

# THE REALLY FABULOUS EVENT CO.

## TREND #1: VIRTUALITY



In 2018, we will be living in a **world where devices outnumber humans**. The Virtuality trend takes us well beyond the “it’s all about me” syndrome and emphasizes the new level of customization and personalization that is possible and that we, as planners and suppliers, will have to find a way to incorporate.

Virtuality moves our event participants beyond the simple two-dimensional.

They are going to insist on being viscerally immersed in the experience. Most importantly, they will also want to be in control. Instead of being presented with a pre-meditated, formatted viewing

experience, our new participants want to be able to choose their own path, navigate their own way and make an experience wholly their own.

The new event participant will be CONNECTED, IN CONTROL, LIVING THE MOMENT and HAVING IT THEIR WAY.

Their expectations are changing, rapidly.

We need to provide more individualized experiences that satisfy this new demand for uniquely personal moments that are worthy of sharing (if you create them, you also have to facilitate sharing them).

More than ever, one size will not fit all.

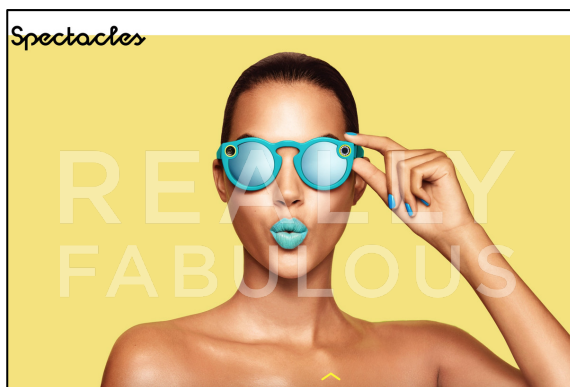
We instinctively look to technology to help us deliver on this. All the usual suspects come into play here (Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, Mixed Reality, 360° video, Video Live Streaming, holograms and, more recently, Chatbots, gesture interactivity and other artificial intelligence, Virtual Reality Streaming, VR meetings and the list goes on). There’s been a lot of hype about the limitless potential of it all but our ability to use much of this technology at our events has been limited because of budgets and accessibility. Game-changing, easy to use and accessible technology and apps that address this trend are (and will be) literally at our fingertips.

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Here are some examples of this:



We can actually connect with friends in virtual reality with **Facebook Spaces** – this app allows users to hang out with friends in a fun, interactive virtual environment as if you were in the same room. Facebook Spaces launched for Oculus Rift and Google Touch in April of this year and can be downloaded from the Oculus Store. It really doesn't get much simpler or affordable to live stream in virtual reality. Super fun!



We also have **Snapchat's Spectacles** to play with. "Specs" allow users to easily make a 360, 10-second recording of what they are actually seeing in real time and broadcast it on a supporting device. Think of how fun it would be to pass out a few of these at our events for our participants to use and share! All it takes is a pair of \$130 glasses and a Snapchat account!

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

"My siblings own these. They are now available on Amazon."

"Amazon has them? Great. I was looking to order a set but the site didn't ship to Canada."

"Any ideas on when and why you'd use Snapchat Spectacles during smaller business sessions?"

"Probably only for large interactive events."

**Diane responds:** I think Specs can work for ANY event of ANY size! In my opinion, "why" is because they give your audience the chance to share their unique experience in real time so that others can experience their experience, which is what Virtuality is all about. The answer to "when" is anytime at all! Why not during sessions or breaks or networking events or awards galas?

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Apple’s ARKIT already offers a framework that allows you to easily create augmented reality experiences. But, coming in September (and what is completely game-changing for event planners) is Apple’s release of IOS 11 that will make our iPhones AR-ready! This means that a whole slew of fun apps will be hard on its heels and we can utilize these as part of our event tech plans in a way that will already feel natural to our participants.

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

“Definitely looking forward to IOS 11. AR could be so helpful when designing an event space. Imagine seeing furniture in the room before you rent it!”

“Great way to do walkthroughs for tradeshow like Home and Garden Show. Think remote guest teaser content for the Snapchat glasses.”

**Diane responds:** That’s a plus, for sure. AR can easily enhance any live experience for your guests – yes, including trade shows. But what about sponsor activations, silent auctions, even food stations?!!

One of the most compelling things about the Virtuality trend is how it speaks to multiple perspectives and our desire and ability to see and experience things in different ways. Activities like Dine in the Dark and Escape Rooms really reflect this trend and truly put our audiences into the driver’s seat. Alternative meeting formats like five-minute talks that represent different points of view on one topic, chat rooms like we are kind of doing today, or unstructured living room styled meetings speak to the demand for peer-based information exchange and solutions. For those who don’t have an AI budget, do things like delegate match-making using no-technology techniques like “currently” badges. Bring in handwriting analysts to quickly pair up or group our participants using simple signatures and unique qualifiers.

**Candy personality chart**

<b>CHEWY</b> A tough cookie who can take whatever is thrown at him or her; very hands-on.	<b>DARK CHOCOLATE</b> The ultimate in sophistication, with gracious behaviour and excellent taste; mature, resourceful and polished.	<b>HARD</b> Slow and steady; logical, open, balanced and sensible.
<b>SOUR</b> Will take an extremist who worships the thrill of danger and puts everything on the line.	<b>MILK CHOCOLATE</b> Loving, passionate, positive and idealistic; seeks out the good in people, places and things.	<b>FLUFFY</b> Independent, non-conformist, easy to talk the lines for cause.
<b>RETRO</b> Quirky but confident and prefers things that are vintage.	<b>WHITE CHOCOLATE</b> Well rounded, confident and in the know; a trendsetter who is never afraid to try something new.	<b>COLOURFUL</b> Has an omnibus-dance of artistic and creative abilities; easily inspired and a great problem-solver.

**Sex Drive & Trust Revealed in Handwriting**

Loner / Independent	Loner with lack of drive	Aggressive
Sexually Frustrated & open for anything.	Incomplete Sex life (Frustration)	Anti-Social (Lack of Trust)
Slow to trust Socially Selective	Healthy normal Physical Drive	Exaggerated Imagination & Sex Drive

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## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

"I sent a group of 20 corporate employees, all 40+ years old, to an escape room and they talked about it for weeks! It felt like a big risk at the time but it worked out!"

"Any suggestions for avoiding people getting sucked into their email when we ask them to use apps/their phones for events (such as this group discussion)? Finding myself checking out the discussion but being distracted by my email notifications."

**Diane responds:** We are all so used to multi-screening now that we cannot expect our participants to sit and listen to someone talk at them for any length of time. If they are too easily distracted then we are not engaging them well enough. I will have to do better next time to monopolize your attention! 😊

"Do you have the template for the 'currently' name badge you showed that we could get?"

"Yes please"

**Diane responds:** I don't have a template per se, but a sample is included above for your reference.

"Which tech trend do you recommend for a conference 75% 50+ age group, 20% 20+?"

**Diane responds:** Well, I'm 53 and I can confidently say that any of these trends would be appropriate. Don't think because your audience is older that aren't open to new, fun technology. The key to making that successful is having a tech concierge available to help as required. If you can support the technology with friendly assistance, everyone can enjoy. I also think the non-tech options would all work for that age group.

"Love the idea of a tech concierge"

"Heavy emphasis on technology-based trends has to be backed up by excellent access to WIFI ... otherwise it's a bust. Planners often forget to do dry runs on access to apps and it's very frustrating for attendees."

"Also consider what level of WIFI speeds and bandwidth is required for what you are supplying or asking."

**Make an effort to give your participants control and allow them to shape their own personalized experiences worth sharing.**

**Next up: Trend #2!**

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## TREND #2: THE UNFILTERED TRUTH – Making real MORE real



We no longer have the time or desire to cultivate a flawless persona (unless we're a Kardashian). Traits we once tried to hide – like being freckled, chubby or geeky – are now proudly displayed. Personality and individuality are climbing to the top of the social

pyramid. The slick and obviously-curated aesthetic that early forms of social media encouraged (like Instagram) are being rejected. We simply can't live up to that level of unreality.

The Unfiltered trend is direct, honest and rooted in reality. Because genuine authenticity is so very scarce these days, anything that is truly genuine is what people are going to pay attention to. This trend gives us the permission we have needed to re-inject transparency, energy and passion into our communications and connect with our audiences in more meaningful ways.

Descriptors for this trend are **AUTHENTIC, INFORMAL, TRANSPARENT, UNPREDICTABLE, REAL BOLD, FEARLESS AND PASSIONATE.**

To those of us in the event world, this trend is saying, "let's be transparent, let's allow the flow and exchange of ideas and dialogue to be true and spontaneous, let's strip things down and get real. Ditch dress codes and pretensions, positions and titles, let's make ourselves accessible, let's stop trying to control the experience and give into unpredictability. Let's show our people by our actions AND our words that they can trust us. It's a powerful message.

So, let's put it into an event context by using one of my favourite things – the what's in and what's out list:

**OUT:** Formal, elaborately-decorated lounges designed more for look than function.

**IN:** Informal, cozy and connected hang-out areas (think LIVING ROOMS) where participants feel comfortable digging in, sharing points of view and exchanging learning. To be authentic, we need to use these spaces as meeting environments within our planned agendas, not just as seating at evening receptions and networking events.

### FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

"Rec Rooms! Love it."

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**OUT:** Jam-packed, overly-controlled event schedules.

**IN:** Free, UNFILTERED time to give our guests and participants a chance to absorb, reflect, determine their own unique points of view, tell stories, and learn from each other without our intrusion.

**OUT:** Meaningless amusement.

**IN:** “Edutainment,” – a little something new for you, which is a fearless, raw and direct approach to storytelling that epitomizes the Unfiltered trend! Can learning about what matters to us be a form of entertainment? How could we be using that concept at our events? Wouldn’t it be cool to do an **interactive What Matters to Me Wall** in place of a step and repeat? Or have guests contribute to a **living library of bookmarked websites** that represent things they care about?

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

“What matters to me wall, love it.”

“Love the ‘what matters to me’ wall! What a great way to personally connect with people at our event!!”

“Tell us when you have used these things and how they worked.”

**Diane responds:** I would happily fill another hour-long session (or more) with answers to that. Suggestion box, anyone?

**OUT:** Censorship and Hiding Behind Barriers

**IN:** Being accessible and unscripted. The Unfiltered Truth trend tells us the time is now to make our leadership teams and industry VIPs accessible to our audiences and allow them opportunities to be truly genuine. Get them out of private meetings and off-limits VIP lounges and bring them away from podiums reading prepared speeches. If we create trust by being authentic, our participants will sit up and take notice.

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

“I believe podiums are a big out. Wireless is now.”

“How do you deal with a Twitter wall or something that gives immediate feedback that turns negative? That’s the biggest fear from higher-ups on not wanting interactive options.”

“Most Twitter wall technologies actually include a curation layer in which Tweets have to be approved before going to the wall. This requires someone to monitor it in real time, but it’s fairly standard capability for the exact reason you mention.”

“You can often turn a filter on to filter out swear words or you can pay for a person to monitor the wall and pre-screen the Tweets before you put them up so you can avoid backlash or negative comments popping up as a surprise.”

“It comes down to you/your client’s preferences. Obviously you want to edit inappropriate language or comments. A live moderator is the best to make moment-specific decisions.”

“Thanks for the feedback on the Twitter wall. Devil’s advocate: isn’t it unauthentic to censor the wall or monitor before posting?”

**Diane responds:** Exactly!! The trend is UNfiltered, authentic, real. We don’t want to be censoring a Twitter wall. That would completely go against the trend. If your organization wants to show that they are authentic and transparent, they shouldn’t worry about negative comments. They should answer those constructively and get their point of view across. Just deal in truth.

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“How do you introduce these changes to the presenters so they’re receptive and don’t look at you like WTF?”

**Diane responds:** It’s all about understanding and communicating the why and the result. If you understand why you are asking them to do things a certain way, you will be able to express your instructions as the expert in a way that *they* also understand. People tend to resist change and anything outside their comfort zone. Once they understand the great result they will get, their reaction will change and they will come over to your side.

**OUT:** Shiny, sparkly keynotes telling a scripted story (like me, today)

**IN:** Real people telling authentic stories. Think in terms of Bloggers and Vloggers rather than polished television analysts, Extreme Sports Athletes instead of Olympians, EXPERIENCE-ISTS rather than REPORTERS. We need unfiltered truth from every point of view, not polish and gloss from a single perspective. Diversity is no longer a novelty, it’s a norm – so be inclusive. I also feel it’s important to note that **WOMEN CONTINUE TO BE ON THE RISE**. The new woman on the scene here is someone like Ultimate Fighting champion Ronda Rousey OR Beyoncé taking a baseball bat to car windows. She is Charlize Theron as the fierce Atomic Blonde. And she is even Hillary Clinton, the first mainstream female presidential candidate in US history. Female powerhouses have been on the rise for the past 10 years and their popularity is only going to increase. There are amazing, unfiltered, REAL women out there with genuine stories and knowledge to share, and we should be unleashing them among our participants and using their unique points of view to elevate our events.

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

“Authenticity – I hope that’s not just a trend but how we really start to evolve as people!

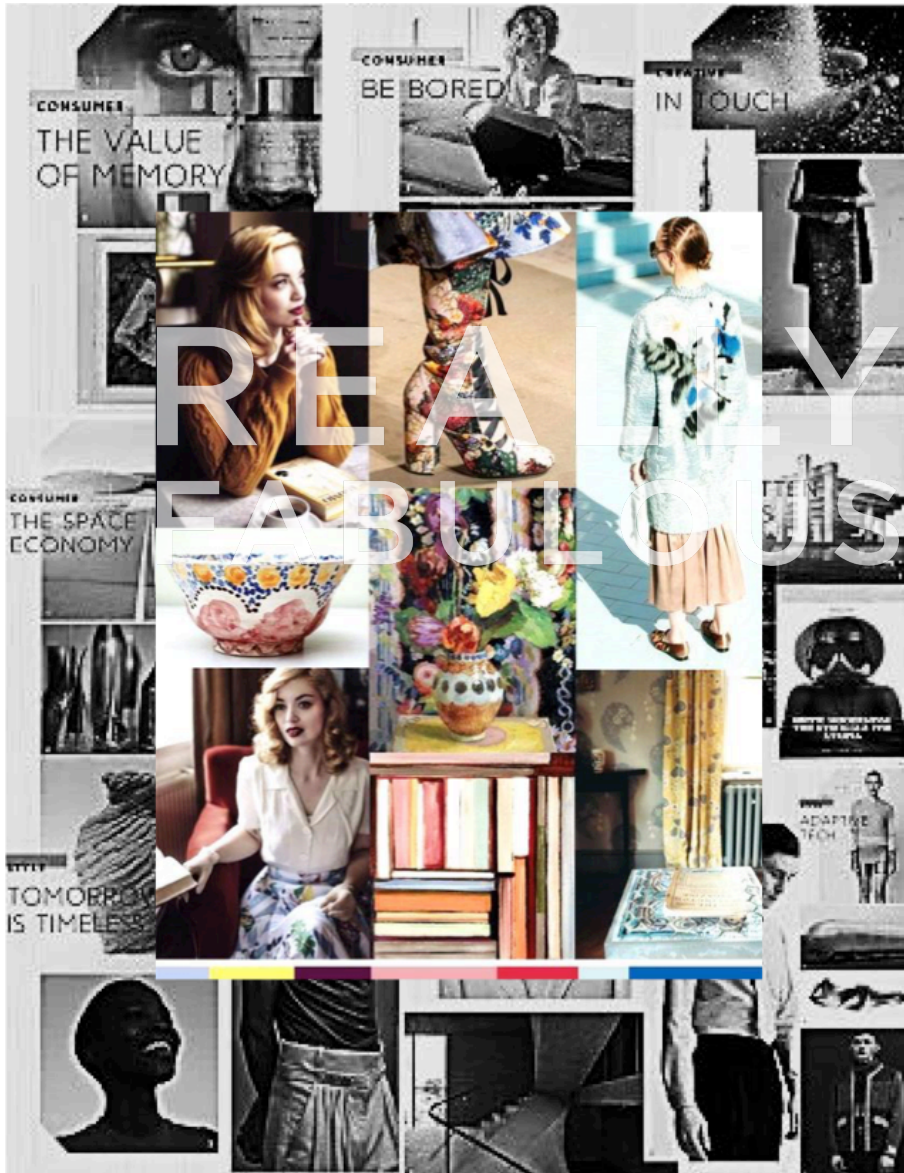
“You say bloggers and vloggers could be used as speakers to be more authentic, but this is an industry that has turned very unauthentic in recent years.”

**Diane responds:** I think the very fact that we see so much that is “unauthentic” explains precisely why this concept is trending. My hope is that we can find authentic people to tell their real stories in all industries and benefit from this trend. The idea of using bloggers or vloggers is in contrast to using speakers who are simply reporting on a story, rather than truly living it.

Next up: Trend #3!

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## TREND #3: THE ARTISAN TREND (aka the Maker Movement)



Artisan looks, products and experiences are dominating today's marketplace.

This trend is epitomized by a crafts and craftsmanship as an antidote to the digital world, the elevation of the basics and the importance of gathering communities in real life.

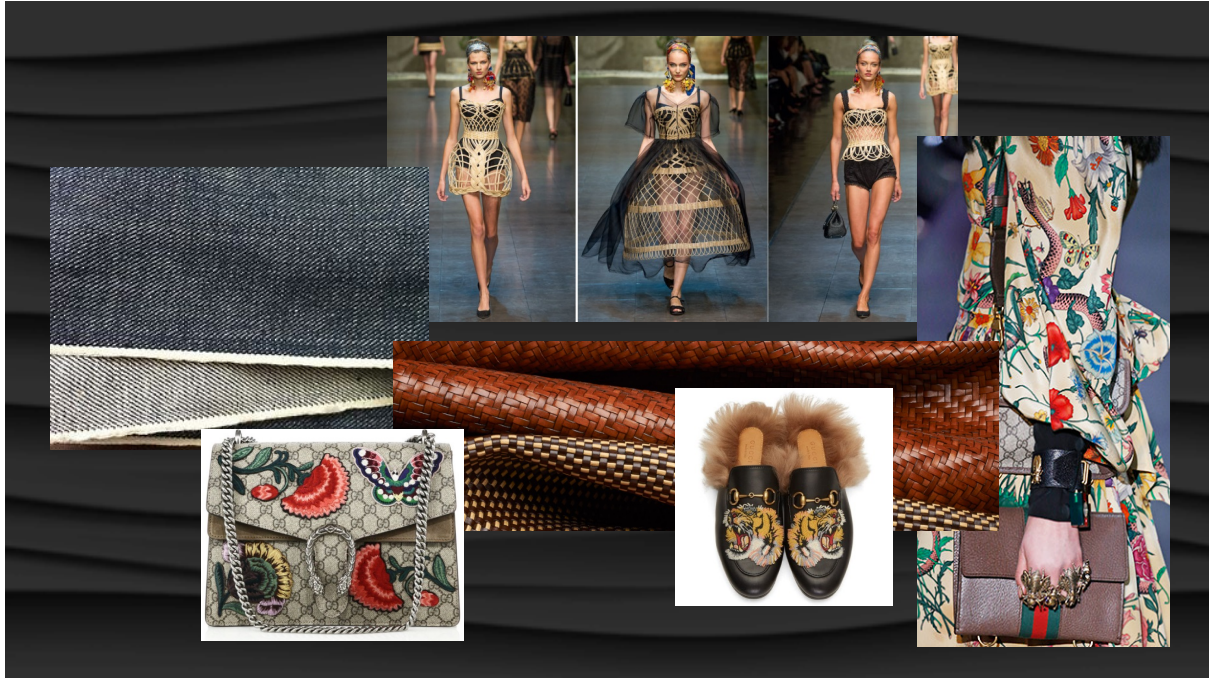
Simply put, this trend is about preserving and using the knowledge and objects of the past in order to imagine and shape the future.

Today, we see its influence across all industries, which makes it a macro trend (one that spans at least five years), so it's worth exploring the myriad ways this trend can influence our events over the next year.

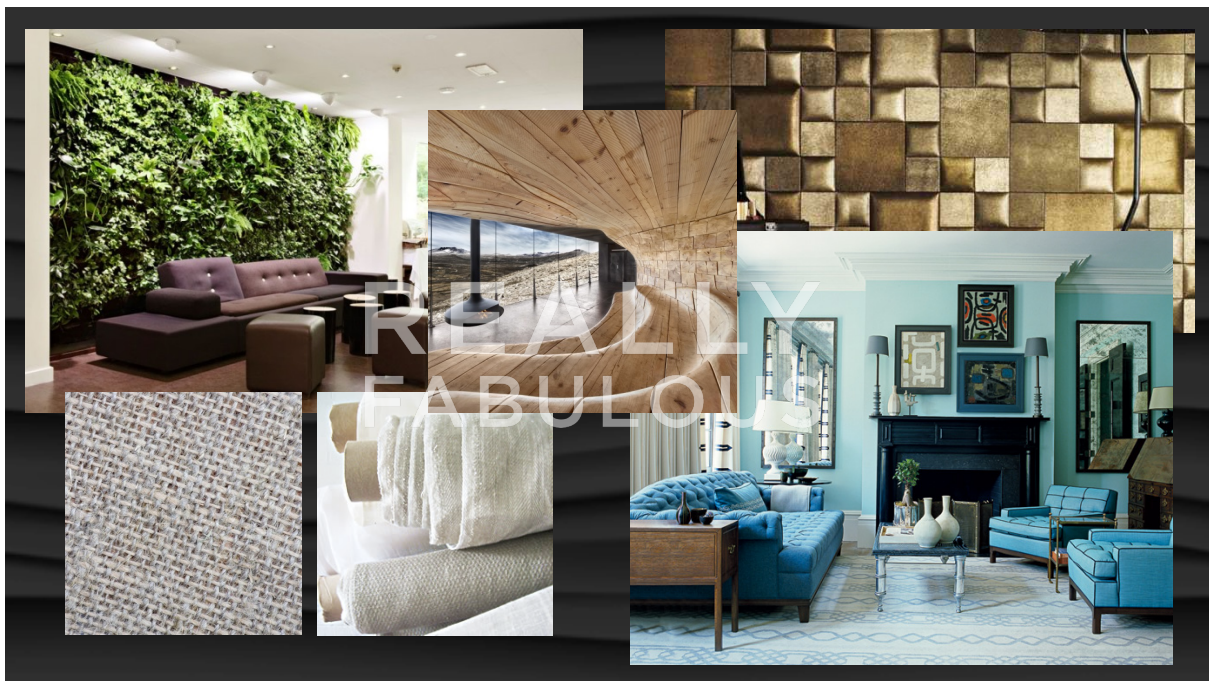
We can use this trend in at our mainstream gatherings like holiday parties, welcome receptions, and galas over the next few seasons for décor, food, beverages, activities and activations, even entertainment.



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In **apparel and textiles** it offers us floral and folkloric patterns, fine embroidery, raw indigo fabrics, raffia, woven leather.



In **interiors** things like house plants and living walls, natural materials like flax, linen, wood, leather again, mono-chromatic schemes using colour (so all shades of blue together, repeated patterns together, textures together, and so on).

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In **paper and printing**, we are revisiting sepia tones, Kraft paper, canvas, waxed papers, calligraphy that is modern, off-kilter, engraved and burnished branding.



In **food and beverage** there is an obvious move toward things like craft beer and craft cocktails. In fact just yesterday I read an article from PCMA about a convention that partners with a local craft brewer to offer their participants Belgian Golden Ale brewed exclusively for the event and named by the delegates! There's a steal-worthy idea! There is also a shift towards more authentic experiences like artisan gin (Fairmont Empress Hotel Gin) and third or even fourth wave coffee, along with a revival of the slow food and slow cities movements, artisan cakes and cupcakes, Milk Cafes, Cereal Cafes, event Cat Cafes and Pet Therapy.

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Hospitality at our events will be influenced with an emphasis on sharing, communal eating, friendly service, home-cooked, wholesome, natural and uncomplicated foods.

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

“Serving family style is a great way to get people talking.”

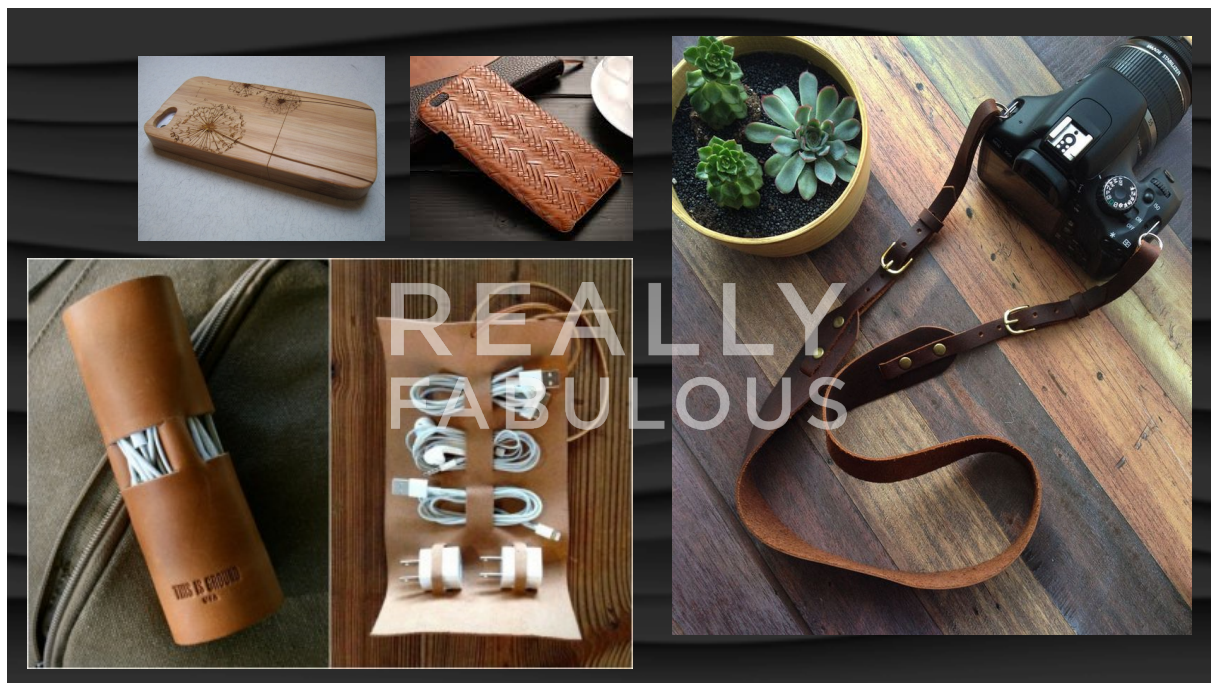
“Very true.”

“Good point!”

“Customer service should be a mainstay, not a trend.”

“Especially in this industry.”

“Agreed. Service makes or breaks the experience. Everyone deserves courtesy and respect.”



At this year’s CES (Consumer Electronics Show), it was clear that the artisan trend had even infiltrated the tech space. Slick and minimalist tech accessories gave way to a new, craft-inspired style reminiscent of high-quality, handmade leather goods, offering nostalgic comfort in our fast-paced forward-striving tech world.

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As we look ahead into 2018 and 2019, the Artisan Trend is predicted to be adopted as a way to solve critical problems on a global scale.



An early example of this is the handcrafted medical device that was developed in Bolivia with knitters from one of the country's indigenous communities. It can repair heart defects in children without the need for invasive surgery. **A crafted item, teamed with sophisticated technology, to solve a critical problem. Remembering or using the past to imagine the future.** Very cool. So, for us as event creators, this idea of pairing basics with technology, is a big influencer and opens up a big world of event possibilities.



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A company that really gets this is MakeLab, who I'm sure you are all familiar with. Their laser selfie cookies are a perfect example of this trend as are the chocolates they are lasering right here at the show upstairs. They are essentially taking a handcrafted item (a cookie or a chocolate) and pairing it with laser technology to create a highly personalized experience. So, too, is their digital colouring wall. Colouring – a basic beloved pastime that we can do with our hands, combined with technology to create a digital experience that is wholly customized. No two creations on the wall are ever the same, thus a uniquely personalized and customized experience that participants can wholly make their own.

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

"Selfie cookies – you are what you eat!"

"Love the selfie cookie!"

Next up: Trend #4!

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## TREND #4: WELLNESS

The wellness movement, believe it or not, is still in its relative infancy. Yet, in the last few years, the global wellness market has exploded into a \$3.7tn industry.

**TECH FOR EVERY BODY**  
WEARABLES ARE REVOLUTIONIZING HOW WE CONNECT — INCLUDING AT MEETINGS  
By Janet Kornblum

**EYEWEAR**  
Whether you want to augment reality, have maps or floor plans beamed directly to your eyeball or immerse yourself in virtual worlds, glasses are the way to go:

- **Google Glass** is not yet available on the general market, but will be at some point.
- **Microsoft HoloLens** is expected later this year. Promises to blend holograms with reality, making them tools for daily life and work, including virtual meetings to view and work on a group project in three dimensions.
- **Epson's Moverio BT-200 Smart Glasses** (\$700) have a screen on the lens that overlays images onto the real world; hands-free navigation, video/image capture.
- **Vuzix (Wear 720)** ships this summer for \$499.99; projects a screen onto your eyes and provides sounds—great for gamers and movie-watchers.

**JEWELRY**  
Look stylish while keeping on top of business:

- **Cuff** (starting at \$49) is a pendant/bracelet that tracks activity and sends and receives alerts.
- **Ringy** (\$195) is a ring with customized alerts—it vibrates and lights up in different colors depending on whether it's hotel staff or your mom.
- **MICA cuff** (\$495), with an 18-karat gold finish, has a curved sapphire touchscreen that lets you view your messages, calendar and alerts.

**WATCHES**  
Both Apple Watch and smartwatches that run on Android work in conjunction with phones to send texts, email and other data directly to your wrist. They also serve as fitness trackers, and will become increasingly functional as new applications are developed for them:

- **Apple Watch** (\$349-\$17,000—the latter for an 18-karat yellow gold case)
- **Motorola Moto 360** (\$249.99-\$330)
- **Samsung Gear** (\$199-\$299)

**HEALTH & FITNESS TRACKERS**  
The quantified self is here to stay, whether counting steps or calories, miles moved or hours slept. Some fitness trackers are currently beset—and numbers will triple by 2015. The more complicated you get, the more you pay. Leading trackers include:

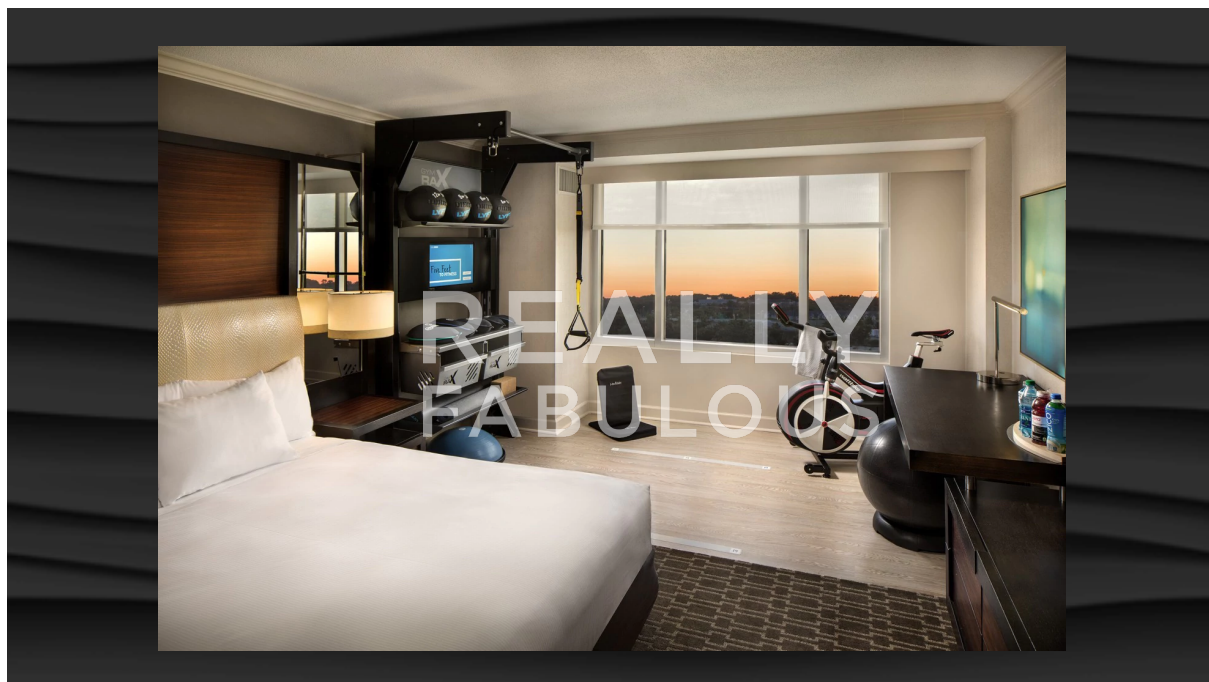
- **Fitbit** (\$95-\$249.95) and **Livestrong** (\$99-\$179.99) offer simple trackers to go with full functionality.
- **Fit by Start** (\$49.99 and \$100) provides two types of simple trackers.
- **Garmin Base** (\$50) tracks and lets you see email and other information.
- **Fit Mi Band** (from \$18.99) from Xiaomi is simple, affordable and highly accurate.

**CLOTHING & SHOES**  
If clothes make the man, smart clothes make the smart (wo)man. A few to ponder:

- **Sensorn** (starting at \$49) socks, bras and T-shirts relay data about cadence and foot-landing while running to heart rate.
- **Alto** (\$99-\$199) fitness tops and bottoms track performance and send data to phones via Alton Core (\$199).
- **Obtained** (starting at \$100) tops and bottoms track heart rate and breathing; relays data to phones via Little Black Box (\$140). Longer-term goal is for data to spur user action to promote wellness and happiness, along with fitness.
- **Lechal** (\$150-\$200) is a startup in India that makes shoes and insoles that vibrate to tell you to turn left or right, or to speed up. Pairs with a GPS app that collects data; can also be used to point you to the meeting room or that hot new restaurant.

**TREND: DRESS FOR SUCCESS**  
HOTELS: TAKE CHARGE  
TECH: A TOP PRIORITY  
LIFE: AT STAY

We already have smart tech wearables, but the next wave for this trend will take more of a holistic view of health and lifestyle, going beyond step-tracking to help us feel happy, stimulated and at our best.



Wellness tourism has emerged, with an influx of hotels featuring rooms designed for optimum

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wellbeing and stress relief. This alone has grown at a rate of 14%, compared to the overall industry's 6% growth.

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

"Is that hotel with the gym a rendering or is it an actual place?"

"I hope it's real!"

"It looks like the Equinox Hotel in NYC."

**Diane responds:** It's actually a Hilton room.

"Hotels are offering free bikes in their lobbies now (to this trend)."

**Diane responds:** Yes! And don't forget that some have hotel dogs to pet and walk! Although nothing new, this also is a valuable wellness offering.

Corporations are consciously looking for ways to incorporate wellness into their events and meetings, beyond the usual offerings of a morning run or yoga class and "healthier" food options.

In the coming years, this trend is going to split off into two directions:



Extreme optimization as a result of DNA customization going main stream – think hyper-personalized diets based on at-home DNA testing and home delivery of optimal food ingredients based on a customer's blood type.

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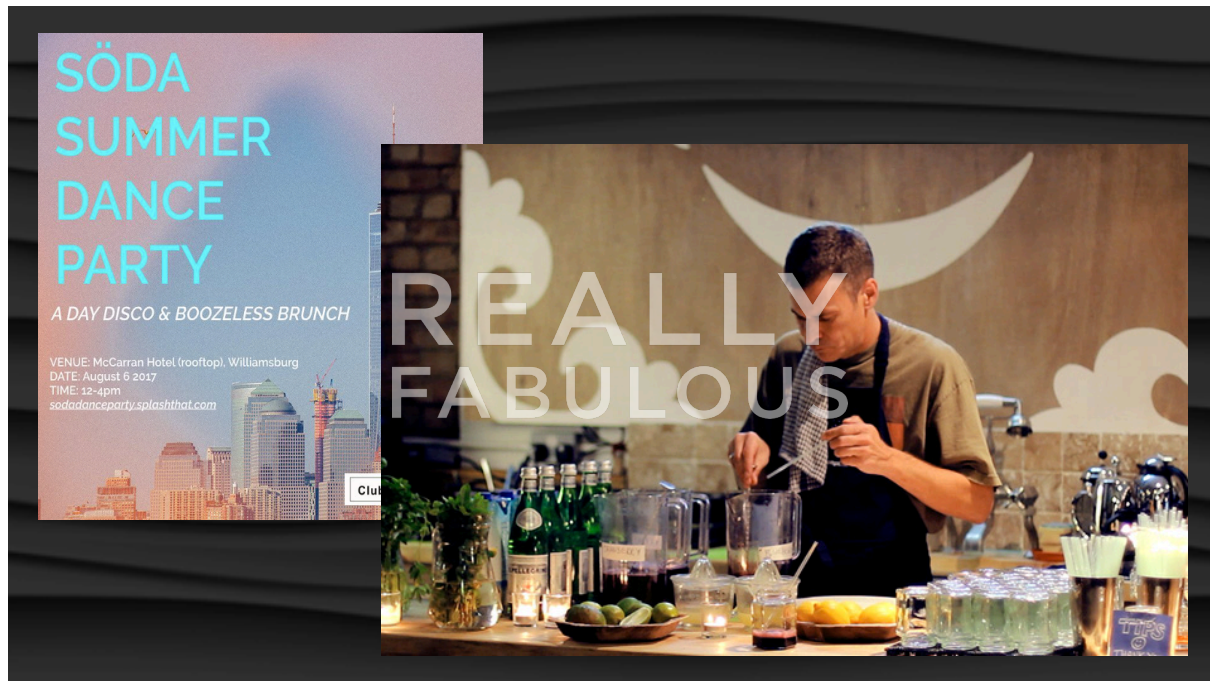


And on the other side – Extreme Anti-Wellness: some consumers will reject the wellness movement with ANTI-DIET activities like beer and pizza yoga. It's true. Just like the flawless persona we talked about in the Unfiltered Truth trend, there is always a backlash when we cannot live up to such restrictive and limiting standards. And, once again, this reinforces the new fact that one size is never again going to fit all.

We need to start thinking about imaginative and unique ways of integrating wellness into our live gatherings. And the answer for those of us trying to please everyone all the time may well lie in creating ENVIRONMENTS in which our guests can enjoy their own healthy behaviours. For example:



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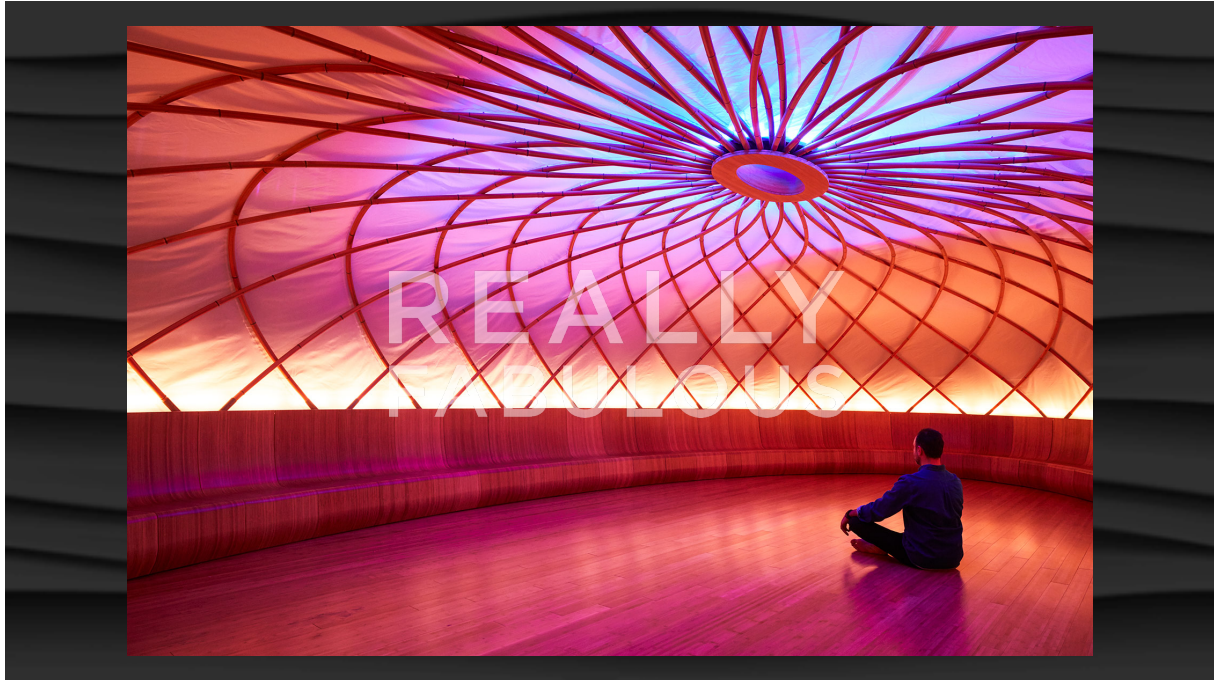


Club Soda types of events for the sober-curious. These have been inspired by places like Redemption, a non-alcoholic bar in London that offers alcohol-free decadence, as does Sober – a club night in Stockholm. Think about **natural relaxation drinks served at Tranquini bars with scent atomizers and handcrafted pots of thriving plants**. Doesn't that sound like a refreshing change to the overdone Martini bar?



Oh those crazy Swedes – they are big into the whole clean living party phenomenon. Have you heard of lunch beat? It's quite simply a giant dance party that happens during workers' lunch breaks. And these lunch beat events are corporately endorsed!

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Have we considered yoga raves or meditation breaks in clean spaces with colour therapy lighting to replace conventional activities?



Lessons and journeys into lifestyle philosophies like the Hygge movement that is based on the Danish for coziness and contentment?

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Or what about simply bringing a session outdoors, either seated or as part of a hike? And, while we're at it, why not make that Yoga class part of an evening event or pre-dinner activity? It is said that food really does taste better after yoga!

## FROM GROUP DISCUSSION:

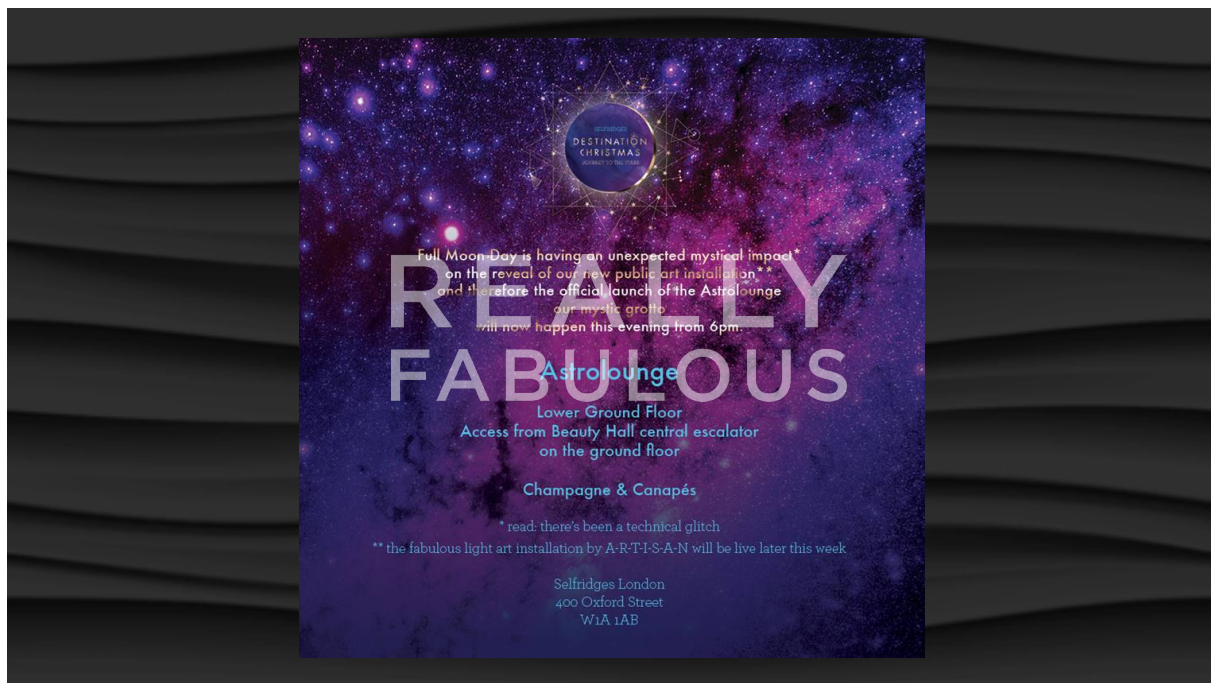
"With hotels being so finicky on space, not sure they would like groups going outside and sitting on their lawn for a session."

**Diane responds:** If a hotel or other venue has appropriate outdoor space to offer for your session and, weather-permitting, this idea might give us another way to include wellness into our meeting and event offerings.

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Without getting too weird or “out there,” I also want to mention that there has been a strong emergence of spiritual wellness spaces and activity concepts globally, so wellness of course goes beyond the physical. Did anyone attend an event for the solar eclipse on Monday? There were loads of them!



Full-moon parties and Astrolounge events are becoming quite popular and newly unique. Astrology, Tarot and alternative spiritual therapies are enjoying a resurgence in corporate events. Move over Lululemon and welcome back Miss Cleo!

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This part of the wellness trend also speaks to an emerging obsession with the cosmos and space so when we host events of this type, we should be using that as inspirations for our visuals and trying to create atmospheres based on the constellations.

It's clear that emotional wellbeing will become just as important as physical health and this rising demand can provide us with a number of new event possibilities.

Next up: Trend #5!

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## Trend #5: GENERATIONAL INFLUENCES (aka youth tonic)



Now, more than ever, all generations are embracing each other's unique characteristics and traits, and for the older generations, youth culture is starting to become a major influence. In fact, youth itself will become a state of mind; while the growth of virtual reality and data will allow for new means of creative expression and self-identity.

I would like to think that by now we all “get” the millennial generation and that we see many of their specific tendencies infiltrating how we behave and feel.

It's now time to start paying attention to Gen Z (also called the iGeneration and Founders), those born after 1995 – the younger siblings of the Millennials. According to Forbes, Gen Zers will make up 40% of consumers by 2020, and are now just coming into the work force. They are smarter than baby boomers and more ambitious than Millennials.

Here are five key characteristics that we, as meeting and event professionals, need to learn about Generation Z:

1. They do not believe in the limitations set by school or the corporate workplace. Their entrepreneurial and creative spirits will manifest into incredible start-ups and change in the workplace. They are going to be all over **Virtuality** and **Wellness**. They will automatically expect to be able to meet in virtual reality and to do so seamlessly, so if there was ever a time to get into the business of virtual reality meeting planning, it's now!

REALLY  
FABULOUS

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2. They value the truth. Searching the web or shooting a text to a friend to find the truth is second nature to them. Therefore, we must understand that **transparency** is always the best policy when it comes to Gen Z. This takes us back to all of the attributes of the Unfiltered Truth trend.
3. They want to be able to experience the world through many of their peers' eyes. The global interactions and thoughts shared by Gen Z have created more commonality between their international peers than the adults living in their own country. There is another trend called "Kinship" that we will also be seeing in the next few years that incorporates this concept of world and world relationships. If we can provide our participants with ways to experience how people in other parts of the world live and what their experiences are in AUTHENTIC ways (be it through food, environment, virtual reality or other), we will hit the mark with this trend, not just for the Gen Z but for **all** of us.
4. They do not know a world without technology, meaning that we only have eight seconds to grab their attention. As they multitask between their laptops, their mobile devices, the TV, and their gaming consoles, appealing to Gen Z has to be immediate - as easy and as fast as snapping a finger. Oh, and they also get a kick out of things they consider to be retro (like the 2000s!)
5. They expect that our events and information will be accessible across all mediums. Therefore, if they can't access what we're doing from their mobile devices or gaming consoles, for example, they simply won't bother. Events that are on ALL social media platforms show the Gen Z participant that we want to interact with them and we aren't afraid to be transparent.

Next up: The Magpie Effect!

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## The MAGPIE EFFECT:



None of the information I have given you applies to every one and every thing. The most important thing to remember is that one size does not fit all and it never will again. Really consider a trend before automatically adopting it into your events. Some things will be right for some while other things will be right for others.



Just because you can doesn't mean you should. Use skinny jeans as your barometer – they may have been trendy but a lot of people wore them that shouldn't have. Maybe virtual reality isn't the right fit for your group. Maybe that's your skinny jeans.



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Don't do it because it's trending. Really ask yourself if using a particular trend is going to provide the benefits that will elevate your event. Go back to the tried-and-true Pros and Cons list to ensure you are including something for the right reasons.

We are so attracted to shiny sparkly things and anything new and trendy that it isn't until it goes over like a lead balloon that we realize not everything works for every application and that we shouldn't be wearing skinny jeans.

Know your audience and don't be sabotaged by the Magpie effect!!!

Hopefully you've already noticed that the trends we've explored here all meld one way or another into the next. When you think about what you've learned here, the overlaps will become quite obvious (if they haven't already). The more you are able to combine these trends, the more you will appeal to your event participants and the more engaged they will become in your events, and trusting in your organization.

We started with one statistic and we will end with another: in addition to the fact that devices will outnumber people by 2018, today just about half of the world's population is on the internet – that's almost 4 billion people. Every time you go online, you are sharing a space with 3 billion, nine hundred and ninety-nine million, nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand and nine hundred and ninety-nine other humans. **As event professionals, it is our responsibility to foster connections between our people and to promote understanding of each other's values. We are required to inspire honesty and preserve the learnings of the past. We must create healthy environments and practices for where we gather our participants and we have to make all generations feel welcome by designing experiences they can make their own.**

All you have to do is pay attention to the world around you which shouldn't be too difficult with 4 billion people at your fingertips.

Many thanks again for participating.

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