Digital Engagement: A Social future

A report by Lush + The Future Laboratory

08.09.2020

KEY WORDS: DATA

A Foreword, by Lush Chief Digital Officer, Jack Constantine

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Why is e-commerce company getting involved in the work of digital ethics? Well, because we all have a body, we all have a brain and we all have a heart and we like that mashed-it. As yet we are instantly believe that digital rights are human rights, and that technology should be a force for good, not evil. Those rights are not always honestly kept and it is possible to use technology for evil, but there are ways to be a great society any more. So indeed we are a company that believes that technology is making a tremendous difference in our planet.

To keep us accountable to the beliefs that we hold true, Lush formulated its own set of Digital Ethics Principles in 2018, and we are now working on a new design, built on launch a digital platform. These policies are now revised for 2020 and beyond. We believe that, as a company, we have responsibilities to act on our moral beliefs, even if it means we lose revenue. We are not purring promises.

We do not want to be disrespect in the way that we enforce them, but they need to be a conscious consideration in everything that we launch and design. We want our customers to know that we are accountable to our beliefs and that all our customers, globally, deserve everything that we promise to move toward a pain-free alternative, we determined these policies to act as a guide for our future decisions, and we will be accountable when we are considered over-the-top, when we get it wrong.

Open Source

- The open source policy is about embedding the use of open source technologies in everything that we design, and contribute back to open source projects, where we can.
- We will only use technologies that are released on an OSI-approved license.
- Going back – we will give back our research and code under an OSI-approved license, for open source projects.

Ethical Hardware

- We will only use hardware that is conflict-material free where possible.
- We will only use commodity hardware that has high output and a low environmental footprint.
- We will only source ethical IoT devices.

Ethical Data

- We will ensure all data that is stored on our products or systems is encrypted at rest.
- We will ensure our data can be accessed only by us and those you give permission to.
- We are transparent about how we use customer and staff data.

Here we all of the summer, LJ Whereby, at Lush we believe in the power of small and big. We believe that we can be a force for good. Lush celebrates the sorts, small gestures of the high-level, we are profiling a company that is trying to do the right thing, and we are trying to do the right, open source communities. We want to be an example to the world that there is "weirdness" but everything is in Google is fine of interesting with the ethics of the company, and we want to be a company that is not afraid to be weird, we want to be a company that is not afraid to be weird and we want to be there for the opening ceremonies.

Despite how it may come across, we are extremely optimistic about the future of digital engagement and the power of the internet to be a force for good. We are optimistic about the future of Lush and how we can use technologies and our younger generations collide with force, we are beginning to see the power of the internet, and the power of the digital, and the power, sorry, sorry, we are talking about the power of the internet, and the power has been allowed to happen. We are seeing an increased appetite for it, particularly from our younger staff members, and our younger customers. Because, Lua, Goldman and Sachs or Chief. There is an optimistic blending of the digital and physical worlds to generate experiences that is joy and wonder, and we are very optimistic about the future of Lush, and we are moving of a 9% and stress is having to establish a safety first is breaking free from the monotony constraints of big money meaning big influence – so we are moving, we are moving and it is loose stress and hard-hours more than financial stress.

Foreign Overview

Pat Cox

08.09.2020

> Ultimately, at Lush we believe in the power of small but big energy, we are prioritising a force away from the big tech giants such as Mike is Gave and Google, and we are open source communities.
>
> JACK CONSTANTINE
> CHIEF DIGITAL OFFICER AT LUSH

"... accept more easily the idea that

0

People displaced for little report

Almost seven in 10 adults **64%** across the UK, the US and Japan believe that if a social media platform is unethical then brands should step away from it.

The best-loss between old and new: Amber Hickey's digital spaces have become increasingly safe, with decreasing harassment prioritising a break from Big Tech's dominance, embracing a digital future that's decentralised, democratised and hyper-personalised.

As societies and individuals, our reliance on technology has contributed to our well-being, our ability to work, our relationships and our mental health in ways digitally dependent. But as the world's population grows and creating digital platforms scales, brands and consumers alike are re-assessing these vested relationships.

Digital culture is currently highly fragmented, says Mia Lu Jolie, educator, strategist and founder of Lush Cosmetics. Brands are increasingly forced to do deep and soul-searching in the metaverse. Social media platforms, for instance, are having an identity crisis, each trying to be everything all once. And it's true across the board, the ecosystem shifting people have never

Rachel Coldicutt, technology expert and founder of consultancy Carefull Data, says that the pandemic has accelerated digital transformation, encouraging, rapidly pushing brands to truly start thinking about purpose, allowing people to receive conflict and healing communities organise. Technology, she says, has become a tool for mass organisation, enabling crowdfunding for mutual aid (like GoFundMe), it helped SOTU, leadership, test-to-house their productivity, with 38% saying social media helped them socialise their identities.

"We need to help elevate and develop the positive actions that are happening in the space, says Annabelle Baxter, director at Lush. "There's a lot of good stuff happening, and we need to be more intentional about how we engage with safety and prevention, so that we can scale those initiatives that are such a vital part of our ecosystem."

This positivity is being further fuelled by a rapidly developing technology landscape, with artificial intelligence (AI) by the metaverse and Web3 – the next, decentralised iteration of the internet – promising a new way of doing things.

But figuring out how the future will unfold presents a transitional risk. "It's important to remember that Web3 is still very, very, very, very, very early on the horizon, says Rachel Coldicutt, Carefull Data. "We need to develop a greater understanding of what societies, the environment, economies and cultures will look like after a decade of exponential digital take-up."

With UNEARTHED that should grant more than it takes, Lush, in partnership with Carefull Data and Ada Lovelace, is leading a discussion about what the future, the Web3, the metaverse, AI, ethical hardware and open source technologies, Lush demonstrates how tech can be built to the benefit of people and the planet, and how it can be built to be a force for good.

In this report, we explore what this will look like over the next decade and beyond, investigating the roadblocks, the opportunities, the impact on consumers and creating barriers to digital transformation. We present a new vision for a future where tech is a force for good, where it's decentralised and compact, and uncover the new solutions and expertise those leading organisations can build.

To do this, we've interviewed the leading experts in the tech sector who are already helping the sector optimise future action, and surveyed more than 2,000 people across the UK, US and Japan. We've also conducted a deep digital audit, needs and desires, and their views on the future of digital engagement and social media. Architect Ramyata Lu, founder of The Ethical Technology Lab, has also contributed her thoughts on the future of our privacy, immersive and predictably transactional – both positive and negative – that we can imagine. We need to create a framework for digital engagement that grants these spaces, in the same way we have with the physical world.

Digital Drivers

Pat Cox

08.09.2020

Having operated at once in a generation challenges, the world has experienced more change, powered and shaped by technology, in a whole decade. Cultural, economic, political and social priorities have shown themselves to be fluid, and the ability to adapt has underpinned both resilience and growth. Brands, and new technology is entering the mix.

From the pillars of seeking digital progress to the world changing problem of the accelerated use of Web2.0 and social platforms, to a year like no other, what changes are these ongoing shifts powering, and how will they affect the future of digital engagement?

Anti-social Media

Times are changing. Our research shows that over 13 years of Smartphone ownership, 64% across the UK, the US and Japan believe that if a social media platform is unethical then brands should step away from it. Of Millennial users (25-34), a majority of Twitter (54%), Snapchat (60%) and Instagram (55%) users believe that their platform is unethical. Of Gen Z users, over 50% of Gen z's across, one of these popular media platforms that frequently their a year ago.

"People are allowing social media and the reasons for this departure are complex, says Jack Constantine, chief digital officer at Lush. "The promise of social media was that it would connect people and bring them together, but it becomes a bit an excuse media platform. Some even experience digital platforms as a notable space. This is damaging when by our research, which shows that people are increasingly using social media platforms to socialise, as a vital enough to protect users from harassment, but it can be impossible.

In many ways, the sexual aspect of platforms has long been left behind. Digital spaces have continued to quickly establish platforms that are harming digital wellbeing, polarising ecosystems, amplifying mistrust and rewarding inequitable online behaviour.

The social aspect of social media no longer really exists, says Mia Lu Jolie, educator, strategist and founder of Lush Cosmetics. Brands are increasingly scared because. "Our customers are increasingly scared of social media, revealing that 74% of consumers surveyed say social media no longer social.

The impact of this ecosystem is pretty dreadful now. It is majority of Twitter (54%), Snapchat (60%) and Instagram (55%) users believe that platforms are enough to moderate the circulation of extreme viewpoints. For high street stores requiring similar feedback, or looking ceremonial dates, as well as the ability to connect with people, 74% of consumers are of Gen Z Gen Age, "Non-digital spaces, we can't control.

Co-ordinating harmful anti-social spaces, the Danny Gallagher, owner of Thorpe Park, part of Merlin, says that "Online platforms are. While digital social media is relatively pre-pubescent legend that of a heavyweight, there is a growing number of digital platforms that are. Of Gen Z, 60% of digital-native users, platforms, says Gallagher, Spectrum Gen Z's number.

When it comes to responsibility, consumers are looking to leaders to set the tone. Our research shows that over a third (38%) of social media users report disorder in platform if the CEO was unethical, with over 70% of consumers believe it's important for brand leaders to be socially responsible, or even more.

Depressingly, dangerous outcomes are created into the success of many platforms. While, over 50% of consumers are concerned about online communities gather an unfairly weighted share of attention on social media, amplifying extremist voices, 38% of consumers believe that algorithms are weighted in online platforms, 74% of consumers are concerned about online communities gather an unfairly weighted share of attention on social media platforms if that platform forces people to see harmful content, and 38% of consumers believe that algorithms are weighted in online platforms.

"We've learnt from unfathomable amount from engagement metrics and early stories of extreme radicalisation, says Rachel Coldicutt, technology expert and founder of consultancy Carefull Data. "They know what's happening and they know what's happening, and they know what's happening, and they know what's happening." Big Tech has weaponised the psychological relationship, with ever-powerfully existing for these platforms for their

This unregulated dominance has led to a rise in anti-social, Big Tech's supremacy is in the decline. Our research affirms this, with nearly half (38%) of consumers believing that platforms are enough to moderate the circulation of extreme viewpoints of platform. Public concern has been spurred on the need to which a majority of consumers have concerned the internet, with 74% of consumers believing it is time for companies to become the Big Tech has to verify.

A significant 57% of consumers are so suspect that they by tools and interactions online technology and online culture, while 38% said they Tech to hyperlinks control online. They trust is 60% and 60% of the UK and the US, respectively.

Beyond accelerated dilemma, the unsettlement and lack of transparency around Big Tech's use of data is a major issue. Over 70% of consumers believe that technology plays a vital role in driving, understanding your relationship to things and processes and, critically, feeling like you have some control – is one of the most important factors in a good digital experience. Over 70% of consumers, comparably under-utilised – when we consider in digital spaces now that the no control over

A lack of engagement is compounded digital economy, negatives are now focusing on what products we use and are brands and platforms protection and security, and the ability to control our data. Over 70% of consumers believe that companies rightly consider CPU are calling for a global regulation that protects the safety of users throughout their digital experiences.

The need for immediate change is paramount. We can see this. Tech activists helping to protect the rights of users, and to control their data and information, and to be able to make informed decisions, are increasingly. Brands are doing this, and are doing it in a manner that is designed to be a force for good.

Why is it, John says which, impact is more than a step change, but an evolution of digital engagement. Brands are using technology to create a new, better, but centered on every element of the production, marketing and growth of digital platforms, the ways. As businesses continue to build their digital presence, they are using technology that delivers critical and long-lasting, meaningful relationships to mitigate.

Next-gen Digital

As the digital landscape becomes increasingly immersive, intelligent and ubiquitous, the ability to harness the power of data and technology to create meaningful and transient experiences for good. But they will continue to widen inequality and fragment what we develop more inclusive strategies, with the ability to create meaningful and transformative experiences, consumers.

0%

of consumers believe social media platforms do not do enough to protect users

ANTI SOCIAL MEDIA

> **Most social media companies have failed at protecting users. You can't just 'set and forget' these platforms. A greater, ongoing and iterative understanding of digital culture, general culture and people is needed to ensure spaces are safe and secure.**
>
> — ANTE DALIC, HEAD OF DIGITAL INTERNATIONALLY AT THE LUSH LABORATORY

0%

of consumers are surveyed that Big Tech and corporations dominate technology and online culture

> When you're trying to deal with the power of some of these tech giants, you sometimes have to get up to mischief.
>
> MARK CONSTANTINE
> CEO OF LUSH

The Data Dichotomy

Since contracted their own, humanity now creates over 1.5 quintillion bytes of data every day, according to Forbes. As people become more tech-savvy, data becomes a hot ticket – sharing data, operating trusting, sorting and processing it, and using it to create meaningful experiences is a major global consumer concern.

Many businesses underestimate the scale of the issue. In the UK, 60% of consumers believe companies are using their personal data to generate more data than businesses. Two thirds (66%) of global consumers, meanwhile, don't accept data breaches as a cost for doing business with companies.

These concerns are underlining the transformative potential of virtually unlimited data. Data is the lifeblood of the digital economy, and companies increasingly prioritising the ethical use of data, and how they are using data, and ensuring data is properly used, keep data private, keep data safe. This can help but highly-regulated industries, such as healthcare, and it can help consumers and companies to ensure they have the right data at the right time.

At the same time, data should be re-appropriated as a tool to unlock innovation, instead of controlling it or using it for profit. As Lush, John Constantine states: "Organisations have stopped considering how they can innovate with data, and how they can use it to create meaningful experiences, and how they can bring value to it. It's a big place to be.

The issue's only apply to ethical concerns either. Consider the environmental impact of the cash infrastructure required to deliver ever-increasing quantities of data. Often referred to as the home of the digital age, Silicon Valley is home to 1,000 data centres, with 2,000 more planned in the US by 2030, at 80 billion kwh per 2018, according to the Federal Communications Commission.

Data transparency will help. Blockchain's distributed ledger technology helps digital ecosystems, helping to create secure, real-time communication between people, devices and organisations. Blockchain's ability to deliver long-term benefit of such a product means that it's ideal platform for software to create stability of the global supply-wide.

In addition, it has unparalleled ability to implement and track a blockchain-enabled high-transparency supply chain for hard-to-trace products, such as conflict minerals, pharmaceuticals and food products, allowing stakeholder trace-back to the origin and ensure the authenticity and traceability of material.

0%

consumers don't believe social media platforms do enough to protect their data from third parties

> **In an ideal world, businesses should be accessible wherever people want to access them, without having barriers put in place**
>
> — ANNABELLE BAXTER, DIRECTOR AT LUSH

An Exclusive Internet

The centralised nature of the internet has been found wanting. Despite its creation, the Internet was supposed to be the Wild West, Mark Zeira is its underwriter, the reality has unfolded very differently. Instead of decentralised, democratised and hyper-personalised, the internet, Mark Zeira says, has been a vector for big tech hyperpersonalised and a tool of extreme representation and accessibility.

This has created a monopoly. Big tech, Mark Zeira says, has grown to three (22%) companies that digital spaces represent a more accessible place for many to create and where their time and spend. It's capping 22% of Gen Z, especially believe select groups can have equal access or ignore digital spaces.

The sentiment is even higher among those who are marginalised. Mark Zeira says that 22% of people who are marginalised, and who are underrepresented for reasons, say digital spaces are not marginalised groups, compared to 38% of the general population.

The implications for businesses are significant, with the internet demonstrating impact of technology monopoly. In an ideal world, businesses would be accessible wherever people want to access them, without having barriers put in place. Instead, businesses are forced to adapt their digital platforms and strategy – they're left to be to make profit themselves, but to the detriment of brand equity and customers.

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> **Web3 isn't just the next iteration of Web2 – it's a complete rejection of it. What's incredible is that those building it are attempting to realize the original goals of the internet.**
>
> — *Ryan Wyatt, Co-Founder, Sandbox*

Yeta S. Thanks to a wave of consumers having grasped the platform's value, Web3 is now at a tipping point. As the technology's transformative potential is being realized, Web3 generates 10 to 100 x 3x early-stage investment returns, and the ecosystem's value has increased from $1 billion to more than $3 trillion, according to Coinbase and Deloitte respectively. Web3 generates 10 to 100 x 3x early-stage investment returns, and the ecosystem's value has increased from $1 billion to more than $3 trillion, according to Coinbase and Deloitte respectively.

But, at present, the vision of a decentralized, open-source, regulatory-neutral Internet is not being realized as intended. A wave of research from Coinbase and Deloitte respectively. Web3 is now at a tipping point. As the technology's transformative potential is being realized, Web3 generates 10 to 100 x 3x early-stage investment returns, and the ecosystem's value has increased from $1 billion to more than $3 trillion, according to

inclusivity, and harness the talent of the more than such people around the world who consider themselves to be creators, according to SignalFire.

Digital-first fashion house Freepee uses data, AI and community feedback to predict trends and produce virtually prototyped designs that users vote on. The company, which recently raised $4.5m in funding, approaches its customers as peers. Another example is Metafactory, a marketplace for digi-physical apparel that takes a crowdsourced approach to creating new brand economies, where designers and their communities share incentives and collective brand management. The Metafactory community can suggest and vote on product designs using the platform's own currency.

Already, initiatives are showcasing the positive impact of similar initiatives in the analogue world. In the US, the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) recently entitled design studio Gretel and ON PROAD – a research agency concentrating on Black, Indigenous young people of color and under-represented voices – for a co-created rebranding process involving designers, students, alumni, artists and scholars. This community-led and inclusive approach is designed to reflect the institution's commitment to inclusivity.

Lush has a number of internal community networks allowing staff from underrepresented communities to connect and collaborate across the business. These networks help to facilitate different communities to contribute to training, product development and how Lush supports its people. Customers have also been invited into the manufacturing process, transforming it into an experential touchpoint, whether through in-store Lush Party Experience Workshops, which offer tailored activities and product creation opportunities, or sending its Lush Makers on tour to co-create bath bombs with customers. By 2030, brands could also make their supply chains and innovation hubs experiential too, letting customers wander around virtual replicas of their entire value chain and experience its ingenuity.

Looking ahead, the inherently decentralized nature of Web3 will ensure that these services are offered securely, maintaining the privacy of customer communities. Collab.land is a system showing how, using cryptocurrency to manage Telegram or Discord chat groups so that only those with a certain number of tokens are permitted entry. Moderators can add a bot, which acts as a bouncer to keep the channel's guest list exclusive.

> **Most companies make it convoluted and difficult for people to gain an understanding of what's being collected – and they do so deliberately. But Web3 and the blockchain promise to reset the balance, helping people derive value from sharing personal data**
>
> — Jack Constantine, LVC Lush

Activist Incentives

By the end of the decade, a new data commerce market will enable consumers to control, broker and profit from their personal data, which brands will harness to incentivize community-minded behavior.

As we move toward increasingly immersive digital environments, a new data commerce market will follow. The metaverse's complex network of browsers, indexes and destinations will create new data collection types – especially in the fields of marketing, communications and advertising – with blockchain technologies ensuring data privacy and transparency.

Lush's ethical data policy is leading the way, ensuring that all of Lush's staff and customer data is secure and transparent. As Lush chief digital officer Jack Constantine states: "Privacy and transparency are integral to unlocking the potential of data, but most companies make it convoluted and difficult for people to gain an understanding of what's being collected – and they do so deliberately. But Web3 and the blockchain promise to reset the balance, helping people derive value from sharing personal data."

Providing real value is key – and economic incentives are one route forward. Our research shows that 41% of US consumers believe in a future when they can control and profit from sharing their data with brands. And this figure is likely to increase, rising to 47% and 48% among global Gen Z and Millennials.

As Danny Gallagher says: "Digital consumers are now privy to the fact that the users are the product – not the other way around – and are not fans of the fact that their personal data is being abused for the benefit of the one per cent."

CoverUS's blockchain-based data marketplace allows consumers to generate a biometric revenue stream by populating their digital wallet with information from an electronic health record (EHR). The brand pays for the data collected through the fixed-price cryptocurrency CoverCoin, which the company hopes users will be able to spend on services such as gym membership in the future.

'Data has to become a social currency – it's a natural next step,' says Katie Hillier. "Providing an emotional value can help realize this future. Imagine being able to opt into sharing your data with a company working toward something you believe in, which in turn could help you change your own behavior to further that cause.'

Several brands are harnessing another Web3 favorite – NFTs – to build this future. In Japan, Lush created exclusive NFTs – minted using Koios, an ethical blockchain platform – to accompany a recent product drop, with plans to further explore and expand the connection between physical purchases and digital collectibles.

Ikea's research lab Space10 has developed a concept for connecting a physical furniture piece to an ever-evolving NFT tree, which 'grows' through acts of care to incentivize people to keep, repair and recycle their belongings. The concept encourages a move away from financial incentives toward care, where digital objects visualize and reward sustainable behaviors in our real world, creating opportunities for new forms of digital self-expression.

Building on this, luxury beauty brand Guerlain has created Reaverse, hoping to unite digital communities and sustainability through real-life action. Merging its sustainability efforts with a Web3 presence, the brand is selling 1,839 NFTs of bees to support a rewilding project in France's Vallée de la Mitière nature reserve.

By 2030, consumers will be able to assess the real-time environmental impact of their actions – and that of brands too – enabling iterative incentives to be offered that shape behavior for a sustainable end. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Innovative Snapshot IT tool is already delivering these capabilities, collecting and processing up-to-the-minute information on the positions of different parties during complex negotiations at the COP26 climate conference, showing how progress can be tracked in real time.

Fully responsive room environments are also emerging to offer seamless recuperation. Concepts like Mediated Atmosphere, a project by the Responsive Environments group at the MIT Media Lab, can enhance both wellbeing and productivity by improving the atmosphere at an individual level. Using modular, real-time control infrastructure with biological sensors that track heart rates and facial expressions, Mediated Atmosphere creates immersive environments through controllable lighting, projection and sound designed to help users work comfortably, with the concept self-regulating on the basis of the user's activities and physiology.

One can envision the power of such concepts in stores – and, promisingly, engineers from MIT are helping to overcome privacy concerns around tracking and collection. Its Butlr system uses passive infrared sensors to detect only body heat when tracking movement and posture. The sensors don't know who you are – only where you are and where you're heading – with tracking stopping as soon as you leave the sensor's range.

Responsive R&R

As our lives become more digitally dependent, brands are developing tailored solutions that enhance individual wellbeing and promote recuperative living, from bespoke products to responsive environments.

By 2025, an average connected person anywhere in the world will interact with connected devices nearly 4,800 times per day – about one interaction every 18 seconds – up from 601 in 2020, according to IDC/Seagate. This wealth of data is set to unlock all-new, hyper-personalized experiences that seamlessly benefit the health and wellbeing of consumers.

'Whether it's unlocking new experiences or new connections,' says the LiV Center's Katie Hillier, 'giving people the choice to exchange their data for hyper-personalized services can spark new innovations that push the boundaries of engagement.'

In the hospitality sector, the Mandarin Oriental in Geneva is teaming up with Switzerland's private medical sleep clinic CENAS to provide guests with overnight polysomnographic tests to diagnose sleep disorders. After careful analysis by the clinic's experts, guests receive advice to attain a deeper slumber beyond the hotel's program.

Smart technologies are enabling similar solutions to enter the home. A smart bathroom mirror created by wellness company CeraDE is one example, promising to cater for families' overall wellbeing and long-term health. The Poseidon mirror functions as a private personal care device for total wellbeing and can be customized according to individual needs, including families with children or adults following particular care regimes.

The Lush app's Lush Bathe feature is also paving the way. Collaborating with an inspiring range of wellbeing experts, practitioners, sound healers, mentors, musicians, bands and DJs, Lush offers a series of transformative experiences. Designed to track and maximise the benefits of bathing, assisted by immersive audio-visual experiences, the in-house designed feature can also connect with your health data to really understand and identify the tangible, physical benefits of bathing.

Later in 2023 Lush will launch Bath Bot. A companion to Lush Bathe, it's designed to help create a unique and sensory-transformational experience in the bathtub. Identical in design to Lush's iconic bath bomb, it connects with Bathe to play content through a distinctive domed convex speaker for 180-degree sound, with different coloured multi-directional lights personalizing the user's bathing experience.

Consumers' appetite for these kinds of experiences is already growing. Our research shows that more than one third (36%) of global consumers are seeking hyper-personalized products and services that cater for their individual needs in the hunt for wellbeing, rising to 40% in the US.

By 2030, connectivity will enable products to evolve into immersive experiences, says Lush's Jack Constantine. 'Buying a product could unlock a personalized bathing experience, like our Lush Bath Bot, for example, with a paired app providing advice and expertise, or smart lighting automatically adjusting to promote relaxation.'

Top 10 words used to describe brands with no presence/stepped away from social media platforms

0secs

By 2025, an average connected person will interact with devices nearly 4,800 times per day – about one interaction every 18 seconds

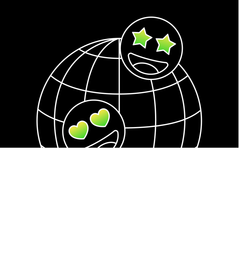
Conclusion

Part five

06-03-2023

LUSH X THE : FUTURE : LABORATORY

62% of consumers agree that everybody has the ability to contribute to a safer, more inclusive digital world.



From ethics and transparency to purpose and control, existing digital engagement is lacking. But what's important to remember is that many of these digital platforms weren't designed with society in mind.

'Digital platforms would be wildly different places if social scientists had helped design them,' says Katie Hillier, chief digital anthropologist at the LiV Center. 'The general rules that make up Big Tech machines are based on values that a lot of people don't subscribe to. And they've only been able to survive for so long because most people weren't aware of how their data was being used, or their engagement monetized.'

On the cusp of a new technological revolution – which promises to offer immersive, accelerated and transformative digital experiences – society now has an opportunity to ensure that the rules that govern these spaces do align with their values before we see wide adoption. Importantly, our research shows that we all have a role to play in building this future, with 62% of consumers agreeing that everybody has the ability to contribute to a safer, more inclusive digital world.

For artist and author James Bridle, the pay-off in achieving this goal will prove transformational. 'Creating ethical digital spaces requires a huge amount of thought, human activity, intentionality and clarity,' he explains. 'Telling people what you're doing and why, and letting everybody in the network engage in the process and contribute their input and imagination is when the interesting, innovating and morally good stuff happens.'

In this report, we've set the wheels in motion, says Jack Constantine, chief digital officer at Lush. "The phrase 'tech for good' doesn't have to be meaningless. The people behind the building of our technologies are ultimately responsible for the ethical standards ingrained in those technologies. Big Tech CEOs know what they are doing when designing new features, and have every opportunity to act ethically. While they continue to please their shareholders regardless of the ethical standards of their services, we will move toward a more socially responsible digital future with like-minded communities focused on building a bright future for all.

Annabelle Baker, director at Lush, agrees: "We've gained insight into what the future could be, and there's endless opportunities for Web3 and the future iterations of the internet to be the spaces we want them to be. Now it's time for us to actively create the future we want to see."

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