

# EXPERIENCE INTELLIGENCE

BY GPJ

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Experiential culture is evolving—fans seek co-creation, listeners crave presence, travelers chase flavor, and transit becomes transformative. Across industries, consumers want deeper, more sensory, and participatory real-world connections.



Musicians embrace new ways to connect IRL with fans



Deep listening spaces ground audiences in the present



Travelers are chasing flavors over views



In-transit experiences are becoming the destination



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# Musicians embrace new ways to **connect IRL with fans**

**Fans crave connection over virality, pushing co-creation to music's forefront.**

Recently, the All-American Rejects rejected the conventional tour with high-ticket fees and embarked on a [House Party Tour](#), crowdsourcing requested stops from fans to play in backyards, bowling alleys, and any other available spaces. The Golden Shoals used [Kickstarter](#) to fund their next two albums instead of relying on a record label advance, offering top contributors experiences with the band members, like a rock climbing trip, pizza and a movie, or a home performance. Meanwhile, younger artists are [building niche worlds](#) around their musical personas, with elaborate and escapist live shows.

## **What it Means**

[The demand for concerts is at record levels](#), with Gen Z at the helm, reshaping music as a participatory media platform. Today's fans want more than the music itself—they want meaningful moments. Savvy artists are turning fans into collaborators and [co-creators](#), not just listeners, responding with personalised, offline experiences that deepen community.

**Key Takeaway** | The "[IRL Rebound](#)" continues to evolve, with demand for live music as just the latest expression. As a social media diet leaves fans craving direct connections, they want to see their input reflected— in venue choices, immersive worlds, and beyond.





# Deep listening spaces

## ground audiences in the present

**Audio is emerging as a primary medium for presence, not just ambience.**

Over the past few years, “[listening bars](#)” have gone global. Originating in post–World War II Japan, these bars — traditionally called “[kissas](#)” — discourage talking and offer audiophiles a place to gather to listen to vinyl records played on high-fidelity stereo equipment in comfortable lounge settings. [Brands](#) are capitalising on the trend with [Valentino’s “listening room”](#) and [Stone Island at Milan Design week](#). More niche experiences, like immersive sound [exhibitions](#) and [festivals](#), feature artists using sound as their primary medium.

### What it Means

In an overstimulated world, sound is emerging as a tool for emotional grounding and sensory focus. For experiential marketers, it’s a chance to create intimate, embodied environments where audio isn’t just background—but the backbone of a vibe, through presence, connection, and storytelling.

**Key Takeaway |** Instead of incorporating audio mediums as an experience ingredient, try treating it as the main course. Catering to our often less prioritised sense of hearing in comfortable settings brings us into the present moment, sharpens our attention, and offers an antidote to overstimulation.







## Travelers are chasing **flavors over views**

### **F&B has transcended sustenance to become a central pillar of global exploration.**

Culinary arts tourism is exploding and expected to reach [\\$54 billion by 2032](#). People want to experience culture through the lens of food. Destinations like [Jamaica](#) and [Africa](#) are taking full advantage, launching programs to up-level local chefs, strengthen food systems, and empower women. Food tours, culinary festivals, and tasting events alike give tourists a dose of local flare. In 2025, travelers are flocking to local bakeries, as so-called “[bakery pilgrims](#)” are travelling significant distances in the pursuit of a delicious [loaf or bun](#).

#### **What it Means**

Savoring the world through F&B has become today's most flavorful form of exploration. Culinary tourism is no longer just about tasting local dishes; it's an immersive journey into the culture, history and traditions of food across the globe.

**Key Takeaway |** While culinary tourism uplifts and empowers local economies, rising demand brings pressure to package culture for consumers. To deliver true impact, brands must create and elevate culinary experiences alongside local voices to preserve authenticity in product, process, and narrative.





## In-transit experiences are becoming the destination

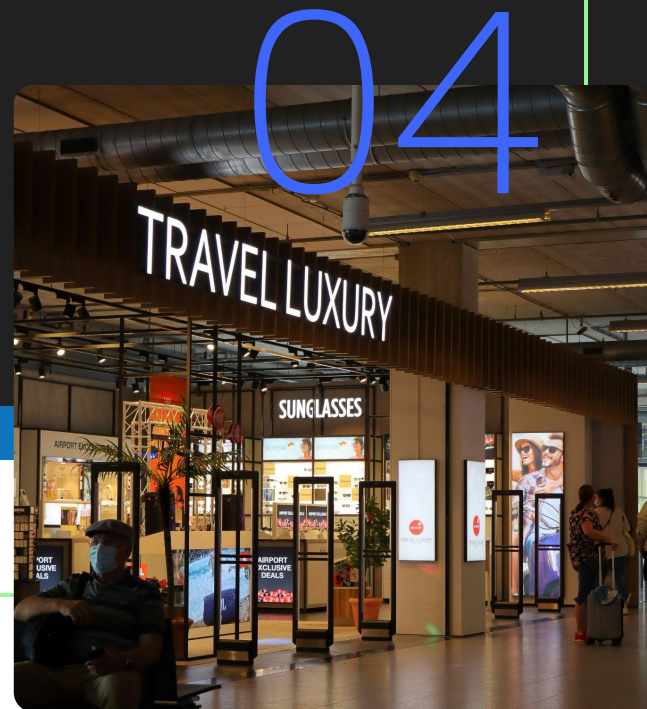
### Transit spaces are the new frontier for immersive brand storytelling and elevated experience design.

Transportation hubs are evolving into dynamic, experiential spaces. [Amtrak](#) riders can now sip their favorite wine, sleep in cabins, and experience up-leveled connectivity and dining. [Airports](#) are transforming into luxury retail and brand experience centers, attracting affluent, captive audiences. Brands like Chanel, Louis Vuitton, [The Macallan](#), and Summer Fridays dominate these spaces, while next-gen technology and immersive activations boost engagement and sales for [Cadbury and Emergen-C](#). In the air, stylish amenity kits designed by Missoni, and Michelin-starred meals at 35,000 feet [help airlines](#) differentiate and deliver a personal touch.

#### What it Means

Once-overlooked, in-between moments of travel are now prime real estate for brand engagement. By transforming idle or stressful transit moments into immersive, thoughtful experiences, brands can connect with consumers in ways that feel both surprising and welcome—elevating utility into delight and creating emotional stickiness along their journey.

**Key Takeaway |** Luxury travel is booming, and brands are offering elevated perks and partnerships—meeting travelers with memorable moments when they're most captive and craving comfort. For experiential marketers, it's a call to reimagine travel as a seamless blend of function and leisure—turning every leg of the journey into a storytelling opportunity.

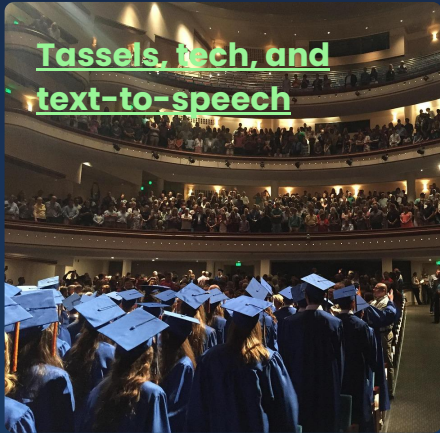




# OUT-THERE EXPERIENCES

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

## Tassels, tech, and text-to-speech



At some 2025 graduations, students scanned in like groceries, hearing their accolades read aloud by AI instead of a dean.

## A gastronomic getaway on the high seas



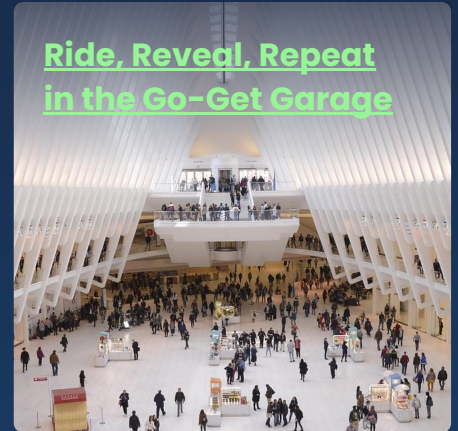
Spanning 75 events—from cooking demos and food challenges to cocktail hours—guests savor nonstop, immersive culinary experiences at sea.

## Mini Mart for the World's Smallest Jet-Setters



ByHeart's pop-up brought the essentials for busy parents on-the-go—from parenting classes to baby passport photos and stroller valet.

## Ride, Reveal, Repeat in the Go-Get Garage



Uber's hands-on playground featured the app's latest upgrades—with test rides, interactive demos, and surprise innovations on every corner.