
Arts, brands and user-generated content

An exploration

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Contents

Arts, brands and user-generated content	1
An exploration	1
Introduction	3
User-generated content and why it matters	3
How cultural institutions are exploring user-generated content	5
First Steps	5
Gaining Confidence	6
Proactive Participation	8
The Challenge and Opportunities from UGC	8
The Rise of the Machines	9
The secret of success?	11
Shaping the role of UGC within cultural institutions	11
Conclusion	12

Introduction

This essay sets out to explore the opportunities and challenges that user-generated content (UGC) presents to cultural institutions. In doing so, we also begin to explore where there may be fruitful and beneficial opportunities for collaborations with commercial brands who are equally facing the challenge of engaging consumers in a meaningful and authentic manner. It may well be that it is at the vanguard of new technologies that we see the traditional model of cultural sponsorship finally falling by the wayside as collaborative, mutually beneficial partnerships begin to take shape and evolve.

Around 35% of the UK population have some kind of social network profile online – an extraordinary figure when we are talking about a phenomenon that is little more than 5 years old – and a figure, according to the Future Foundation, that has doubled in the last year alone.

But when it comes to experimentation, a desire to try new and different things, an opportunity to lead the pack and be early adopters, then on the whole it is the 16-34 age-group; or the iPod generation¹ that leads the way. They are the first generation to be living with, and reliant upon, mobile devices (phone right through to laptop) and they have been the pioneers in using these mobile devices as interactive platforms for capturing and sharing content across social networks. The actions of this generation filters through to the rest of the population and as they ‘grow up’ the trends and innovations ‘grow up’ with them too.

These interactive platforms are marketed on their ability for users to develop creative content and indeed it is this audience that are often highly sought after by both cultural institutions - keen to engage with younger audiences, and with brands – keen to develop lasting commercial relationships with an audience that has relatively high-disposable income. It is for this reason that this age group are the focus for much of this piece.

In the context of this essay, user-generated content is taken to mean the production of content, across all forms of media by consumers that is shared publicly. In the spirit of user-generated content, this essay asks a number of questions which remain unanswered, primarily to spark further debate and discussion between the worlds of culture and commerce.

User-generated content and why it matters

Dr. Klaus Müller, from kmlink Consultancy says: *“Museums will not continue to exist in their present 150-year old form for the foreseeable future, at least not as relevant institutions. As many other businesses, they face a rapidly changing culture, through which their mission will be redefined and will take on new meanings. They are challenged in their core definition as showcases of material culture through the most innovative force in contemporary culture, the Web.”*

¹ Mintel, *Online Social Networking – UK – Market Brief*, April 2008

Look at Myspace.com or YouTube.com where users can present their own videos, music, photos or poetry. YouTube started in 2005. A year later, it had six million users who put an average of 60,000 new videos on the site each day. MySpace started in 2003 and only three years later had 93 million users. MTV and other music channels, which dominated our consumption of music for a long time, might be history. More and more artists use MySpace to present themselves. Social media in particular is becoming the dominate platform for content creation and sharing.² The Web is the new creative experimental lab.

Harnessing user-generated content as a way of building audience/consumer engagement, trust and action (attendance/purchase) is an issue that currently concerns brands and cultural institutions alike. When and how do you encourage an audience to engage and participate in a dialogue with you? What content do you have which will engage and mobilise people? And when is users' content relevant to your organisation and your message? How do you prepare for and deal with negative, as well as positive, engagement? How do you sustain interest and keep the relationship fresh? And how, and where, does the management of this content sit within an institution or brand?

It is essential to consider user-generated content because consumers are increasingly expecting organisations (or any kind) to engage with them and give them a voice – and if they don't, consumers are increasingly likely to air their opinions – good and bad, elsewhere. Facilitating user-generated content will increasingly become part of the ongoing dialogue between institution and audience, brand and consumer, potentially leading to a deeper and more trusting relationship. And crucially, because the very act of opening yourself up to audience/consumer feedback suggests an openness and trust in your audience that in the current climate is a highly valuable commodity for you.

Knowing what to do with that feedback is of course key – as HSBC learnt to their credit in 2007 when they were forced into a major U-turn on their initial decision to charge graduating students 9.9% APR on their overdrafts. A student campaign was set up on Facebook to coordinate opposition against the charges, called, rather succinctly, *'Stop the Great HSBC Graduate Rip-Off'*, which attracted nearly 5,000 members and was absolutely pivotal in forcing HSBC to think again about their proposals. On the one hand, this is straight consumer feedback, but on the other, social media platforms enabled the students to get organised and launch a campaign. In response to the campaign HSBC took the decision to freeze interest charging on 2007 graduate overdrafts up to £1,500. In their press release HSBC bank said that it was not too big to listen to its customers.

Despite increasing consumer expectations of engagement and dialogue many cultural institutions are struggling to get to grips with the rudiments of a digital presence. The Arts Council's Digital Content snapshot research found that of a sample of over 800 organisations, 94% of them were using their websites as a marketing portal which highlights the significant opportunity which exists for more sophisticated and media-rich website presence and interaction. Although initially encouraging that 56% of those organisations' surveyed were embracing social networking, almost all of these had rather rudimentary participation opportunities. This perhaps begs the question as to whether dipping their toes in the water of user-generated content is perhaps a step too far for some or whether it is understood how social media will support an institutions' strategic objectives. And for those that do have an appetite to explore and experiment in a more sophisticated fashion, who, or where, will the support come from to enable this?

² UM consultancy research, *Power to the people – social media tracker: Wave 4*, July 2009

However, the benefits of utilising digital technologies are manifold. Firstly it opens up the channels of communication to the user as it incorporates mobile, web, internet and multiple platforms, creating greater opportunities to view and engage and, secondly, it enables a two-way dialogue between the institution and the 'audience'. It can offer a deeper level of audience engagement and participation for existing audiences. But, perhaps most interestingly, is the impact of UGC on the artistic programme as there is potential for new art to develop.

Narration - as a form of reflection, interpretation and representation of culture - will become the fluid core of what museums, theatres, galleries and institutions are about. Traditional one-way presentations of expert institutions in the sense of exhibitions, plays, even musicals will be altered by the ongoing transformation from collection-based to audience-driven missions and, equally, by two-way Web 2.0 communication models, both on- and offline.

But investing in the resource to manage and sustain this dialogue has significant implications. Cultural institutions are invariably strapped for back-office resources, not least in the current downturn, even if the distant (but valuable prize) is engaging new and existing audiences in a more sustained manner. But for organisations starting out on this journey, what can be learned from cultural institutions that have already begun to explore this territory?

How cultural institutions are exploring user-generated content

New Media departments are, slowly, being established within cultural institutions although it is often the largest and most well resourced institutions that can afford to establish teams and departments at this stage: The Royal Opera House have a New Media department, the Tate has a large team dedicated to Tate Media and the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) are developing their management structure which will look to include a New Media department.

These are all long-standing institutions that offer some valuable insights into the role and opportunities to explore user-generated content from an institutional perspective. Of course there are a breed of newer institutions for whom technology and its artistic exploration is at the heart of its mission: FACT in Liverpool and Watershed in Bristol being just two examples; and one of the interesting questions to raise is whether the expertise of these organisations can be offered up to other institutions in a cohesive way?

First Steps

Often, the role of these New Media teams/departments is to nurture and manage the 'new' technology that enables the audience to participate. To ensure the 'iPod Generation' are suitably engaged takes some understanding. Rachel Coldicutt, Head of New Media at The Royal Opera House set up a group on Facebook to utilise an existing online community and take advantage of an audience that is openly discussing the artistic discipline of opera and ballet:

"I think we watched it for half an hour and it went mad. Absolutely mad... We've now got, I think, about 11,000 fans. The dynamic is always, I think, ¾ people under 34, mostly women. What was then

really interesting about it was we were touching lots of people who I think were quite liking having a badge on their page. What we found were we had lots of people who were fans but who had never attended.”

Here, the benefit is very much in reaching out and creating an interaction with an audience that is culturally engaged, but who have never engaged with the specific institution before. Social media platforms enabled this relationship to begin but the challenge, and more interesting aspect, is how best to strengthen and develop that relationship – moving people who appreciate the affiliation (i.e. the badge) to those who become active participants and audience members. Such an approach delivers on key priorities and objectives of cultural institutions as it increases access and potentially penetrates new audience segments.

Experimenting with how to take your institution into different social networks is perhaps the easiest step to take in initiating a conversation with your audience, and many organisations have begun to use these channels effectively for example [Sadlers Wells on You Tube](#), (817 subscribers), V&A on Twitter (4,290 subscribers) and [Manchester International Festival on Facebook](#) (1,600 members) (all figures correct as of July 1 2009). On the whole, however, these platforms are still primarily used as a marketing channel, a way of enabling an individual to track and follow what an institution is doing in a more media-rich environment, but offering limited opportunities to engage or play with the cultural content per se.

Gaining Confidence

Of course one of the drivers for any institution or brand who encourages user-generated content is not just to engage individuals to offer content but to share and spread their engagement in order to extend the brand, or the institution virally. There are four steps that move attendees/consumers from passive individuals to engaged advocates by encouraging participation and user-generated content:

[1] Experience > [2] Engage > [3] Advocate > [4] Disseminate

Creating an opportunity for your audience to play with your content is where it gets interesting, but is certainly not simple. There must be a plan, a vision and a reason to manage UGC. Audiences have an expectation and a trust in cultural institutions to make informed curatorial decisions about the content that is presented; an expectation that must be managed appropriately when it comes to the solicitation and presentation of user-generated content, and an expectation that the institution is prepared to share some of its own content in order to solicit a response. But to what extent should user-generated content be managed, edited and curated? How does UGC fit with your organisations' strategic objectives and what do you want to achieve from sharing content with your audiences? And what kind of **experience** do you want to create for your audience?

The creation of user-specific content (where the user can effectively navigate their own content experience) can be an important element of these 4 steps by offering up a deeply personal and immersive experience for the audience. An example of successful **engagement** through user-specific content is the collaboration between The Tate and Apple who have been placing the iTouch/iPhone technology into the hands of the audience for guiding them around exhibition spaces. The content has suddenly becomes a living, breathing, multi-faceted experience for visitors. The audience can choose

to spend longer in front of certain items and learn more about them. The institution can ‘push’ more content about each item in the collection to the handsets and further audiences’ knowledge of the artistic content.

Head of Content and Creative Director of Tate Media, Jane Burton says:

“We have all these interesting things to show people when they’re going around the galleries - whether it’s a film of an artist talking about their work or some archival images to provide some context - but we don’t want to put big screens up around the gallery. They intrude upon the integrity of the space and can detract from the art on show.”³

In creating a more immersive experience for the audience, it has had a significant impact on dwell time in the gallery as Will Gompertz, Director at Tate Media remarked:

“What’s interesting is that most people spend about 40mins [in the Tate], in an exhibition, with an iTouch you’re actually in there for 3 hours, it wasn’t until the battery ran out that they actually got out of there. So there is clearly an appetite for people to navigate their own content experiences.”

Colin Jenkinson, Design Director of Cogapp (Cognitive Applications), is particularly interested in how interactions with a cultural institution’s collection can be designed to facilitate dialogue with an audience. Jenkinson says, *“the focus will move away from just the wittiness of technology and move into the ‘I just want great content’.”*

Once the audience feels an affiliation with the artwork or experience what should follow is **advocacy**. This is the point at which the need to share is triggered. Early adopters and tech-savvy audiences become advocates straight away and share immediately with their social network, often via Twitter or Facebook, profile updates. These one-liner updates have replaced the text to a friend and increased the word-of-mouth and peer-to-peer audience from one or two friends to a whole world of ‘followers’ or friend networks.

One American project which is showing the way in a new kind of cultural interaction between audience and institutions is the [Indianapolis Museum of Art](#) (IMA), which has produced a number of exciting applications including the recently launched [ArtBabble](#). ArtBabble is an online offering dedicated to providing high-quality video art content from a range of art institutions from across the USA. Visitors can watch a range of short films that showcase a range of artists and their artistic processes, as well as contribute to debates and share rich-media content across a range of social network sites quickly and easily. ArtBabble was conceived, initiated, designed, built, sculpted, programmed, shot, edited, painted and launched by a cross-departmental team at IMA. ArtBabble was created so others will join in spreading the world of art through video and is aimed at an audience that is not necessarily versed or educated in a critical appreciation of art but simply has a passion and enthusiasm for it. It is a smart application that enables audiences to be advocates in a highly effective manner.

³ Yusuf, Bulent – *Tate Media: State of the Art*. Interview with Jane Burton, Tate Media, <http://www.apple.com/uk/pro/profiles/tatemedial/>

Proactive Participation

As the interaction pattern suggests, after advocacy comes **dissemination**. At this point there requires a certain amount of skill from the audience. They will 'edit' and go through a selection process taking the role of producer and consumer – they become *'Prosumers'*.

One example of this is the Bronx Rhymes Project in New York. Initiated by two individuals passion about the urban history of the area and the power of technology to create a dynamic local history, this project principally relies on text messages. Bronx Rhymes combines physical location and digital mobility to trace the roots of hip-hop in the Bronx. Interactive designers, Masha Loveva and Claudia Bernett, spotted a need on the streets of the Bronx to celebrate the history of the area. Participants can send in their own texts that offer, in rhyme form, their memories and connections to hip-hop icons. A Flickr channel with pictures showing low-fi, black and white posters dotted about the streets of the Bronx runs alongside a Google Earth location map which allows you to see each battle-stream relevant to that area. It is a fantastic concept, very low cost and a raw, authentic way to engage people in an ongoing dialogue that means something to the individual and the community. It has life, emotion and wit, as well as longevity.

The Challenge and Opportunities from UGC

Moving an audience through these stages of interaction is no easy task and the web is littered with examples of failed attempts to invite user-generated content or engage an audience, both from a brands' and a cultural institutions' perspective. It is not about institutions jumping on the user-generated content bandwagon or trying to project that they are in touch with today's youth, it has to be about delivering something of value for the institution and the audience.

A pragmatic approach that takes into account all of these steps along the journey and recognises that not everyone will be moved to participate and engage is vital. There is also no value judgement associated with the stage users are at – if an institution's objective is to increase access and that is the stage users are kept at, then that is a success. What needs to be remembered, however, is that exploring opportunities to develop semi-passive/participative users to more active advocates is often where exciting and new collaborations with audiences can happen, and indeed where the opportunity for an institutions' message to spread dynamically through networks can happen.

Rachel Coldicutt worked on the UK's first user-generated content managed project for a cultural institution. The project encouraged people to tell a story about an object that means something to them. As this was the first major, publically-funded project there was a hugely experimental approach to the project and the team. It was costly and time consuming, but the outcomes in terms of their learnings were incredibly rewarding.

"The idea was that we were going to create something that was going to work in every way and encourage everyone to contribute in every way...basically [they] gave us one million pounds and said go away and make this amazing thing...It was one million pounds for one million users. For the previous couple of years I'd been working with an early adopter audience and you couldn't really get these people to send their photos in at all in 2003/04, that was really hard work still and Flickr launched over that period so it was all really, really new. It was a very museum led idea, you know

more a pedagogical idea that if we build it they will come racing in, because it's amazing, and...they don't."

Rachel identified a number of reasons as to why the project did not succeed:

- 1 Lack of a cohesive effort between institutions, universities, agencies and other organisational bodies;
- 2 All parties were confused by the purpose of the project, and the call-to-action to get people to respond and upload was weak and time consuming - this obviously is a great barrier to entry for an audience;
- 3 The proposition and the target audience were not sufficiently clear.

In 2006, Danish web guru Jakob Nielsen posited a theory that would demonstrate the way social communities would evolve and then predicted how people would interact and create content for the web. Nielsen called it 'participation inequality' and summarised it is as follows:

*"In most online communities, 90% of users are lurkers who never contribute, 9% of users contribute a little, and 1% of users account for almost all the action."*⁴

Neilsen called it the '90.9.1 Rule' and suggests that there are ways in which you can equalise participation:

- Make it easier to contribute (one click);
- Make participation a side effect (naturally occur);
- Edit, don't create (edit the site and modify its look);
- Reward – but don't over reward (be aware of your audience);
- Promote quality contributors (this will entice the others).

These useful recommendations highlight the need for the development of a framework for user-generated content to be a flexible and an on-going process for an institution. Setting rigid expectations will only disappoint and fail the idea of user-generated content. It is of benefit only when all parties are aware that it is opinion-led, democratic and built on the principle that the instigator cannot force or predict the outcome. Similar to art, the content is personal and purely subjective. To inhibit the flow of content coming in from the public, will only contribute to the failure of the project.

The Rise of the Machines

Does any of this activity replace, or reduce the importance of the physical and live? Absolutely not – as the impressive growth in audience numbers for live events shows. In an increasingly digital world, our appetite for the real is enhanced – as authors of *Authenticity*, Pine and Gilmore are at pains to point out:

⁴ Nielsen, J. http://www.useit.com/alertbox/participation_inequality.html, October 2006

“...be sure to focus your remaining live person-to-person interactions on turning every seemingly mundane encounter into an engaging experience. Amidst today’s sea of technological meditation, handling this human remnant well sends a powerful message to your customers and should inform the design of all other interactions.”⁵

As Pine and Gilmore’s book shows, consumers increasingly want their interactions with brands to feel authentic – that the brand delivers on its promise in a way that feels honest and true. Cultural institutions are making increasingly appealing partners to a growing number of brands looking to create these meaningful interactions with their consumers because cultural institutions offer a high degree of authenticity in their own right. When technology can be deployed to enhance this experience we see how powerful it can be in deepening a connection with a particular offer and consumer. Sometimes this connection is self-initiated - where individuals have been sufficiently moved or motivated by a particular experience that they are compelled to share it with others and create activity around it. Other times, the institution or brand makes a calculated decision to create a platform for others to engage with and interact through a deliberate call-to-action.

An interesting example of the former was the as [Drift 08 \(London\)](#) festival curated by Illuminate Productions, a not-for-profit organisation, who presented a series of contemporary artworks in unusual and accessible environments, along and on the River Thames. Many of these pieces made use of new technology, including a projected laser bridge and holographic monsters in the Thames. With no direct encouragement, people began to respond to the works not just by [posting](#) numerous images on Flickr, but by organising amateur photography trips to capture the images in an organised fashion, creating groups and utilising technology in order to do so.

Far more is at stake for the institution and brand when there is a deliberate call-to-action. In some case, the results can exceed expectations, as a project initiated by the [Art Gallery of Ontario](#) (AGO) demonstrates. In 2007 the Gallery launched a public brief for a temporary exhibition called ‘In your Face’, inviting the public to submit a self-portrait. Over 17,000 people contributed their own portrait created through a variety of artistic mediums.

As the exhibition grew, people kept on contributing, the AGO admitted:

“Though challenging, somehow this need for increased flexibility, coupled with the open-endedness of the project, enlivened the institution and kept the exhibition in play for much longer than anticipated.”⁶

Coincidentally the AGO was in the process of designing and developing an experiment in social media through an initiative called ‘Collection X’ (<http://www.collectionx.museum>).

“Launched in April 2007, Collection X represents a programming and delivery approach that is purposely designed to challenge some of the fundamental practices of museums and galleries. As

⁵ Pine, J., & Gilmore, J., *What Consumers Really Want, Authenticity*, 2007, p.16

⁶ McIntyre, G., et al., Getting ‘In Your Face: Strategies for Encouraging Creativity, Engagement and Investment When the Museum is Offline’, in Trant, J. And Bearman, D. (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2008: Proceedings, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics*.

*with 'In Your Face', 'Collection X' provides a space within which to share user-generated content, but it takes this concept even further by inviting users to curate and interpret their own content using a range of Web 2.0 technologies and concepts such as self-publishing and tagging.'*⁷

In this case, the user-generated content has not just been an interesting adjunct to the institution, but become an integral and vital part of the artistic programme. At this point the boundaries between amateur and professional, producer and consumer, institution and individual all begin to melt away and point towards a new and exciting future of artistic production and consumption. The appeal for the 'amateur' to engage in this kind of activity is clear – to have your work presented where legions of venerable artists have exhibited confers a sense of status to your own creativity. The popular appeal of Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition has demonstrated this for more than 200 years. However, the impact of technology is clear – the Summer Exhibition, traditionally, the world's largest open submission arts exhibition, annually attracts some 10,000 entries, whilst 'In Your Face', attracted almost double that with 17,000 submissions in its first year.

The secret of success?

Based on the examples of 'In Your Face' and 'Collection X', AGO has found that these kinds of endeavours can succeed if the idea being explored is authentic and engaging and if the following principals are followed:

- establish structures and frameworks that are open and inclusive;
- foster creativity without being prescriptive;
- be democratic and ensure that the processes are non-hierarchical;
- engage in dialogue and nurture relationships;
- encourage a layering of voices and a plurality of content;
- embrace a multiplicity of potential outcomes; and
- honour the collaboration.⁸

Shaping the role of UGC within cultural institutions

Who, or what, will drive the development of UGC within cultural institutions? By its very definition it resists some kind of policy framework or strategic plan, but instead demands new forms of collaboration that see a coalescence around digital expertise, content, audience enthusiasm and desire to engage. Interesting new collaborations are emerging. Google has been quick to recognise that showcasing its emerging technologies through cultural collaborations can bring software to life

⁷ McIntyre, G., et al., Getting 'In Your Face: Strategies for Encouraging Creativity, Engagement and Investment When the Museum is Offline', in Trant, J. And Bearman, D. (eds.). *Museums and the Web 2008: Proceedings, Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics.*

⁸ Ibid.

in a highly compelling way – as evidenced by the collaboration between both [Google Earth and the Prado Museum](#) and Google's recently launched collaboration with the [Guggenheim](#).

In the same way that Google's collaboration with the [Prado Museum](#) succeeded in showing both organisations in a positive light, showcasing their best wares to an ever greater and undoubtedly receptive audience. There needs to be a meeting of the minds between the cultural institution and brand, both of whom are foresighted enough to recognise that such a collaboration can be a powerful way to engage the audience/consumer.

Not only do these innovative collaborations extend the reach of a single institution far beyond its geographic confines, but they also highlight how skills that have traditionally been viewed as niche are now becoming increasingly valued and utilised by the general public, in part due to the emergence of new technologies. The ability to pull together disparate objects in the digital realm – text, music, images, films and even friends is demanding that each of us becomes our own 'curator' – able to create narratives that express who we are through a series of descriptive tags, ratings and selections. In turn this creates a heightened sense of appreciation for the role of curator as storyteller, conferring on them greater status and elevating their importance. It has created a growing trend for 'guest' curators of everything from TV scheduling (Sky Arts), to music festivals (meltdown) to a regular refreshment of the permanent collection at Tate Modern through the annual re-hang.

This respect for the curator, the trusted expert, came through clearly in the Synovate Consuming Digital Arts research, recently published by Arts Council England. Those surveyed displayed a clear desire to have their online experience of culture curated or selected by experts – it gave them a level of comfort and confidence that there was a real artistic merit in what they were looking at which they did not feel sufficiently confident to judge in their own. The curator acts as a value guide through the wealth of UGC which can be of mixed quality.

What this means, of course, is that the management of user-generated content within an institution is not simply a technical role, but also demands a curatorial role if the experience is to be deemed valuable to those visiting and viewing, and indeed contributing to, any form of UGC. It inevitably means that internally, larger institutions need to think about how they can break down the hierarchies and silos that may exist and instead explore a more project driven, networked approach where inter-disciplinary teams can work together to realise projects across a variety of platforms.

Conclusion

The big 'but' in all of this is of course financial. How can institutions, often already operating on extremely tight budgets, find the money to invest in exploring these new areas in innovative ways? In part this is where the private sector can play a role, not simply as a financial resource but also as a source of innovative thinking, technological expertise and entrepreneurial spirit.

This inevitably leads to the million dollar question – what new business models can be developed which enable both the institutions and brands to generate sustainable revenue from or to support UGC? There are a number of models currently operating ranging from a redefinition of advertising, interrupting users, micro-payments through to charging for the added experience provided around the UGC, but as yet no definitive framework has emerged. An entrepreneurial business like [Threadless](#),

which sells t-shirts designed by the general public who submit and showcase their designs online, has captured the public's desire to create and turned this into a wildly successful, much talked about, business where the product is created by the consumer and the business acts as a facilitator and shop window. Further experimentation and innovation will be key to not only embedding audiences/consumers in institutions' and brands' operating models but also their financial models too.

So if the traditional model of arts sponsorship is falling by the wayside as collaborative, mutually beneficial partnerships begin to take shape and evolve, there is an undoubted mutuality to the opportunity that is immensely appealing in terms of reimagining how new forms of cultural production and consumption can become increasingly central to our lives. Brands can align and lock their skills into innovative and expressive projects, building trust, credibility and authenticity with their consumers through culture, whilst cultural organisations can begin to play in a hitherto underexploited digital realm with the support and expertise of commercial partners.

All of this is centred around the needs, desires and appetite of an emerging breed of consumers who wish to engage with both brands and institutions as an equal and active participant in the relationship – and for these consumers, the benefits that a trusted brand can bring to their cultural experiences – the brand as curator, if you like, is an as yet unexplored commercial opportunity.

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