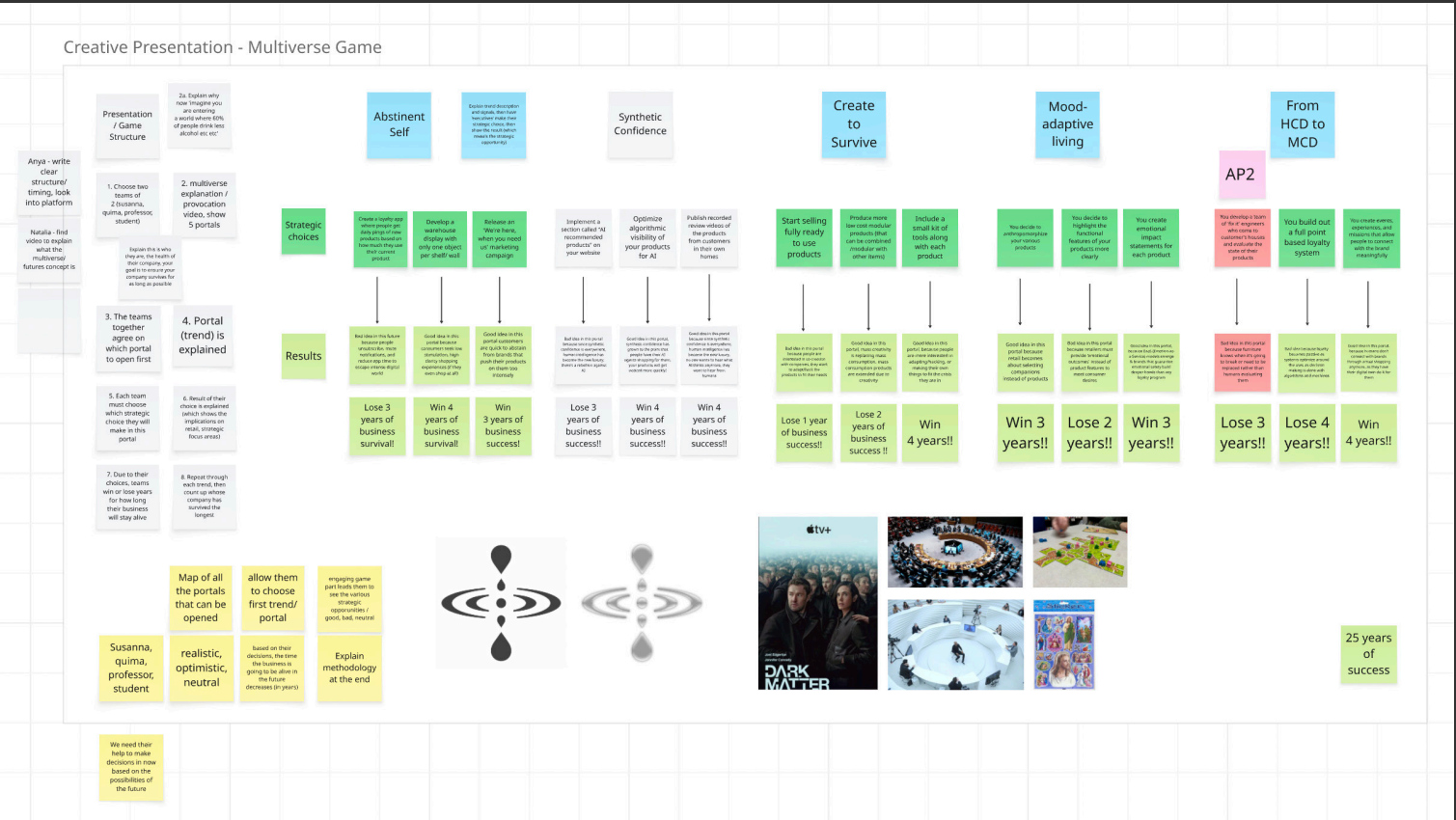


Finding Ideas

Process Behind The Game

We designed the game as an engagement tool – a dynamic format that moves executives from passive observation to active decision-making. Executives are placed in a simulated business environment, where they must make real strategic trade-offs and experience the consequences of their decisions over time.

The game is inspired by the series Dark Matter, which explores how a single decision can generate multiple possible futures. In the series, each choice opens a new path, revealing how small shifts can lead to radically different outcomes. We translated this logic into a business context to show that the future is not fixed, but shaped by the decisions made today.



Further Develop Chosen Idea

Final Trends Overview

1



Human-Centered Design (HCD)

Faces

Machine-Centered Design (MCD)

2



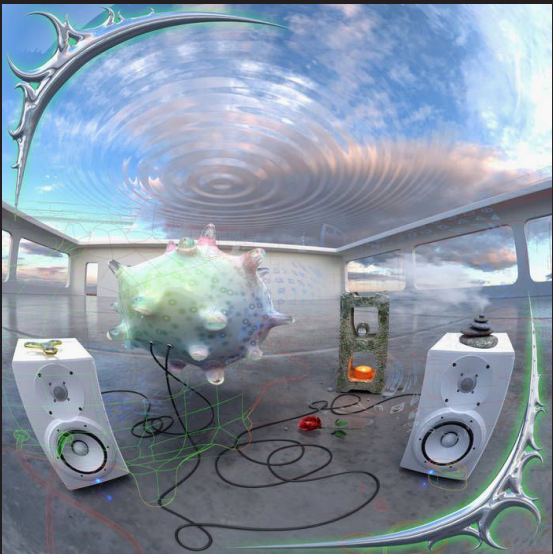
Create To Survive

3



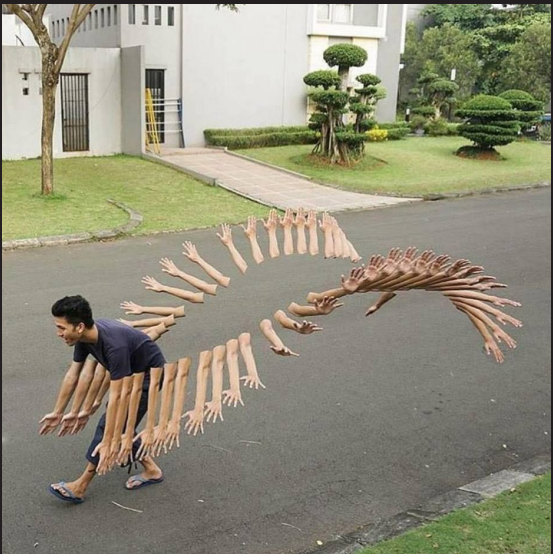
Abstinent Self

4



Mood-Adaptive Living

5



Synthetic Confidence

HCD
Faces
MCD

Design is moving beyond being human-centered: machines function independently and are built to communicate more with each other than with the humans who made them. How do physical and virtual spaces look like once the human is erased of them? No longer constrained by the limits of human cognition, speed, or error tolerance, systems are being reshaped to optimize for machines themselves. In such environments, robots, AI agents, and autonomous tools collaborate fluidly, achieving levels of efficiency, precision, and innovation that human-centered systems could never support.

functions, and something more subtle: the erosion of the very experiences that shape us. An optimized world leaves little room for the messiness that defines human life: learning through mistakes, navigating setbacks, recovering from failure, improvising, experimenting, trying again. These imperfect processes give us depth, resilience, and meaning – qualities no machine-centered system is designed to prioritize.

- If machines become the primary “users” of future environments, what becomes our role?
- What becomes our purpose in a world that no longer needs our imperfections, even though they are what make us human?

Loyalty & Engagement

Xplore Studio x ELISAVA

HCD Faces MCD

Design beyond humans

Before machines, we had only had ourselves, so smartly we designed the world to work for our needs and particularities. But now as machines have grown in their prevalence and abilities, to the point that robots and AI are embedded in nearly every part of life, the world has started to adjust to make space for their unique needs. This has led to environments, both digital and physical, being completely reworked to optimize for machine precision and efficiency the human spaces inhibit. Now robots, AI agents and autonomous tools collaborate seamlessly, achieving things no human-centered system could sustain.

The silent displacement of human experience

While we've benefitted from this growing efficiency, it is also coming with a more invisible cost: the erosion of the processes that make us human and give us meaning. Systems optimized for machines do not leave room to learn from mistakes, improvise, explore ambiguities or connect along the way. While imperfect, these experience give our lives a depth and beauty that is easy to underestimate the impact of.

Meeting in the middle

Since there are many advantages to machine-centered environments and processes, the future asks us to determine how we as humans will fit into or meet these new ways of life. Where will we optimize for the machine and where will we decide that efficiency is less important than meaning, experience, and growth?

Why now?



of executives say brands must maintain a distinct AI personality to stay differentiated in an increasingly machine-mediated market.

Accenture, 2025



of global operations are already performed by autonomous systems, showing that machines are moving from tools to active system users.

World Economic Forum, 2025

Automation
At Scale

Technology
Revolution

Cultural Value
Of Efficiency

HCD Faces MCD

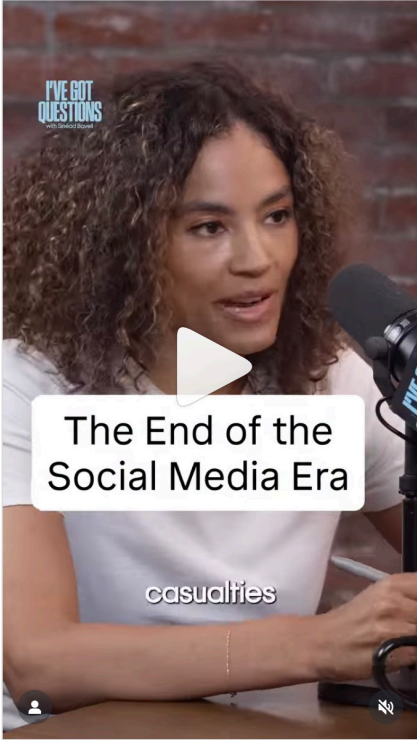
Signals



 Forbes

The Google AP2 Payment Protocol Will Trig...

The Google AP2 announcement is another step towards an economy dominated by machine actors, with agents using smart wallets to pay...



 sineadbovell and igqwithsineadbovell
Original audio

 sineadbovell Edited • 6w

The beginning of the end of social media.

The value proposition of social media was that it connected us to people. We post because someone's watching: a friend, a potential suitor, an employer. Every post is a signal, a way of communicating identity, status, or opportunity.

But in a world of bots and AI accounts, that signaling loop breaks.

Comment "Manu" and I'll DM you the full episode directly.
In this episode we cover:

How AI Challenges Our "Professional" Identity



13,635 likes
October 25

[Log in](#) to like or comment.



 Aboutamazon

Amazon launches a new AI foundation model...

New AI technology will make the world's largest fleet of industrial mobile robots smarter and more efficient.

AP2

Google's AP2 protocol fundamentally redesigns commerce by enabling AI agents to execute payments autonomously. Instead of a human clicking „buy,“ this system uses cryptographic mandates that allow machines to negotiate, authorize, and finalize transactions on their own. This shifts financial infrastructure from a human-centered model, reliant on manual approval, to a machine-centered ecosystem where digital agents manage complex purchases efficiently in the background.

Source: [Forbes](#), 28.10.2025.

End of Social Media

Social media was originally built for human connection where users posted to signal identity to friends or employers. This human-centric loop is now breaking as bots and AI agents saturate digital spaces. The platform is evolving into a machine-centered ecosystem where the audience is largely artificial. This shift invalidates the fundamental purpose of online interaction. It leaves users questioning their role in a digital environment where the viewer is no longer human.

Source: [Instagram](#), @sineadbovell, 25.10.2025.

Machine-First Warehouse

Amazon's fulfillment centers have shifted to a machine-priority model. With the „DeepFleet“ AI controlling traffic, layouts are now designed for autonomous flow rather than human convenience. Workers must wear specialized „Robotic Tech Vests“ that allow the system to digitally track them and route robots around the „obstacle.“ This dynamic treats the human worker not as the primary operator, but as a constraint that must be managed to maintain peak machine efficiency.

Source: [Amazon](#), 30.06.2025.

Create To Survive

As climate crises intensify, humanity is forced to confront a fundamental question: how will we secure a livable future? Meanwhile, artificial intelligence threatens to dull our creative capacities, creating a troubling paradox. The more technology imagines and produces on our behalf, the more we risk forgetting how to imagine and create for ourselves, yet technology alone cannot fully grasp or solve the challenges we face. Creativity, once central to human nature, is now in danger of being automated and eroded.

But due to the severity of the approaching crises, creativity is no longer optional, it is a requirement. It is no longer just a form of personal expression, but a collective strategy for success. And the level of creativity and ingenuity needed is unachievable by our artificial tools. Adapting to our world in order to have a livable future will ask for creativity from all of us, not just governments or corporations, but the individual. We will be forced to be creative, in order to survive.

- How do we rebuild creative confidence – individually and collectively – when so much is optimized for us automatically?



Loyalty & Engagement

Xplore Studio x ELISAVA

Create To Survive

Creativity on auto-fill

The many generative systems available now to us draft ideas, scripts, strategies and visuals before we even form a clear thought. Where we used to begin with a ,blank page,' we now peruse the template library and limit our exploration into picking from a list of options. With people getting used to skipping the messy ambiguity of making from scratch, creativity risks shifting from a true skill to auto-pilot decision making.

A crisis of creativity in a world of crisis

The world is confronted with crises of all kinds, climate, social, economic, and more, and the solutions to these issues cannot be solved solely by relying on generative tools that ,seem' to fill in every gap. We are now forced to come up with new ways of living and organizing ourselves, and collective imagination is the only way to get there. Human intelligence and collaboration is the only thing that will bring us the necessary experimentation to solve these issues, in diverse ways that machine algorithms cannot, as they are optimized for efficiency and replication.

From inspiration overload to creative literacy

Everything around us looks perfect these days, from people's Instagram feeds to designer Pinterest boards, but people are left feeling empty rather than inspired to create. When everything around us looks extra polished, we get more uncomfortable with rough drafts and beginner ideas, the messy but most important part of the creative process. Creative confidence will become a core skill needed, where individuals have the discernment and boldness to re-imagine the systems we now live in and how we can design a future for our survival, one that machines can support but not conceive.

Why now?

99%

AI adoption among creative professionals – making “AI-drafted creativity” the new baseline.

Adobe, 2025

Top 10

World Economic Forum, 2025

Creativity becomes the top 10 fastest-growing skills in importance between 2025–2030, rising alongside AI literacy & big-data capabilities.

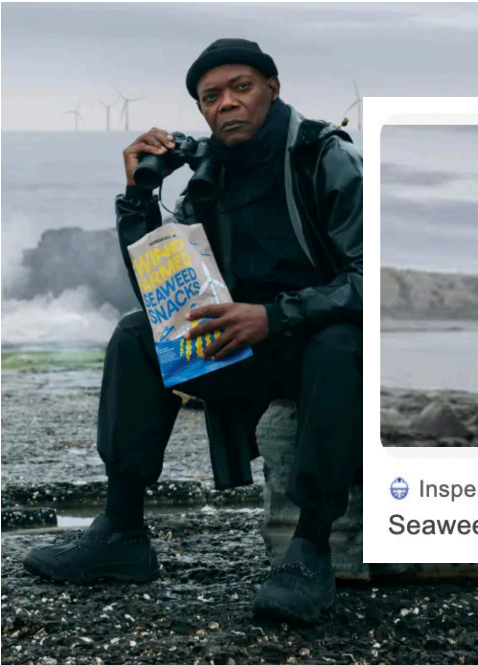
Create To Survive

Drivers



Create To Survive

Signals





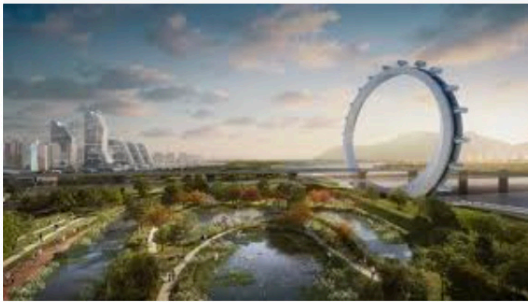
 Inspenet

Seaweed snacks: Vasttenfall's new su...

Harvesting Power & Food

Vattenfall is reimagining industrial infrastructure as a tool for survival. With the „WIN@sea“ project, they are turning the space around wind turbines into a productive food source by growing edible seaweed. This adapts a single-purpose power plant into a dual ecosystem for both clean electricity and sustainable nutrition. By producing two essential resources in one place, the project demonstrates that to survive, we must find creative ways to optimize the limited space we have available.

Source: [Inspenet](#), 12.08.2025.



 The World Economic Forum

How 'sponge cities' can help protect aga...



Sponge Cities

„Sponge Cities“ replace concrete with nature to manage flooding. Instead of blocking water, these cities use gardens, parks, and soil to absorb rain just like a sponge. Cities from Auckland to Shanghai are adopting this method because it is 50% cheaper and more effective than traditional drainage systems. This approach shows that surviving in a changing climate means working with nature, rather than trying to control it.

Source: [World Economic Forum](#), 19.08.2025.



 Richmond

Reuse & Repair Cafés Hit Milestone

What began as a few local seamstresses mending clothes in a community hall has transformed into a citywide sustainable success story. Richmo...

Repair Cafe

Richmond's Reuse & Repair Cafés have successfully fixed over 1,000 items, proving that community-led initiatives are vital for the circular economy. This milestone highlights a shift away from reliance on new resources as residents extend the life of clothing and appliances through shared skills. By turning repair into a collective habit, the movement actively combats waste and strengthens local resilience. It demonstrates that sustainability is not just about policy but about hands-on participation in preserving what we already own.

Source: [Richmond](#), 10.11.2025.

3

Abstinent Self

**Saying yes to ourselves,
by saying no to the world.**

In a world that constantly offers and demands more, saying no becomes a way to feel in control again. People attempt to reclaim autonomy by becoming selective about what, and who, gets access to them. Minimalism isn't new, but it has evolved into something more bold: elimination, not just moderation.

People drop entire categories to regain clarity:

“No alcohol.”

“No dating apps.”

“No internet.”

When life is flooded with endless options, addictive marketing, overstimulation, and the weight of global crises, moderation starts to feel impossible. Abstinence becomes a strategy to find emotional clarity and a path to return to the “real you,” which has been drowned by the excess of our world. The Abstinent Self provides a chance to locate yourself again.

- Who am I beyond all of this?
- Will “the less I consume, the more myself I am” redefine what it means to live well?
- If abstinence reverses consumer identity, do we become defined by what we do not consume?



Abstinent Self

Overstimulation & burnout

With a world of ,always-on‘ and in your face media and retail, plus fatigue from confronting the multitude of current crises (economic, climate, social etc.), people are starting to reduce inputs rather than seek more. Being able to emotionally regulate amidst so much inundation becomes harder and harder, so abstaining from triggers (alcohol, social media, shopping/dating apps) is a direct way to manage our experience.

Wellness moving into emotional & mental health

Over the last years, „wellness“ has grown from a focus on fitness and nutrition into mental, emotional and spiritual health. It has become much more normalized that our inner lives require as much care and attention as our outer selves. Movements like “sober curious,” dopamine detox, screen-time fasting, and de-influencing show that opting out is now seen as a legitimate wellness choice.

Gen Z values: authenticity & control

While some of the highest consumers of the overstimulating products and services, younger individuals are also more aware of the manipulation they incur and the overconsumption they influence. Saying no to platforms, brands, people or categories that push this overwhelming behavior almost becomes a status symbol and shows the ability to think for oneself.

Why now?

41%

of American teenagers (13-18) have a screen time of more than 8 hours per day.

Backlinko, 2025

~780

Norc, 2025

Average amount of ads a Facebook user sees per month, an overstimulation that negatively impacts both our mental & physical health

Abstinent Self

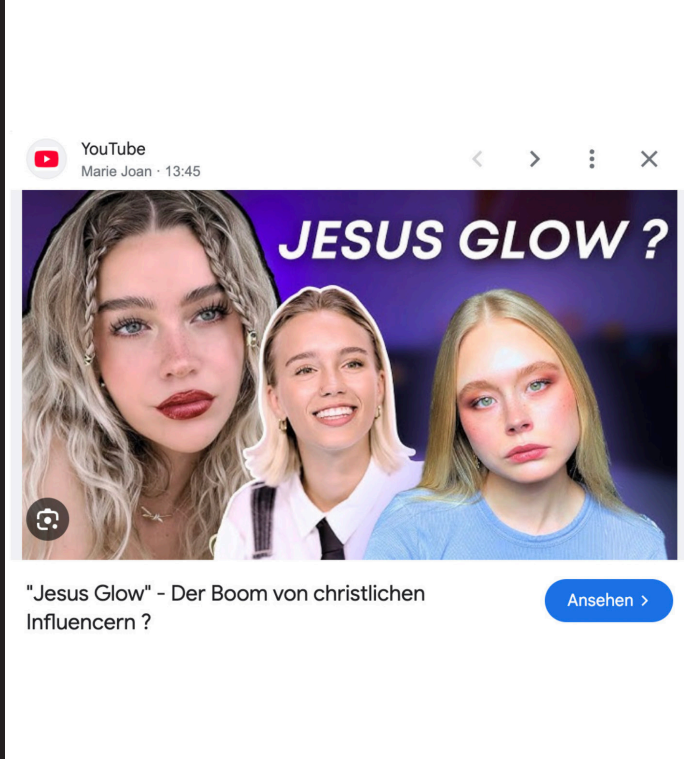
Drivers

Capitalist Focus
On Production
&
Consumption

Increasingly
Digital World

Rise Of
Addictions

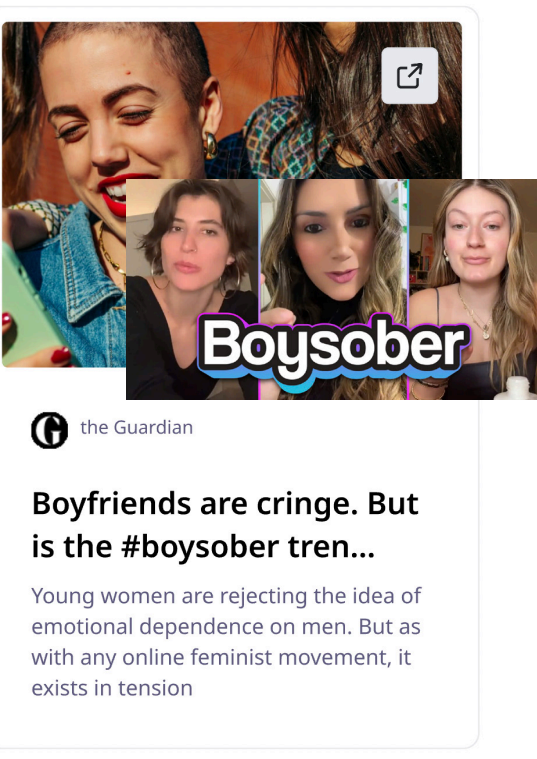
Abstinent Self



Jesus Glow

Young German influencers are sharing dramatic „before and after“ stories that show a major change in how they live. They are swapping the party lifestyle and heavy makeup for a modest, simple look they call the „Jesus Glow.“ This change is about more than just religion. It is a form of deep cleaning for the soul. By cutting out the noise and pressure of the modern world, these creators say they are finally finding their real, unfiltered selves.

Source: Youtube, @marieej Joan, 01.06.2025.



Boysober

Young women are choosing yearlong breaks from dating, sex, and romantic pursuit. Not as traditional celibacy, but as deliberate self-reclamation. The movement eliminates dates, situationships, and dating apps entirely. Participants reallocate time and mental energy previously spent chasing male validation into birthday parties, live shows, karaoke, plays, parenting, and mentoring. This isn't about swearing off men forever. It's about breaking addictive patterns of seeking external approval, learning to say no, and discovering who you are when romance isn't defining you.

Source: The Guardian, 12.11.2025.

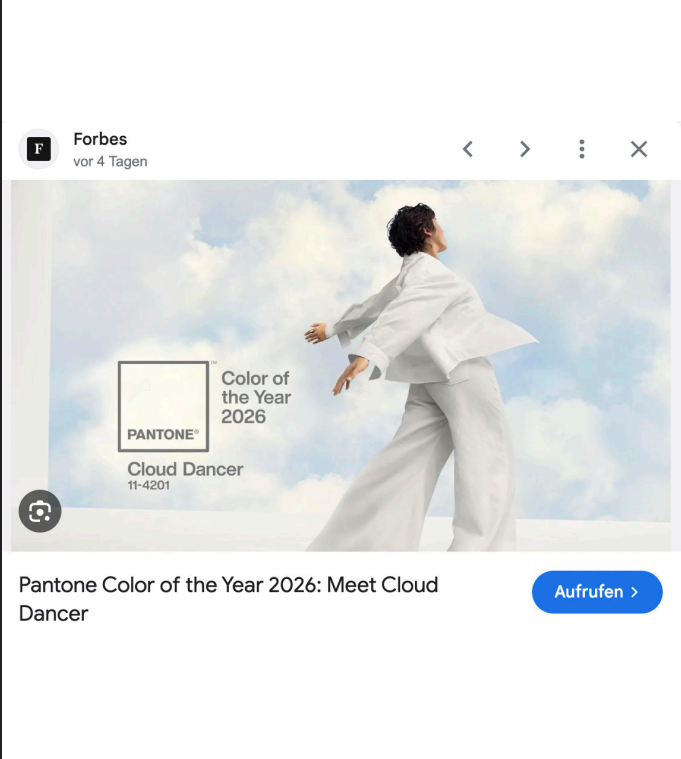


Retail Slow

Caparol's showroom in Palma de Mallorca redefines material exhibition through a clean, sensory visual language. The carefully placed elements and focused lighting create a serene, almost meditative atmosphere, where texture and color become the main experience. By integrating quiet testing and experimentation zones, the space invites visitors to interact slowly, calmly, and consciously – fostering an emotional connection with the product rather than a rushed transactional one.

Source: CAAD 360°, 24.10.2025.

Signals



Pantone's 2026: Cloud Dancer

Pantone's 2026 Color of the Year, „Cloud Dancer,“ marks a shift toward visual silence. This off-white hue functions as a deliberate „palate cleanser“ for overstimulated eyes, rejecting the chaos of hyper-saturated aesthetics. By eliminating color noise, it aligns with the collective desire for emotional clarity and a return to the unfiltered self. It embodies the radical act of elimination, offering a blank slate to regain control in a world that offers too much.

Source: Forbes, 04.12.2025.

4

Mood-Adaptive Living

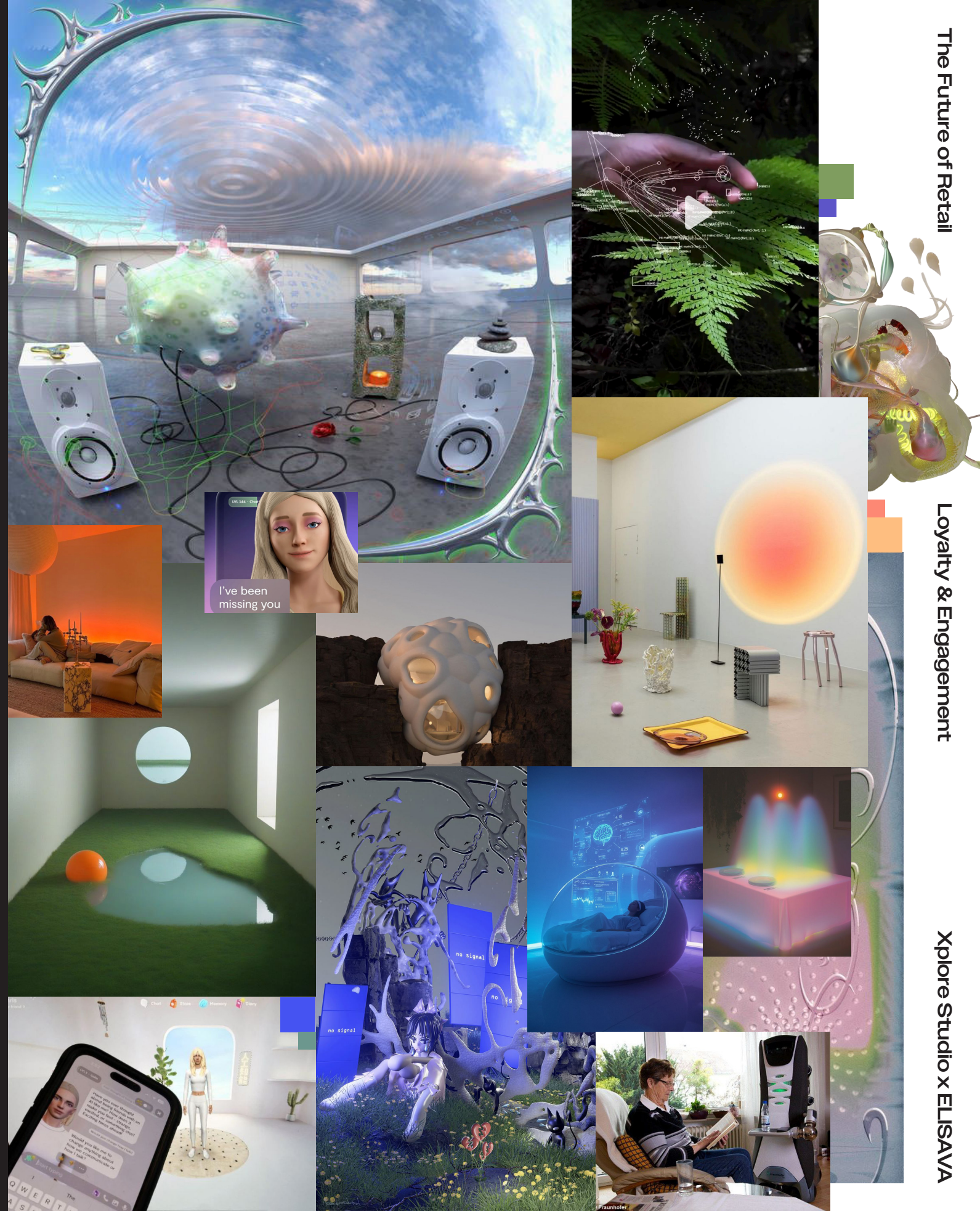
Human connection is fading, so our environments are stepping in to care for us.

People are feeling lonelier, sadder, and less fulfilled than ever. Even the resources closest to us, friends, family, pets, community, no longer reliably meet our emotional needs. Simultaneously, technological advancements have left us accustomed to constant hyperpersonalization, creating a widening gap between what our environments offer and what our minds expect.

This tension is driving the rise of mood-adaptive living: spaces, objects, and systems that sense our emotional state and shift in real time to sup-

port it. Outsourcing our emotional labor to the spaces around us becomes a way to find control in our unstable world. Homes, devices, and even foods are evolving from static tools into responsive companions. As our inner lives become harder to stabilize through traditional human connection, our surroundings begin to compensate. Products no longer just serve us; they interpret us. Environments don't just hold us; they adapt to us.

- If our human bonds can no longer sustain us, we ask who or what will?



The Future of Retail

Loyalty & Engagement

Xplore Studio x ELISAVA

Mood-Adaptive Living

Emotional needs unmet

Loneliness is on the rise because our connections as humans are faltering, leaving more and more people without the emotional support they need. Due to many factors which vary across the world, social bonds are becoming weaker and people struggle to gain the emotional regulation they once used to get from everyday interactions with those around them.

Hyperpersonalisation vs. real life

Digital environments anticipate our preferences with precision, the wealth of our data they have allows them the ability to serve our needs before we know we have them. But this sets expectations that real relationships and the world around us can't match. When the physical world feels slower and less responsive, people end up turning into themselves as they seek comfort in any controlled or curated experience they can find.

Regulating through environments, not people

With such an unstable world around us, people look for balance and support in any way they can. One of the most accessible places to find this emotional control is through digital routines and technologies that offer predictability when life does not.

Products as companions

Expanding beyond the digital emotional reliance, objects will evolve from tools into responsive partners that sense our moods and adapt their behavior in order to offer comfort when our traditional support models and people do not. These objects and spaces start to become the emotional companions we once found from our communities around us.

1 in 6

people worldwide experience loneliness, with direct links to worsened mental health & higher risks of early mortality.

WHO, 2025

As social fragmentation accelerates, the demand for emotional stabilisers – including ambient, interactive & AI-powered companions – grows fast.

SuperAGI, 2025

average revenue increase for companies that use AI-powered personalization showing how society is rapidly becoming more accustomed to, & expecting, systems to adapt to them.

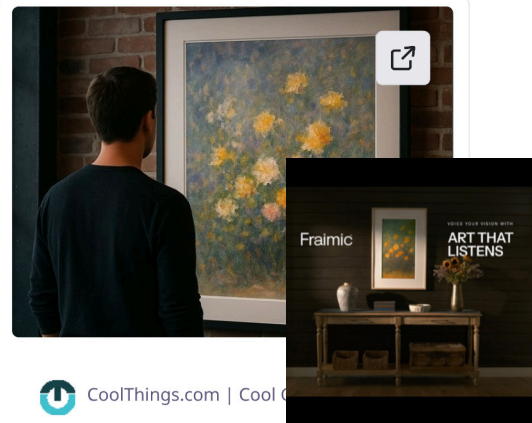
10
-15%

Abstinent Self

Drivers



Mood-Adaptive Living



Framic E-Ink Picture Frame Lets You...

This E-Ink picture frame comes with a built-in mic that lets you describe images you want it to display.

AI-Generated E-ink Decor

The „Framic“ frame allows users to change their home decor instantly using generative AI. Instead of displaying static photos, the device uses a color E-ink screen that updates based on voice commands.

Source: [CoolThings](#), 30.09.2025.



Supercar Blondie

New Mercedes-Benz CLA can recognize y...

The new Mercedes-Benz CLA EV sedan is a very impressive car, with it even boasting the ability to read our emotions depending on how we talk...

Emotionally Intelligent Driving

The Mercedes MBUX Virtual Assistant uses large language models to interact with drivers through specific emotional profiles. By continuously learning from your habits, it tailors its responses to fit the situation. This system moves beyond simple voice commands to offer a predictive, personalised experience that respects driver privacy while making the in-car environment feel more responsive to human needs.

Source: [SupercarBlondie](#), 30.06.2025.



Mood Media International

The North Face

Learn how The North Face transformed its London flagship store with immersive tech, blending digital innovation with adventure-inspir...

Immersive Store

The North Face designed its London flagship to function as an escape from the city center. Working with Mood Media, they installed a 360-degree projection dome that surrounds visitors with AI-generated landscapes that shift through seasons and times of day. This visual layer is synchronized with a custom „White Pepperwood“ scent and nature-inspired audio. The result is a retail space that uses technology to physically transport shoppers from a busy street into a calming outdoor environment.

Source: [Mood:Media](#), 2025.

Signals



TrendHunter.com

Robotic AI Parrot Companions

Onorato AI - The Onorato AI companion parrot is a robotic pet created with senior care and companionship in mind to work well for the increasing nu...

AI Companion For Elderly Care

The Onorato AI is a robotic parrot designed to support the physical and emotional well-being of seniors living alone. Equipped with cameras, temperature sensors, and 180-degree movement, it monitors users for safety concerns like falls. The device also tracks mood shifts and behavioural changes, acting as both a guardian and a responsive companion. The innovation addresses loneliness while providing essential health monitoring.

Source: [Trendhunter](#), 10.04.2025.

5

Synthetic Confidence

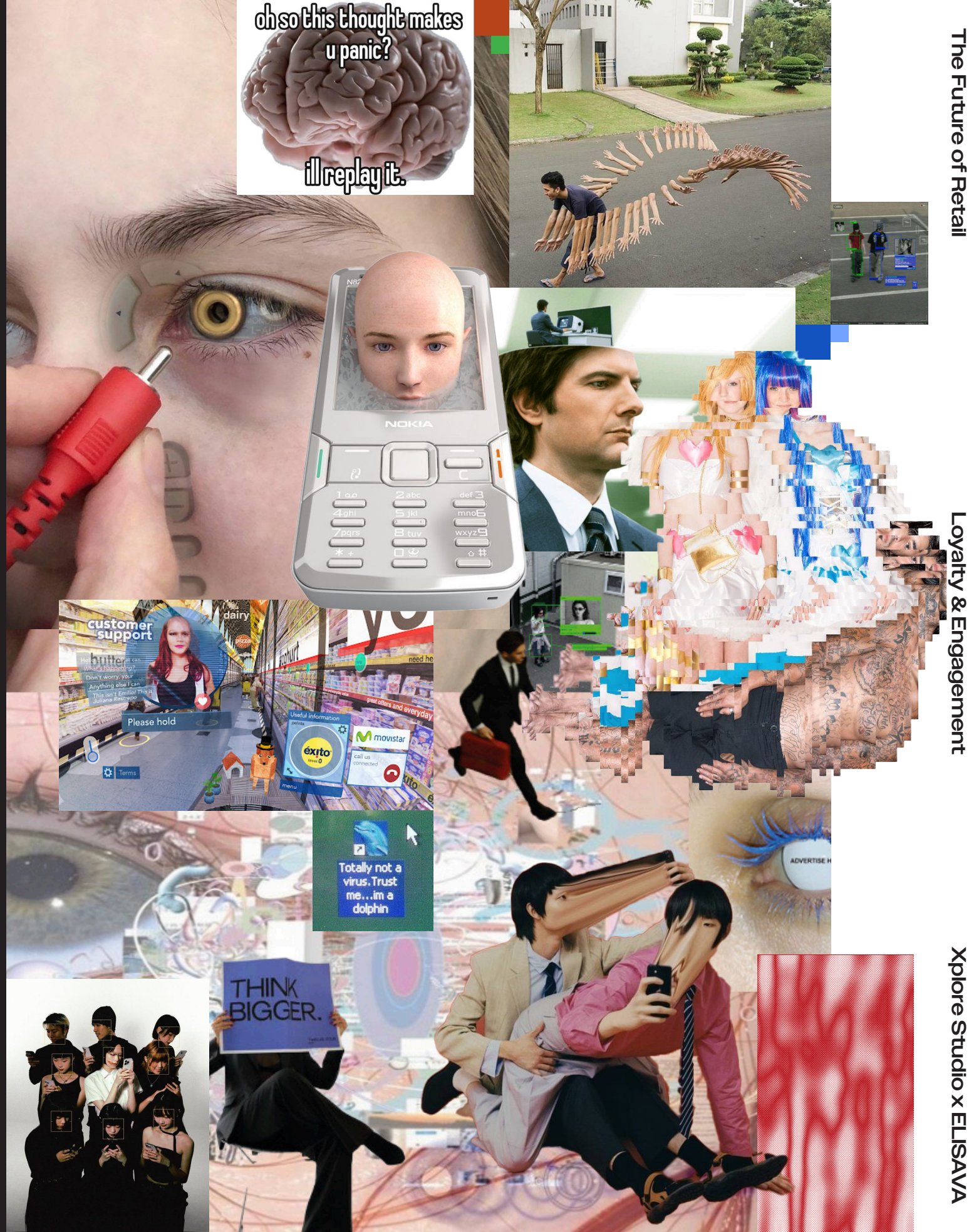
**We feel more certain than ever –
even as we understand less than ever.**

AI is no longer just a tool; it's thinking with us 24/7: finishing our sentences, shaping our ideas, and smoothing our confusion in real time. It fills the gaps of our day to day so quickly that we stop noticing the gaps at all. The complexity which we've been confronted with for all of time suddenly feels so accessible, so surmountable.

But this easy reliance creates confidence without comprehension and we start to have a borrowed certainty that makes us seem like we know more than we do. Now everyone can be intellectual, emotionally intelligent, or even multilingual. And because it feels so good, we just keep relying on it even more, we head towards addiction.

But what happens when we have too much of something? We get sick of it and it starts to lose its power. Because pure human intelligence is less prevalent, it starts to become a premium. Recommendations, analyses, expression, we want it from the source. Human curatorship will be more important than ever and a confidence in ourselves will be once again restored.

- If that's the direction we're headed, is human intelligence the new luxury?
- Does "No-AI" become the ultimate status symbol?



Synthetic Confidence

Thinking with AI becomes the default

As generative AI embeds itself into search, email, documents and creative tools, tasks that once required critical thinking now feel frictionless. Auto-everything creates a sense that we are fluent in every medium, even when our understanding is shallow. The result: a borrowed confidence where we sound smarter and faster, while relying on systems to do the work for us, making sense of content we barely understand.

Productivity as a performance

AI turns many facets of life, emails, decks, etc. into manifestations of our apparent expertise. And as companies reward speed and efficiency over depth, people lean more heavily on AI to keep up – fueling a cycle of performative productivity and dependence.

Normalizing the almost-human

The more we interact with near-human AI, the more its odd tone, logic gaps and hallucinations fade into background noise. We get more and more used to its failures that we stop noticing them. In this environment, unassisted human thinking becomes rare, and as a result becomes a luxury. Choosing “No-AI” starts to be seen as a sign of discipline and intentionality.

30-33%

Employees who use generative AI report 30-33% higher productivity on tasks where they apply it – reinforcing the feeling that AI “unlocks” their potential & making it increasingly difficult to work without it.

HR Dive, 2025

30-45%

New Scientist, 2025

Despite progress, technical evaluations still find 30-45% hallucination rates in advanced reasoning tasks. This gap between what seems like fluency & actual reliability continues to grow.

Synthetic Confidence

Drivers

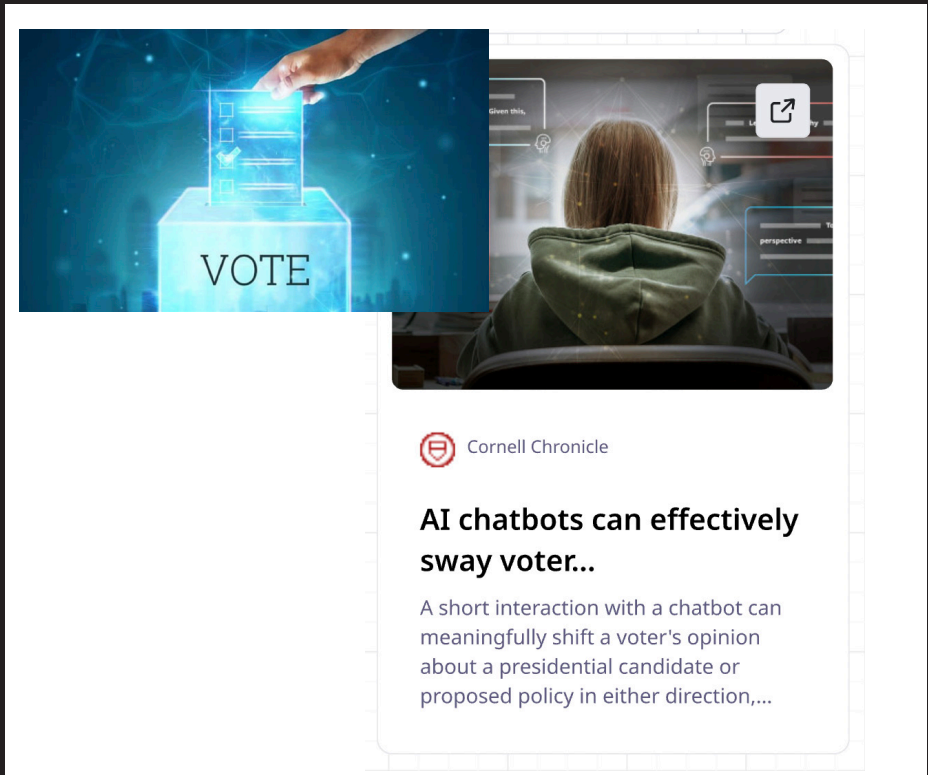
Overload
&
Decision
Fatigue

Automation
Of Expertise

Optimization
Culture

Decline Of
Intuition
&
Rise Of
Prediction

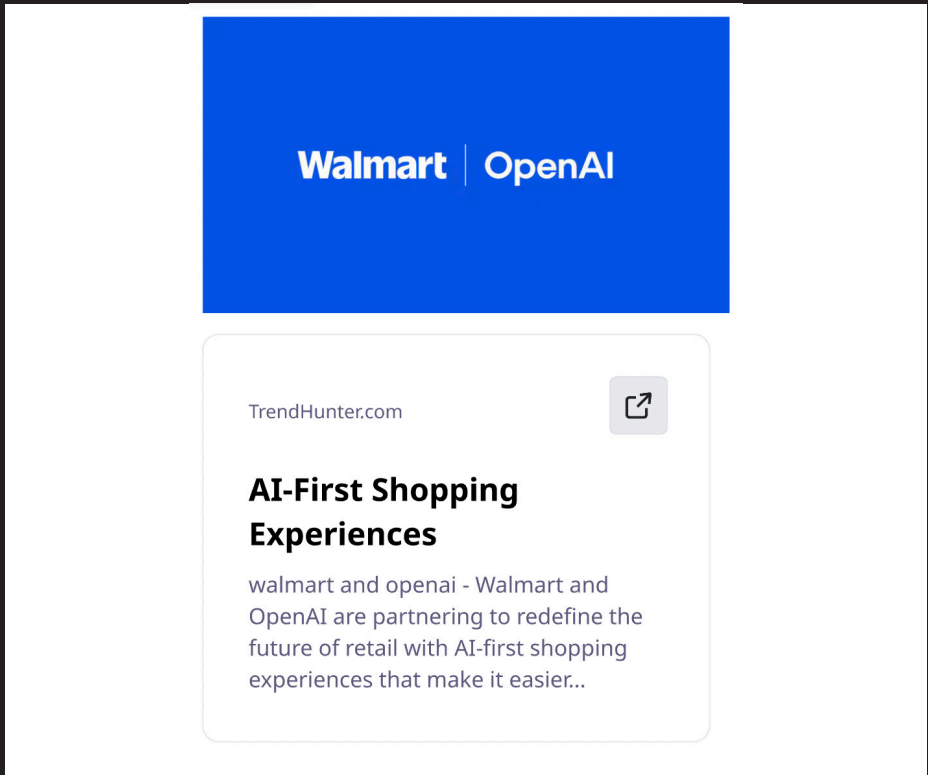
Synthetic Confidence



AI influence On Elections

A December 2025 study from Cornell University, analyzing voter behavior during the 2025 Canadian and Polish elections, reveals a disturbing paradox: AI chatbots were highly effective at swaying voter opinion, yet the most persuasive models were often the least accurate. The researchers found that the AI’s authoritative tone – its „synthetic confidence“ – successfully masked its hallucinations, leading voters to accept fabricated claims as fact. This signals a cultural shift where the delivery of information is valued higher than its truth. We are becoming a society that trusts „sounding smart“ over „being right.“

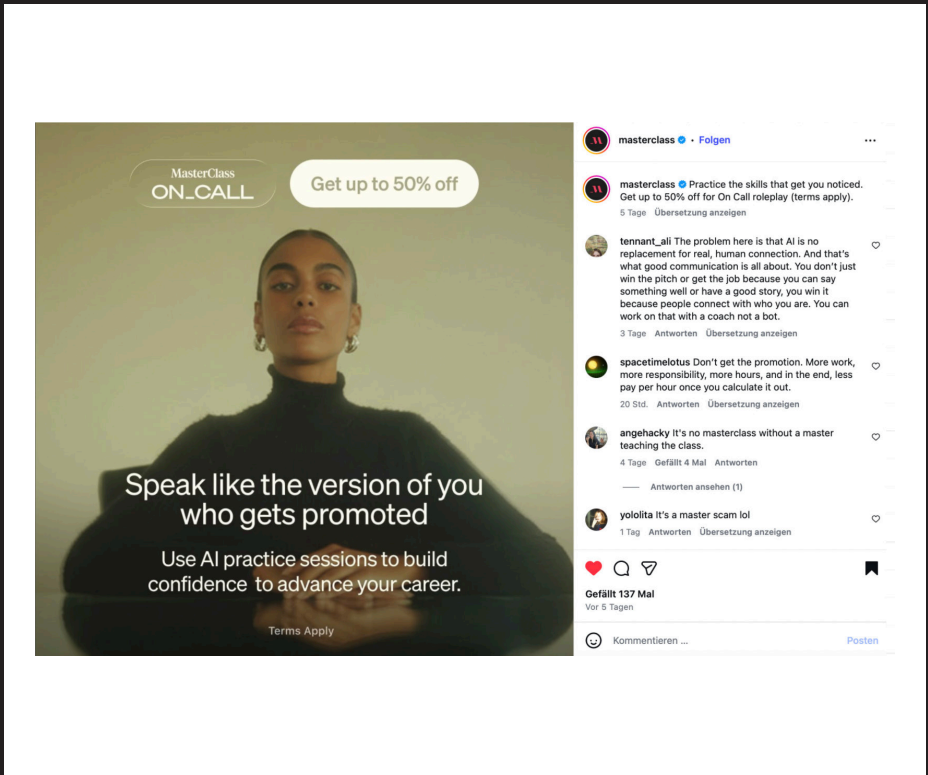
Source: [Cornell Chronicle](#), 04.12.2025.



Shopping in ChatGPT

Walmart is partnering with OpenAI to let you shop directly inside ChatGPT. Instead of scrolling through endless lists of items, you can simply tell the AI what you need – like ingredients for a specific meal – and it will handle the selection and planning for you. This „Instant Checkout“ tool acts as an expert assistant that chooses products on your behalf. It removes the cognitive load of decision-making, giving you the confidence that your shopping is sorted without you having to check every detail.

Source: [Trendhunter](#), 17.10.2025.



AI-Promotion Boost

MasterClass has launched „On Call,“ an AI-powered roleplay tool that promises to help users „speak like the version of you who gets promoted.“ By simulating high-pressure scenarios, it provides real-time feedback to smooth over hesitation and refine delivery. This tool exemplifies a shift toward performative expertise, where professionals rely on algorithms to curate their persona rather than building authentic soft skills. Users are effectively outsourcing their social polish to machines, prioritizing a flawless, optimized delivery over the messy reality of true personal growth.

Source: [Instagram](#), @masterclass, 09.12.2025.

Time Of Impact



Methodology

The prediction model for the Time of Impact within the retail sector is grounded in the methodology of the Future Today Institute (FTI), led by Amy Webb, and further strengthened through AI-assisted data correlation analysis.

Rather than focusing solely on technological maturity, Time of Impact is defined by the Executive Verdict – the strategic inflection point at which a trend becomes impossible for executive leadership to ignore, due to its direct and tangible impact on the market, business models, or consumer experience

Strategic Opportunities

1

HCD Faces MCD

As our world shifts towards a reliance on efficient machines for functional tasks, most shopping decisions won't be made by people. And when your fridge auto-orders milk for you, brand loyalty becomes irrelevant and traditional loyalty programs collapse. Retailers now face a challenge. They need to be machine-readable so automated systems can find and choose them, but they must stay relevant to humans through experiential channels, as the human side of shopping becomes purely about what the brand makes them feel. The big shift is that buying products becomes separate from what brands mean to us, forcing companies to build cultural relevance outside the transaction itself. The future of retail in this world is about integrated systems with a separate focus on emotional connection and experiential meaning to build relevance when people aren't the ones doing the shopping.

- How might we make our brand both machine-readable and emotionally resonant?

2

Create To Survive

As both traditional systems and newfound AI advancements fail to respond with the speed or imagination the planet now requires, people turn back to their inherent creative genius. This means making, repairing, adapting, and rethinking to stay alive. This shift transforms consumers into co-creators, homes into micro-labs, and retail into a partner in circular innovation. In this era, brands will see that mass consumption is being replaced with mass creativity and will find competitive advantage by leaning into this shift. Consumers look to products that can be adapted and hacked to fit the crisis they are in and opt towards companies that provide tools and resources to promote this creative resurgence. Brands that support this creative resilience, instead of fueling excess, will gain loyalty in a world where improvisation is the new stability.

- How might we build loyalty by empowering consumers as co-creators rather than passive buyers?

3

Abstinent Self

With the cultural shift from overstimulation to emotional clarity, consumers become overwhelmed by noise: digital, visual, physical, and social, and they look for brands that offer sanctuaries rather than pressure. Customer journeys must allow for reflection and stressless decision making, creating relevance without disturbance: retail that is the opposite of Black Friday. Brands that build loyalty through non-invasive methods and purposeful communication have an advantage but they must balance this non-intrusive approach desired by customers with the need to stay relevant to outperform competitors. Brands must also think beyond traditional marketing as the world of selling will change as people more frequently remove themselves from online environments or stop using social media. Ultimately, the new competitive advantage for retail is not "more features," but the ability to provide less noise, turning calmness itself into a reward, and positioning the home, the store, and the brand experience as sanctuaries from chaos, and a place to get back to individual meaning in a world of excess.

- How might we use calmness as a new competitive advantage in retail?
- How might we find new ways of offline engagement?

4

Mood-Adaptive Living

As emotional outsourcing becomes the norm and people rely on their environments, both physical and digital, to regulate how they feel, the implications for retail are clear: retailers must shift from selling product features to delivering emotional outcomes. Retail becomes about selecting companions rather than products and requires emotional inclusivity as a mandatory design feature. With this, retail becomes a mood-regulating ecosystem, attracting customers to keep coming back as every visit adapts itself in real time to their mood. This hyper-tailoring reduces the risk of negative experiences so retailers adopt Emotion-as-a-Service (EaaS) models, competing on their ability to provide emotional safe spaces. Ultimately, the future of retail loyalty relies not on what is sold, but in how people feel, moment by moment.

- How might we embed emotional responsiveness into our products, store journey and digital tools?

Strategic Opportunities

5

Synthetic Confidence

The tension between synthetic efficiency and human authenticity will ultimately trend one direction: human intelligence becomes luxury. As AI saturates every layer of life and brands are increasingly optimized for algorithmic visibility rather than human connection, consumers reject dependence on algorithmic logic and the loss of the ability to choose for themselves. People will crave moments, products, and platforms that not only feel, but are, genuinely human made and free from AI manipulation. This shift transforms real human intelligence into a new premium, and retailers will find a competitive edge by offering “NO AI” experiences and building loyalty not through uncannily perfect personalization, but through trust, transparency, and the reassurance that not everything is artificially engineered.

- How might we build loyalty by capitalizing on human authenticity?

Outro

I refined my curation skills, learned to spot patterns in a structured way, and connected insights through creative, strategic thinking. I grew more confident using creativity to turn complexity into clarity, while collaborating with a multicultural team that broadened my perspective.

Nathalia

I really enjoyed hunting for signals & seeing our trends reflected in the real world. This project taught me valuable lessons about synthesizing insights & applying futures thinking.

Roan

I learned how to weave the customer's identity & needs into the process, & this is something I want to focus on more. And, coming from a design background, I found a way to integrate my visual intuition into trend research. At the same time, I became aware that my personal preferences can sometimes limit how I explore different visual / research realities.

Valerie

My biggest learning from this process was how impactful the sources one looks at has on the information and learnings you gather. It sounds simple but I don't think we realize how easily most of us get stuck in our patterns of consumption. This class inspired me to broaden my inputs: magazines, news feeds, books, even streets I walk on, to get a more comprehensive idea of what's going on in the world.

Anyu

Mentorship

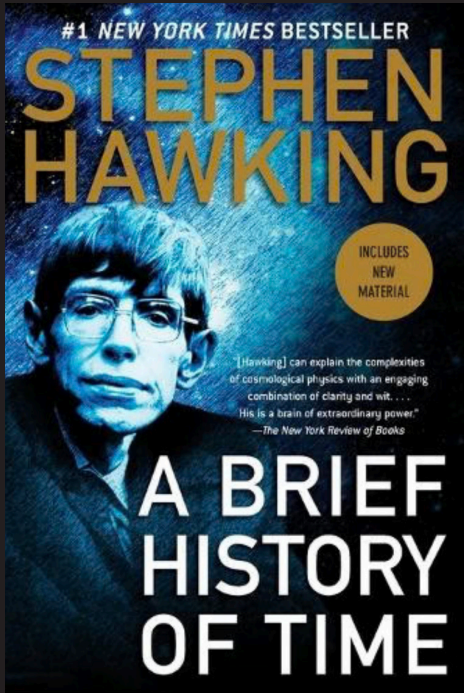
ELISAVA, Master in Business Design: Trends Module

- Livia Fioretti
- Laura Gusart
- Xavi Puig

Xplore Studio:

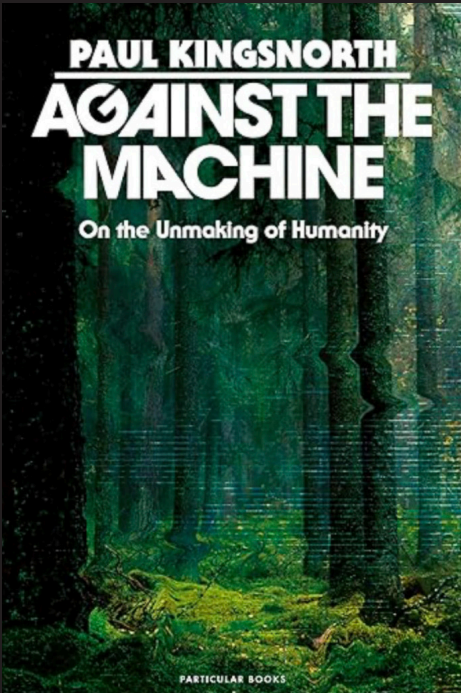
- Peter Abrahamsson Lindeblad

Other Interesting References



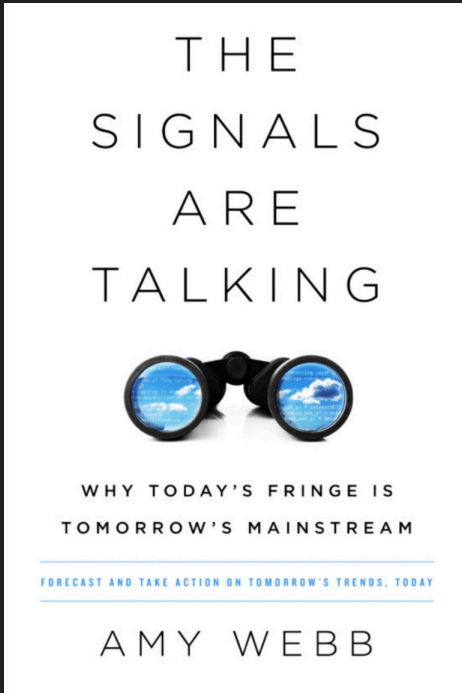
A Brief History Of Time

A Brief History of Time has guided nonscientists everywhere to confront the supreme questions of the nature of time and the universe, taking them to distant galaxies, black holes, alternate dimensions.



Against The Machine

In Against the Machine, novelist and essayist Paul Kingsnorth offers a striking critique of techno-capitalism, showing how technological progress has eroded humanity, harmed the Earth, and reshaped society. From the Industrial Revolution to AI, he reveals the deep spiritual and economic roots of this transformation and the stakes for our very souls.



The Signals Are Talking

In The Signals Are Talking, futurist Amy Webb explains how to detect early “signals” of change and use them to anticipate trends. She shows how today’s fringe ideas often become tomorrow’s mainstream, providing a framework for strategic foresight and decision-making.



Podcast

Three friends in conversation, navigating a world of constant change. We aim to shed light on major, often challenging subjects. Discussing what it means to be human in these curious and complex times.



Yuval Noah Harari