

EXPERIENCE INTELLIGENCE

BY GPJ

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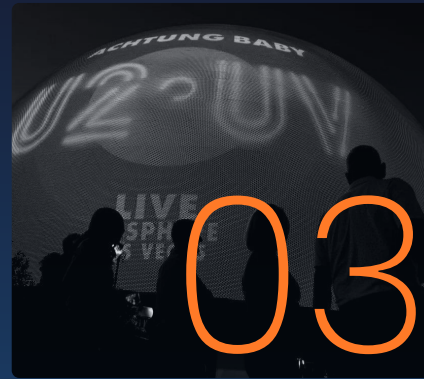
Consumers are increasingly eager to immerse themselves in imagined worlds, unique interactions and new experiences.



Consumers and creators alike are embracing all things horror



Accelerating learning and understanding through immersive play



Immersive experiences have reached a whole new dimension



Fiction and FOMO are driving brand exclusivity and identity



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Consumers and creators alike are embracing all things **horror**

Interest in the macabre extends beyond Halloween as more people find comfort in horror.

This year a [record number of people in the US](#) (73%) say they will participate in Halloween-related activities. There's even a new spooky mascot: the iconic [Jack-o-Lantern named Lewis](#). More than just a consumer craze, horror is becoming a cultural phenomenon once again.

Gen Z has [claimed horror as their generation's genre](#) because it grapples with [themes they're interested in](#), like anti-heroes, feminism, and systemic inequities. From aesthetic movements like [the Gothic home](#) and [succubus chic](#) to #HorrorTok's [chilling digital artistry](#) and DIY [experimentations](#), the horror definitely doesn't stop at Halloween.

What it Means

The horror genre is enjoying a [renaissance](#), having shifted away from predictable narratives or stereotypes, and leaned into a creative opportunity to provoke thought and engage with [social commentary](#). For Gen Z, the evolution has been particularly well received as this population comfortably navigates raw realities.

Key Takeaway

Society's consciousness has been captivated by horror and individuals are selecting the level at which they wish to engage. Experiences can take note of horror's comfort with risk-taking and its ability to tune into their audience's' ideals—all while not taking the execution too seriously.





Accelerating understanding through immersive play

Educational immersion builds connection and understanding across generations.

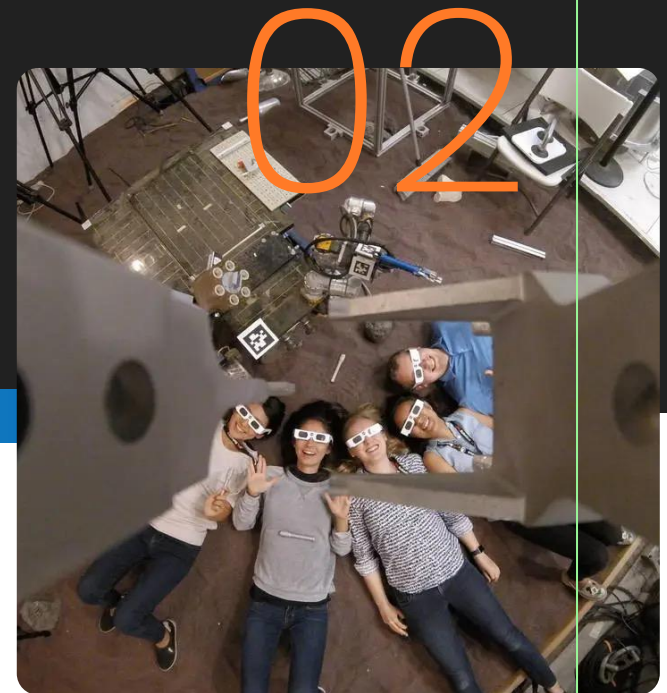
As [pandemic learning loss](#) continues, families are increasingly seeking opportunities to consume educational content. In response, leisure and entertainment spaces are adding more [hands-on, immersive areas](#) for learning. Museums are [advancing STEM](#) with projects that highlight the [wonders of space](#). Galleries spark creativity through [open studio](#) sessions and [immersive AI](#). Even zoos and aquariums are rethinking their approach. [Holograms](#) and [VR](#) experiences encourage guests to appreciate the animal world in a new way, whereas newly built [habitat environments](#) promote [sustainability and conservation](#) on a conceptual level.

What it Means

A heightened focus on learning post-pandemic means spaces are rethinking how to connect more deeply with their audiences. As playful elements that promote interaction get folded into experience design, it's becoming evident that deeper [immersion leads to enhanced understanding](#).

Key Takeaway

There's no age limit for learning. By tapping into childlike wonder and curiosity, human connection and understanding are all but guaranteed. Brands might consider exploring playful experience design as a means to promote interaction, which can cultivate lasting impressions and educate audiences all at once.





Immersive experiences have reached **a whole new dimension**

The Las Vegas Sphere is the epitome of [peak immersion](#).

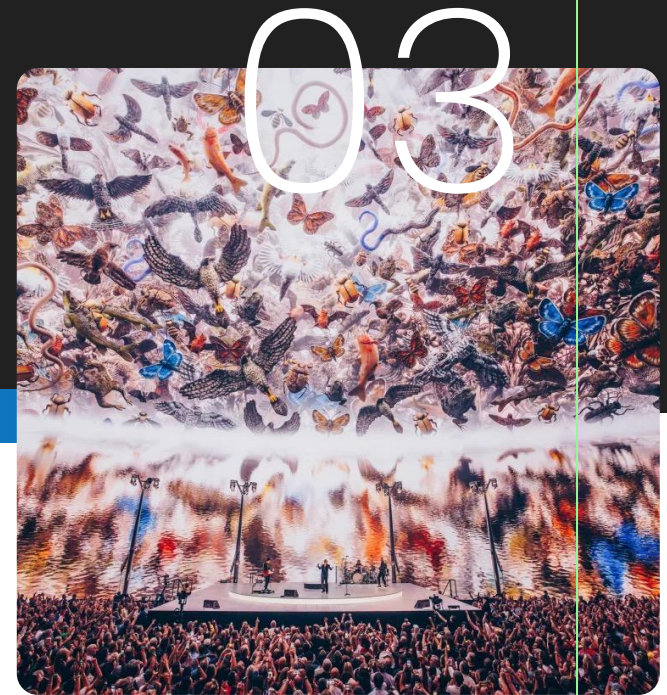
On September 29th, legendary rock band [U2 christened the stage](#) of a now infamous venue: [the Sphere](#). With nearly [1,600 permanent speakers](#) and a massive, wrap-around LED screen, attendees are engulfed by this [875,000 square foot venue](#) that enables artists to customise the space to their brand and create unique, content-driven experiences. Outside of U2's residency, the "Sphere Experience" featuring [Postcards from Space](#) is the only other announced show at the new venue, perhaps a subtle nod to the [inevitable and inherent challenges](#) that come with activating multisensory experiences at this scale.

What it Means

The Sphere is just the latest, and perhaps most thrilling, [example of immersive multi-sensory experiences](#) that are setting a new benchmark for marketers, artists and brands. With the goal of achieving "[peak immersion](#)," venues like the Sphere are presenting enhanced opportunities to engage consumers' minds and bodies to leave lasting impressions.

Key Takeaway

An experience like the Sphere may seem intimidating, but the principle of peak immersion is a goal worth pursuing. Experiences that achieve responsiveness and connectivity between the digital and physical worlds can immerse audiences like never before, and can have truly profound [effects](#) on audiences.





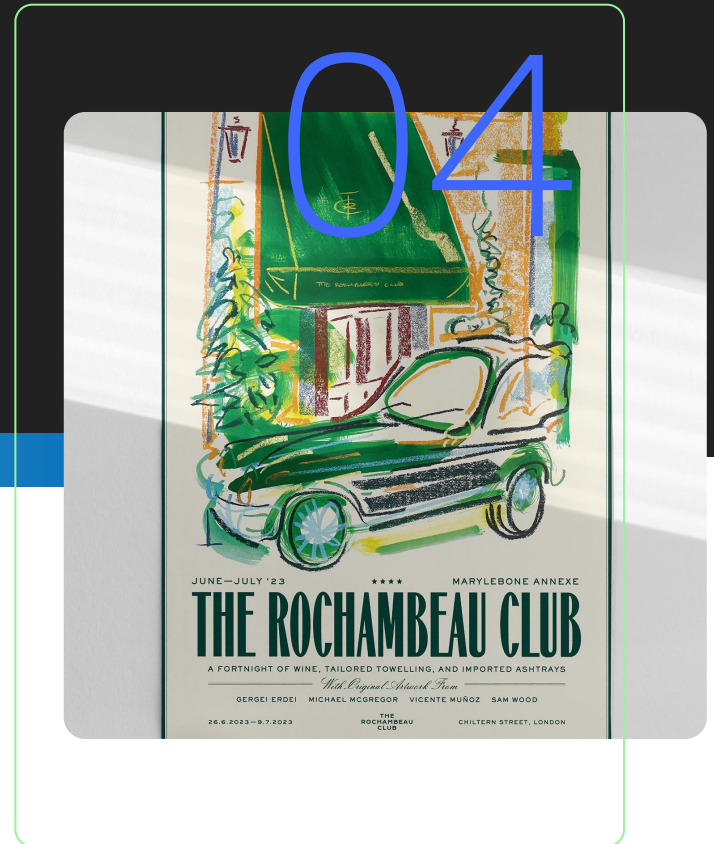
Fiction and FOMO are driving brand exclusivity and identity

Successful world building and brand-hype generation are not confined to reality.

“Faux” experiences have been around for [centuries](#), but emerging tech has given these fictitious moments new platforms. With a few country club photoshoots, a cheeky website, and several [clever social media posts](#), the [Rochambeau Club](#) cultivated community *and* drove demand for Racquet Rosé— without ever truly existing! And did you manage to get a reservation at [Mehran’s Steakhouse](#)? Probably not, because it quickly became one of Manhattan’s most sought after reservations (despite not being a real restaurant at all!).

What it Means

The Rochambeau Club and Mehran’s Steakhouse illustrate that the idea and belief behind a brand is just as, if not more, powerful than its tangible manifestation. Perhaps beyond that, it underscores the power of creating FOMO—[consumers almost always want what they can’t have](#).



Key Takeaway

Faux realities almost always elicit a fear of missing out, but not all brands can pull it off. So, in lieu of imagined worlds, brands should tap into the essence of FOMO by building something for consumers to experience that's truly new, exciting, uncharted, and exclusive.



OUT-THERE EXPERIENCES

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

Brands that Properly Celebrated Halloween

From M&M's + GoPuff's "Halloween Rescue Squad" to Airhead's AI film making contest, Halloween campaigns were in full swing this spooky season.

The Beatles Last Song Has Finally Been Released

The completed version of John Lennon's love song, "Now And Then" has finally been released thanks to the use of AI.

Gen Z and "Sonic memes"

A new study suggests Gen Z's attuned ears can properly identify brands based on sound alone, likely a result of "sonic memes" often emerging on apps like Tik Tok.

A New Zealand Town is Officially Sick of Céline Dion

Celion Dion is a popular choice for Kiwi's participating in "siren battles," a subculture where people wire sirens onto their cars and compete to blast the clearest music.