Inspiring original thinking through a deeper understanding of cultural trends.
Many of us have entertainment at our fingertips, not to mention the power to create and influence the content itself. The implications are enormous.

Entertainment is no longer just something that we enjoy occasionally, on a night out or night in. In our connected world, entertainment is now at our fingertips, in our ears, and all around us, all the time. Just walk down the street and look out for mobiles and earphones. But is this the case everywhere in the world? And the lines have blurred – between entertainment, information and advertising – through an ever-evolving range of platforms, formats and technologies.

So what are the implications for brands in this dynamic landscape? We hope to answer those questions and many more – what is happening now and where is it leading? This Entertainment dossier from Mindshare is part of our Culture Vulture series, whose purpose is to inform, inspire, intrigue and maybe even entertain our clients, our people and our business partners.

In order for us to understand how entertainment might evolve, we started with Mindshare’s 10 Global Trends and explored how these manifest themselves in the entertainment industry. We also worked with our Scout Network to highlight key differences in global culture, and our media partners, to understand the point of view of the industry experts.

This piece developed 10 Cultural Dynamics – patterns in social behaviour and attitudes that capture the prevailing spirit of the times – that relate to the Global Trends. When adapted to fit a brand’s unique essence, these Cultural Dynamics can help springboard communication ideas to deliver a brand experience that delights, awes and captivates consumers at all points of the customer journey.

This report is developed in three sections: our 10 Cultural Dynamics, a collection of Points of View from the industry and finally the individual reports from our global Scout Network.

We hope you enjoy reading and exploring!
Culture informs media and media drives culture. They are intrinsically linked together and to understand the different areas of our culture, the best way is to look at trends.

Findings from Culture Vulture’s Entertainment dossier have been drawn from a rigorous process that integrates desk research, brainstorming sessions and our Culture Vulture framework of Global Consumer Trends (people’s reaction to cultural influences and drivers).

Our study has identified 10 Cultural Dynamics – patterns in social behaviour and attitudes that capture the prevailing spirit of the times – that are related to our global consumer trends and reveal how entertainment is perceived and experienced around the world.

Cultural Dynamics

ENTERTAINMENT

These are the major Global Consumer Trends that Mindshare consider to be a powerful influence on culture.

This is how we see the global consumer trends manifesting themselves in entertainment.

Each Consumer Trend has a colour which is matched to its relevant Cultural Dynamic.

Global Trends

Consumer Trends

Global Trend

Me Nation

Individual’s perception that consumers are in the centre of their universe and everything should revolve around them.

Cultural Dynamic

Collective

Curation

Helping consumers navigate entertainment.

Global Trend

Simplification

The desire to not complicate life.

Cultural Dynamic

Unplugged

Plugged In

Uncluttering the entertainment world, both by turning off technology and by turning it on.

Global Trend

Snacking

We now consume media in the same way we consume snacks. Consumption plays a part in the growing need to have access to anything without purchasing.

Cultural Dynamic

Snacking & Bingeing

Snacking or indulging in moments to be entertained.

Global Trend

New Networking

Communities don’t have to be based on location but on shared interests. The power of the community is at an all-time high.

Cultural Dynamic

Social Entertainment

From group fun to group decision making.

Global Trend

Maximising Moments

Doing multiple things at the same time.

Cultural Dynamic

Immersive

Layered Entertainment

Entertainment in multiple environments.

Global Trend

Power Play

The use of gaming system and design in a non-gaming context.

Cultural Dynamic

Press Play

The spread of gaming to new audiences and to new activities.

Global Trend

Visualisation

The look and feel of everything is the most important factor in its quality.

Cultural Dynamic

Feast for the Eyes

Visual images that simplify stories and immerse our senses.

Global Trend

Seeking Authenticity

The desire to have a transparent, genuine experience while maintaining privacy.

Cultural Dynamic

Real Deal

Chasing credible talent and true experiences in the face of the artificial and the virtual.

Global Trend

New World Order

With new global economic powers the world view is shifting so ideas and products can come from anywhere.

Cultural Dynamic

There’s New Business Like Show Business

Traditional models broken, new rules abound!
"Helping consumers navigate entertainment excess".

**COLLECTIVE CURATION**

With democratisation of information comes information excess: with so much choice, consumers are increasingly looking to trusted curators to help navigate entertainment choices.

Powered by data, curation can be an automated but personalised experience, based on previous choices and online journeys. Amazon’s famous recommendation engine is emulated everywhere, with subscription services such as Spotify, Rhapsody and Netflix, helping consumers find the right songs and films. Music video website Vevo, combined with Echo Nest, provides personalised recommendations. A variety of apps have launched, from Purple Bowl Digest, Flipboard and Pulse, allowing consumers to efficiently curate their own information and entertainment feeds. Furthermore, advances in geo targeting means that consumers can be offered entertainment choices based on their location – such as Mexico’s Yumbling app.

Meanwhile, media and entertainment brands become increasingly important, as consumers turn to familiar and trusted sources of good quality content. These brands are building on this service to drive differentiation and gather loyal customers – to the extent that businesses such as Netflix, Amazon, Yahoo and Microsoft are developing their own original programming.

Niche curators help consumers discover new content they might never have chosen for themselves. Independent film site MUBI offers consumers a new independent movie to try on a daily basis, while popular Dutch website 22 Tracks offers constantly updated playlists in 22 different genres of music.

Furthermore, empowered consumers themselves increasingly take on the role of curator – from casual recommendations to friends, to consumers whose passion for their subject and their circle of influence have elevated their status to a super influencer and curator – to the extent that new businesses such as Gleam Digital have sprung up, managing influential YouTube celebrities, such as makeup artists Samantha and Nicola Chapman whose YouTube channel averagely receives 6.5 million views per month.

From a brand perspective, Intel stepped into the brand publishing world with their new media property iQ, which focuses on providing consumers with an ongoing platform of curated content.

The managing editor of iQ, Luke Kintigh, stated that curation was a crucial element to capture what’s trending on the web, “Our core objective is to share and source content that inspires, educates, entertains and helps all of us to better understand our modern world”. When asked why Intel chose curation over another marketing tactic, he stated, “This multi-tiered curation approach is providing iQ readers with an insight into the world of technology by surfacing relevant and fresh content that has a unique Intel perspective and voice intertwined in it.”

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BRANDS?

Consider who, where and how you can engage with relevant influential consumer curators. Can your brand credibly curate entertainment choices for your consumers? Many brands have established curated music apps on Spotify – Reebok sharing workout recommended lists, for example.

Make sure the content you already have can be discovered and shared by curators. And if you don’t have any, investigate creating content that will be useful or entertaining.
TV lovers are couch potatoes? Not these days. Our busy, tech-enabled audiences love to cram as much as possible into every moment. The use of more than one screen has become ubiquitous and habitual. Consumers are surfing the Internet, sharing opinions in social networks, or debating the contents they consume while watching TV. TV formats developed especially to harness the power of the second screen are on the rise, such as the latest second screen app from Channel 4, which they hope will strengthen the viewer relationship. Many formats, such as the Channel 4 example, allow for consumer participation, often in the form of tweets and votes, to be broadcast.

Many producers and broadcasters now develop their content in ‘layers’, using the second screen as a method for accessing additional entertainment. These days, no self-respecting programme format is produced without a – sometimes complex – web of interrelated content and ‘extras’. The 4Now app enables users to view discussions on social media about programmes, as well as adding their own opinions on Twitter. In addition, exclusive content about programmes and their stars will feature and it has the capability to conduct live polls. Platforms themselves are making an immersive experience a priority: Microsoft’s recent deal with ESPN and the NFL demonstrates the company is taking the convergence of live games with scores, stats, and other data very seriously. With hypermobile consumers and seamless connection between devices, consumers expect to be able to take their entertainment wherever they go (but more of this in the later Snacking & Indulging section).

Beyond the second screen, the empowered consumer audiences increasingly seek emotionally, physically and mentally engaging, immersive experiences, as the phenomenally successful UK cinematic immersive experiences, Future Cinema, attracting 20 thousand consumers to their events each month they run. A new breed of entertainment form is developing, showing our affinity for the visual, where stories are designed specifically to be experienced in multiple environments, from multiple angles and with very personal outcomes, often using augmented reality applications. Projects such as ‘Conspiracy For Good’ and ‘The Silent History’, which deliver their stories in both digital and physical environments have received much critical acclaim. ‘The Silent History’ was named one of the best apps of 2012 by Apple and was praised for its innovative storytelling properties. In 2011 ‘Conspiracy For Good’ resulted in building and stocking five libraries in Africa and funding 50 scholarships for schoolgirls, along with being nominated for an International Digital Emmy Award. The merging of entertainment genres is a fascinating trend – which you can explore further in Press Play.

“So what does this mean for brands?”

- Emulating entertainment trends in a brand’s own content development – can the brand’s stories be told immersively, across multiple channels, with content appropriate to the context?

- Creating a discovery experience which rewards a consumer’s participation, and invites the consumer to share their findings could prove a memorable and effective route.

- Embedding layers of product information and opportunities to click and buy will appeal to consumer’s moment maximising sensibilities.

- Geo-location technologies could be used to attract consumers to take part in mobile gaming opportunities to win prizes or get discounts.
Where once ‘gaming’ as a hobby was considered the preserve of young, obsessive males, today’s reality is very different. The rise of social games on social networks and casual games enjoyed by all the family has changed the face of the gamer forever – and therefore gaming. The average demographic of a Candy Crush player is 35 and female.

Now we see gaming extending into more concepts of play, as the digital and physical worlds collide. Disney, for example, has been coming up with new ways to add an extra layer of interactivity between the games and the toys themselves through their AppMates range and upcoming Disney Infinity. Likewise, in 2012, Activision launched the Skylanders’ series, which merges merchandise with the kids gaming experience. Skylanders has been Activision’s biggest success story of 2012, garnering them over $1bn with over one hundred million of their toys sold in just 15 months.

In the more classic gaming arena, gaming has been elevated beyond the level of hobby or mere entertainment as the competitive gaming scene is starting to get big, and brands are starting to notice and even sponsor their own events like the Intel Extreme Masters competition.

In some cases, top gamers across the world are becoming professional players, with annual earnings in excess of $250k, as they compete in global gaming series. And the rise of competitive gaming has also created a new scene around it – such as Shoutcasting – essentially eSports commentating, much like you would see in Football. Mike Lamond (Husky) is one of the most well-known commentators for popular game Starcraft 2 on YouTube. With over 600 thousand subscribers and over 252 million video views, Husky’s channel is the number one stop for Starcraft fans (1.1 million in Korea, over three million in US and Europe). The big name games themselves are focused on developing their brands further, developing both availability through multiplatform apps and immersion by building the brand stories into new areas such as TV programmes and live experiences.

Beyond the most literal definition of ‘gaming’ in the entertainment space, the notion of gamification is broadening the definition of entertainment, as activities not previously considered to be a source of entertainment have been transformed by the application of technologies and gaming techniques into an entertaining pastime. The ‘quantification’ of life, through apps such as Nike FuelBand, has for some people turned tracking heart rate into a competitive and ‘gamified’ life-tracking obsession.

Many genres are looking to gaming to improve and innovate. Cultural institutions look to the cues of gaming to revive appeal, designing and curating interactive exhibitions, whilst increasingly we are seeing the crossover of gaming and film making with successes such as ‘Conspiracy for Justice’. The increasingly absorbing gaming worlds allow consumers to create alternative realities, to escape to a world where they can create and escape to whole new identities.

The partnership of TV and online media is also a beneficial tactic in which users can interact with TV shows via gamification techniques, generating greater engagement and provide access to a related community of viewers via social TV and incentivise viewing of programmes and advertisements.

Britain’s Got Talent’s latest free app for the 2013 series allowed viewers to vote directly, design their own buzzer, become a judge, take part in live polls, get access to additional content and finally connect with friends, the judges and anyone else involved on social networks.

Brands are already using gamification platforms or services that enhance consumers’ TV watching experience and provide rewards for participating. Brands can use gamification to engage consumers during commercials and to enhance a brand’s appeal among certain demographics. For example, to launch the new A-Class, Mercedes-Benz created an interactive TV campaign for the new A-Class that invited the audience to drive the story via Twitter.
If social sharing has become an integral part of the entertainment experience, then the visual companions, such as Instagram, Vine, Viddy and the like, elevate this interaction to an art form. Millions of visual social updates are shared on a daily basis as consumers seek to update their friends with a visual record of their busy social lives. 150 million images are taken by consumers per day on the Snapchat network. And no wonder, videos are 12 times more than links and text posts on Facebook (Hubspot). The number of people who would claim ‘photography’ as a hobby has risen dramatically, whilst the total number of photographs uploaded had exceeded one billion. On February 27, 2013, Instagram announced that they had 100 million active users, only two and a half years after first launching. In addition, the popularity of Vine, the animated gif app, continues to rise, as consumers use this simple video form to relay events. As our a macro consumer dynamic of Simplification tells us, in an increasingly complex world, with information and data overload, consumers seek to find ways to simplify and de-clutter – and with visual images helping to make information digestible and intelligible, it’s no wonder consumers are increasingly keen on pictures that tell stories. A 2012 report by ROI Research found 44% of respondents were more likely to engage with brands who posted pictures on their social media channels rather than any other type of content. From a commercial perspective, this is significant. Business Insider reports that Pinterest is emerging as an “early star in social media-power commerce” and Pinterest drove twice as much e-commerce traffic as Twitter in December 2012.

Technology is of course empowering consumer’s love of the visual. Currently, the talk is all about the augmentations delivered by Google Glass technology, layering augmentations over real life. But with increasingly powerful technologies, the human universe is being reimagined way beyond Google Glass. The future is fashionable eyewear, contact lenses or even bionic eyes with immersive 3D displays, conjuring up a digital layer to ‘augment’ reality, enabling entire new classes of applications and user experiences.

By 2014, the market for augmented reality in the US will grow to $350m, from $6m in 2008, according to ABI Research. Total annual revenues from mobile apps using augmented reality are expected to reach $732m in 2014, up from less than $2m in 2010. Already, we are seeing the merging of gaming and films, where consumers can actively participate in the story. As technology advances, these ‘feasts for the eyes’ will become all the more immersively entertaining.

“Visual images that simplify stories and immerse our senses”.

**FEAST FOR THE EYES**
Despite, or perhaps because of the popularity of such shows as The X Factor (distributed in over 40 countries), there is an increasing rejection of the manufactured and the artificial. As we see in the empowerment of people, the accessibility of celebrity, the ease by which it is now perceived to become famous, has led to admiration for real, gritty and un-adorned talent.

This is perhaps most clearly demonstrated by the passion and demand for live experiences, from music festivals to premium film screenings. In the UK, more than 80 summer music festivals have sprung up. Many of the newer festivals are ‘boutique’, focusing on new talent and intimate shows. Nowadays, the ultimate reward is the intimate music gig, not the uber stadium show. Brands such as Jack Daniels and Mastercard have understood this, running a series of ‘intimate’ gigs with high profile bands.

Even at the most credible of events, such as Art Basel, it is the ‘off Basel’ events – the ‘unofficial’ activity which generates the most excitement and social status, fuelled by the array of temporary, pop-up spaces that spring up. Harking back to the days of Warhol’s Factory, communal artistic spaces are springing up, such as the Holzmarkt in Berlin, offering space and creative support, as well as the opportunity to perform and share. As you will see in the Local Talent section, craving for the real deal also extends to local, home-grown talent.

Global accessibility to the Internet is an extremely new occurrence, but is changing the world and the way we live every single day. We have immediate access to all our friends, family, work colleagues, content, shopping and entertainment with a click of a button. Being online is one thing, but live entertainment has a unique emotional pleasure that comes with the experience, something you just don’t get online, and consumers know it all too well. According to research, watching TV live on TV is still consumer’s number one choice of viewing platform, favouring this over streaming and on-demand.

Furthermore, it is clear that social media has enhanced the pleasure of live TV. Twitter conversation surrounding prime time television tends to begin 30 minutes before a programme starts and ends 30 minutes after it finishes, which suggests consumers benefit further from the live event and want more engagement and real-time contact.

In addition, we see a revival in arts and crafts, genuine and ‘wholesome’ skills, perhaps as reaction to the artificial and the ‘untrustworthy’ that technological progress and economic downturn have brought. In the UK, Google search results show that searches for ‘knitting’ increased over 150% in 2012, while the term ‘knitting for beginners’ increased by 250%.

To complete the picture of a craving for the real and authentic, consumers are also harking back to heritage entertainment brands – brands built with love and to last as opposed to the culture of dodgy ethics and disposable products.

Social networking increasing at rapid rates means we no longer talk to one another – we Facebook, Twitter, Email and text instead. However, online behaviour lacks physical contact that we, as people, innately long for. This can be said for shopping online, since 59% of UK shoppers prefer shopping in-store than online, in order to gain from the physical contact a consumer has with a product and its seller, that emotional experience is enhanced by the physical act of ‘live’.

Consider the value of your brand heritage. Is there a genuine story to tell that will inspire consumers and appeal to their need for authenticity?

Incorporate live into your products, as it’s this experience that will stun, engage, surprise and produce feelings of intimacy, supremacy and proximity to its consumers.
Today consumers face a paradox: technology is both the cause of a flood of information and excessive choice, and potentially the source of a solution or simplification.

It could be argued that the rapid uptake of smart devices, and the entertainment services they provide, can be attributed to simplification – the simplicity of intuitive design has aided consumer understanding and enabled behaviour to change at an unprecedented rate.

In parallel and with breath-taking frequency, apps and services are being launched that simplify the discovery and consumption of entertainment, from music streaming services that make new music suggestions from your listening habits, such as Deezer and Last FM, to film services such as MUBI, which suggest just one film per day to independent film fans, to smart TVs which make the process of programme discovery as simple as a few clicks. The popularity of apps that simplify are big money spinners. Why else would Yahoo! reportedly pay $30m for the Summly app, an analytical tool to condense text content into 1000, 500, or 140-character summary text?

In a data-powered world, new forms of entertainment, or certainly consumer pastimes, are being fuelled by the uncomplicated delivery of data and information. Personal data-tracking, with the likes of Nike FuelBand and Fitbit tracking and analysing every move, is leading some consumers to become increasingly obsessed with tracking their ‘quantified selves’.

And in contrast, consumers also seek to simplify their entertainment experiences (not to mention add a layer of perceived credibility) by removing the technology. As we noted in our Real Deal dynamic, unplugged, acoustic sets in intimate surroundings and the stripped-back entertainment experience are on the rise.

"Uncluttering the entertainment world, both by turning off technology and by turning it on".

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BRANDS?

In a competitive brand environment, creating an insightful and differentiated service that simplifies consumers’ entertainment lives is likely to be appreciated. Consider partnering with services that can help simplify your discovery, creating an app for Smart TVs for example.

And if you must, join the bandwagon of brands offering intimate stripped-back entertainment experiences.
The snacking consumer trend is a new consumption model, triggered by the saturation of information and the increasingly short attention span of consumers, who can only focus and consume small bites of information, data or entertainment when, where, and how they want (from short web videos, RSS feeds, blogs, etc.). In the world of entertainment, we see consumers turn to the likes of YouTube to snack on bite-size chunks of content to fill a moment (see also Immersive Layered Entertainment) or take to a break. Kit Kat’s YouTube channel is dedicated to creating short forms of content, such as ‘Learn a bit of sign language’ and ‘Learn a magic trick’, in order for consumers to consume little chunks of content to ‘Have a break’.

But snacking is not just about small pieces of content. As access to entertainment is democratised and access becomes ubiquitous and delivered in 3G and in HD resolution to tablets and smartphones, entertainment-lovers can choose to consume on-the-go, content that might previously have been reserved for the TV or cinema.

The snacking entertainment consumer also extends to temporary ownership. With a wide variety of entertainment on offer, and new entertainment consumption models springing up, consumers need not commit to purchasing their chosen entertainment, but merely rent or stream. Music streaming service Spotify, which was launched in 2008, has 24 million active users and over six million of those are paying subscribers. The platform has aggregated a staggering 20 million songs over the years, which is continuously growing, and is now available in 28 countries, while in India, the fast-growing Saavn music streaming service is India’s go-to destination for discovery and streaming of both Indian and English language music, with over 15 million members.

In direct contrast to this seemingly insatiable appetite for content snacking, is our greedy binging. Leichtman Research Group found 47% of people who watch shows on-demand say they view multiple back-to-back episodes of a single show. All the episodes for Netflix’ original drama series ‘House of Cards’ and the recent ‘Arrested Development’ were released simultaneously, with great success. Even though Netflix has refused to release the viewing figures for these programmes, we do know that ‘House of Cards’ was the most viewed show on the site, in every country, and as a result Netflix are creating many more series to feed the binging trend, suggesting TV consumption is completely changing direction. Some commentators believe that, in our fast paced, constantly ‘on’ lives, binging on entertainment, allows us to ‘switch off’ and immerse ourselves in a compelling story (see immersive experiences for more). Or perhaps it’s just because, with VOD and smart TV proliferation, we just can. The international streaming marketplace had 6.1 million streaming subscribers for Netflix, a figure forecast to increase by 14.8% this quarter. It’s certainly a sign of the empowered consumer taking control of the viewing experience. Entertainment producers for binge phenomenon such as ‘The Walking Dead’ are adapting and developing the new series with the binging audience in mind.

“So what does this mean for brands?”

Consider how to make your messages simplified and ‘snackable’. hone in on the critical part of the message, build a story and connect that ‘snack’ to other complementary snacks.

Consider the fact that if a consumer is snacking on content on a ‘down’ moment, they may object to interruptive advertising. Can you instead help curate the content snacks for maximum enjoyment?

Can your brand be credibly and authentically integrated into an entertainment binge? If so, this could be an opportunity to tell quite a complex story, create familiarity and make a real impact.
Whilst most forms of entertainment have always tended to be group or shared experiences, our socially networked worlds have amplified the networked experience of entertainment to new levels.

The rise of layered, immersive entertainment, with built in second screen applications has been spurred on by the abundance of social interaction around TV programmes. So far in 2013, the US Superbowl was the most social TV telecast ever, generating over 52 million social actions, three times higher than in 2012.

In the UK, Twitter is the number one application for social TV, with 60% of UK’s 10 million users tweeting about TV, 40% of which occur during prime time TV slots. Second Sync, a technology company that focuses on social analytics for TV, have recognised celebrity tweets can increase viewing figures for channels due to starting up conversation surrounding that programme. Furthermore, a study by Nielsen revealed that tweets had an effect on TV ratings across a range of shows, with the most being in competitive reality TV programmes, where 44% of which had ratings affected by tweets.

Businesses such as Zeebox, My TV Buddy and IntoNow have launched to capture this social market and many programme makers and broadcasters are endeavouring to capitalise on the power that social endorsement can create as well as allowing consumers to enjoy entertainment collectively, even if they are not physically present.

IntoNow, for example, aims to enhance the way people engage with each other around the shows they love, by giving them the ability to recognise, share and discuss programme content in the app and through other social streams such as Facebook and Twitter.

In the US, broadcaster NBC launched NBC Live in Spring 2011, a free online ‘fan companion’ service that web and iPad users can log on to when watching their favourite NBC shows. When logged on, users can interact with trivia, polls, cast commentary and fun facts synced with the show. Whilst discovering new bands, shows and other forms of entertainment through peer recommendation is certainly not new, the proliferation of social networks has turbo-boosted its effects and firmly places the consumer in a position of power. In the UK, terrestrial channel Channel 4, has created a new non-terrestrial channel, 4Seven, with a schedule entirely based on ‘noise’ created in networks, blogs and other media outlets. As we see in the ‘curation’ trend, certain consumers become ‘super influencers’, becoming a powerful advocates or indeed detractors.

But social entertainment is not limited to the discovery and consumption of entertainment: it has a significant power further up the value chain. Consumers are collectively empowered to demand and even fund the creation of new entertainment – from funding albums to owning film rights.

Tens of thousands of fans rallied around Kickstarter to fully fund a project to take cult hit TV show ‘Veronica Mars’ to the silver screen, reaching its $2m goal. Kickstarter is a funding platform for creative projects, from films, games and music to art, design and technology, which – since its launch in April 2009 – has managed to fund over 35 thousand creative projects from consumer pledges.

Meanwhile, Finite Films calls for consumers to exert influence over the film concept itself and Intel and Toshiba’s Inside project encourages consumer interaction to move the plot along.

“From group fun to group decision making”

SOCIAL
ENTERTAINMENT

“From group fun to group decision making”

ENTERTAINMENT

New Networking

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BRANDS?

Reach out to and engage with the super influencers is key – their opinion and network is critical.

Consider giving your consumers the chance to invest (and therefore be invested) in your project.

Build socialising into your campaign, including employing the social networks of all influencers involved in your campaign.
Whilst the glitter of international celebrity, stars and entertainment still holds an allure for many, in certain environments, celebration and appreciation of local talent is becoming more prevalent.

In rapidly evolving markets, the dominance of American culture is being gradually eroded by a new found belief and appreciation for a national and local culture, particularly when renewed investment means many more national forms of entertainment are reaching audiences. In India, for example, although the current craze of Electronic Dance Music is an import, it is being reinterpreted by Indian DJs for the local culture.

In some cases, this can be due to economic pressures: with the price tag on seeing international music artists too hefty, German consumers are turning to local, more accessible acts. Indeed, being seen to support the local economy and hence local talent is becoming increasingly desirable.

The love of local can also be attributed to the hyper local that technology has empowered, where various apps can allow consumers to discover and bug the best of entertainment closest to them, and which, in turn, allow consumers to advise each other on local favourites and finds. Furthermore, local labels and artists can now, through social networks, more effectively communicate and build a following. Suddenly local talent is better known and shared than ever before and fame and followers is no longer the preserve of the big boys.

Let’s not forget, of course, that local passion and fervour has in many cases, always been part of a nation’s entertainment, with festivals and celebrations steeped in tradition.

Entertainment companies are recognising this national/local interest, and providing products appropriately – from new video games inspired by Indonesian shadow puppetry to the increased percentage of national/local films released at box offices.

So what does this mean for brands?

If you are a local brand, now’s the time to shout about it. If you’re not, imposing culture is out and celebrating local culture can be a route in to your audience, but only if it feels credible and authentic.

When considering entertainment partnerships and sponsorships, don’t default to world-renowned talent: local artistry could resonate more and prove to be significantly more cost effective.
Technology and connectivity have democratised the world of entertainment: from production to distribution – creating a very new and rapidly changing business environment – and from who makes it, how it’s funded and where it’s consumed.

The music industry has been severely affected by the advent of digitisation – from talent scouting (where crowd-sourced curating websites such as FreshScouts and RecordScout exist to assist individual listeners in discovering new artists) to music production (where software such as Apple’s Garage Band allows a home user to record and edit his own music and then upload it) to promotion and distribution (where direct access of talent to consumers has radically changed the role of record labels).

In the film industry, the cost of entry in terms of production has been significantly reduced with easily accessible, high quality and relatively low cost production and equipment, providing more opportunities for aspiring film makers with low budgets to bring their cinematic dreams to fruition. Furthermore, the digitisation of cinema networks and a plethora of digital VOD platforms delivering feature films to homes means that these films also have a greater chance of actually reaching audiences. Businesses such as Devolver Digital Films provide film makers with a direct digital route to market. Online distribution is becoming increasingly important to the industry at the same time that TVs are increasingly integrated with internet connectivity. As of the end of 2012, Netflix had 33 million members with revenues of over $950m.

Ridley Scott has recently launched ‘Ridley Scott Presents’ and will be supporting the production and distribution of six low budget features over three years.

New players have entered the content creation sphere. Amazon, Hulu, Netflix, MSN and Yahoo! have all announced – and in some cases launched – their own original series available exclusively on their platforms. Amazon has announced five original series will air later this year and early 2014.

The first to enter the market, YouTube, has invested $100m both in the US and Europe to commission one hundred original channels exclusive to YouTube. In 2012, 25 of the hundred channels were receiving a million views per week, resulting in further investment into more channels as YouTube believes this is “the future of TV”. As rumoured, 55 of YouTube’s original channels are now charging a monthly fee of $0.99, with expected yearly discounts and a 14 day trial.

Entertainment providers continue to experiment with business models as the snack-happy, empowered consumer looks increasingly to temporary ownership, with the likes of Spotify and most recently Google Play Music All Access offering music streaming services. Another example is Snapchat, the photo messaging app that allows users to take photos or record videos, add text and drawings, and then send them to friends. Due to the massive success and demand, Snapchat is reportedly raising a staggering $100m to fund this.

Consumers are now moving higher up the food chain, actually deciding on and investing in entertainment. Amazon Studios are allowing their consumers to choose which of six pilot programmes they develop into a full series, whilst businesses such as Kickstarter, Devco and Cowbird allow consumers to fund projects they like.

This new environment has the effect of democratising success, where consumers become the writers, creators, stars, whilst the constant access to celebrities – via twitter or other social media – brings people closer to them, narrowing the distance between the two.
Linear TV is as strong today as it has always been. It’s one of the prime examples of how important it is to make viewing decisions easy and accessible. We still spend an average of four hours per day per individual watching TV and of the 5000+ TV channels available in Europe alone, 48 channels make up 75% of the viewership.

There are three main human characteristics as to why linear TV is still so strong: habit, inertia and inclusion. Entertainment needs to be easy to access through an electronic device, content needs to be navigable through one destination (in the case of TV, the EPG) and viewers like to lean back and feel that they’re seeing the content at the earliest opportunity and simultaneous to when their friends, family and colleagues are watching.

The Internet gave birth to video-on-demand about 15 years ago. The dynamic and demand of being able to watch what you wanted when you wanted, contributed to the growth of high speed internet access. We now have the bandwidth to view varying lengths of video content on a range of IP driven devices with the necessary clock speed, processing power and screen resolution to enjoy video outside of the home. The sheer scale of free-to-access video content coupled with the various platforms and the numerous video enabled devices has driven a need to curate content specific to the profile and tastes of the viewer.

Context is king!

5000 TV channels and nothing to watch

Barry Llewellyn
International Video Specialist, Microsoft

Not so long ago there was a very overused phrase in the media world – ‘content is king’. What exactly did ‘content is king’ mean? Did it refer to the need and prioritisation of quality, high production value video which engaged and entertained? Or, was it referring to volume of content, accessibility to video on multiple devices offering control and choice?

I’m old enough to remember the days when UK programme planners were severely chastised by the general public for repeating TV shows across the weekly schedule. In fact in the very early days of TV, the BBC would wipe clean many reels of film and record over classic comedy performances because tape stock was deemed more valuable than content. Early recordings of classic series like ‘The Goons’ (Peter Sellers et al) and ‘Hancock’s Half Hour’ were lost forever.

Regardless of the definition, varying degrees of quality content is now widely available through a host of platforms and devices. The consumer challenge for today is discoverability. There’s so much video choice that viewers gravitate to their well-used and familiar methods of entertainment access, the TV.

So who’s doing this well? Well, all self-evident biases aside, we happen to think that Beefeater’s recent ‘London Sessions’ is a good example of a brand not only identifying this opportunity, but absolutely maximising it. Launched in February 2012, the platform’s central concept was to bring a diverse but coherent group of British artists together in both Moscow and Madrid, thus clearly positioning the brand as a credible exporter of the very finest British music – in this case Emeli Sande, Baxter Dury and The Kooks. Centred around a live experience, but amplified imaginatively through digital, social and PR channels, the force of the campaign lay in the evident strength of Beefeater’s curatorial choice. Any curator needs a ‘point of view’ (or else it risks just being an arbitrary ‘selector’), and Beefeater’s could scarcely stray from their immediate commercial agenda (in marketing terms, the direct sales message) – (rightly) fancy the chance to step up to the plate.

Unable to resist the force of the sweeping statement, we at Parlophone are convinced that nowhere is this dynamic playing out more vividly than in music. In the words of a wise music industry executive who shall remain unnamed, “we now live in a world where a 14 year-old boy can walk to school with the entire history of music in his back pocket”. In this climate, it follows that it’s less about the music you own, and more about the music you know. Combine this insight with another surging truism of our musical world – the buoyancy of live experience over and above recorded content – and the path to a sweet spot for brands in this space begins to become abundantly clear.

Who are the new trusted editors?

Jack Fryer
Head of Research, Parlophone/Warner UK

Amidst the avalanche of marketing buzzwords that land in our inboxes ever year – fresh, hopeful but usually doomed to immediate obsolescence – ‘curation’ is one that steadfastly refuses to go away. The reason is simple: unlike so much fodder that fills our PowerPoint presentations, its DNA is not a confection of over-imaginative marketers, it is the result of a confluence of evolutionary pressures: Darwinian ‘natural selection’. Consumers need curation because they have more choice than ever before, but have fewer and fewer ‘choosers’ around to help them. The economies of editorial are feeling the strain like never before while brands – often monied, and often ever happier to stray from their immediate commercial agenda (in marketing terms, the direct sales message) – (rightly) fancy the chance to step up to the plate.

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Curators, as we know, are only as good as the things they curate. A self-proclaimed ‘curator’ of wines who doesn’t know a vintage Bordeaux from a corked Chardonnay will not command the name for long. So how did Beefeater get it so spectacularly right? First selecting a nigh-on unknown Emeli Sande, then (fast-forward a year) a fresh-faced Bastille (now one of the UK’s hottest acts)? The answer in this case is simple: every good curator is a ‘selector’, and Beefeater’s could scarcely be clearer: this is about the best of British, from cult established artists to – as it was then – the bleeding edge of emerging talent. In blunt marketing terms, this is a curatorial voice in music designed to closely mirror Beefeater’s brand values: bold, creative and with tradition.

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POINTS OF VIEW

This perceived increase in scepticism of the manufactured, combined with the obvious continued appeal for real talent and live experiences could simply be the result of present day phenomena.

Steve Jenkins
Marketing Manager, VEVO

The blurred line between manufactured and real talent

One core performance metric for VEVO as an online video platform is to increase views. These are typically generated by the global music superstars, Gaga, Bieber, One Direction to name just three. Another of its core values is supporting emerging talent. Initially promoting an artist’s first ever video then helping the development further through its flagship LIFT programme. Eventually streaming a gig live to a global audience through its gameshow is the ideal outcome, both principally and commercially. It could be said this is a manufactured process. Regardless of whether it is, the success of it, like the successes of Gaga et al, is driven fundamentally by viewer and fan choice.

When the term ‘manufactured’ is used, the overall consensus is the reality TV concept – One Direction are a prime example. Finishing third on X-Factor in 2010, they are first UK outfit to go straight to number one in the US with their debut single whilst also selling 30 million records worldwide. 2012’s biggest selling single globally was Carly Rae Jepsen’s ‘Call Me Maybe’, also a reality TV finalist. Manufactured? Arguably. Talented? Debatable. Successful? Definitely – One Direction are set to make US$1bn in the US alone this year.

There is little doubt that these artists appeal to a certain demographic, and are nurtured for optimum commercial success. More often than not however, there is a limited shelf life for this success before the next ‘big thing’ replaces their appeal. But this apparent manufacturing is simply one element of the music and entertainment business. Music fans have, and always will, immerse themselves in whichever artist, genre, song or experience they choose. It may be a fleeting immersion or a timeless love affair. Carly Rae Jepsen finished third in Canadian Idol in 2007. It wasn’t until five years later after going back to school, writing and recording and releasing numerous singles independently that she eventually found success. Hardly manufactured. Modern day artists dominate the top ten selling singles and albums of last year, yet the top three grossing live acts of 2012 were Madonna, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band and Pink Floyd’s Roger Waters.

This perceived increase in scepticism of the manufactured, combined with the obvious continued appeal for real talent and live experiences could simply be the result of present day phenomena. The ever present reality TV shows have been absorbed by multiple media channels, coupled with social media outlets to ensure a 24hr influence in consumers’ lives. They can pick and choose a level of interest and involvement to suit. If a sense of uniqueness or credibility is challenged then a retreat to edginess, underground, and ‘real’ can be sought and publicised just as accordingly.

This is where the lines blur though and which VEVO actually strives to be part of. What begins as an unsigned, young lad from Brighton with a loyal following on YouTube quickly becomes Conor Maguire, mentored by Ne-Yo and signed to Parlophone.

There will always be a demand for real talent, real experiences and manufactured bands, none are mutually exclusive though. Two of VEVO’s first LIFT artists, Rita Ora and Labrinth were relative unknowns at the start of last year, by the end both were appearing live on the final of X-Factor. Real talent, providing great experiences and certainly nothing manufactured.

ENTERTAINMENT

As an open platform, unrestricted from schedule, the viewers were allowed to decide what they find entertaining, who they want to see more of, and ultimately, create new celebrities.

Andrew Donovan
Entertainment Proposition Manager, YouTube

YouTube began in 2005 with an invitation to ‘broadcast yourself’. Since then, it has become a creative canvas for millions, helping distribute everything from holiday videos and pet achievements to an Austrian jumping from the edge of space.

As an open platform, unrestricted from schedule, the viewers were allowed to decide what they find entertaining, who they want to see more of, and ultimately, create new celebrities. Many of those previously only consuming entertainment content have now begun to create it, and many have become very successful in the process.

There are teenage bedroom-bloggers who engaged fellow teens, and started attracting thousands and then millions of loyal followers. Trick shot artists, gamers, short film makers, magicians, musicians and make-up artists have found their home and their passionate audience.

YouTube’s vast audience has a host of celebrities that are seemingly unknown to the average person on the street. Most people may not know who Michelle Phan or The Syndicate Project are, but with nearly 10 million subscribers between them, they have a fiercely loyal audience devouring every video.

And for every ‘unknown’ celebrity on YouTube, there are the well-documented self-starters such as Susan Boyle, Jessie J, Macklemore and Justin Bieber who weren’t global stars were it not for YouTube.

These consumer-turned-creators were able to meet the demands of their audience because they have been directly connected to them. Robert Kyncl (YouTube’s global head of content) recently highlighted the fact that unlike TV, YouTube is a two-way conversation. It allows creators to have direct feedback from their consumers whether through the comments sections, shares and likes and drive fans to more content. Creators that succeed nimbly make content to the request of their subscribers. A fan may ask Tanya Burr for an Angelina Jolie beauty tutorial and the next week it is live on her channel.

Live streaming allows for a creator’s global audience to unite at a chosen time and comment live on the event. At the launch of ‘The YouGeneration’, One Direction took part in the live streamed kick-off, attracting viewers from not only the time zone-friendly UK and US but also fans staying up until three in the morning in Asia just to be part of the live experience.

And where the young people go, traditional talent and media execs will follow! Conventional celebs from the TV world such as Jamie Oliver, Simon Cowell and Ricky Gervais have all chosen YouTube to launch their latest initiatives. And conversely, TV execs are now coming to YouTube to find their next stars. YouTube grown make-up artists Pixiwoo recently featured on Gok Wan’s new Channel 4 programme. Ellen has a regular YouTube feature on her TV show and DreamWorks Animation SKG recently announced the acquisition of YouTube channel AwesomenessTV.

The future business model for creators is extremely exciting, with the move into connected TVs, distribution across multiple devices and content being available anywhere for the consumers. Ad spend might not have migrated across to YouTube as much as it should get, but with this unstoppable combining force of creativity and connectivity, it certainly will
More than a mouthful of music

Pete Beene
International Account Director, Spotify

Much the same as has proven to be the case with Netflix, we too find that the Spotify listener tends towards binging of content. Compared with media ownership, the access model gives the user an incentive to listen for longer periods as a lack of variety isn’t imposed on the listener by the cost of purchase. This frees the listener to use the Spotify platform as a music discovery tool and to spend longer periods listening, as they don’t tire of the limits to their media collection.

The binging effect is borne out in the numbers, with the Spotify user listening to the service for 104 minutes per day on average. What’s more, the relaxation of many industries working practices mean that unlike VOD, the Spotify platform is extensively listened to in the work environment, not just the home.

Advertising's biggest competitor could soon be its consumer

Sameer Modha
Partner, Business Planning, Mindshare

TV content is so desirable and so costly, consumers have to put up with on-screen ads to get it. PWC Outlook shows that, in 2013, advertisers will spend £108bn globally on conventionally delivered TV and film content, while consumers will pay about £185bn, so although they outspend us 2:1 they can’t afford telly without their sugar daddy.

But it doesn’t mean they like us. Looking online, AdBlock is the single most popular browser extension in the world, and on some estimates 10% of internet ad impressions are blocked by people wanting to be ad-free.

And in the world of internet delivered content, the deal is increasingly either/or, either have the free version and put up with the ads, or pay some money and make them go away. To take a recent, random selection, iTunes Radio, Kindle Fire and the new ITV Player all offer ad-free subscriptions.

Consumers will spend over £300bn in 2013 to get internet content (including delivery costs), while advertisers will only fork out £76bn. In a world we’re outgunned 4:1 by consumers and consumer spend on internet delivered content is growing three times faster than online marketing spend, our biggest competitors for media muscle may soon be consumers themselves.

Interchangeable values of culture

Rita Ibarra
Manager, Business Planning, Mindshare

From real to virtual, from social to individual, the network society has changed the way we consume entertainment, creating a more exciting participative, interactive and accessible global entertainment culture.

This new and open media for entertainment is challenging culture and increasing the hegemonisation of the status quo - ‘counterculture’, ‘alternative’ or ‘cult’ are no longer exclusively the domain of the hipster, they have been absorbed into and become mainstream products, where seemingly ‘the classic’ is paradoxically ‘the new modern’.

The cultural references in entertainment are constantly mutating and communication technologies are accelerating this process.

What can brands offer that is different or unique? Is the answer in the fusion of organic movements of creative citizens and the reactive entertainment media corporations? Or in Kerouac’s words: “Great things are not accomplished by those who yield to trends and fads and popular opinion”.

Taking a share of culture, not category

Michelle Cfas
Business Director, Invention, Mindshare

As many of the dynamics outlined here demonstrate, the lines between entertainment genres and even between information, entertainment and our daily lives, have blurred. Some of today’s biggest entertainment brands started their lives as a pure consumer product – as Red Bull’s Media House and Content Pool bear testament. Indeed, the powerful force of consumer advocacy has become a past time in its own right, as consumers hone their artistic skills, sharing Instagrams and Vines of their own and others at an astonishing rate. Communication, consumption and entertainment are inextricably linked.

Brands that thrive today take a share of culture, not just category. And yet many brands still choose to separate out their work in ‘entertainment and sport’ to a sponsorship marketing function, separate from their broader marketing function. As much as the entertainment industry itself is changing and adapting to new circumstances, brands also need to rework their structures and approach to reflect a new reality.

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Bingeing on ‘Breaking Bad’

Jay Kandola
Account Director, Invention, Mindshare

Before the final season of ‘Breaking Bad’ launched, I already had the episodes pre-ordered on my Apple TV and I was resigned to the fact I would be blocking out my weekend to get through all the episodes, in one sitting (excluding toilet breaks). I am a self-confessed compulsive viewer – but I am not alone.

Binge viewing is transforming the way people watch television and changing the business of the industry. Now, technologies such as on-demand video and DVR’s are giving rise to the binge viewer, who devours shows in quick succession – episode after episode, season after season. It’s not just how we watch content that is shifting, but it’s also changing what we watch, as well. Introducing the habit-forming, highly addictive hyper-serial, they are intense, fast paced and focused on one series long plot line, with no time for recaps or explanations. ‘Breaking Bad’ joins an elite group of heavy hitting titles, which get viewers hooked, including ‘Game of Thrones’, ‘Homeland’, ‘House of Cards’ – the list is endless.

Longer term, with more and more viewers indulging in lost weekends of marathon viewing sessions, the results are changing the face of the TV business, in ways few of us can predict. Shorter term though, the key question is Will Walt live or die?

Culture isn’t complicated

David Vincent
Partner, Invention, Mindshare

This year I was lucky enough to enjoy a day at Wimbledon and one of the highlights was a free portion of strawberries and cream. As a sponsor of the event, HSBC have offered this customer benefit for the last few years.

Now strawberries and cream at Wimbledon are an essential yet irritating part of the whole experience – much like listening to some wag in the crowd shouting “come on Tim”, as Andy Murray dumps another forehand into the net. At £2.50 for a punnet of ten, they are rather pricey. Not pricey enough to make them inaccessible to the typical affluent Wimbledon spectator, but pricey enough to irritate them because they know they’re being exploited. However, everyone wants them because they fit so perfectly with the cadence and culture of the day.

HSBC’s strawberries and cream offer is incredibly successful because it’s based on a beautifully simple cultural insight. People love eating strawberries and cream at Wimbledon but they hate being exploited by a tournament that makes £30-40m in profit in just one fortnight. The cost of providing every HSBC customer at Wimbledon with free strawberries and cream costs very little, but has huge cultural value.

Entertainment

Victoria Cook
Partner, Business Planning, Mindshare

The culture of entertainment is affecting all aspects of society, even permeating to media research. As people become more aware of what their opinions and data are worth, they are less likely to participate in audience research.

At the same time, as an industry, we are asking them more and more questions to understand the explosion of media choice, so how do we engage with them?

Behavioural scientists understand what a powerful motivational force game play could be to encourage us to do activities, so the research community is using that same motivation to encourage people to answer surveys. Through using the culture of entertainment we can achieve better insights through a more engaged audience.

Entertainment in research

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Has Kevin Spacey killed the content calendar?

Sam Reid
Manager, Invention, Mindshare

At the recent Guardian Edinburgh International Television Festival, Kevin Spacey urged broadcast networks to adopt the Netflix model, giving the consumer control to watch the content they want, when they want. He could have been bolder; he could have included brands too.

There has been a steady rise in products that allow brands (and others) to host a whole range of content within one area in the digital space, rather than drip-feed that material over a length of time. Dynamic ad units can now house multiple pieces of content, whilst ThingLink make images interactive.

Nike is currently one of the few brands to have embraced this, and initiated a game-changer last year. For World Cup 2010 they created a campaign off the back of the ‘Write The Future’ hero film (TVC and online), however for Euro 2012 they took this one stage further, creating an interactive online campaign within the ad, via tunnels. Users could play Sonic, visit the Nike Barbershop or check out FC Barcelona’s famed youth academy.

Brands should take heed of Spacey’s comments – they shouldn’t necessarily be spending time discussing what to activate when, they should give the consumer that power.

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SCOUT REPORTS

The Scout Network is a group of individuals living in key cities all over the world, whose lives are immersed in music, fashion, design, sports, technology and brands. They contribute their thoughts and observations at www.scoutnetworkblog.com

For this dossier, the scouts – recruited through Vice Magazine – have identified the most cutting edge and emerging manifestations in entertainment.

Each local Scout Report has been tagged with both the Consumer Trends and Media Channel they contain.

Media Channel Keys
- Mobile
- OOH
- Internet
- Cinema
- Radio
- Magazine
- Newspaper
- TV

Consumer Trend Keys
- MN Me Nation
- MM Maximising Moments
- PP Power Play
- V Visualization
- SA Seeking Authenticity
- S Simplification
- SN Snacking
- NC National Celebration
- NWO New World Order
- MM Maximising Moments
- SA Seeking Authenticity
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Hong Kong has traditionally been upscale, a city whose revenue comes from finance and trading. Combined with the Asian obsession with status, live entertainment is all about swanky bars, clubs, hotels and restaurants. It has also been long criticised for lacking in cultural activities, but in response to this need is the venue West Kowloon Cultural District. A project shadowed with controversy as to its funding and management, which is still years off from having any venues ready. But as the WKCDC battle for high end concert halls and galleries, the real creativity is taking place in Hong Kong’s industrial areas which has had effects on the way people consume entertainment in particular music, art and nightlife/club.

Hidden Agenda: Hong Kong's own CBGB. This year Hidden Agenda have hosted international and local bands. Brands have quickly adapted to this trend with the ‘Converse Get Dirty Tour’ featuring local bands The Vours, NIKE Mo and Cheungchungkong at Hidden Agenda last February. Again, only social media platforms were used and there was a huge turnout of local hip kids. Hidden Agenda continues despite frequent police raids and threat of closure. If they are shut down they will just open up elsewhere, it already moved three times and it is not about the venue itself. It is about Hidden Agenda as trusted curators. Similarly, XXX nightclub (industrial warehouse space) has had to move further West to Shek Tong Tsui, as their doubled rent was impossible to cover without a liquor license. The brands are quick to follow the move and founder Enso recently hosted ‘Fresh Off The Boat Party’ in a similar industrial building in Shek Tong Tsui. The event was sponsored by Adidas with the walls adorned with their graffiti logos.

Temporary Art Spaces: Hong Kong is very adaptable in terms of adaptive reuse. This was evident with Art Basel and the many popup and temporary spaces used for the ‘off Basel’ activities, such as the Chai Wan Mei party. Whilst the crowds flocked to buy art, it was the ‘off Basel’ activities that generated the most parties, tweets, Instagram pictures and insight into Hong Kong’s growing creative culture. Ignacio Garcia of local fashion brand Tansgatm coordinated Chai Wan Mei, an open studio event aiming to introduce a wider audience to the hidden creative community in the industrial area of Chai Wan and quickly becoming a cluster for local creativity and arts scene. The situation in Hong Kong is marked by the rent prices and all these industrial alternative areas that pop-up from time to time end up being colonised by the developers sooner or later, as is the case of Kwun Tong right now. I think we are also open to a wider audience as a space for art, design, food and other areas of creativity. Chai Wan Mei’s huge opening party was set in a ground floor car park with Beijing band of creativity. Chai Wan Mei’s huge opening party was set in a ground floor car park with Beijing band of creativity. Chai Wan Mei’s huge opening party was set in a ground floor car park with Beijing band of creativity. It has also been long criticised for lacking in cultural activities, but in response to this need is the venue West Kowloon Cultural District. A project shadowed with controversy as to its funding and management, which is still years off from having any venues ready. But as the WKCDC battle for high end concert halls and galleries, the real creativity is taking place in Hong Kong’s industrial areas which has had effects on the way people consume entertainment in particular music, art and nightlife/club.

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Snacking & Bingeing: Hong Kong is very adaptable in terms of adaptive reuse. This was evident with Art Basel and the many popup and temporary spaces used for the ‘off Basel’ activities, such as the Chai Wan Mei party. Whilst the crowds flocked to buy art, it was the ‘off Basel’ activities that generated the most parties, tweets, Instagram pictures and insight into Hong Kong’s growing creative culture. Ignacio Garcia of local fashion brand Tansgatm coordinated Chai Wan Mei, an open studio event aiming to introduce a wider audience to the hidden creative community in the industrial area of Chai Wan and quickly becoming a cluster for local creativity and arts scene. The situation in Hong Kong is marked by the rent prices and all these industrial alternative areas that pop-up from time to time end up being colonised by the developers sooner or later, as is the case of Kwun Tong right now. I think we are also open to a wider audience as a space for art, design, food and other areas of creativity. Chai Wan Mei’s huge opening party was set in a ground floor car park with Beijing band of creativity. Chai Wan Mei’s huge opening party was set in a ground floor car park with Beijing band of creativity. Chai Wan Mei’s huge opening party was set in a ground floor car park with Beijing band of creativity.

A Space For Live: In a city where a beer in Central can cost HKD80, the Dome Music Festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day). Normally a K-Pop music festival was scheduled on 1st July public holiday (Handover Day).

The real creativity is taking place in Hong Kong’s industrial areas which has had effects on the way people consume entertainment in particular music, art and nightlife/club.
Dance With The Stars

Sunburn Festival In Goa
Promoted By Local DJs And Radio Stations

Dance In Trance

From the beaches of Goa to the tiny clubs in every city, trance music has finally come of age. Some of the biggest names in EDM have performed in high profile events and it’s only the start. The addiction cuts across religion, class, social status and it is a win-win for everyone.

“What do Ibiza and Miami have in common with Mumbai? Absolutely nothing! But if you ask David Guetta, Swedish House Mafia or Armin Van Buuren, the answer might surprise you. Mumbai has become, like any other chic and large cosmopolitan cities, a hub of Electronic Dance Music (EDM) and chances are it is on the top of any major DJ's touring list. From the beaches of Goa to the tiny hole-in-the-wall clubs in every city, trance music has finally come of age. Some of the biggest names in EDM have performed in high profile events and it is only the start. This addiction to dance music cuts across religion, class, social status and it is a win-win for everyone.

Sourabh

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The EDM craze in India has also given rise to local DJs and radio stations catering to the music. One such station, Tenzi FM, is an internet radio station programmed from India which plays all genres of EDM. With more than 200 international DJs and guest artists from every corner of the globe, plus tens of thousands of regular listeners in more than 70 countries tuning in for their favourite radio shows, Tenzi is a platform that inspires hope for up and coming artists. Along with Tenzi, there are also Indian DJs who are getting better known in the global EDM scene and that is the best news of it all. Groups like Midival Punditz and Jalebee Cartel are paving the way for newer and edgier music coming out of India. In a country with such deep musical history, this truly is an incredible phenomenon.

Perhaps even more impressive than an Armin Van Buuren show is India’s grandest party on the beach – the Sunburn Festival in Goa. Asia’s biggest dance and music festival is an annual phenomenon that attracts not only the best DJs in the world but also the ones born and bred in India. Up to 30,000 people party in simmering heat, spread over three days and encompassing countless memories. Just as EDM has become increasingly popular, so has its commercial appeal. Concerts sell out in minutes and it is no longer a seasonal fad. Year round, Mumbai is plastered with adverts about performances by overseas DJs. For many of these DJs, Mumbai or Goa are the Meccas of it all, with thousands and thousands of fans swaying their head to one universal language.
The field of entertainment in contemporary China is complex and rapidly changing, not only in its means of production, distribution and consumption but moreover in the definition of what constitutes an entertainment experience. The digital revolution, mobile technology and the exponential rates of internet and mobile penetration are key factors pushing the evolution of entertainment, impacting all areas of life, particularly the way young Chinese discover, consume, share and reflect on various forms of entertainment. Students watch online videos as a distraction from school pressures and to connect to social media to chat with other fans or as a way of expanding their social network. Stressed-out office workers may play computer games for relaxation but they might also take yoga or dance classes to add value to their self-improvement. The emerging elites might consume expensive experiences (fine dining, luxury-label shopping) that are both an escape as well as an expression of their spending power and social status.

Second Screen

Social Entertainment

The rise of the second screen is significant and exemplifies how the line between virtual and real in entertainment experiences is blurring. It also blurs the traditional distinctions between audience, participant, critic and curator. For instance, a young woman who goes to a shopping mall art exhibition (reading about it from a friend’s Weibo), takes photos of the display and posts to her Weixin and Instagram. Later, she eats at a mall café and reviews it on Dianping and finally peruses some accessories from a shop, only to go home and purchase cheaper look-a-likes online on Taobao. Where does her offline entertainment experience end and online begin? It’s hard to tell and it’s hard to classify her shifting role between the identities of spectator, participant, critic and curator. For instance, a young woman who goes to a shopping mall art exhibition (reading about it from a friend’s Weibo), takes photos of the display and posts to her Weixin and Instagram. Later, she eats at a mall café and reviews it on Dianping and finally peruses some accessories from a shop, only to go home and purchase cheaper look-a-likes online on Taobao. Where does her offline entertainment experience end and online begin? It’s hard to tell and it’s hard to classify her shifting role between the identities of spectator, participant, critic and curator. For instance, a young woman who goes to a shopping mall art exhibition (reading about it from a friend’s Weibo), takes photos of the display and posts to her Weixin and Instagram. Later, she eats at a mall café and reviews it on Dianping and finally peruses some accessories from a shop, only to go home and purchase cheaper look-a-likes online on Taobao. Where does her offline entertainment experience end and online begin? It’s hard to tell and it’s hard to classify her shifting role between the identities of spectator, participant, critic and curator. For instance, a young woman who goes to a shopping mall art exhibition (reading about it from a friend’s Weibo), takes photos of the display and posts to her Weixin and Instagram. Later, she eats at a mall café and reviews it on Dianping and finally peruses some accessories from a shop, only to go home and purchase cheaper look-a-likes online on Taobao. Where does her offline entertainment experience end and online begin? It’s hard to tell and it’s hard to classify her shifting role between the identities of spectator, participant, critic and curator. For instance, a young woman who goes to a shopping mall art exhibition (reading about it from a friend’s Weibo), takes photos of the display and posts to her Weixin and Instagram. Later, she eats at a mall café and reviews it on Dianping and finally peruses some accessories from a shop, only to go home and purchase cheaper look-a-likes online on Taobao. Where does her offline entertainment experience end and online begin? It’s hard to tell and it’s hard to classify her shifting role between the identities of spectator, participant, critic and curator.

KTV (Karaoke)

Real Deal | Social Entertainment

Local & Global

The Japanese invention of karaoke (KTV in China) has loomed large in China’s entertainment landscape since it was first introduced in the early 90’s. Over time, it’s remained a powerful pop culture force, influencing everything and of course Chinese KTV. KTV emphasizes the private space rented by a group of friends as a temporary time and place to socialise, bond and relax all around a singing activity and certain expected ‘extras’ (all-you-can-eat fruit, drinks, etc.) to complete the experience. What’s interesting is how KTV has retained its popularity, even among hip urban youth and upwardly mobile young professionals. It’s slightly nostalgic connotations. Groups of former college classmates still reunite to sing KTV once in a while, as a way of reflecting back on their golden years as students. In Shanghai and beyond, it’s still one of the central forms of Chinese entertainment that involves going out and cuts across various economic classes (KTV venues range from quite cheap to expensive).

Shopping as Entertainment

With the rise in Chinese disposable income and boom in shopping mall construction as well as the expansion of online retail platforms, it is unsurprising that in Shanghai (and many other cities across China), shopping itself has become a form of entertainment. There is fierce competition between shopping centres, individual branded stores, as well as e-commerce (not to mention online content creators/advertisers) to attract, retain and delight customers in buying something, come back again and spread the word by social media. One recent addition to Shanghai’s retail landscape is K11 Art Mall, which is not the first Chinese shopping centre to introduce art, exhibitions, pop-up events and educational programmes amongst its shops and restaurants but it explicitly makes art part of its mission. An example of an emerging trend seen across many shopping centres, branded boutiques and gradually in e-commerce platforms that are using art, media, music, celebrities and interactivity to package the experience of shopping as an entertainment in itself.

Online Video

NBLN | Collective Curation | Social Entertainment

China’s film industry has quickly become one of the top three in the world and hundreds of new cinemas are under construction across the country. Going to see new films on the big screen is incredibly popular among all ages and yet, because of various import and censorship restrictions, many Chinese movie fans resort to watching new and diverse foreign films on DVD and online that can’t be shown on Chinese screens. Related to this is the rise of Chinese online video, which has become a key platform for not only user-uploaded content, but also officially-sanctioned and subtitled syndication of foreign films and TV shows (due to deals with overseas media companies) and, most interestingly, original domestic content. One example of this is the independent young filmmaker Lu Zhengyu who, on the basis of some popular viral videos, attracted the attentions of Youku, China’s biggest online video site which has now merged to include Tudou, and subsequently was contracted by them to create a series of original web shorts. His latest, ‘Peerless Master’, is a loving parody of retro Hong Kong kung fu films and has adopted for the first time a pay-per-view model, an experiment which has surprised many with its success.
"The entire country lives and breathes online and social media is heaving. A lot of the teens lead to one of the myriad of malls to hang out at a café, watch a movie at the cinema or simply wander around with an ice cream, or something, all the while logging every move on Instagram or Twitter."

**BORING IS OPTIONAL**

Social Media On The Go

Time With Family and Friends

Embracing The New Technologies

If you type “Singapore is” into Google, the first word to complete the sentence that pops up in the search toolbar is “boring”. Earlier in the year, Singapore was not only voted the unhappiest country in the world, but also the most “emotionless” population. Well, I’m not Singaporean; I’m a British expat working and living in Singapore so you won’t be seeing reams of a defensive stance to dispense such brutal statements. However, these statements do set a rather fascinating basis for exploring the idea of what Singaporeans class as entertainment.

If Singapore really is a boring country and the population is unhappy, then it doesn’t say much for the country’s entertainment industry.

**For Export**

**Sonia**

**Embracing The New Technologies**

Man-Made River Banks For A Night Out

Social Media On The Go

Time With Family and Friends

If Singapore is still finding itself when it comes to entertainment and culture, then there are conscious efforts to provide entertainment but a lot of the attractions are purely made for tourists. Locals do venture out to these attractions every so often, especially in families.

Marina Bay Sands – a hotel with a luxurious mall, casino, bars and restaurants – is a good example of attracting Singaporeans as well as the flock of tourists every evening. It also hosts theatrical shows that have been a rarity in Singapore and is now bringing a new form of entertainment to the city that is get to establish itself as a main attraction in Singapore. How many times can you go see the Merlion, ride on the Singapore Flyer and go to the zoo?

**Expats vs. Locals**

**Real Deal**

Contrasted with the local population are the many tourists that pass through and the expats who have a very different view on what they class as entertainment. One easy way to see this is by experiencing the nightlife, for example Boat Quay. Robertson Quay and the thriving Clarke Quay line are the man-made banks of the river with complete bars, clubs and restaurants specifically constructed for those who want a fun night out. But it is the tourists and expats who indulge in the themed bars. Singaporeans of course have the odd night out there but are very outnumbered. Instead, the locals tend to gather by the bridge that leads into Clarke Quay and have a quiet night of chatting and drinking with friends, avoiding the tourist hotspots. They also turn to home barbecues or pool parties at home to have a nice chilled day with friends or family, which is still of a great importance to the Singaporeans. Whether old or young, shopping or partying, they will always be in groups. At the local hawkers centre, families and groups of friends gather there for an unlimited supply of cheap and cheerful food; catch up over drinks and watch whatever is on the suspended box TV and natter about life. This has become a solid importance to the Singaporeans. Whether old or young, shopping or partying, they will always be in groups. At the local hawkers centre, families and groups of friends gather there for an unlimited supply of cheap and cheerful food; catch up over drinks and watch whatever is on the suspended box TV and natter about life. This has become a solid entertainment and culture. Technology however, is the essence of a community that brings a happiness that is not so obvious to the outsider’s eye.

**Stage of Transition**

Social Entertainment | Real Deal | Unplugged/ Plugged In

So it is clear the entertainment sector is still in development as Singapore has charged drastically in recent years and the local population is constantly adapting to it. Many of the attractions have only been opened very recently so it seems Singapore is still finding itself when it comes to entertainment and culture. Technology however, is the one thing that is truly embedded in the culture here. If there’s a new app or a new gadget, Singapore will embrace it. Singaporeans may be branded “emotionless” but one cannot confuse being emotionless with simply being a quiet population, because they definitely make their presence known online. And as for Singapore being “boring”, well for tourists it is quite the contrary. So Singaporeans depend on their families and friends for entertainment and well, if you have boring friends and you don’t like your family, then you probably would find Singapore quite a boring country to live in after you have seen all the sights.
Australians enjoy all its aspects, with a myriad of festivals, tours, exhibitions and performances gracing the stages, screens and streets of the country. They’re also online all the time.

FAR AWAY, SO CLOSE

44 EDITION 04 CULTURE VULTURE

Love At First Site

At the risk of starting bowwow, says Penny Modra, the Melbourne-based editor for The Thousands, “I’d mention the massive popularity of image-based aggregator sites — especially Sydney’s Brown Cardigan. It’s like your funny brother has spent all night on Four Chan and found the best bits for you”. I’ve noticed all my friends actually love streaming TV, especially weird documentaries from ABC View, as well as SBS On Demand. I guess this is where YouTube channels come in, too. At the risk of sounding like a dinosaur, I think these days more people are actually getting what YouTube channels are and subscribing to them (Tim Heidecker’s ‘On Cinema’ show on ‘Thing X’, or JASH). They also love subscribing to things that will tell them what to read elsewhere, for instance Longreads and Neustadt.

Sweet Home Australia

Social Entertainment

Social Entertainment has also empowered consumption of entertainment with Australians no longer looking to traditional media and advertising to find out about films, gigs and more. It’s friends telling friends where to go and when. Trading on trust, value and consistency, the producers of the content (media, bands, record labels, festivals et al) are also driving this curation. Luen Jacobs, Brisbane based founder of Hand Games Music & Management, couldn’t agree more. “By following culturally educated people on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook you can see what events they’ve pressed ‘attending’ to, and find out what bands they follow. One click and you can engage with the same content. It’s a way of life, “she sums up. “Or rather, THE way of life; “No other social media has anywhere near the penetration of Facebook and Twitter”, Time Out’s Andrew P. Street chips in, “and as long as so many people are on it, so many people will stay on it.”

Entertainment Network

Another trend at play is the ‘pop-up’. It’s not just food trucks; entertainers are moving from traditional venues to temporary spaces. From cinemas in converted nunneries to gigs on teams, for promoters of music, art, film or food, the model is proving a great way to test the market, seeing if it has the legs to grow into something permanent. St Jerome’s Laneway Festival started in an alley in Melbourne’s CBD — it now crosses the breadth of the country and into New Zealand, Singapore and Detroit.

CONSUMER TRENDS

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Entertainment in Japan today is an interesting mix of the old and the new. Smartphones and tablets have proven wildly popular, but many Japanese still prefer the older Galapagos phones, which are so named because of the separate and advanced evolutionary stage they took from other mobile phones. Either way, mobile devices are often the primary gateway to the internet for many young Japanese; who, in many cases, don’t own their own computer or at least share one with the family. Social gaming and online services with purchases that can be tacked directly onto phone bills have proven huge money makers for many companies and become a tried and tested business model. Kaito Royale, perhaps the most successful of Japan’s social games, was even adapted into a TV mini-series. At any rate mobile phones, smart or otherwise, comprise an almost essential part of the entertainment equation in Japan. All in all, though Japan has its own set of unique dichotomies and idiosyncrasies that may stand out more than those of other nations, it remains in defiance of all attempts to paint it as a weird place where you can find probably whatever you’re looking for.

One reason Japanese entertainment sells so well is that it has a certain something, an ‘eccentricity’ if you will, that allows it to stand out from other examples in the same genre. This is true not only of entertainment that draws upon Japan’s unique culture, but also to entertainment created when the Japanese adapt ideas from abroad to suit their own tastes. While this eccentricity, free from many of the religious and cultural constraints that their counterparts abroad face has led to the concept of ‘weird Japan’ becoming a selling point particularly in Western markets, a closer look or perhaps even a sojourn in Japan will reveal that entertainment in the ‘Land of the Rising Sun’ is about more than just anime, schoolgirls and samurai.

Japanese society at large.

Eccentric Japan
Local Talent/Eccentric

TV Adaptation of Social Gaming
SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT Styled & Staged

Printed Manga
Real Deal/Local Talent/Feast For The Eyes

Print media is another example of traditional entertainment that has held strong in Japan despite stiff competition from online rivals. Many Japanese get their weekly dose of manga from phonebook-like magazines printed on inexpensive paper, and fashion monthlies still remain a major force in helping brands connect with their audiences here.

Entertaining Fashion
Local Talent/Real Deal

Speaking of fashion, Japan also happens to be one of the most active countries in the world when it comes to both consuming and producing fashion; from high-end to street wear and everything in between. The equal regard for traditional styles along with innovation means that Japan produces some of the most eclectic apparel out there, with brands that personify this like N.Hollywood and John Lawrence Sullivan ensuring that Japan remains a source of inspiration for fashionistas worldwide.

Experiential and Reality TV
Local Talent/Real Deal

Television in Japan is quite different from what can be found abroad. Perhaps most popular are variety shows usually featuring a rotating panel of guest celebrities like comedians, actors, or models. The variety programmes provide all sorts of entertainment ranging from introducing people with exceptional talents to slapstick physical challenges, exploring all the ramen shops in a particular neighbourhood, or game shows. Unlike their Western equivalents, these game shows feature celebrities instead of contestants drawn from the general populace. Comedy shows also fill a lot of TV time slots; Popular duos like ‘Downtown’ or ‘London Buds’ host programmes that showcase younger comedians either in traditional stand up, funny situations or pranks. This sort of junior/senior relationship is a whole topic in itself that is prevalent through the entertainment world in Japan, as well as Japanese society at large.

Live and Vibrant Music Scene
Live Entertainment

The live music scene in Japan is vibrant and active, with tons of large and small venues armed with top-notch PA systems and hosting acts by bands of all levels of popularity. Japan also gets regular visits from some of the world’s top acts in both massive yearly festivals like Fuji Rocks or Summer Sonic and in more intimate performances. Of course, no discussion of music in Japan is complete without mentioning J-pop. Teams of idols like AKB48 or KAT-TUN and solo performers like Namie Amuro dominate the charts and remain some of Japan’s most prominent musical exports.

SURREAL LANDSCAPE

"Japan has its own set of unique dichotomies and idiosyncrasies that may stand out more than those of other nations, it remains in defiance of all attempts to paint it as a weird place where you can find probably whatever you’re looking for."
...the rise of the Internet and the economic crisis have forced young people to find alternatives to established forms of entertainment, which has also led to some new and exciting emerging models.

Paul

For the last 30 years, Spain has been at the forefront of both providing entertainment and its consumption. From the tourist bars of the Costa del Sol to the hectic nightlife of Madrid and Barcelona, Spanish youth have grown up on a culture predicated on service industries. This has changed drastically in recent times due to the economic crisis, which has reduced spending power and in turn undermined the established entertainment industries. With live music as a central part of Spanish life, the rapid rise in the importance of festivals over the past 20 years is in part a testament to the fact that, for Spanish youth, live music has often been idealised as a chance to have contact with foreign cultures and as a way of getting out. That said, the rise of the Internet and the economic crisis has forced young people to find alternatives to established forms of entertainment, which has also led to some new and exciting models emerging. The rise of gastronomy is a good example of this but by no means exclusive.

Redefined Music Scene

Local Talent | Real Deal | Collective Curation

Less willing to spend the money to see touring bands and with festivals still important but increasingly expensive, the focus has switched to smaller local bands with a fierce following playing in smaller venues, many of them temporary. A case in point is El Cuñador Records in Barcelona, a record store that recently had to close due to poor sales but that has redefined the city’s scene thanks to its providing of an inner city space for smaller bands to play free gigs. Since closing, this trend has been replicated in other similar licensed and unlicensed spaces such as La Milagrosa in Gracia or increasingly in squats and other autonomous spaces. Traditional media has also been affected, with many outlets still promoting mainstream concerts or relying on their contacts with established promoters. With the same unaffordable concerts being promoted across all media, the result has been a turning away from cultural media in favour of social networks or underground publishing.

Eating Out

Finally, and perhaps more indicative of a lasting trend, is the emergence of eating out as a form of entertainment. Johann Wald from the popular foodie blog Plateselector – aimed squarely at a hipster demographic but with a strong focus on quality for price – estimates that people eat out twice a week on average, spending about 40% of their salary on food. Featuring short pithy reviews of restaurants across the spectrum, it has quickly become one of the most visited sites in the area of Barcelona. The links with the city’s media, fashion and music communities only enhance its credibility and therefore its success. Eating out has replaced going to shows as the main form of entertainment for this demographic. Johann Wald also says that “before eating out was something grown-ups did. Now that restaurants and bars are focusing on attracting younger folks to their tables, it has become part of their itinerary. It started with having DJs spinning records during dinners but now it simply means affordable menus in exciting places”. While this might seem exuberant given Spain’s current financial situation, it is worth keeping in mind that the response of consumers in crisis is to consume more, not less. Other reasons for this shift include prohibitive concert prices due to last year’s VAT hike and the smoking ban. Johann sums up: “Now that the middle class is earning much less on a whole, it is up to the chefs and restaurant owners to keep finding ways of selling their products at affordable prices without sacrificing creativity and surprise.”
Creatives Collaboration

Out In The Open

“Entertainment is more than visiting a gallery or listening to a DJ; it has become a lifestyle that incorporates all facets of daily life, whether they’ve heard about it through the Internet, friends or been there themselves and enjoyed the vibrant entertainment of this all round experience.”

Felix

Cross-platform Entertainment

Live Experiences

Despite rumours of not really enjoying fun and entertainment, Germans are actually pretty outgoing people who love being out in the open. As soon as it stops raining and socialising with others is again possible, we are really into nature (the environmental protection movement in Germany is enormous and a hugely successful political party) and the perfect concept of entertainment for Germans is that it must be out in the open, it must be live and inexpensive. Culture throughout Germany is heavily subsidised by the government and the idea behind it is that culture should be affordable for everyone. Sadly though, nobody seems to be interested in opera, theatre or in general state-funded culture and the numbers of visitors to these institutions are dwindling year by year. One of the reasons for this might be that they just don’t offer such appealing entertainment anymore. For Germans, entertainment is more than visiting a gallery or listening to a DJ; it has become a lifestyle that incorporates all facets of daily life, whether they’ve heard about it through the Internet, friends or been there themselves and enjoyed the vibrant entertainment of this all round experience. Germany is booming and attracts more and more tourists to Berlin every year, quite an achievement for an entertainment industry driven by alternative culture to become our most important export. Well, that and cars.

The change and shift in German entertainment started in the early 90’s with rave culture. More and more open airs popped up generated by the abundance of free and unused space after the reunification in Eastern Germany, and especially in Berlin, they found niches where they could flourish. Art, music and culture suddenly thrived in places you would never expect. A perfect example of this development is Bar 25 that was nestled on the bank of the river Spree, a melting pot for people in Berlin: avant-garde theatre, readings, cinema nights with movies you couldn’t see anywhere else and of course dance music and nightclubs. It became massively popular and a phenomena across Europe in no time. With an entry fee of €5, it was cheap and it fulfilled the criteria that Germans love: it was out in the open; it was live and it was cheap. But times change, the lease ran out and the place had to close down. Today, its spirit is still alive and people across Europe have been there, heard stories about or found out through the Internet and spent time being entertained by its sheer creativity.

Creative Exchange

Bar 25 marked the start of a development that turned the alternative into a brand in Berlin. Many more bars and places like this opened up across Germany. The founders even recently started their new project named Holzmarkt, which will develop this concept of a creative entertainment space even further, with aims of becoming a new urban city centre and forum for creative exchange between people and bringing a wide variety of entertainment to one space. Since the death of Bar 25, the Holzmarkt project aims to become the new hot spot regarding entertainment in Germany and will deliver an all-round carefree package for the entertainment-hungry inhabitants of Berlin. At Holzmarkt, they will find apartments and office spaces to rent, a hotel, a club, a restaurant, 24-hour kindergarten and environmentally sound agriculture that will deliver food for the new city centre.

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Creative Collaboration

Out In The Open

“Entertainment is more than visiting a gallery or listening to a DJ; it has become a lifestyle that incorporates all facets of daily life, whether they’ve heard about it through the Internet, friends or been there themselves and enjoyed the vibrant entertainment of this all round experience.”

Felix

Cross-platform Entertainment

Live Experiences

Despite rumours of not really enjoying fun and entertainment, Germans are actually pretty outgoing people who love being out in the open. As soon as it stops raining and socialising with others is again possible, we are really into nature (the environmental protection movement in Germany is enormous and a hugely successful political party) and the perfect concept of entertainment for Germans is that it must be out in the open, it must be live and inexpensive. Culture throughout Germany is heavily subsidised by the government and the idea behind it is that culture should be affordable for everyone. Sadly though, nobody seems to be interested in opera, theatre or in general state-funded culture and the numbers of visitors to these institutions are dwindling year by year. One of the reasons for this might be that they just don’t offer such appealing entertainment anymore. For Germans, entertainment is more than visiting a gallery or listening to a DJ; it has become a lifestyle that incorporates all facets of daily life, whether they’ve heard about it through the Internet, friends or been there themselves and enjoyed the vibrant entertainment of this all round experience. Germany is booming and attracts more and more tourists to Berlin every year, quite an achievement for an entertainment industry driven by alternative culture to become our most important export. Well, that and cars.

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As far as entertainment goes, I suppose live music is one of the older and better established formats. The point is gigs are a pretty widely accepted way for people to inject some joy into their lives. But big shows are becoming something like an overbearing advertising experience, overflattered artists bent on remunerations. The point is, small gigs are more affordable, intimate and you can also avoid the crowds, which gives the whole experience an appealing edge. The big show vs. the small show trend even extends to a long list of activities. It is not surprising the pop-up craze reflects the fact that people want to feel they are avoiding the mainstream even when – in the case of Brixton for example – the pop-up is merely a small scale operation under a global brand. Independent film, even when sponsored by a giant car manufacturer, lures in the aesthetes: essentially, people who consider themselves discerning (rightly or wrongly) like to feel they are being discerning, which I guess is no surprise and maybe that is why I don’t like big concerts but can tolerate small indie gigs.

Big Events

Social Entertainment | Immersive Layered Entertainment | Curation

Either way, I will leave huge mega concerts in Docklands for the 15 year olds who want the poster for their wall, leave the world tour rap shows for people who want to upload iPhone videos of pyrotechnic entrances to their Facebook pages and leave getting your feet trampled into the Carling soup or just avoid that, full stop. Why not just leave me at home with my records because I am missing something when it comes to the large scale music entertainment industry.

Pop-ups

Snacking & bingeing | Real Deal | Immersive Layered Entertainment

That small scale and intimate entertainment options is a trend that extends to a long list of activities that people living in cities around the world would recognise: Small independent restaurants, bars, and burger bars with lines outside them around the corner. The pop-up craze reflects the fact that people want to feel they are avoiding the mainstream, even when – in the case of Brixton for example – the pop-up is merely a small scale operation under a global brand. Independent film, even when sponsored by a giant car manufacturer, lures in the aesthetes: essentially, people who consider themselves discerning (rightly or wrongly) like to feel they are being discerning, which I guess is no surprise and maybe that is why I don’t like big concerts but can tolerate small indie gigs.

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Summer is a great time to be in Moscow. Days are warm, nights are long and locals are friendlier than usual. It's a good opportunity to explore the city's entertainment scene. Muscovites love enjoying themselves and, in a city of constant activity and growth, two philosophies hold firm: there is always something new to try and anything goes.

Dmitry

**SUMMER OF LOVE**

Gorky Park

**Park Life**

**Immersive Layered Entertainment**

A primary platform for entertainment is the city's network of parks, which hosts an innovative stream of live events. Gorky Park is a particular hotspot, this year presenting a summer-long outdoor Pioneer Cinema, which shows art house films from Spain, France and China alongside American blockbusters like the new 'Star Trek 3D'. The festival also kicks-starts Gorky's planned transformation into an international stage for the live acts that Russians adore: Hurts, Foals and Arctic Monkeys. Meanwhile, Sokolniki Park also launched The Basscin, a swimming pool club with a café and regular D3 at night.

**Random Music**

**Immersive Layered Entertainment**

Locals also love the unpredictable and entertainment often pops up in unexpected places. An excellent example is the recently completed seventh edition of Strukturnost, a music festival in the loosest sense, its basic principles are: unpredictability, being organic and the breakdown of conceptual boundaries between performer and observer. The festival constantly changes location; this time occupied a factory and featured ‘pay what you want’ bars and shows, with performances from the techno trio The Shapka, the volatile electronic artist Curd Lake and others. This reflects the growing tendency in Russian entertainment to disregard traditional boundaries between genres and audience groups, turning the idea of a certain type of audience for a certain type of entertainment on its head.

**Digital History**

**Social Entertainment**

While live events remain central to Russian entertainment culture, how we enjoy ourselves is becoming increasingly digitised. Physical events have an overwhelmingly online presence through social entertainment. The expected is also subverted at the Garage Centre for Contemporary Culture. A self-described independent platform for new thinking, the centre currently hosts the Museum of Everything, a travelling research project questioning the concept of the contemporary and examining the boundaries between the professional and the amateur in art. The centre's year-round program follows a similar searching theme, allowing the visitor not just to observe but to take an active role in the definition of what they see.

**Interactive Past**

**Real Deal | Collective Curation**

While summer sends the local creative scene into full bloom, innovative entertainment remains available all year long. Museums and galleries are cultural institutions but Russians enjoy mixing the old with the new and, among the Tretyakovs and Pushkins, several genre-bending operations are currently redefining the experience of interaction within this traditional sphere. The Museum of Soviet Arcade Machines in north east Moscow is a place where history meets the current digital age, where the golden rule of ‘look but don’t touch’ is disregarded and the interaction of visitors with the machines (15 kopeks per game!) becomes vital to the exhibition.

**Contemporary & Inquisitive**

**Real Deal | Collective Curation | Press Play**

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There is a sense that the Internet has allowed one to watch videos from anywhere at anytime and even more with mobile devices. When you develop a certain feeling for specific shows or film genre, it is something you want to share and dig into deeper with your friends. Making it happen outside your living room on a carefully curated theme, surrounded by other fans or friends, often in unusual locations, for less than the highly expensive movie tickets and the option to have a beer or champagne, is an unbeatable experience. The usual movie-going experience offers high quality screen and sound but if you want to step away a little bit from the new releases (now that more and more older films are easy to find in good quality), make sense of the film critically, make it affordable and get a community feeling, it seems like there is still plenty of situations to invent and that a whole new breed of cine clubs is on the rise.

Social Cinema

Real Deal   Social Entertainment   Immersive
Layered Entertainment

The first example is a cine club held by the very fine movie journalist of Les Inrockuptibles, Jacky Goldberg. Every Sunday night, he turns the cosy, red carpeted living-room styled space of Le Carmen nightclub into the dark. For a few bucks, you can come and sit down and, most importantly, have a beer while watching some American 80’s classic films on a bigger screen than most Parisian apartments allow. There is intimacy that goes on because of the decor, the small capacity and because some of the people coming are regulars of the nightclub too – some might even have a hangover from the night before. Of course, a plus here is to be able to meet and get an easy conversation going with ‘half strangers’ more easily than you could in a more usual and crowded event. Also to enjoy a critique with a bunch of like-minded people just after. Cine clubs used to be a social phenomenon among the first generation of owners of video cameras, showing each other their films and sharing tips, but it makes sense that it could concern a dedicated spectatorship as well, for those craving a little bit more than a conversation on online messaging boards.

Home Movie Screening

Curated Film Experiences

Booming Social Cinema

Cine Clubs On The Rise

Social Cinema

Real Deal   Social Entertainment   Immersive
Layered Entertainment

At the other end of the spectrum, a quite hyped attempt at redefining the movie-going experience happened recently at the infamous Grand Palais with ‘Cinema Paradiso’. With direct reference to the golden era of the Greasy American Fifties, you were offered for €11,50 to sit in a Fiat car and watch obvious choices like ‘American Graffiti’, while drinking some Moët and maybe afterwards getting a bite to eat at the Jean Francois Piege pop-up restaurant. Unfortunately, the screening wasn’t top quality and some movie-goers even complained that they couldn’t hear the actors talking because of the music coming from the drinks stores placed all around. But the concept has some charm and I’ve heard about a similar project happening in Bordeaux in a parking lot close to the riverside.
...It should come as no surprise that Swedes increasingly surf or iPaddle the web (is that a thing yet?) when on the lookout for entertainment. George Orwell would turn in his grave at how happily people accommodate any ‘big brother’ possibly watching them.

Sharing Is Entertaining

Data Everywhere

Self-Expression, A Way Of Life

Swedes aren’t exactly famous for their humour; however, they spend more time online than most others. Sweden’s Internet Infrastructure Foundation (IIS) state in their latest report Swedes and the Internet, that 95% of Swedes now have Internet access and 74% are online on a daily basis. This makes Sweden the country where the Internet has had the greatest impact. So it should come as no surprise that Swedes increasingly surf or iPaddle (is that a thing yet?) the web when on the lookout for entertainment. George Orwell would turn in his grave at how happily people accommodate any ‘big brother’ possibly watching them. According to IIS, only 11% of internet users are concerned about the government monitoring their online activities. This research also shows that people increasingly believe the Internet will lead to more democracy: authorities caring more about people’s opinions and that people will gain more political power. Why enjoying entertainment online has become a trend in Sweden can be analysed in many ways. For example, Sweden has a good broadband infrastructure and people are relatively wealthy and can afford computers, smartphones and tablets. One in five Swedes now has a tablet computer and it is not uncommon to see kids as young as nine with smartphones.

Social Outlet:

Social Entertainmen Collective Curation

Social Outlet: Collective Curation

Niche Entertainment

Niche Entertainment

Blog Affair

Social Entertainment

Blog Affair

Social Entertainment

Swedes are considered generally collected and non-confrontational people, so the immense popularity of social media and blogging goes to show that the Internet has filled a void: a popularly accepted form of social expression. It is a discreet, non-confrontational, way of snooping around people’s social and private lives and expressing your opinions. Observing groups of friends, families and couples in Stockholm, the term ‘social media’ gets a rather ironic ring: mostly, everyone’s glued to a phone or tablet, instead of enjoying the IRL socialising. Observing groups of friends, families and couples in Stockholm, the term ‘social media’ gets a rather ironic ring: mostly, everyone’s glued to a phone or tablet, instead of enjoying the IRL socialising.
Buenos Aires has always been a city with world class cultural activities, a city full of visual art, literature and book fairs, dance, music concerts and festivals, theatre, street performances, cinema and a vibrant nightlife. A city full of shared spaces for live experiences and collective entertainment.

Entertainment

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Feast For The Eyes

Collective Curation

Immersive Layered Entertainment

The brand can be read as a message: “If we look or listen to the sounds around us; we discover that the world we live in is full of messages that permanently provide information, either through social networks, songs or videos, because people love expressing themselves.” The brand is targeting consumers, who have an opinion on everything, who like to stand out from typical fashion, are brave enough to experience new things, interact with the real world, are comfortable in the virtual world, enjoy surfing social networks and show emotions. Mesi&Sage’s philosophy believes in constant change because that is how human beings develop. Their inaugural parade in Buenos Aires incorporated new technology: each guest was given an iPad from which they were able to choose a gift by clicking the selected garments as the models walked by in the catwalk.

The Internet has definitely changed Argentines lives and given them a window to sate their thirst to find out what is happening in the rest of the world and be able to access entertainment from anywhere at any time: from music or film downloads to the enjoyment of virtual interactions through social networks, making the experience simple, immediate and unlimited. But Argentines not only like entertainment and amusement through technological devices, Buenos Aires has always been a city with world class cultural activities, a city full of visual art (photography, design, galleries, museums, street graffiti), literature and book fairs, dance, music concerts and festivals, theatre, street performers, cinema and a vibrant nightlife. A city full of shared spaces for live experiences and collective entertainment.

Social Media, The Visual Entertainment

Once an exclusive activity for the elites, art has now been increasingly embraced by the masses. A reflection of this is arteBA, the most important contemporary art event in Latin America and the event with most cultural relevance in Buenos Aires city. Every year it takes place in La Rural in May, attracting 10 thousand visitors. In 2013 arteBA celebrates its twenty second edition with 82 participant galleries and 500 artists from Latin America, United States and Europe. Galleries are chosen by a special committee of curators which keep the fair’s quality and professionalism. U-TURN Project Rooms by Mercedes-Benz, is the space in the fair for international galleries and has Abashe Mirvali’s curation. He is an independent producer of cultural projects in Mexico, Berlin and the Middle East, with a background in development policies and patronage: Abashe Mirvali explains that “art is and has always been a reflection of the world and our society. However, in recent years art in Argentina has taken a leading role in the economy and in the creation of an emerging industry. Nowadays we find in art an infinite wealth of languages and possibilities for constant research. This makes people feel attracted by art while discovering different worlds and be entertained with it”.

Fashion Fusion

Collective Curation

Social Entertainment

Feast For The Eyes

Fashion is huge and is an interesting form of entertainment in Buenos Aires, a city that continuously breathes fashion trends. The launching of Mesi&Sage, a women’s virtual fast fashion store is an excellent example for this fashion appetite: Mesi&Sage is driven by travelling experiences, research and living the global fashion world. One of their goals is the fusion of trends, fast fashion and modern technology. The name of
New Fire Ceremony

“…rock concerts with international bands, a particularly interesting phenomenon in the Mexican capital that has become more frequent in the last few years. Rockers aren’t the only ones going to concerts anymore, but all the young people who want to belong to this consumerist society of cool, almost elitist and special.”

Jorge Pedro

SOCIETY OF COOL

Mexico City is enormous and diverse, with millions of people living there. Around 30% of the population is between the ages of 12 and 29 and these young people are getting better acquainted with smartphones and social media. This has obviously transformed the ways in which they relate to a number of social concepts, amongst them entertainment. It is evident that their main activities are still the same (for example, going to the movies, going out at night or attending shows and sports events). However, one thing that has changed is the role played by young people when they are involved in these activities.

One example of this would be rock concerts with international bands becoming an open and social form of entertainment, in which rockers aren’t the only ones attending, but all the young people who want to belong to this consumerist society of cool, almost elitist and special.

Great Gig In The Sky

Immersive Layered Entertainment

Today there are more opportunities for the market to grow and open the doors of entertainment to a number of people who didn’t have this option before. One could say there was a democratisation of shows and going to a concert has become the new ‘weekend plan’. There is also an empowerment of the youth when they actually get to see the show itself. A picture on Instagram or the use of a popular hashtag in Twitter can give someone an identity that aligns themselves with a scene, a trend and the ‘weekend plan’. Social media allow for a strong message of identity. I am aware, I was there and I am a part of this.

Speed of Spotlights

Social Entertainment

Another thing about this phenomenon is the speed of messages: in no time the news of the next concert finds its way into everyone’s smartphone: “Are you going?”. “I’m not sure what they play, but it looks good”. “I’ve been watching the YouTube videos and they sound good”. “This or that brand is sponsoring them”. “Let’s go, are the tickets on sale now?”

This can lead to two things: concerts will keep growing; not just in capacity but in social value as well, and the relationship between concerts and new technologies will reinforce the power of those brands involved in this trend. These curators have found an opportunity in smaller and medium-sized forums that have popped out in the last few years: BlackBerry Auditorium, Plaza Condessa and Centro Cultural Roberto Cantoral. Better to have a few people buying expensive tickets than thousands buying cheap (or thousands more with free tickets to the government-sponsored concerts downtown).

Concerts are compelling not only to fans of rock bands but also to other people looking for a place to meet others and become part of a trend. Surely this is partly due to how easy it is to ‘become a fan’. The two main rock radio stations in town (Reactor 105.7 FM and Ibero 90.9 FM) play new songs all the time and keep people up-to-date about more underground scenes. Naturally, the Internet reinforces this knowledge and this curiosity (it takes only hours to master the entire discography of any group) so it becomes easier for a band to get fans in the city. Practically any new group that comes here to play these days will sell out, especially if the band is playing in Mexico for the first time: We saw it with The XX and Queens of the Stone Age.

Rendevouz

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Rendevouz

Social Entertainment

Today we have at least two large international festivals: Vive Latino and Corona Capital, both can be compared to renowned festivals such as Lollapalooza and Coachella. Even groups that had never been to Mexico City or had only been here once are starting to show up more often. Recent examples include The Stones Roses and Blur. It is worth noting that Portishead or Belle & Sebastian, just to mention a few, hadn’t played in Mexico until three or four years ago. It’s clear that the demand now is much higher which might explain why some tickets can sell for up to US$100. In Blur’s case, tickets were resold for up to US$400. This can only mean that more people are buying cheap (or thousands more with free tickets to the government-sponsored concerts downtown).

One could say there was a democratisation of shows and going to a concert has become the new ‘weekend plan’. There is also an empowerment of the youth when they actually get to see the show itself. A picture on Instagram or the use of a popular hashtag in Twitter can give someone an identity that aligns themselves with a scene, a trend and the ‘weekend plan’. Social media allow for a strong message of identity. I am aware, I was there and I am a part of this.

Another thing about this phenomenon is the speed of messages: in no time the news of the next concert finds its way into everyone’s smartphone: “Are you going?”. “I’m not sure what they play, but it looks good”. “I’ve been watching the YouTube videos and they sound good”. “This or that brand is sponsoring them”. “Let’s go, are the tickets on sale now?”

This can lead to two things: concerts will keep growing; not just in capacity but in social value as well, and the relationship between concerts and new technologies will reinforce the power of those brands involved in this trend. These curators have found an opportunity in smaller and medium-sized forums that have popped out in the last few years: BlackBerry Auditorium, Plaza Condessa and Centro Cultural Roberto Cantoral. Better to have a few people buying expensive tickets than thousands buying cheap (or thousands more with free tickets to the government-sponsored concerts downtown).

Immersive Layered Entertainment

Today we have at least two large international festivals: Vive Latino and Corona Capital, both can be compared to renowned festivals such as Lollapalooza and Coachella. Even groups that had never been to Mexico City or had only been here once are starting to show up more often. Recent examples include The Stones Roses and Blur. It is worth noting that Portishead or Belle & Sebastian, just to mention a few, hadn’t played in Mexico until three or four years ago. It’s clear that the demand now is much higher which might explain why some tickets can sell for up to US$100. In Blur’s case, tickets were resold for up to US$400. This can only mean that more people are buying cheap (or thousands more with free tickets to the government-sponsored concerts downtown).

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With a buoyant economy and greater access to consumer and market expansion, fun is becoming a priority when it comes to spending for Brazilians, as there has been a considerable increase in spending on entertainment. Brazil is experiencing a unique moment, preparing to host major international events like the World Cup and the Olympics, which mobilises people and companies to bring new products to market. And others follow suit. Major festivals like Lollapalooza settled in the country as well as the Brazilian Rock in Rio returning to its place of origin, after editions in Madrid and Lisbon. In a society increasingly virtual, the Internet is the main base of behaviours observed in Brazil recently regarding the entertainment industry. The networks, which now form online and reshape communities, enable small revolutions and a new collective strength. Against the digital life, the exploration of public space is also growing. Although the country’s cultural scene is moving, it is important to have more events in different cities outside Rio and Sao Paulo.

**The Concert Network**

**Immersive Layered Entertainment**

Through this connection, we can see the mobilisation of individuals to access culture that was not previously available to them. Having access to information was a hindrance that has sometimes been a major barrier in this country. This makes producers reluctant to include shows and exhibitions in Brazil on their routes. Therefore, initiatives such as Queremos!, have a lot of traction. The project began in Rio de Janeiro, a city that was generally not included in the tour of the greats of music. The proposal is that fans choose what they want to watch in their cities and join other fans to finance concerts, with the opportunity to have their tickets refundable if not reaching a certain number of tickets sold. Today, in a second phase of the project, it is possible that artists and producers enrol their shows in crowd funding platform. The project has also won an international version called We Demand, based in New York, that assesses the feasibility of shows in the United States.
There can be no doubt that Los Angeles is widely considered to be the entertainment capital of the world. The Hollywood sign, the stars on the Walk of Fame, the towering palm trees, the glamour of Beverly Hills... If that sounds a bit like a dated 80’s teen movie, then you are right on the money with where Los Angeles finds itself right now. The city that used to show the world how to make a good movie and how to live like a celebrity is having a slight identity crisis in a world dictated more by 'bottom-up' user-generated social media than traditional 'top-down' media empires. In present times — where nothing is sacred, they may find that if they do not reinvent themselves to keep up with the changing demands in LA, the decision is made for them. Where formerly LA was able to dictate entertainment to the rest of the world in the confidence that it was the city producing the best material and that the rest of the world had little alternative choice, the new entertainment from Los Angeles may not be televised, but you will surely still know about it. The democratising influence of the Internet has forced Los Angeles to change its previous ways, which were as outdated as the rock fans looking for Motley Crue on the Sunset Strip.

Competitive Entertainment

The mainstays of LA entertainment are still the lifeblood of the city but their relevance and influence on a world with waning American dominance is changing LA’s famous self-confidence. In the rush to be one of only 20 foreign films allowed into the booming Chinese market annually, recent films like ‘Iron Man 3’ bent over backwards to appeal to outside influence like never before. ‘Iron Man 3’ is notable for its efforts to impress Chinese censors by including flattering scenes of China, whilst James Cameron — director of Avatar — has opened an office away from Hollywood, in China itself. Although this is not a sign of LA’s imminent decline, it is a measure of the city’s ability to adjust to cater for this. The world of TV, which is leaving behind the old world of pure TV distribution, has seen the web-only distribution of ‘House of Cards’ and ‘Arrested Development’ on Netflix. At least half of all internet traffic in the US can be accounted for through digital streaming on Netflix and YouTube, illustrating the appetite for new forms of entertainment not available through traditional media. Los Angeles is doing its best to adjust to cater for this.

Embracing Social Media

Smaller budget success stories in niche audiences have been a notable addition to this year’s screens, with US$5m Spring Breakers offering former Disney good-girls Vanessa Hudgens and Selena Gomez a critically acclaimed cult-hit through which to reinvent themselves; much like the city that gave them a living. The ‘Bling Ring’ is due to achieve similar feats for former Harry Potter star Emma Watson. The very success of these films has hinged on their embrace of promotion through social media. Hollywood may not be as dominant but it is finding ways to leverage the success of other media, like Twitter and Instagram, to stay abreast of the competition.

Iconic LA

The hackneyed old image of LA, being a city with its best days in its past, is being rethought even on its iconic Sunset Strip, where the image still lives large: Venues like the Whisky a Go Go, the Viper Room and the Roxy are wrestling with whether to keep hold of their infamous pasts in continuing rock ’n’ roll-themed debauchery or shed the image to welcome a younger generation intent on dancing to electronic dance music (as seen at more niche dance nights like A Club Called Rhonda) or gratuitous exhibitions of abandon like Greystone Manor.
Each Miami native recognises that the unique qualities that make their city so addictive are characterised not by the fact that we are all drawn to the same activities, but by the truth that we are all individuals interacting in this beautiful tropical melting pot.

Life Is A Beach

Cinema World

Social Entertainment Feast For The Eyes

Throughout the past decade, social media has proven to be a major influence on how the 20 and 30 somethings plan their days. Most venues are stacked with a website that offers an email newsletter on a weekly basis along with a feature that connects you to all your social media platforms. The independent cinema in the Design District, O Cinema, regularly hosts events where they show praised films of the indie genre that individuals of the Miami area would not normally have the benefit of seeing. These days, following an organisation like O Cinema on Twitter is not just an option but a necessity on staying up to date in a city that is so large and thriving.

Leisure Life

Exclusive Experiences

The day to day agenda of a young person in Miami varies, but the objective is relatively the same. Waking up around 10am after a long night out, one can check the weather and head to the Wynwood favourite Panther Coffee, where the taste is as enjoyable as the foam crafted images in the cup. For those who prefer the latest trend of the juice diet, head over to Jugo Fresh. Miami brunch is a lively experience that connects you to all your social media platforms. The independent cinema in the Design District, O Cinema, regularly hosts events where they show praised films of the indie genre that individuals of the Miami area would not normally have the benefit of seeing. These days, following an organisation like O Cinema on Twitter is not just an option but a necessity on staying up to date in a city that is so large and thriving.

Snacking & Bingeing Collective Curation

What's On?

Feast For The Eyes

Many of those who call Miami home are involved in the creative and entertainment industries themselves, which allows them to dictate how they have fun and who they provide it to. Blogs and local publications are constant sources that provide real time updates of the ‘what’s what’ on and around Miami. A fan favourite includes the Miami New Times, which dishes out on local news, entertainment and gossip all the way from South Beach to Coconut Grove. MNT also has a smartphone app that claims to ‘know the Magic City like no other’, where they help you navigate through the 305’s endless happy hour deals and concerts like a local.

Real Deal Immersive Layered Entertainment

Exclusive Fun

Due to the fact that the entertainment industry is celebrated by such a large number of people in Miami, everyone is fortunate enough to be exposed to a myriad of talent and creativity. Art Basel provides a yearly fix of sculptures, graffiti, paintings and nightly parties at various locations. Local artists are constantly cultivating in Midtown Miami, home to renowned studios and galleries freely.

Artwalk Feast For The Eyes

Music Extravaganza

Immersive Layered Entertainment Real Deal

Aside from the extravagant Ultra Music Festival, local and international DJ’s and musicians nomad from club to lounge on a regular basis. House music is one of the aspects that drive this town, with megclubs such as LIV at the Fontainebleau and Story SOBE being front runners for showcasing the veteran names of the genre. So the next time you are visiting Miami and someone asks in like they own the place, don’t be surprised. Chances are they probably do.
In a climate of hyperinterconnectivity, a sense of exclusivity and physically embodied inclusion is highly sought after in the realm of public and commercial entertainment.

Kara

Montreal’s art and music oriented young-adult culture is comprised of cultural aesthetes whose entertainment activities are hosted and influenced by monastically dedicated art-leanting types. This culture is multi-faceted, multi-taste and multi-media and can be described as online-savvy, independent, narcissistic, impoverished, racially flirtatious, obsessed with rap culture, well-educated with advanced multi-disciplinary communication skills and politically engaged. The most successful entertainment acknowledges and indulges a sympathetic complexity, understands the current artistic lifestyle and considers the technological prowess, financial limitations and amorphous tastes of the poly-music oriented young-adult culture is comprised of cultural aesthetes. This culture is multi-faceted, multi-taste and multi-media and can be described as online-savvy, independent, narcissistic, impoverished, racially flirtatious, obsessed with rap culture, well-educated with advanced multi-disciplinary communication skills and politically engaged. The most successful entertainment acknowledges and indulges a sympathetic complexity, understands the current artistic lifestyle and considers the technological prowess, financial limitations and amorphous tastes of the poly-musicians like BADBADNOTGOOD or Tommy Kruise are able to promote and raise funds directly for a show more effectively than a diluted and comparatively disconnected party or concert promoter. Today, a brand does not promote an artist but rather the artist promotes a brand that, in exchange, is expected to logistically facilitate the event according to the demands of the artist's predetermined vision. The events that are recorded enjoy something of a second life after the primary event. This phenomenon has shifted the entire dynamic of what constitutes entertainment. Presence at an event is not only participation but it is also a form of performance. Because entertainment consumption is captured and shared to their respective consumer audiences as a form of pleasure and entertainment itself; the character and quality of this experience must adaptively become a priority for entertainers. In the narcissistic 'me' culture of social media, spotlight must be placed on both the entertainer and the entertained. Parties are creating an atmosphere where everyone feels like a celebrity, which is essentially in high-demand in today’s internet tabloid culture with the most successful parties and concerts fully photographed, filmed and broadcast live like the Boiler Room.

The V.I.P. Factor

Real Deal
Social Entertainment
Collective Curation

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Luxuriant and Interracial Rebels

Real Deal

Indeed, today's youth culture has fine tastes and an affinity for high art but little money to indulge, hence a dependence of corporate sponsorship. That said, the very definition of high art is in flux and has attached itself in a large way to the glittered and staged culture of rap. As rappers become the more exciting and artistic auteur of the music realm (Kanye and Juicy J), entertainment has sympathetically become increasingly racially integrated and racially flirtatious, particularly with black culture, even as its consumer community remains mostly white. This indicates a certain alienated fascination with rebellion, social awareness, political engagement and, above all, a rather hypocritical thirst for democratic luxury, excess and materialism.

Political Experience

Real Deal

Despite a materialistic fascination with luxury, this culture is educated, empowered and places value on 'making a difference' socially, politically and environmentally. Parties with great music and free alcohol are paired with activist photo and art shows. WACE’s 2011 Montreal Photo Show showcased an extremely disturbing journalistic neo-Nazi photo essay but that didn’t stop the gratuity from being drunk in an hour, couples making out in the back corner or skaters doing kick flips on the gallery floor. There is no reason political activeness or social awareness needs to be stifling and boring or isolated from the realm of entertainment at all. In fact, their inclusion only illuminates and enriches the memorability of the experience.
The cultural heyday of the Clinton years has re-emerged in full force, especially in NYC nightlife and culture. It would make sense then that, along with grunge, other 90’s subcultures like rave and dance should be having their day’s due. "…the cultural heyday of the Clinton years has re-emerged in full force, especially in NYC nightlife and culture. It would make sense then that, along with grunge, other 90’s subcultures like rave and dance should be having their day’s due."

Laura

LadyFag Pop-up Souk

Dizzyland

Party Life

Neon Visuals

LadyFag Pop-up Souk

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Party Life

Neon Visuals

For those looking for proof that 90’s revival is back and in full swing, you will not have to look very far. From the racks of plaid flannel button downs at the local Urban Outfitters to the New Museum’s recent homage to all things 1993: Experimental Jet Set, Trash and No Star, the cultural heyday of the Clinton years has re-emerged in full force, especially in NYC nightlife and culture. It would make sense then that, along with grunge, other 90’s subcultures like rave and dance should be having their day’s due. The former seems to have manifested via a distinctly 90’s version of the club kid (day glo crop tops, shiny pants, Spice Girl style platforms and a penchant for designer hallucinogens) that has been cropping up on dance floors and Instagram feeds around the city. Art and fashion being the most easily recognisable (and readily available) manifestation of the New Club Kid. Fashion being the most easily recognisable (and readily available) manifestation of the New Club Kid Culture and nightlife is where you can see the crossover in action.

Reinventing Pop Visuals

Social Entertainment

Collective Curation

Feast For The Eyes

Collective Curation

The main difference between the original rave/early 90’s club kid scene and the one we are currently experiencing is how much technology has evolved in the intervening years. Though on the surface sharing many visual and stylistic similarities with its 90’s counterpart, the New Club Kid is heavily plugged in, uses social media and the Internet to not just spread the word and connect, with others but to inform their own art and interpretation of the new century. Based in both New York and LA, internet collective The Jogging Club Kid has been pushing forward an aesthetic that could best be said exemplifies this new vanguard of culture: a melding of hi-brow irreverence with heavy nods to new media (one of their most famous works is of a laptop submerged in a bathtub). Their fans, as well as themselves, could be considered the perfect Nu Club Kid: often well-educated, culturally fluent, smartphone addicted, fashion/brand conscious and with the desire to re-interpret pop culture through an ironic lens and the digital world community context.

Media Hype

Feast For The Eyes

Collective Curation

At least one member of this collective has seemed to be on almost every new media and art discussion panel this year. Co-fronted by artist Brad Troemel, famous in certain circles for his use of base pop imagery thrown in a freakish high brow blender (I.E.: ‘Shrink Wrap Brussels Sprouts: Cool Ranch’ or ‘Vacuum Sealed James Franco With Anchovies’), the art has been heavily used by DIS Magazine, currently one of the biggest Nu Aesthetic promoters and called by the NYT, ‘a fiercely analytical take on a runway that is worlds away from the rose-coloured glasses of vogue.com or style.com’. If you want to know what is happening in the New York scene, you really need to look no further than DIS to see which way popular culture is heading. Another publication pushing the movement forward is VFiles, V Magazine’s younger and more neon counterpart. It was recently behind the club kid friendly event LadyFag Pop-up Souk, which just happened to look like a scene right out of Party Monster.

Party Life

Collective Curation

Immersive Layered

Social Entertainment

Collective Curation

NFC Nightlife is where we see the most crossovers between now and the original waves. Walking into popular parties like Ghetto Gothik (GHE20G0TH1K), Top-8 and Dizzyland (whose recent event featuring Grimes collaborator and viral sensation Brooke Candy) made the pages of a somewhat baffled Village Voice with their proliferation of blue lipstick, camo prints and androgynous belly-baring dancers) can make visitors feel like they stepped directly onto the set of Go. As V’s like DollarGem (@dollargem) use wall-projected second life avatars to add colour to dance nights, party promoters like Mister Saturday Night and Chris Goldteeth (veteran club kids themselves) have been working behind the scenes to bring new acts onto the circuit. For those in NYC, the New Club Kids are a daily party of life, which has made it strange that not many outlets have been covering this story. Twitter, Tumblr and Facebook are keeping the major players in the public eye, while the rest of us can keep tabs on what is next from our iPhones and Androids. Though, hopefully soon, larger outlets will be picking up on this trend but for now most of the evidence of it’s emergence lies solely in the last night’s party pics section of papermag.com.
YOUTH POWER

Toronto has quietly, but enthusiastically, become a world city for youth entertainment. It was quiet five years ago, when there was barely any place to buy a taco worth eating, the bands that had defined our city started aging and moving onto bigger and better things (Broken Social Scene, Death from Above 1979). But now, the city is full of tacos and awesome music. And yes, in case you’re wondering, the scale at which a world city is measured these days is in fact by its ability to produce a diverse array of fish tacos and a seriously impressive live music scene, while you tweet about it and share the video experience with your Vine followers.

Toronto is now a new arbiter of great food and captivating music, and it’s all because of the young generation that is making it happen.

Music Festival

NXNE Takes Over Toronto

Every year Toronto gets taken over by NXNE music festival. It is not yet at the level of hyper-marketing that has made SXSW kind of painful to deal with and yet NXNE still offers a comparably frenetic experience to Austin’s overwhelmingly hip music festival, with nightly free shows in Toronto’s largest public square that has seen acts like The Descendents, Dave, Ghostface Killah, Rankinom, GZA, Big Boi and The National. Even if you have no idea where to go to find the secret rooftop and pool parties, you’re going to have a good time regardless.

Toronto Calling

Immersive Layered Entertainment | Real Deal

Toronto is luckily enjoying a thriving music scene in 2013. Bands like Yacht Club have taken the laidback surf vibes of California and brought them into the often-cold arena of Toronto music, thanks to Fucked Up member and Yacht Club-frontman Ben Cook’s vision. Prince Innocence duo pairs Josh McIntyre (formerly of the bedroom fuzz project Little Girls) and his girlfriend Tahi Faustmann to form a dreamy synth pop project that have been stirring up comments on web magazines and blogs like The Fader, Gorilla vs. Bear and Noisey with their fashion forward pop music. Then there is the relaxed approach taken by record label Telephone Explosion, who has their own four night music festival called The Toronto Thaw, pushing acts like Young Mother, Soupcans and Teenanger. That crew is effortlessly able to maintain a garage rock sensibility without bending or curving to any relevant blog trends. So clearly, there is a lot of room for everyone to breathe in the city music-wise.

Hip Hop Breakthrough

Real Deal | Local Talent

Beyond guitars and synths and band practices, Toronto’s young hip hop scene is undoubtedly on the rise. As the up-and-comers start to make strides and try to catch up to the shadow of Drake, acts like Razz Fresco and Rich Kidd are quickly becoming notable rising stars. Razz takes the chill stoner vibes of Curren$y and adds a Northern, cold weather sensibility. Rich Kidd – who worked with Drake on his very first mix tape – is finally finding his own voice as a rapper which, paired with his incredible self-production, makes for some incredible music.

Food Blast

Social Entertainment | Real Deal | Unplugged

And what is all this good music without exceptional food to go with it? Toronto’s young culinary scene has exploded with the tacos and bourbon phenomenon that had defined our city started aging and moving onto bigger and better things (Broken Social Scene, Death from Above 1979). But now, the city is full of tacos and awesome music. And yes, in case you’re wondering, the scale at which a world city is measured these days is in fact by its ability to produce a diverse array of fish tacos and a seriously impressive live music scene, while you tweet about it and share the video experience with your Vine followers.

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So, please do contact us at: culturevulture@mindshareworld.com
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