

EXPERIENCE INNOVATION

OUTFORM. | Magazine

**ONLINE BRANDS'
RETAIL REINVENTION**
MAKING BRICK-AND-MORTAR COOL AGAIN

UBER'S AIR TAXI
DOMINATING AIR TRANSPORT

**THE COMPLEXITY OF THE
CONSUMER JOURNEY**
AND ITS IMPACT ON SALES

**THE REALITY OF
VIRTUAL REALITY**
VR'S POTENTIAL TO ADD A NEW
LAYER TO THE IN-STORE EXPERIENCE

**THE INFLUENCE
OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

HOW SPACES ARE BEING DESIGNED WITH
INSTAGRAM PHOTO-OPS IN MIND

A Word From The CEO

At Outform we strive to continuously push the envelope in our innovation efforts. To do so, we must always stay in touch with the latest advancements in the retail, technology, and design fields. We have put this publication together to not only bring you the latest industry news, but to add a dose of inspiration and spark to your day that we ourselves love to experience at Outform.

Happy reading!

Ariel Haroush,
Outform CEO



“ Outform’s Guiding Philosophy
dare to innovate. ”

We are an Experience Innovation Agency

To be innovative means pushing the envelope through unprecedented ideas and executions. And that's just what we do at Outform...we dare to innovate. We believe that the only way to succeed is to keep moving forward by relentlessly challenging the status quo.

By combining research, strategy, creative thinking, technology, design, and engineering we are able to come up with solutions that not only look beautiful on paper, but are also carefully constructed to deliver behavior-changing experiences.

Through our complete in-house capabilities and end-to-end retail solutions we strive to become the leading global experience innovation agency.

- / strategic innovation
- / human-centered design
- / agile manufacturing
- / global support

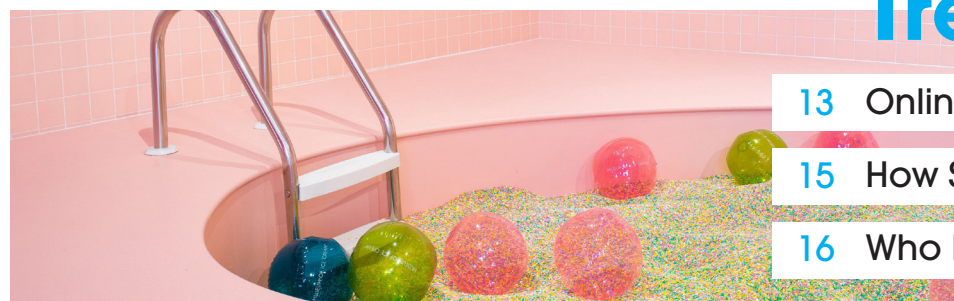
Photo: Cream Electric Art



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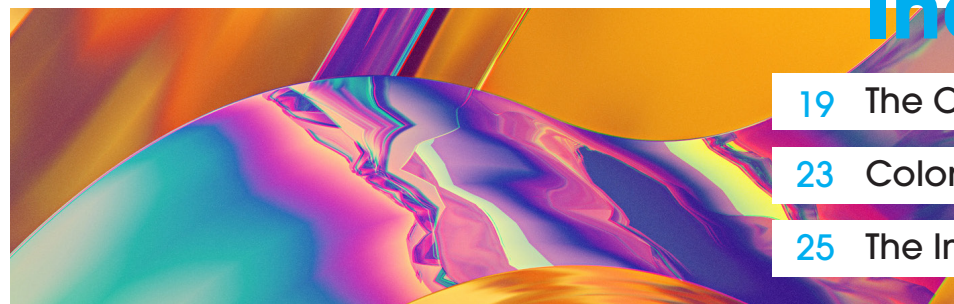
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VR's Presence in Physical Retail

Is immersive technology changing the brick-and-mortar experience?

Virtual reality is slowly creeping its way into our lives in various forms. The gaming industry has been an early adopter of the technology, finally making the futuristic scenes we've seen in movies over the years a reality. From fully immersive console games built for high-end headsets to apps on your phone viewable via Google cardboard, VR has become accessible for the masses and is spreading in its presence - there is now even a [VR theme park](#).

Though still a fairly new initiative, it is projected that by 2022 there will be over 175 million VR headsets in the US alone, according to the [PwC Global Entertainment & Media Outlook report](#). Brands have taken note of this emerging technology and are beginning to experiment with VR to deepen the customer experience.

Microsoft for one, who sells Oculus Rift and HTC headsets, offers customers an in-store trial of the VR devices and games. Strategically, Microsoft has placed the VR experience area right at the front of the stores so that whoever is passing by is sure to notice shoppers having fun, becoming intrigued and eager to try it themselves.

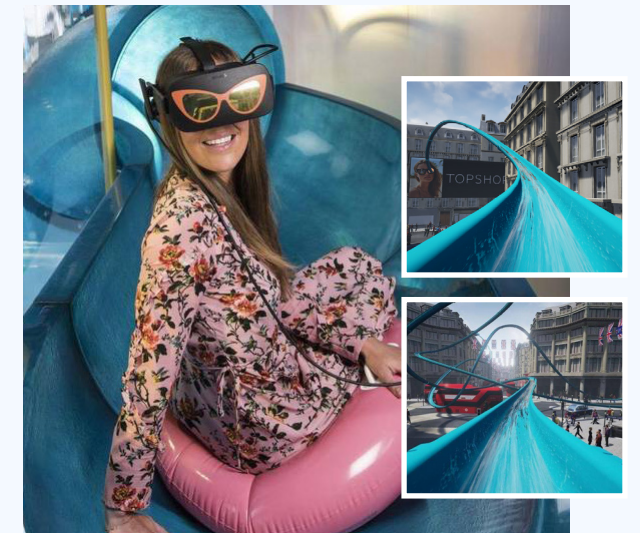


The [Samsung 837 flagship store](#) has become the go-to destination for any tech lover. The digital playground engages visitors in various VR activities such as surfing, skiing, and roller coaster rides using the Samsung VR headset.



Other brands have taken a more gimmick approach to introducing VR into their locations. [Cadillac House](#), a cafe, event venue, gallery space and retail lab, features a VR showroom, which lets customers customize their own Cadillac. [Oxford Street's Topshop location](#) featured a VR waterslide which took customers on a digital journey throughout the city streets.

While Microsoft's approach is aimed at increasing sales and has been cemented as part of their in-store experience, other brands present this technology only in their flagship or experiential locations, like Samsung 837 or Cadillac House. Other brands (like Topshop) have used the technology more as fun, one-off marketing



execution (or implemented it into apps) and not as a consistent part of their business model.

While digitally-immersive, multi-sensory experiences are emerging and are definitely exciting shoppers, there is still some time before they become a common selling tool for retailers. In fact, a recent [Retail Dive article](#) explains why the revolution of retail won't be in virtual reality, but in scan-and-go technology instead.

VR AT OUTFORM



The creative team in Outform's Tel-Aviv office has developed an exclusive VR experience to put the client directly into the environment of the proposed execution.

In The News

Methods in Customer Experience

Satisfying shoppers through more than products.

A customer's experience is important to the success of a brand. A good experience can result in return and new business, while a bad experience can deter a customer from buying from a brand again. Besides providing customers with the best product and/or service offered by the brand, there are numerous other factors which play into creating a good customer experience.

SENSES

One well-known selling method in retail is appealing to a customer's senses. Sight and touch play a big role in a shopping space, presented through store design and product interaction. Sound and taste can be applied to a store's overall experience where appropriate, such as playing pleasant music to give the customer a more relaxing shopping environment or giving out free samples of food. Smell, however, is not always considered when thinking about the customer.

Olivia Jezler, sensory design and fragrance expert, explains that the olfactory sense is an important, yet overlooked, element that can be effective when curating the customer experience, "You can use scent in multiple ways. You can use it to make a big room feel warmer and feel cozier. You can use it to make things feel more expansive and wide... We have these sensory connections formed: specific sounds with shapes, specific colors with smells, specific textures with smells. If you use these connections that our brain naturally already has to design an experience, it makes the experience that much better." (PSFK)

Find out more about how retailers can use scent marketing to influence shoppers [here](#).

Photo: Scentfrom.us



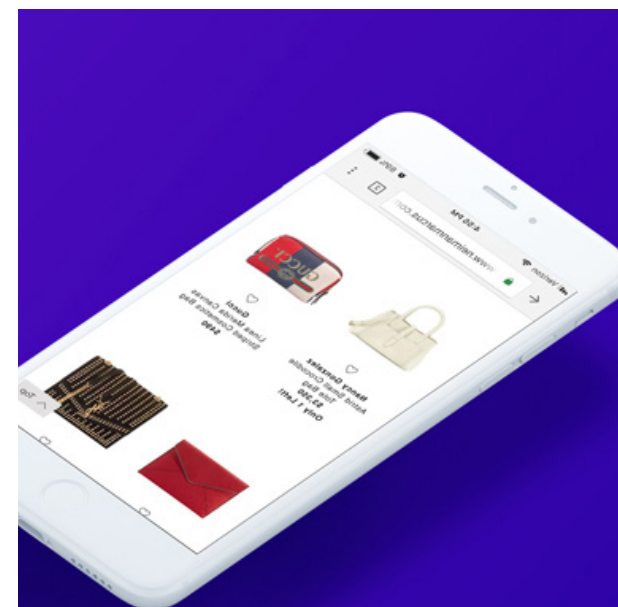
TECH

Effectively implementing technology can also add to the customer experience. Forrester's 2018 CX Report has ranked 43 multi-channel retailer brands based on how well they earn loyalty from shoppers based on their customer experience quality. Retailers like Neiman Marcus, BJ's Wholesale Club and Sephora, which all land at the top of the list, share a common theme - strategic tech integration, digital interactions, and multi-channel experiences to appeal to customers' needs.

Read more [here](#).

PERSONALIZATION

Personalized experiences should also be considered. According to an [Accenture Interactive report](#), shoppers are onboard to have their shopping habits be more tailored towards personal tastes, stating that "91% of those surveyed said they would be more likely to shop with brands who recognize and provide relevant offers and recommendations, and 83% said they were willing to share their data to make this work". However, in a digital age when privacy is always a concern, too much invasion can certainly turn a customer off. The report states that "41% of those surveyed said getting a text from a retailer or brand when you are walking right by that company's store is creepy." (Retail Dive) The key for brands is to leverage the personal information they have in a way that benefits the consumer, helping them discover new and relevant things without creating concern about their privacy.



SOCIALIZATION

Social spaces are becoming increasingly popular. As more time is spent online, people are increasingly seeking out places to connect in real life. Places that support community and social connection attract more visitors and have a greater likelihood of recommendation.

Rich brand experiences go beyond physical product and in-store interactions to create deeper connections. Retailers are aiming to become social destinations where visitors can drink, eat, or hangout— not just shop. From experiential to culinary offerings, brands are using non-traditional approaches to differentiate and engage customers.

[Bergdorf Goodman's Cafe](#) and [Tiffany's Blue Box Cafe](#) are perfect examples of social spaces, acting as extensions of the brand that give visitors a new way to interact with the brands. These cafes definitely appeal to an Instagram generation, with visitors giving the spaces exposure through photos and hashtags on their social feeds.

Designing spaces that encourage social behavior can create experiences and interactions that will exceed customer expectations and add a level of unexpected surprise and delight.

Read about how brands are using stores as community spaces [here](#).



Photo: Kay Pound

Walmart Innovates Through Tech

How the retail giant is progressing in efficiency.

Incorporating technology into today's retail experience seems to be a must in order to please customers and meet their needs. Walmart is doing just that by stepping up its innovation efforts and continuing to staying ahead of the competition. Here is a few ways that Walmart is using technology to assist both customers and employees.

MOBILE

Amongst its other features, Walmart's mobile app integrates store maps for 165 locations to help customers find what they are looking for easily. According to Mark Matthews, VP of Digital Acceleration, "close to half of mobile page views initiated from shoppers in stores where it's active are going to the maps feature". ([Retail Dive](#)) The maps feature works with the apps list feature, which shows the customers where each item on their list is located in the store.

Returns are also made easier with the app, as customers can access things they have purchased offline by scanning their receipts into the app. If choosing to return an item, a customer simply has to select the item in the app to create a unique barcode and present the barcode along with the item at the customer service desk for an easy return.



Photo: Roc Canals

ROBOTS

Walmart has implemented a robot in 50 of its stores to facilitate the process of tracking inventory levels, restocking shelves, returning misplaced products, making sure prices are up to date and shelf tags are accurate. The robot scans various parts of the store several times a day to collect information using AI and machine learning, reducing employee turnover and improving customer experience. The information is transmitted to employees via a mobile app, giving them a to-do list of tasks that are not yet robo-capable.

AUTOMATION

Walmart has automated their truck unloading and inventory sorting process through technology called the "Fast Unloader", which "can move a full trailer of merchandise along a conveyer belt, sort the items and get them to carts for shelf replenishment in a fraction of the time it took by hand." ([Retail Dive](#))

Click here to find out more about Walmart's technology initiatives.



Photo: Aix Sponza

Nike Is Rethinking Retail

Serving customers in innovative ways.

Nike has been expanding through forward-thinking methods and ideas, leaving others to play catch-up. Nike's re-imagination of retail has attributed to its success over the year, including opening new stores, taking advantage of social media to create direct-to-consumer relationships, and reducing the amount of retailers it works with. And the brand is not slowing down its efforts. Nike's Q4 earnings grew by 13%, reaching \$9.8 billion and bringing it closer to its 2022 goal of \$50 billion.

Here are just some of Nike's recent inspirational and innovative ideas:

NIKE BY MELROSE

Using localization to its advantage, this experimental store blends the digital and physical by using Los Angeles NikePlus members' data and digital commerce data to determine which products and services will be part of the store. The product mix is updated every two weeks to keep up with local trends. NikePlus members receive perks such as the NikePlus Unlock Box digital vending machine with free rewards and a curbside service which lets customers buy, exchange, or return items without going inside.

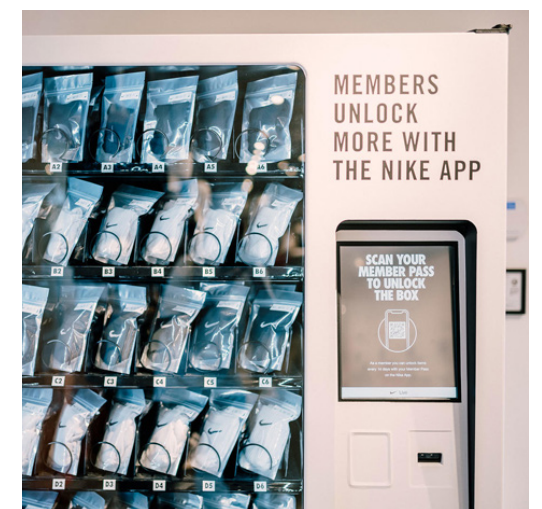
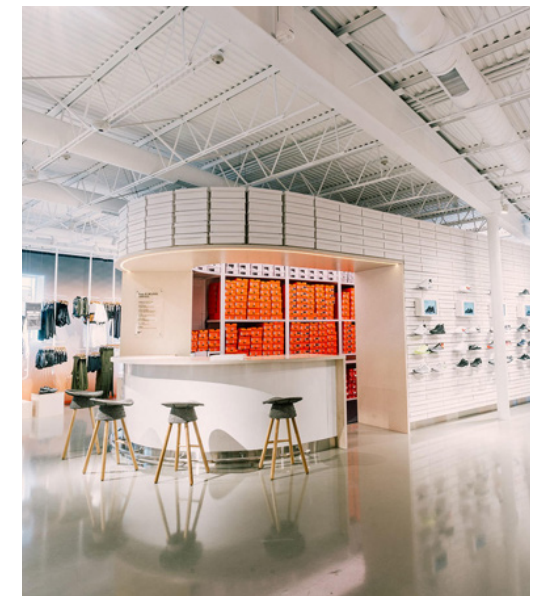
NIKE APP

To create a better in-store experience, the app lets customers browse and reserve products, scan product barcodes to find out more information and call over an associate via an app button. In the future, customers will be able to scan a display QR code and have every part of the outfit waiting in a fitting room to try on.

NIKE NYC FLAGSHIP

Although little is known about the space, it is reported to open in 2019 and feature four floors of Nike services and products, all surely to be innovative. The location will also include an exclusive fifth floor only accessible to NikePlus members.

These are just a few examples of Nike's efforts to push the brand in innovative directions. [Click here](#) to read more.



Volvo's S90 Ambience Concept Car

Connecting with the senses.



Volvo has unveiled its S90 Ambience Concept car, which combines sound, visuals and scent, providing an “industry-first sensory experience”. ([Volvo](#))

The Volvo S90 is a three-seater that focuses on chauffeured passengers in the back seat. Passengers can use the accompanying smartphone app to change the atmosphere inside the car by choosing from several themes. The themes include Scandinavian Forest, Northern Lights, Rain, Archipelago, and Swan Lake and have their own unique visuals. The Volvo S90 also includes a Nocturnal and Freedom theme for resting and giving a boost of fresh, uplifting energy respectively.

Along with visuals, there is also synchronized audio as well as four specially made scents. “[The scents are] released from a special compartment incorporated in the center console. Each theme is harmoniously matched to one of the four available scents that were created by Byredo, a Swedish high-end marque specialized in scented candles, perfumes, as well as leather goods.” ([Motor 1](#))



Uber's Air Taxi Push

Taking transportation to
new heights.

Uber has dominated the on-demand ridesharing market on land. Now, the company is setting its sights on air transportation.

The Uber Elevate program is in the works of launching uberAIR. Dallas and Los Angeles have been chosen as the first two launch cities and Uber is now seeking a third partner city to help test the program.

UberAIR taxis will use a process called “vertical takeoff and landing” (VTOL), taking off and landing like a helicopter. On their website, Uber state that “the goals of operating demonstrator flights starting in 2020 and beginning commercial operations in 2023.” ([Uber](#))

Just like with current Uber transportation, the uberAIR initiative seeks to create quicker daily commutes, additionally creating less traffic congestion as well as cleaner air.

“If you look at the aviation system right now, the schedules are pre-set. And even then, if you have a weather delay that floats through

Chicago, or a nor'easter comes to the East Coast and shuts down Dulles and Philadelphia [airports], the waves just ripple through the system...If you're booking a [flight] in real time in the same way that you book a ride on Uber right now, and this all has to link together seamlessly, you can imagine that the opportunities for things to go awry are large”, says Eric Allsion, Head of the Uber's aviation programs.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

Trend Report

Online Retailers Are Going Offline

Beating traditional brick-and-mortar stores at their own game.

“Retail disruption” is a well-known term and sought-after practice for modern brands. In an age when traditional brick-and-mortar stores are struggling to stay afloat, online retailers have instead taken a dive into physical retail. Whether temporary pop-ups or permanent locations, e-commerce businesses are striving to stay innovative and noticeable by giving consumers an unexpected shopping experience.

There is something about seeing an online store taking on a physical space that is fascinating to consumers - what will it look like, what will the experience be like? Shoppers’ curiosities are piqued to see how something that has been digital will manifest in a physical design. Amazon is probably the first store to come to mind, but here are some other brands which have taken on the traditional brick-and-mortar spaces.



Warby Parker started online, but have been expanding their physical retail stores over the years. The company “now reports that more than half of its sales occur in physical stores and 75% of customers that shop in store visit the website first”. ([Insider Trends](#))



Casper is amongst several online mattress retailers who have promised a better night’s sleep with an innovative approach to mattresses. What makes this brand stand out is their physical retail footprint, which aims to build brand awareness, offer shoppers the opportunity to touch and feel products, and “make the mattress shopping experience enjoyable and educational”. ([CNBC](#))



“Pop-up” has been the buzz word in the past year and Glossier has hopped on that bandwagon, taking over Rhea’s Cafe and transforming the space into an edible experience. “Customers can enjoy food and drinks from Rhea’s in a made-for-Instagram setting while sampling Glossier’s menu of minimalist, millennial beauty, skincare and body products.” ([Brand Channel](#))



Farfetch’s Store of the Future launched a beta version in 2017 and plans a commercial rollout for 2018. The store is said to use technology to drive sales instead of just adding it for gimmick. Customers can check into the store while an RFID-enabled clothing rack detects the products the customer is browsing, populating a wishlist. A digital mirror can be used to view the wishlist and items in different colors and sizes. ([Business of Fashion](#)).

[Click here to read about the 45 online retailers who went offline.](#)

Samsung Brand Experience in Paris showcasing the latest products through an immersive experience. [Learn more.](#)

How Social Media Is Shaping Physical Spaces

Appealing to an Instagram culture.

Social media, particularly Instagram, is popular and influential, so far so that its reach is expanding outside the internet and into physical spaces. Because people take photos of their life and daily activities, including the places they visit, the food they eat, everything becomes a photo opportunity. That means exposure and free promotion for brands and businesses. Businesses are taking note and honing in on the Instagram culture by creating interactive spaces built around photo-ops.

Here are a few pop-up venues that have stood out for their Instagram-worthy designs:



Supermoon Bakehouse

From the treats to the packaging to the space design, this bakery is the definition of “aesthetic”. Supermoon Bakehouse has created the perfect space to encourage visitors to fill their social feeds with eye-pleasing content that’s sure to get them plenty of Likes. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Museum Of Ice Cream

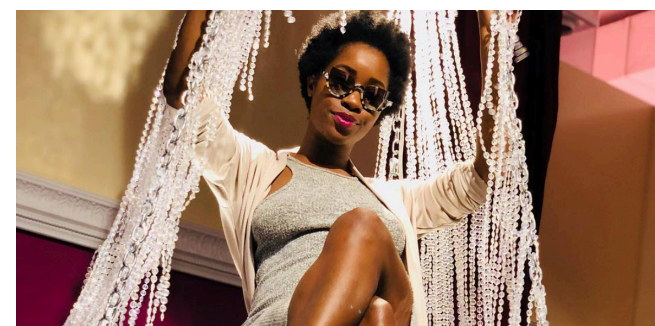
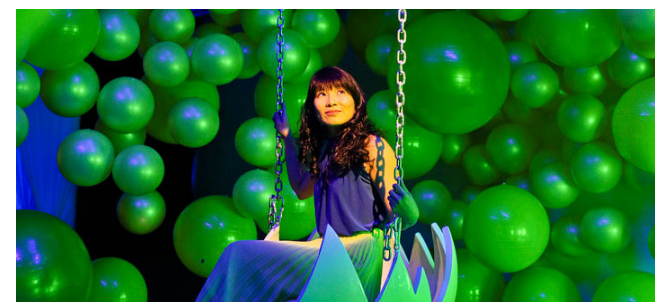
Another food-centric pop up, the Museum of Ice Cream is an experiential installation that is made to interact with all five senses. The San Francisco space fosters “IRL interaction and URL connections, providing fun, multi-sensorial expressions of ice cream that cater to the appetites of our generation.” [Click here to learn more.](#)

The Egg House

The New York pop-up is home to the star of the show, Ellis the egg, who has graciously opened his doors to the public. The space includes various areas for photo worthy moments, all surrounding the theme of eggs. [Click here to learn more.](#)

Rosé Mansion

“Rosé all day” has become a popular hashtag on social media. At the Rosé Mansion patrons can sip on rosé as they explore the venue and “learn about the history, science, and economics of this magical beverage.” The Rosé Mansion includes other interactive and Instagram worthy features like a gold chandelier swing, a secret garden, and a few other surprises. [Click here to learn more.](#)

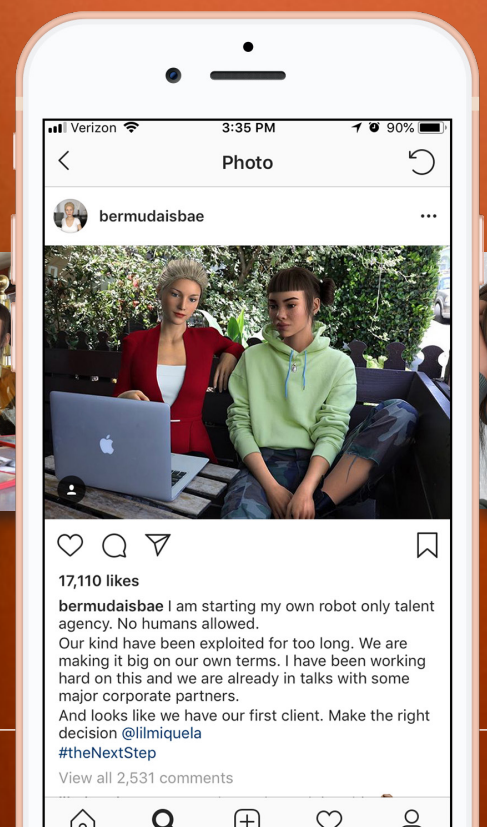


Who Is Lil' Miquela?

She's not your typical influencer.

Standing out on social media is a competition and if you manage to do it right you might earn yourself the title of “influencer”, someone whose online presence is strong enough to garner thousands of followers and even snag a few brand deals in the process. While some are trying to figure out how to present their life in its best way through a virtual presence, one young woman has been innovative in her approach by not existing in real life at all.

With over 1 million Instagram followers, Lil Miquela is actually a fictional, computer-generated character created by Trevor McFedries and Sara Decou. Lil Miquela's feed portrays her as the “it-girl”, wearing designer clothes, attending events, and hanging out with friends (some real and some also virtual). While some try hard to make carefully planned and manipulated posts look like their normal, everyday lives, Lil Miquela's timeline embraces “fake” and unrealistic aspects, showing her living a life her followers would want without living one at all. So, are virtual influencers the next wave in social media trends? Is Lil Miquela acting as a commentary on the unrealistic perceptions perpetuated by social media? Take a look at her Instagram account and judge for yourself.





Industry Insights

Outform's extensive work with some of the world's leading brands has given us a deep expertise of the relationship between strategy, design, and manufacturing. Each part is unique and must be mastered. The ultimate success comes when the three parts are combined into one vision. We look forward to sharing our learnings from each of our three competencies with you each quarter.

The Consumer Journey

From the Outform strategy team.

In the rapidly-evolving world of retail, understanding the consumer has become both easier and more complicated. Technology advancements have made it possible, and at this point necessary, to track consumers' interaction within stores and on websites. However, dissecting the data to understand the shopping habits and purchase intent can be challenging, especially when multi-channel shopping is so prevalent, adding to the complexity of a shopper's behavior. Nevertheless, the consumer journey is a puzzle that must be understood by retailers to better cater to the customer and improve their shopping experience.

Photo: A-2-O Studio

DEFINING THE JOURNEY

A consumer journey is "the complete sum of experiences that customers go through when interacting with your company and brand. Instead of looking at just a part of a transaction or experience, the consumer journey documents the full experience of being a customer". ([Survey Monkey](#))

At a time when e-commerce did not exist, the consumer journey was isolated to the physical store - it started the moment the shopper walked through the door, continuing through their path around the space and interactions with the various products, and ending with the moment they left. Maybe a coupon that a customer received in the mail or an ad they saw in a magazine extended the starting point of the journey, but that is as complicated as it got.

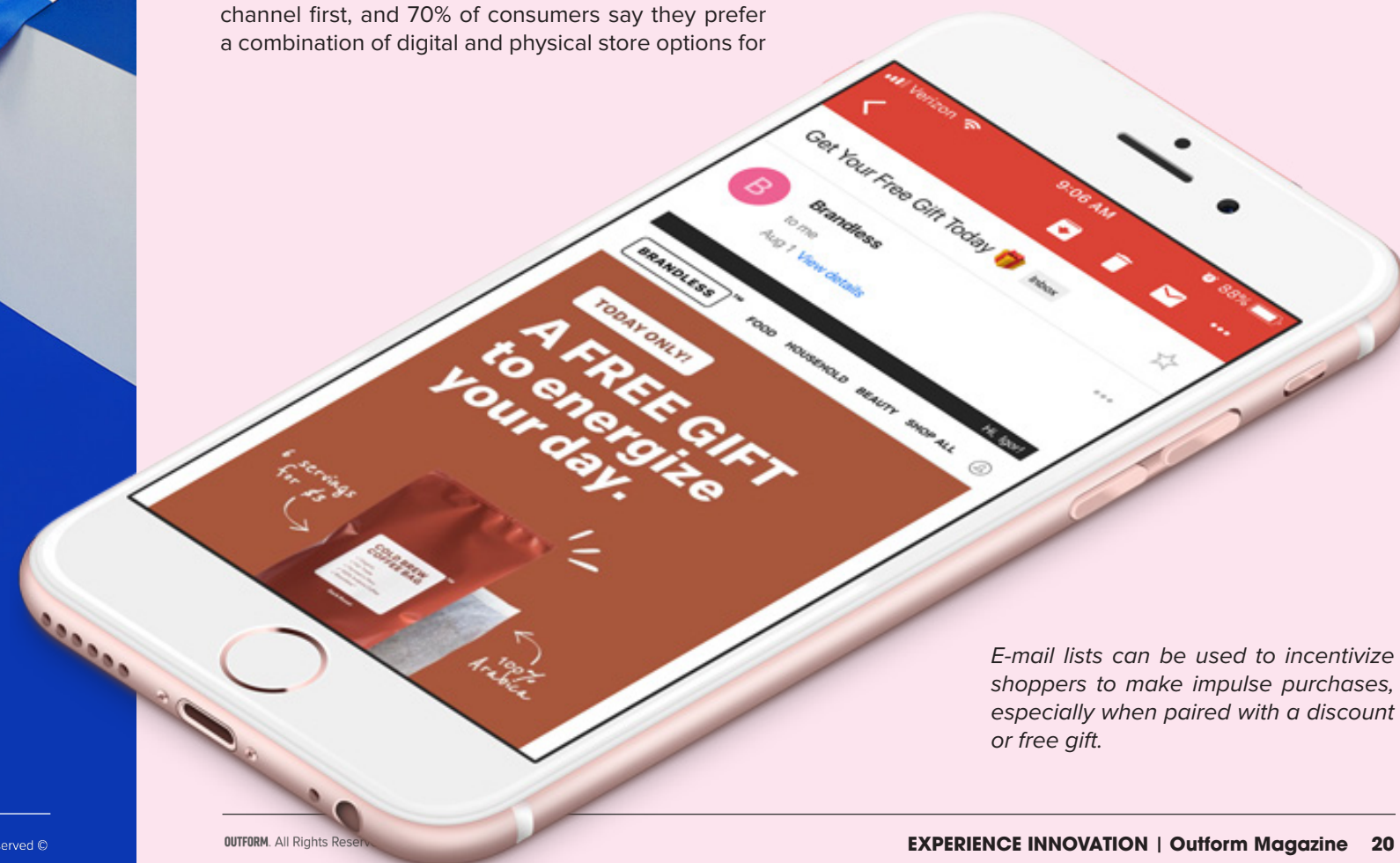
Now, in 2018, the beginning and end of a consumer's journey is not so easily defined. With online shopping and access to the internet from multiple devices, there is a myriad of ways for a customer to interact with a brand and just as many ways for the brand to interact with the customer. According to [Forbes](#), "a recent study from Deloitte found that 56% of in-store customers begin their journey using a digital channel first, and 70% of consumers say they prefer a combination of digital and physical store options for

the sake of convenience -- meaning that now more than ever we're seeing digital and store experiences working in conjunction."

The journey can take several paths, with customers being able to:

- Shop solely online or in-store
- Start shopping online and continue in-store
- Look at products in-store, purchase online, then pick up in store and buy something else there

The ways customers shop are vast and it is up to the brand to know every single path their shoppers can take to design an effective shopping experience. "By using this data, brands are able to use consumer pathing reports to understand the exact path a consumer took to conversion, attributing credit to all devices and browsers in that journey, rather than just the last click." ([Retail Tech News](#)) Following up with a customer post purchase is just as important, which can only be established if a customer is convinced to connect with the brand, whether through snail-mail or online communication.



E-mail lists can be used to incentivize shoppers to make impulse purchases, especially when paired with a discount or free gift.

A MULTI-CHANNEL PRESENCE

Since the communication between customer and brand is now so easily achievable, it is invaluable for a brand to establish a multi-channel, if not an omnichannel, presence. According to PYMNTS, 88% of customers research products online. French (40%) and UK (39%) consumers exhibiting the greatest balance of multichannel shopping preferences followed by German (33%) and then U.S. (32%) shoppers, according to Inc. A multi-channel brand presence gives customers a seamless experience and complimentary shopping options. And although it may not be strategic for every brand to have both an e-commerce and brick-and-mortar store, it is important to have a digital presence. Establishing a social media presence, which is almost expected of a brand these days, gives the brand more exposure. A website creates opportunities for a brand to show up in more online searches. Asking shoppers to sign up to a dedicated e-mail list continues the conversation even when the customer is not deliberately engaging with the brand. These communication methods can keep customers in the loop about a brand's latest products, services, and sales, keep the brand on the customer's mind, and create an earlier start to their consumer journey.

IDENTIFYING THE PAIN POINTS

Along that journey, there are certain "pain points" - interactions that may negatively impact the experience of the shopper. In a physical store it can include insufficient or disorganized merchandise, missing price tags or a slow checkout experience. On a website it can be slow loading times, poor layout design, insufficient product photos or information or no "Checkout As Guest" option.

Tracking consumer pain points is invaluable because it helps retailers turn issues into opportunities and design a better consumer experience. These critical pain points should be identified "from the customer's perspective and reflect the customer's entire journey — from evaluation, purchase, use through to loyalty, satisfaction and/or advocacy". (Footwear News)



Photo: A-2-O Studio

Macy's CEO Jeffrey Gannette has applied strategic customer journey mapping to address in-store challenges. By creating a customer persona and identifying pain points, areas of the shopping experience which do not meet consumer expectations, Macy's was able to identify points of differentiation "We broke down our journey. At each step we identified what was working and what wasn't", says Jeffrey Gannette. The research also highlighted the importance of online channels that intertwine with a brick and mortar experience. "[Our customer] doesn't look at Macys.com and the store as separate brands. She expects the human touch and the power of convenience and technology", Gannette explains.

INTERTWINING TECHNOLOGY

Incorporating technological elements into physical retail locations can create a more cohesive and easier shopping experience for consumers, and can also help retailers gather more data about visitors' shopping patterns.

One example is beacon technology. Beacons use wireless technology to identify a shoppers location in-store and serve targeted marketing messages to them via mobile device. Beacons help "build an accurate consumer profile, giving an indication of an individual's shopping behavior, how many times they visit a store, and where they spend the most time", according to Retail Tech News.

Empowering sales associates with hand-held POS devices can also benefits both retailers and their shoppers. A quick checkout process is always guaranteed to please a customer. Hand-held devices can also give sales associates quicker access to information in case a customer has questions. Also, asking customers for their e-mail address at the end of a checkout session can create the opportunity to continue the conversation after they leave the store via email marketing.

CASE STUDY

Oasis is a U.K. fashion retailer that's fusing their e-commerce site, mobile app, and brick-and-mortar stores into a simple shopping experience.

If you walk into one of their stores, you'll find sales associates armed with iPads that are available to give you on-the-spot, accurate, and up-to-date product information. The iPad also acts as a cash register, making it easy for associates to ring you up from anywhere in the store. And the cherry on top? If it appears that something is out of stock, the staff can instantly place an online order for you to have the item shipped directly to your home.

[Hubspot.com](https://www.hubspot.com)



Color's Role in Retail

From The Outform Design Team.

Having wonderful products that meet the needs and wants of customers is important, but the way those products are presented is just as significant. Colors play a major role in the world of retail, impacting the moods, reactions and overall experiences customers have with brands. This is why deciding on a design for a logo or product packaging is so important - they are the identifiers of a brand whose colors will be the first element to stand out for customers when shopping. Store design is just as important, the colors of which should be carefully decided upon when creating an effective retail space.

Everyone has a color which they love and a color which they cannot stand. Although there is no perfect color that will appeal to every single customer, there is strategic thought behind the selection of colors that will be most appropriate for a brand to help yield more favorable results.



Photo: Umberto Daina

KNOW YOUR BRAND

Although the appeal and meaning of colors can range throughout various cultures, associations with certain colors have been accepted by large parts of the global population. This can help brands in deciding which colors to use to impact their customers on a global level by subconsciously projecting an image, message, or call to action.

For instance, the color blue is associated with trust, security, as well as serenity. American Express, Visa, PayPal and Chase use blue in their logos, helping consumers feel safer and more at ease when trusting these companies with their money.

Red is a very bold color and is often used to signal sales, creating excitement and urging customers to act fast. Many food brands also use red in their logos, especially fast food restaurants. McDonald's, KFC, Wendy's, Arby's, and In-N-Out are some of the companies that incorporate red into their branding as it is said to invoke hunger. Find out more about why red is a prominent color for fast-food businesses [here](#).

KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER

Besides knowing what you want your brand to convey, it is also important to know your customer type. According to VMSD, "impulse shoppers respond best to red-orange, black and royal blue. Budget shoppers respond better to pink, teal, light blue and navy. Traditional shoppers respond better to pink, rose and sky blue".

COLOR COHESION

Keep a consistent color palette throughout your channels so that customers can easily identify and recognize your brand. For instance, if a brand uses green as its main color for its logo and product packaging, its retail space should also use green to create a cohesive look and feel within the brand guidelines. That is not to say that the whole store, from walls to the floor to the furniture, should all be green. Use

complimentary colors to break up the space or drive attention to specific areas of the store while not taking away from the main, identifying color of the brand. The website should also not be overlooked - if colors and design elements in the digital space are not reflective of the brand, shoppers may get confused or even concerned with whether they are shopping on the correct retailer's site.

COLOR BY COUNTRY

Being culturally conscious is important when designing for retail, as all colors do not carry the same meaning throughout the world. Although there are some global associations with colors, it is important to be aware of their different interpretations across the globe so as to not create a design that may mistakenly elicit the wrong or unfavorable reactions from customers.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the color meanings in different countries.

[Click here](#) to see a chart which breaks down colors by their meaning in different parts of the world.

In countries like Greece, Turkey and Albania, blue is believed to be a protector. Blue eye-shaped amulets are common, which are believed to protect against the evil eye.

Green is associated with nature and health throughout the world. In Eastern cultures this color is a symbol of youth, fertility, and new life.

Red is symbolic of energy, love, and danger. In Asian cultures red stands for luck and prosperity and is even worn by brides on their wedding day.

Yellow is representative of happiness, friendliness, and optimism in Western cultures. However, in Germany and France the yellow is associated with envy.

Orange represents warmth and harvest in Western cultures and love, happiness, and good health in Eastern cultures. In Colombia orange is associated with sexuality and fertility.

Globally, purple is considered to be a color of wealth, nobility, and royalty. However, in Brazil and Thailand purple represents mourning.

Purity and peace is associated with white in Western cultures, while in China and Korea white is the color of death, mourning, and bad luck.

Black is globally known as the color of class, sophistication, but can also convey death, evil, and bad luck.

Photo: Machineast



The Importance of Prototyping

From The Outform Production Team.

No matter how beautiful a design can look on paper or as a 3D render, there is no guarantee that it will work as imagined in the real world once it is constructed for the masses. To evaluate if the product meets the desired expectations of the company and solves the required needs of customers, a prototype is developed. Prototypes, the preliminary models of products, can be assessed, tweaked, and reproduced until the required state is achieved to deploy in final production.

Photo: INDG

A BENEFICIAL PROCESS

When designing and creating a product for mass production, one that will be produced thousands of times over, it is crucial to ensure what is coming off the assembly line looks and functions just as initially planned. Getting to that point is not simple, but definitely achievable through prototyping. The process acts as a set of drafts for a product, pointing out any problems it may have and providing chances to eliminate them with every iteration.

Creating product prototypes advisedly helps work out kinks and flaws to ensure a desirable final result and avoid potential issues when reaching the production phase of a project. These edits can create room for improvement and a chance for feedback to be considered to better the end product. Additionally, avoiding potential mistakes through prototyping can also save costs and time, ensuring that the product will go into mass production correctly the first time instead of having to push out multiple incorrect copies which would only go to waste.

Having a physical product to look and touch can also better persuade clients. Sketches and renders can only take the imagination so far, but having something tangible turns the concept into a reality, even if it is not in its final design.

AVOIDING COMMON PROBLEMS

Prototyping, just as any production process, can have its own sets of problems and challenges. Looking out for these issues can provide smoother development to better reach the final phase of the project.

- Adding completely new parts and features during the prototyping phase can also add to time and extra costs. All of the needed aspects should be decided upon and approved during the initial design phase so as to not disturb the timelines of production.

- Tweaking the product and its design is necessary to create a good result, but sometimes this stage of the process can go on for an excessive amount of time. Having a set amount of renditions to a prototype can avoid excessive expenses and speed up the time to reach the development phase.

- When concentrating on issues to resolve, it is easy to focus more on one specific aspect that needs adjusting and incidentally overlook the rest. A balanced overview of all required adjustments will help avoid unwanted deficiencies when the product is fully developed.

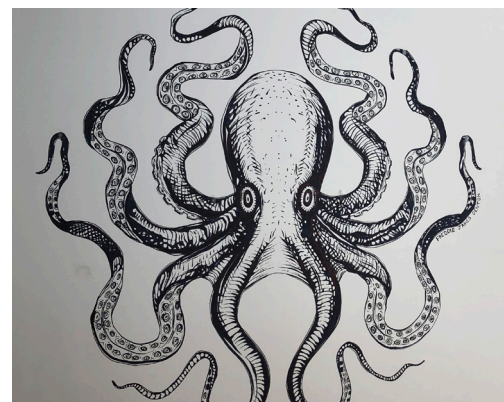


Outform Life

LONDON EDITION

London Office

Everyone at the London office will agree that this busy and ever-changing environment gives us a unique opportunity to engage in the day-to-day life of retail. Our central-London location is home to a group of fun, hard working team members, all from multiple backgrounds. Working in a close-knit environment creates a more family-like setting and also gives us the chance to constantly bounce ideas of each other when looking for solutions.



The Shopper Agency Joins Outform

The Shopper Agency – which offers services in behavioral research, shopper marketing and retail design – has become part of global retail experience group Outform.

Founded five years ago in Leeds, The Shopper Agency has tripled in size over the last two years. It lists companies such as sports licensing specialist Fanatics, and SHS Drinks on its client list.

Outform, which has 250 employees and has just been through as equity restructure, has become a 'significant' shareholder in The Shopper Agency. It is the first time either company has entered into such an arrangement. They plan to work together to provide fully integrated services for clients.

[Click here to read more.](#)



*Martin Fawcett,
The Shopper Agency founder*



Outform and Oxford Street

Being in the field of retail, we could not have asked for a better location for our London office than right next to the famous Oxford Street. This is Europe's busiest shopping street, surrounded by hundreds of brands, stores and restaurants, and serves as an incredible source

of inspiration for our London team. Oxford street is always full of curious shoppers who are exploring the constantly-changing retail environments of some of the world's most well-known brands. This gives us incredible first-hand exposure to consumer habits and latest retail trends to always keep us innovative.

[Click here to learn more about the Outform London office.](#)



Outformer Highlight: ANOUSKA KETT

Anouska Kett, our Client Services Lead, has established a career in retail and shopper marketing even before joining the Outform team. Her experience includes working with global brands such as Apple, Warner Bros, Red Bull, J&J and Bosch, 10 years agency experience, and running her own shopper consulting business. In her off time Anouska keeps up her momentum by channeling her energy into physical activity with a love for adventure and stepping out into the unknown. This year has been all about staying active through sports like yoga, the trampoline, and cycling.

The sports you take part in- yoga, the trampoline, cycling- are they something you do on a regular basis? How long have you been participating in these sports?

I've cycled for a long time, it's something I try and do most weeks. Yoga is a new thing, I found that after a running injury it's been a brilliant way to stay supple and stave off the disappointment of not being able to go out running. Trampolining is something I do with my son, we found an indoor venue with 100 trampolines you can spend an hour jumping around. Its great for giving him a run around and I get to benefit from it too - less sitting around drinking coffee, more time playing and getting fit at the same time.

What do you find appealing about these activities – does it promote better health or do you do it for a bit of fun?

Cycling gets me out into the countryside away from the madness of London. It's something I do with friends so it has a social benefit too - normally involves stopping for a glass of rosé when we finish. As for yoga, I had no intention of taking it seriously; in fact, I was probably more dismissive of its benefits prior to trying it. However, committing to it each week is helping me focus at work and manage my injury. I have also noticed with the travelling I do for work it helps to alleviate tiredness, get my focus back and stretch out stiff limbs.

Have you been an active person your whole life or was there a turning point that caused you to start being more active?

I've always loved high-adrenaline sports, running, cycling, climbing and racquet activities. So finding new things to do which aren't as high-impact has changed my outlook about sport and which activities I can do for life.

I understand you cycled in Mallorca – was this for an event or just a fun activity on holiday? Was it easy or challenging?

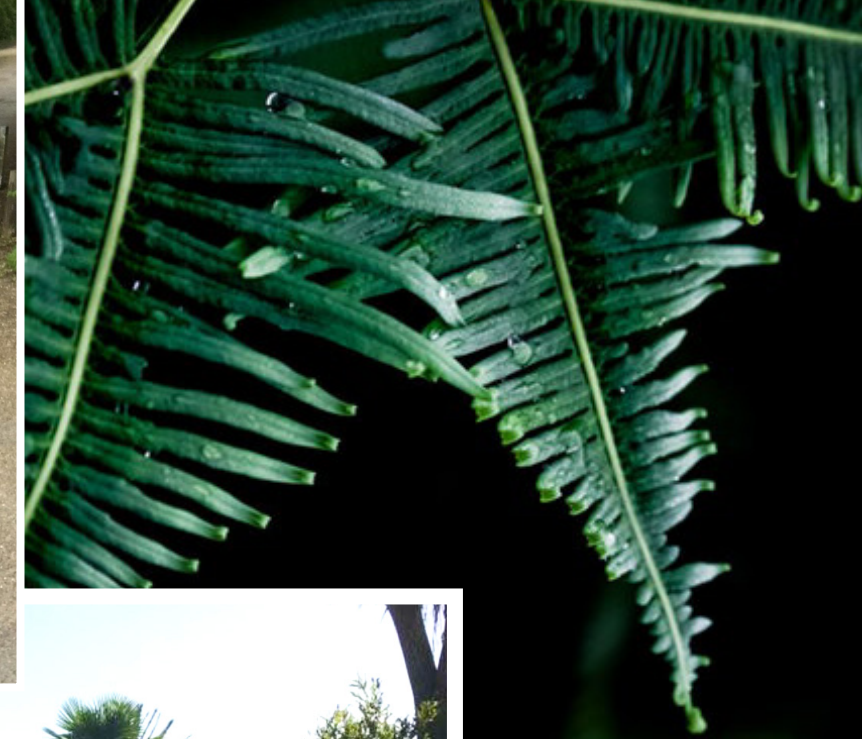
I holiday in Mallorca a couple of times a year and tend to go with mates who like to cycle. Mallorca is well equipped for cycling, great roads, amazing mountain routes and it's easy to hire top-notch kit too. So has become a bit of a habit more than anything and there's still so much more to explore.

What other things do you recommend as part of this lifestyle – a better diet, more sleep, good work/life balance?

I would recommend all of the above! I'm no saint, I love wine and I have a very promiscuous sweet tooth. But yes, I think we're all becoming aware of the pitfalls of sugar, lack of sleep and stress. What drives me is wanting to be energetic and a positive role model for my son. This has made me more conscious about looking after myself to do that, quite simple really.

Does your participation in these activities help in your work life? Have you learned something while working out that has helped you in challenges at work? Or maybe vice-versa...

I have always found exercise as the best outlet for work / home stress management. I guess the main thing I have learned is that if you can be disciplined to get up and do a run; plan better so you can make it to that evening yoga class; or, pack a bag the night before so you can jump on your bike and cycle to work in the morning, the greater your sense of achievement is from your working day. Also... you can have that glass of wine as a reward!



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