

COLUMNS

5 cultural shifts in New Era of Connection

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It is no understatement to say that the luxury lifestyle market is going through a period of unprecedented disruption. The needs and priorities of affluent and influential individuals are changing at a rapid rate and luxury brands must adapt to continue to engage with this hard-to-reach consumer.

At Quintessentially, this is a consumer we know intimately. Founded in London in 2000, we pioneered the concept of lifestyle management through our global luxury concierge service, 51 offices worldwide and agency arm.

Over the past decade we have seen the steady development of the experience economy in the luxury lifestyle sector. Today, we are seeing that economy evolve at pace.

Consumers have been growing apart from one another for decades. Now the pandemic is the final straw, leaving us feeling even more isolated.

But in taking away many of our in-person interactions, COVID-19 has provoked a re-evaluation of our priorities: we have come to value human connection more than ever.

We are witnessing the dawn of a new era. We call it The New Era of Connection.

In this new era, businesses will still need to create "memorable events or experiences" for their consumers, but we believe they can generate further value and differentiation by leaving their VIPs with an increased feeling of connection to other people or to themselves.

Here are five key cultural shifts that we have identified in the New Era of Connection:

Conscious consumption

As activism becomes mainstream amongst millennial and Gen Z, brands are having to respond beyond brand purpose to meaningfully connect with customers.

Luxury brands must be increasingly transparent and authentic. They must deliver purposeful actions not just words for this discerning, socially aware audience.

Seeking meaningful connections through technology

Technology designed to connect us has driven us apart. Now the backlash has matured we are seeking out technology that truly delivers a more human connection.

Digital transformation has never been more important. While more purchases are happening online, luxury businesses must not forget to retain a human element in the customer journey, which is imperative to build lasting relationships.

Establishing "living legacies" through targeted giving

Successful individuals are increasingly deciding to give earlier in life, driven by the need to forge living legacies and connect with others. They are taking a more active role, choosing exactly how to use their resources to maximize impact.

As philanthropy become the major passion point for affluent and influential individuals, brands should consider how they can support clients' causes through donations or communications.

Health-based decision-making

We have never been more conscious of our collective health. All businesses are now required to be mindful of this precious resource to forge genuine connections with their customers.

While customer safety is the immediate priority, in the long term, as the health and wellness industry continues to grow, brands should consider adjusting their NPD pipelines to include a health and wellness product or service.

Bespoke self-betterment

An increased demand for bespoke transformative experiences has emerged as consumers seek to connect with themselves more deeply.

As knowledge and self-transformation become new forms of social capital businesses should consider how they can provide transformative experiences or masterclasses for their customers to fuel this growth mindset.

WE BELIEVE the brands that adapt now to provide this feeling of human connection are the ones who will thrive in the future.

[Please click here to download the 41-page PDF of "The New Era of Connection" report](#)

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