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strawberry
brand
studio

A post-lockdown world report

Consumers, Trends and what it means for Brands

17 August 2020

the path towards

A post-lockdown world

A few words about this report

Hi there, my name is Eva. In the beginning of the year, I traded Munich for Lisbon to pursue my Masters in Management at Nova SBE. With my constant appetite for finding new inspirations and crafting meaningful work rooted in simplicity and purpose, I was honoured to be part at Strawberry Brand Studio. At Strawberry, we're always aware of what's happening in the world around us. While we're not research specialists, we like to take on the role of an anthropologist, psychologist, analyst and sociologist all meshed into one, in order to interpret how macro factors impact consumer behaviour. Over the last couple of months we've been observing what others had to say and gathered all the secondary information into one report to gain a deeper understanding of the post lockdown world. Hopefully this report helps you to find inspiration yourself. Make sure to take some time off and enjoy it with a glass of wine, or two.



report structure

the new world after the lockdown

changing consumer behaviour

3 emerging tensions

10 emerging trends

brand reset

references

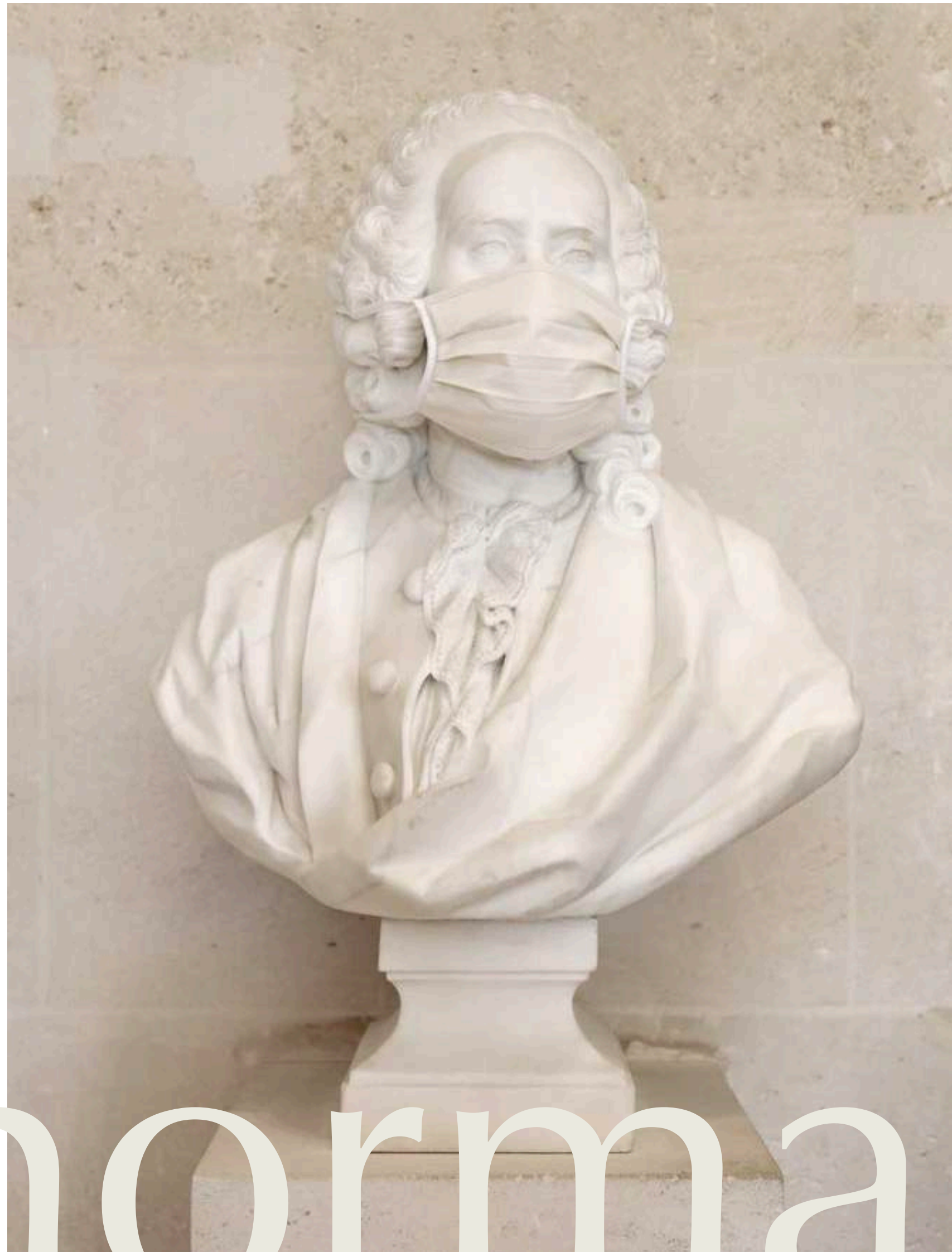
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Let's get into it!

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The new world after the lockdown





The new world

The global lockdown has given us time to reflect, to reprioritise our values and to be grateful for the life we have. While some still argue that life will go back to normal, others believe that our attitudes and behaviours will shift dramatically. From the importance of community and supporting local enterprises to the need for better public health regulations to protecting future generations, now is the time for brands to address and fight for these matters. There are already many theories and predictions about “the new normal” scenario buzzing around, some seem more plausible than others. We’ve witnessed cultural tensions and trends emerging in the last couple years with Covid-19 accelerating its development. It is safe to say that the year 2020 will go down in the history books. With a virus that spread all over the world, forcing us to stay at home, brands and leaders have no choice than to adapt and help to work towards a brighter future.

normality 2.0

Changing Consumer Behaviour

How did consumer behaviour change due to the pandemic and how does the future consumer look like?



— Post lockdown report

“If our minds are being fed
by our social feeds, we need
to be careful of what we’re
digesting”

Carla Buzasi

(Managing Director at global trend forecaster WGSN)

We are all in this together

The way people live, the way people buy and the way people think - the pandemic has fundamentally changed our behaviour in many different ways. Covid-19 formed new habits which made us rethink our value system, taking us back to the roots and making sure we are surrounded by the people who truly matter to us.

Consumer attitudes towards the crisis are varying in many different ways. Some feel anxious, worried and stressed, responding with panic-buying of toilet paper. Others do not react at all, staying calm, remain indifferent and at the extreme, ignoring recommendations and rules from the government and health organisation.

The need for brands to understand how their customers behave, feel and develop is now crucial more than ever. One size fits all marketing does not work anymore and must be replaced by personalised marketing strategies for individual consumer profiles, keeping in mind their desired needs and wants.

“This pandemic has helped me realise that life is too short. We need to value each day to the fullest and make the most of each day we are living.”

Jacqueline Fernandez
(Sri Lankan actress and model)

VALUE

Carpe diem attitude

The pandemic emphasised that our time on this planet is limited, reinforcing the need to show appreciation for those around us and flirting with the pleasure of just being because who knows what is going to happen tomorrow.



So, let's meet the future consumers 2022 and their changing sentiments!

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- Identified sentiments and personas by [WGSN](#)

Consumer sentiments



Fear

No surprise that fear is a present sentiment when scrolling through the daily news feed, being bombarded with critical health updates, political uncertainty and environmental issues. Moreover, individuals start to fear what impact the pandemic will have on their personal life, their families and friends, and the society.



Desynchronisation

Especially during the lockdown period, people craved stability and a replacement for their daily routine. However, the opposite is happening and the nine-to-five work schedule is less dominant. Due to the lack of daily interactions, communities split and individuals become even more independent and flexible.



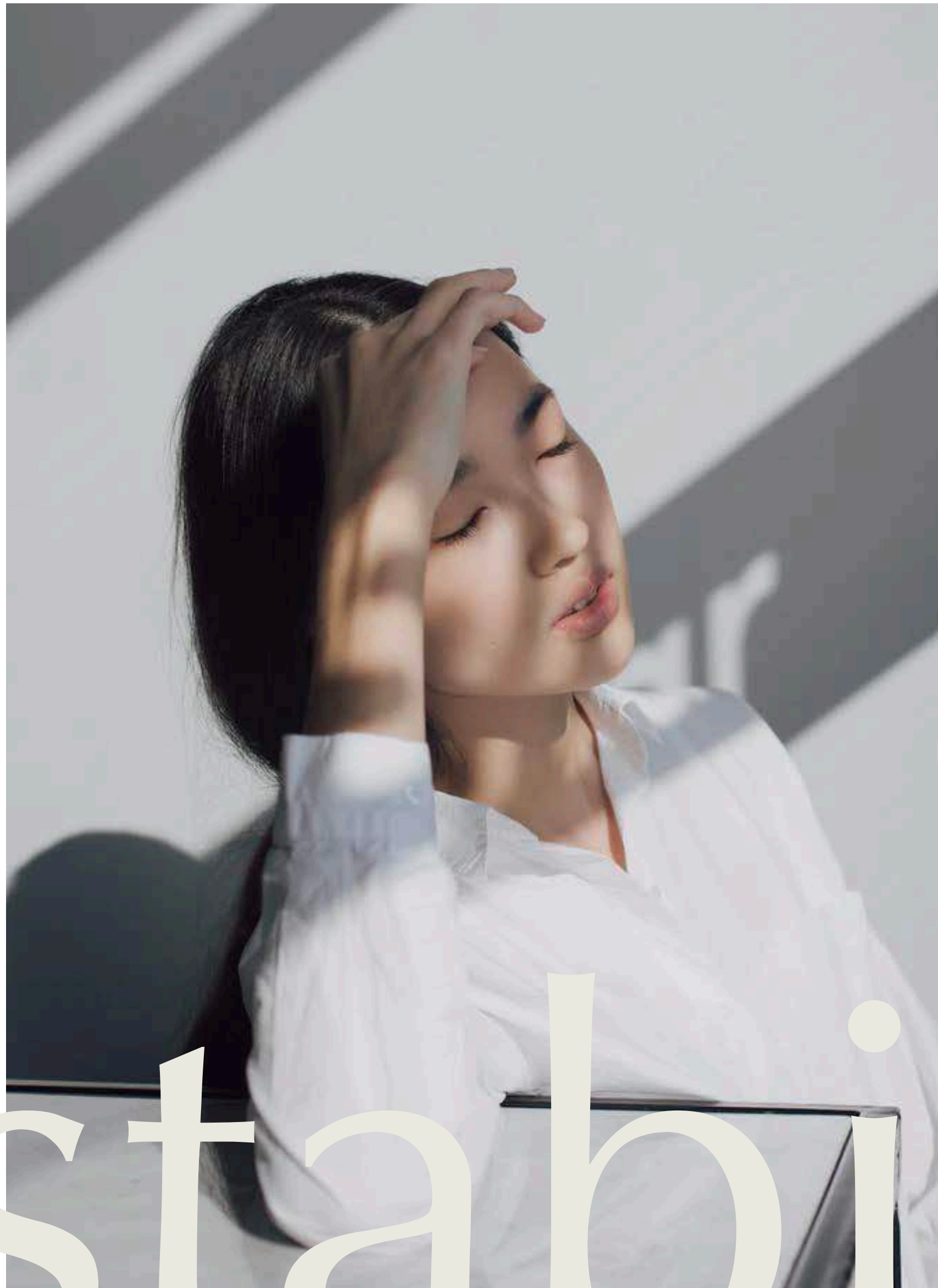
Radical Optimism

In times of uncertainty, it seems that society lacks hope and is more pessimistic, focused on catastrophes. However, the pandemic gave us hope that other big concerns like climate change can be reduced. Radical optimism replaces negative thoughts making us remember that there is still good in the world.



Conscious Resilience

There is an emerging trend around building resilience. Being capable to recover and adapt well in difficult, ever changing times becomes a new objective. However, people still need to be conscious and give themselves the space and dedication to accept and feel their emotions, no matter if these are negative or positive.¹



Consumer
Profile 1

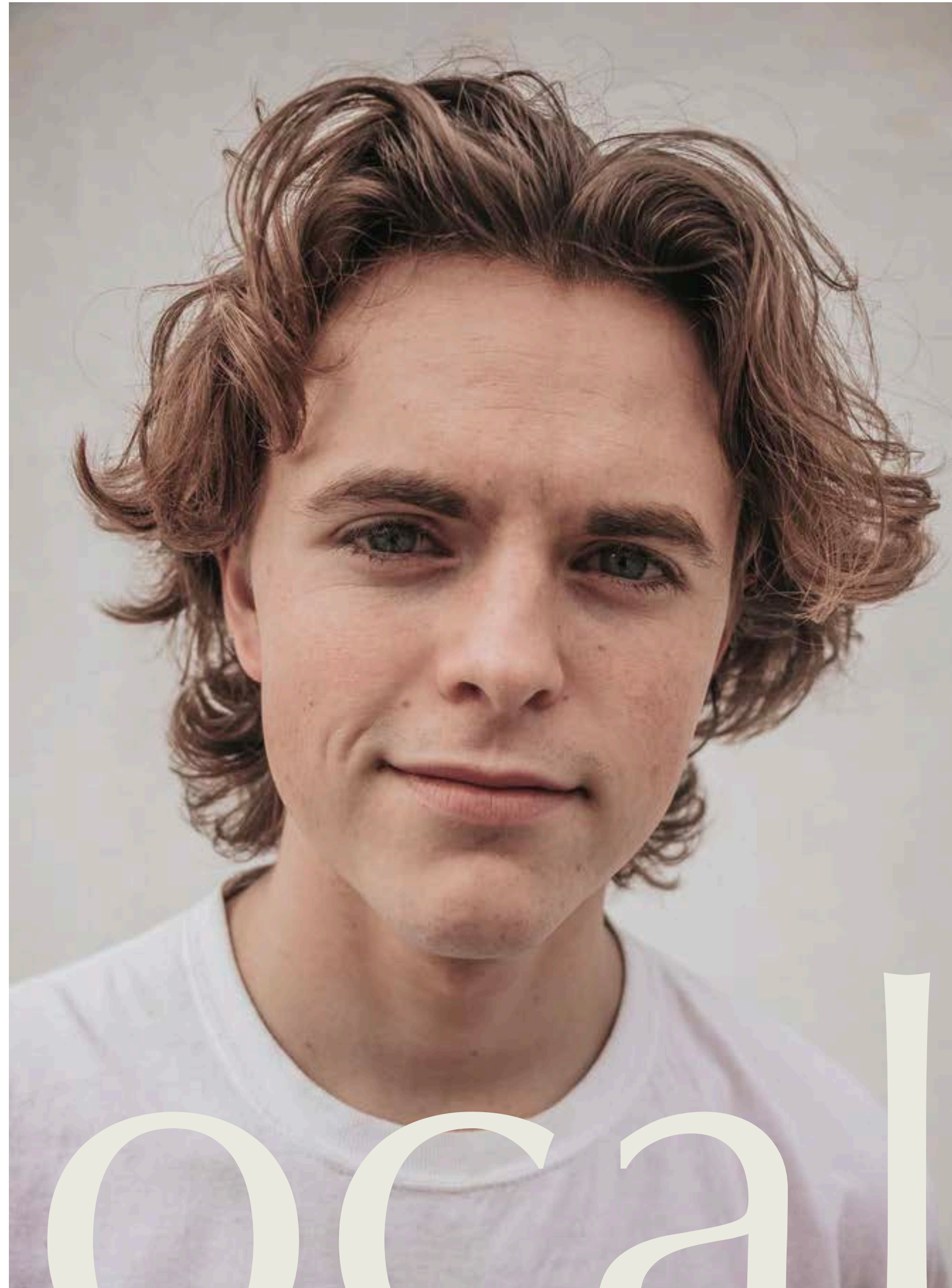
The Stabilisers

Stability is the priority in all parts of their lives and a reaction towards desynchronisation, fear and uncertainty. The Stabilisers are turning their back to the cult of productivity and dive into a new reality of radical acceptance. Making sure to avoid symptoms of burnout, optimisation and self-improvement is booming in all parts of their lives.

Strategy

Stabilisers, by nature, feel overwhelmed. Make sure to create a shopping experience that allows them to breathe, providing a space to escape stress and making them feeling calm.²

stability



Consumer
Profile 2

The Settlers

The Settlers aim to globally redefine the nine-to-five, five days per week work cycle. Their goal is to settle in local communities but without having to sacrifice an outstanding career. Especially in 2019, workism hit its peak with over-hours, less sleep and too much coffee.

Strategy

Invest in local shops to fulfil consumer needs with exclusive and sustainable products. Another way to implement this is through partnerships with social commerce platforms. Start small and keep an eye on what is working best for your product.³

localism



Consumer
Profile 3

The New Optimists

The New Optimists - ranging from Gen z to Boomers - have the desire to live a life full of joy. This broad demographic persona profile is looking for an accurate portrayal for all, celebrating all ages in a culture that is obsessed with the youngest generation.

Strategy

Instead of visual stereotypes, products or services should focus on meeting consumers lifestyle. Be open-minded and enjoy talking to a cohort, both young and old, that celebrates life. Through livestream experiences, brands can focus on interacting with their consumers, keeping up the conversation.⁴

optimism

3 emerging tensions

Due to Covid-19, new tensions between our desires and the status quo we are living in started to appear. Within this new reality, it is important for brands to express their uniqueness that helps them to connect with consumers. Now and more than ever, brands can use this opportunity to differentiate themselves, bringing their purpose to life in a more meaningful way. The first step is to understand the new emerging tensions in order to relate with consumer needs on a deeper level.

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Pressure Stress

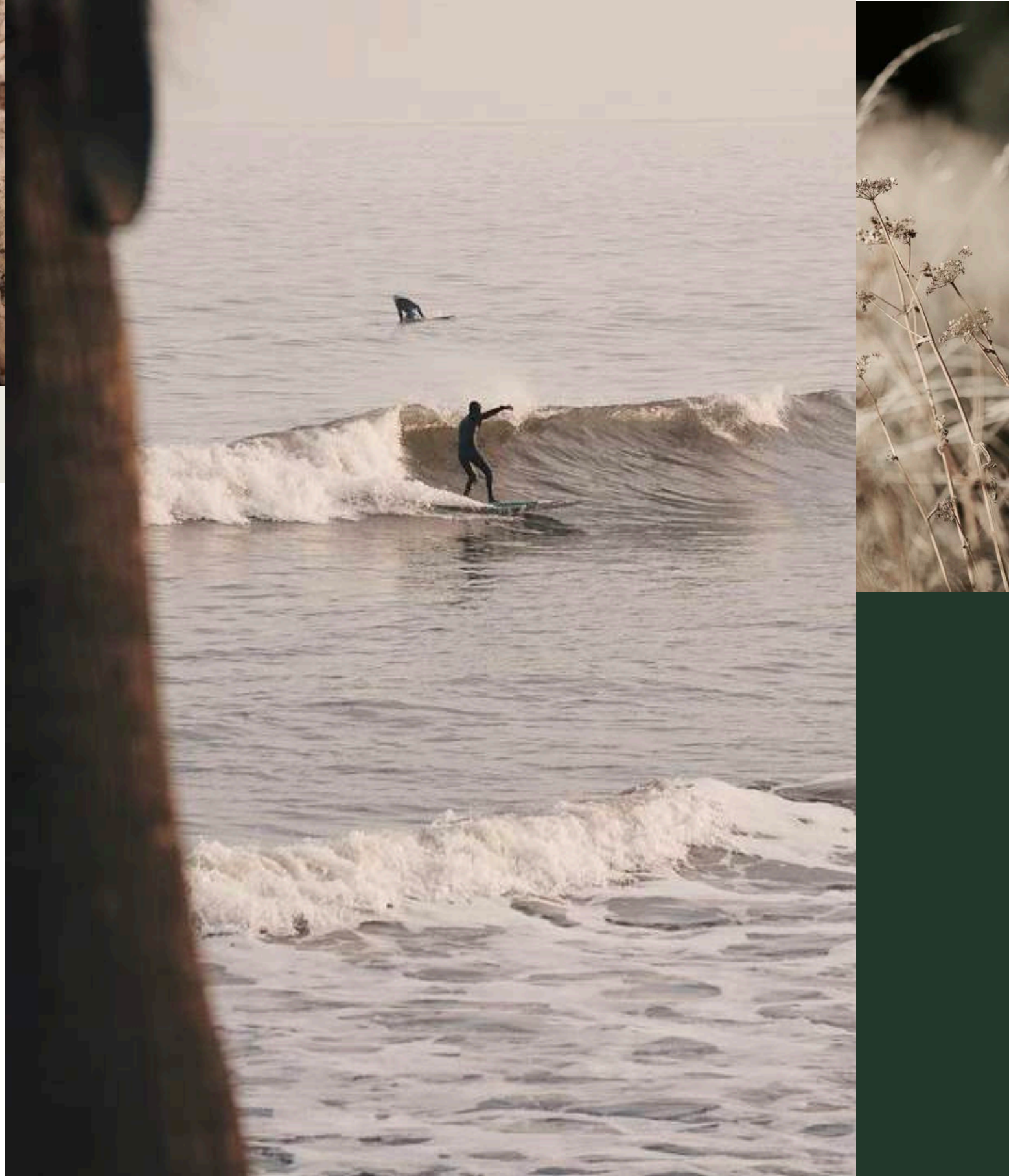
Tension

/n ['ten(t)-shən]

Inner striving, unrest, or imbalance that comes with physiological indication of emotions such as fear or anxiety.⁵

Recognising the underlying human tension and addressing it is part of a brand's journey.

Tension 1



The universal human need to move on and make progress has been challenged due to lockdown. Daily activities we used to rely on to fill our productivity gap have been unwillingly switched off. Covid-19 forced us to 're-define' our understanding of success. Life can not carry on the pace it used to be and capitalism, progress and production, are now fighting against well-being, slow living and freedom.

We all need to dig deep and re-define how success and fulfilment really looks like. Traveling back in time to old concepts of success, we start to remember the simple way of living, realising that we can be very happy with very little. It's about finding a way to live best of both worlds where we make progress but not at the expense of our well-being. No wonder that people look for Lisbon as the perfect destination for work-life-balance where freedom and progress are becoming friends.⁶

Progress shift

HUMAN TENSION

The desire to make progress but not at the expense of our well-being



OPPORTUNITY

'Re-define' the meaning of success

When living in difficult times, we all start to pull on one single string, strengthening our communities. However, the reality of Covid-19 is frightening. Those who truly suffer from the consequences of the pandemic are more likely to come from poorer demographics or ethnic minorities. Many feel uncomfortable with their privilege to stay at home and be safe, while key workers make big sacrifices to support the rest of society. We feel the desire to help our community, yet we struggle with taking care of ourselves. Our resilience has showed that support doesn't have to come through financial ways and that simple acts of generosity go a long way.⁷



Tension 2

20

Community shift

HUMAN TENSION

To support the community while needing
the support yourself



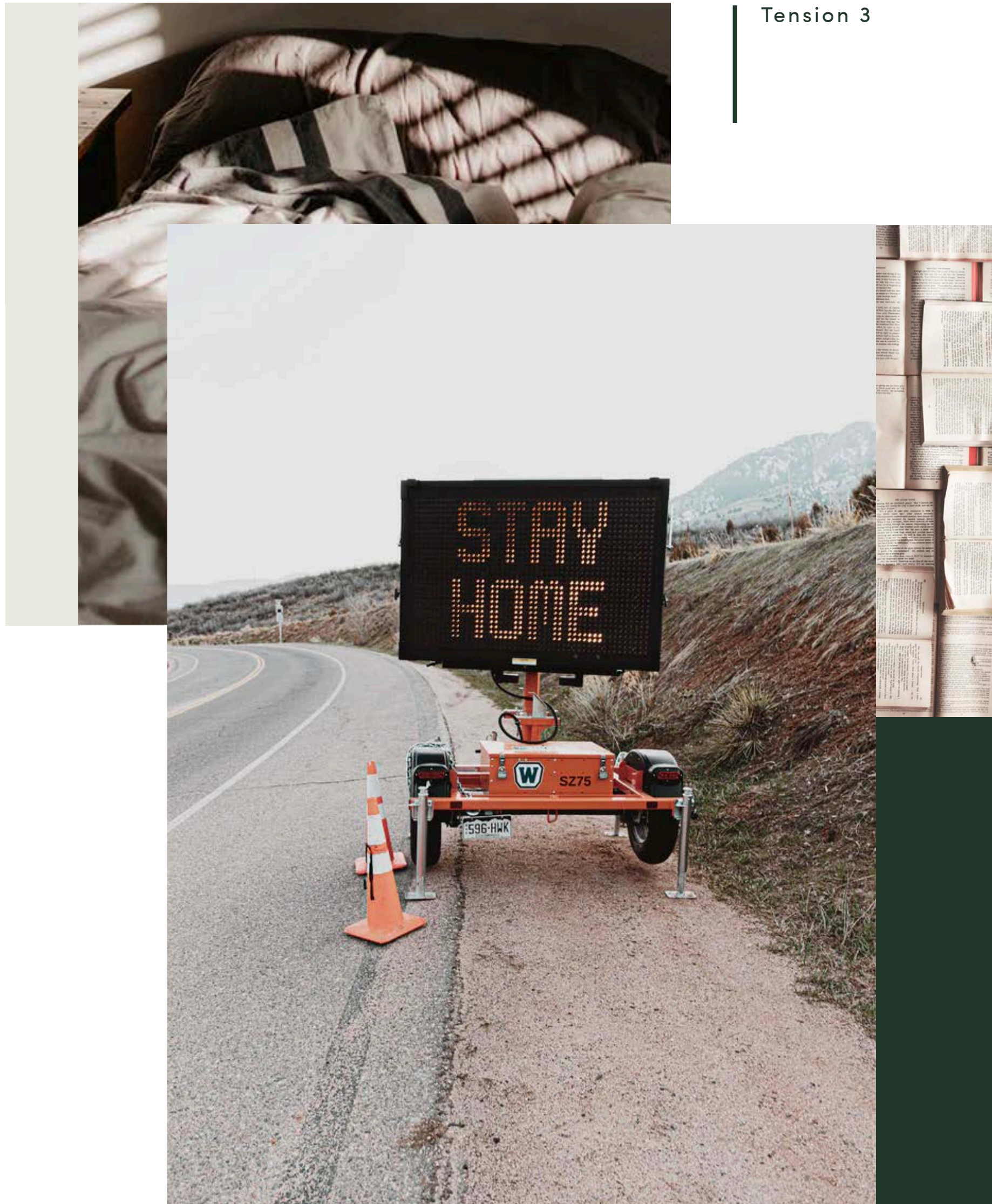
OPPORTUNITY

Hold communities together
in uncertain times



Thank you key workers

Tension 3



Life in quarantine can be challenging, especially for extroverts who fill up their energy levels from socialising. Lockdown forces us to explore the introvert mode because real human contact is mostly taking place through a screen. Since recurring lockdowns might become the new reality, we need to find new ways that work best for us to nourish our soul with social contact.

Different personality types are being challenged in different ways, each of their own finding the right balance. Introverts are now even more enjoying activities such as drawing, baking or reading, whereas extroverts are being creative and finding new ways to socialise from a distance.⁸

We saw brands jumping on the IG live, but don't do it for the sake of doing it. It has to be authentic and add value to the community.

The New Socialising

HUMAN TENSION

The innate need for physical human contact while social distancing



OPPORTUNITY

Find new ways to socialise and remain connected even from afar

10 emerging trends

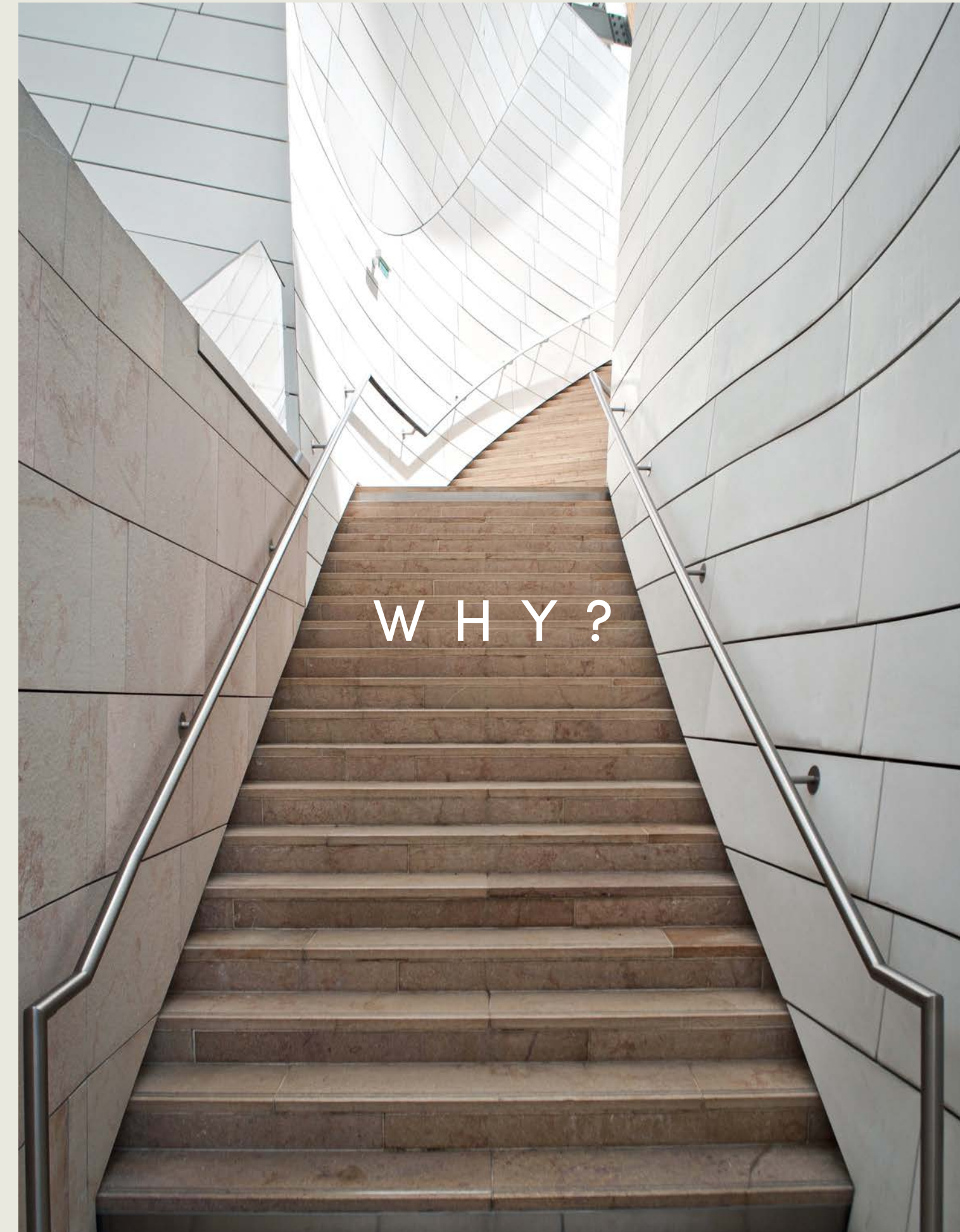
We have an array of sources that we rely on for these insights and we've narrowed down what we thought seemed relevant to our community. Here are 10 trends emerging in the last couple years with Covid-19 accelerating its development:

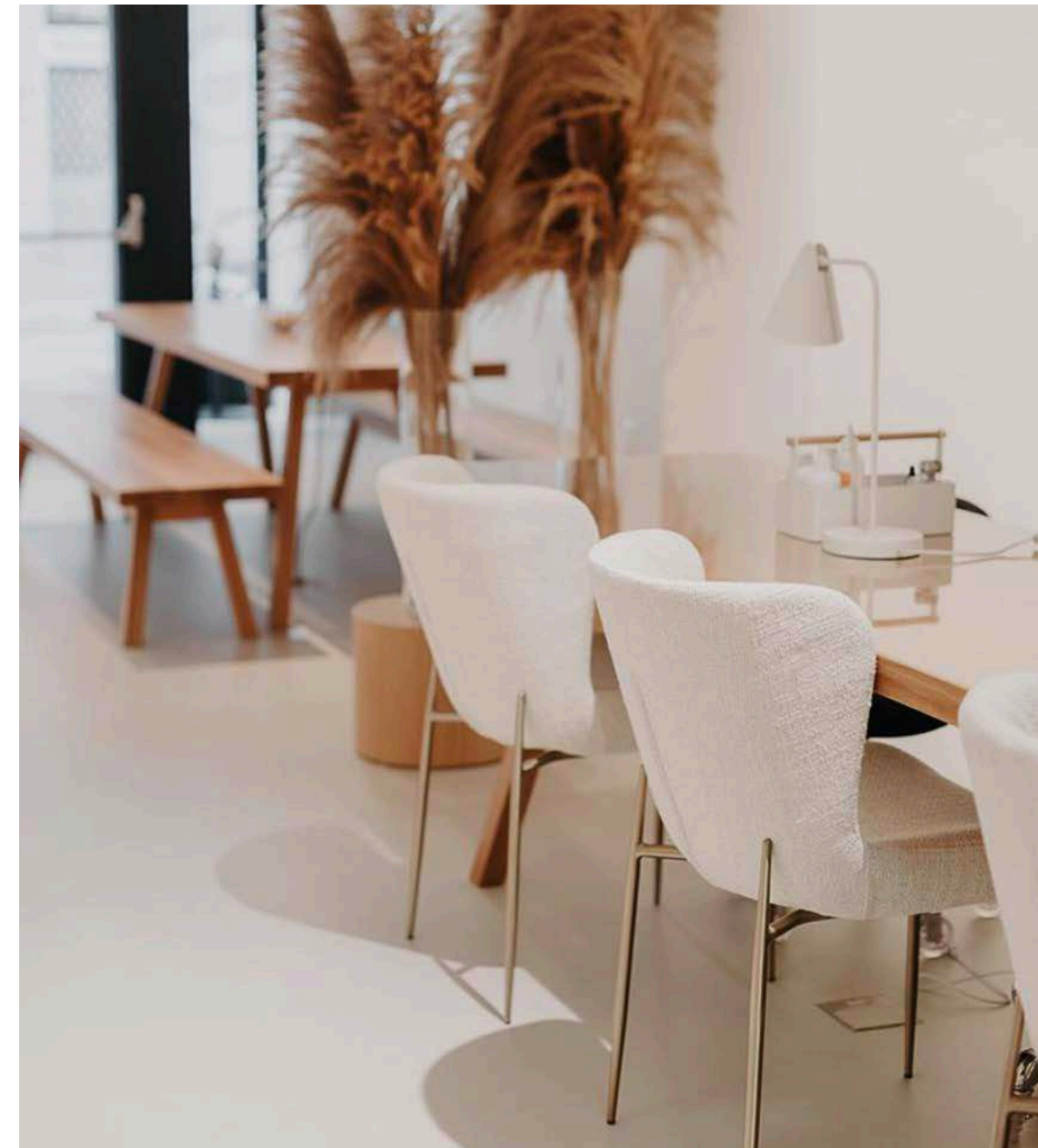


1

Purpose Economy

The economic security we - or at least most of us - had at the beginning of the year has been stripped away from underneath us. As a result, we are now much more careful how we spend our time and money, focusing around purposeful living and on things/experiences/services that add joy into our daily lives. We desire a deeper, emotional bond with brands that we share the same values with. The rise of purpose links to Maslow's well-known hierarchy of needs.⁹ His model presents how individual or society needs move up the pyramid from physiological (e.g. food or shelter) to love and belonging, to esteem and self-actualisation. While (mostly) the privileged part in our society has been focused on self-actualisation prior Covid-19, we are now finding ourselves back to the basics.





Best practice trend no 1

B a b e t o w n

Babetown is the “happy place for every kind of babe” – whether you visit their store in Vienna or buy the products online. It’s more than just a salon where you get your nails and eyebrows done. The whole concept, created by Julia and Kathi, equals a beach day where relaxing and socialising goes hand in hand. It’s a space to hang out with family or friends, treat yourself and have a cup of coffee in the morning and a glass of rosé in the evening – both, preferably. A place, that sets your mind free and just makes every woman feel good.¹⁰

2

Meaning seekers

As all of us realised, due to the pandemic, time is precious. As a consequence, we are much more inquisitive with ourselves, delving deep to find meaning from the world we live in. We are taking a step back, and disconnecting from our constantly connected world so that we can embrace being present and enjoy the moment. More than ever, we will take care of our beloved ones and nourish relationships through home-cooked meals and intimate conversations. We will transform our homes into a personal mecca, where we can shelter ourselves from the realities of the world and fantasise about our dreams. Taking cues from nature, organic shapes, soft textiles and warm tones will help us embrace this home-staying - a.k.a. Cocooning - lifestyle.



Best practice
trend no 2

Nine O Five

#stayathome
#bakeathome



Nine O Five is the pizza and wine place to be in Germany. Instead of closing down the restaurant during lockdown, they offered its customers something more meaningful - a kit for self-made pizza to enjoy with family and friends at home.¹¹

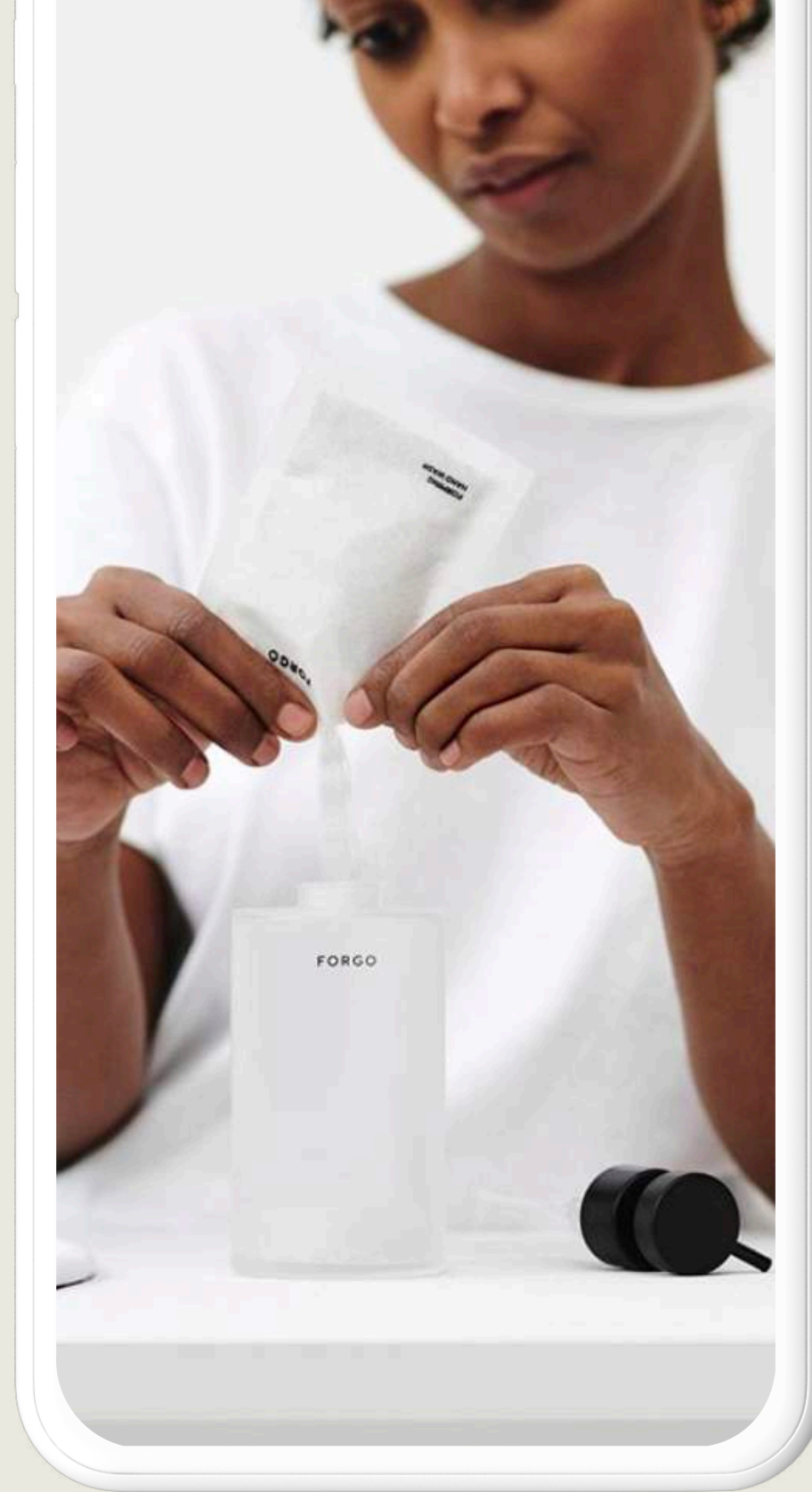
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Conscious consumption



As soon as Asian countries emerged from the first lockdown, we witnessed wealthy shoppers picking up where they left off - splurging, a.k.a. “revenge shopping”. For most of us, this won’t be the case and how could it? As a consequence of economy stillstand, many of us were affected with a drastic drop in our earnings or even faced job losses which means that we can’t simply go back to life as usual.

We believe the new consumer will go back to basics, shifting from splurging on non-essential goods and services to preserving essentials – and even making them last longer. This new trend highlights that consumers are becoming increasingly aware of the impact of their purchases on the environment, their health and life in general. With a more conscious mindset, they will play devil’s advocate with themselves and pose the million dollar question “do I really need this?”.



Doing better with less. That is what Swedish-based FORGO sets out to do. With the world watching out for plastic waste and questioning the traditional packaging more and more each day, they started a refillable soap concept that sells its soap in powdered form.

FORGO

Best practice trend no 3

Customers can just add water and shake the bottle to create the soap. Their concept is eliminating single use plastic and reduces the carbon footprint of shipping water.¹²



4

Sense of Collectivism

As COVID-19 reached its peak, we noticed the world assemble on a deeper level from a distance. Across all industries, people started to adopt a collectivist mindset and worked together to fight the virus. Whether this meant going grocery shopping for our vulnerable beloved ones, final year medicine students helping in overwhelmed hospitals or fitness influencers posting free content on their social media platform, we recognised that “we” goes further than “me” mentality.





Best practice
trend no 4

Stykka is a Danish brand set to become a part of a journey towards the digitalisation of furniture design and manufacturing.

Stykka

With the urgent demand to find ways to set up workstations from home brought by the pandemic, they announced the release of the StayTheF***Home Desk, made from cardboard and super easy to built (less than 10 minutes!).¹³



collectivism

5

Adapt or die

The global impact of the virus led to businesses - from independent business owners to large corporates - setting aside their profit and prioritising social responsibility. Unconventional brand actions took place in order to support the health facilities. Luxury conglomerates for example switched from producing perfumes to hand sanitisers and we saw

tech giants Apple and Google partnering up for a greater cause. Brands that have contributed in a positive way to Covid-19 are the new 'heroes', whereas those who didn't take any actions were referred to as 'zeros'.¹⁴ Such was the case for billion dollar brands who tried to run away from not paying their rent on its shops (you know who we're talking about...).





Best practice
trend no 5

Christy Dawn

In pursuit of honouring mother earth, Christy Dawn is a sustainable clothing line that uses leftover fabric and organic cotton for all of its designs.

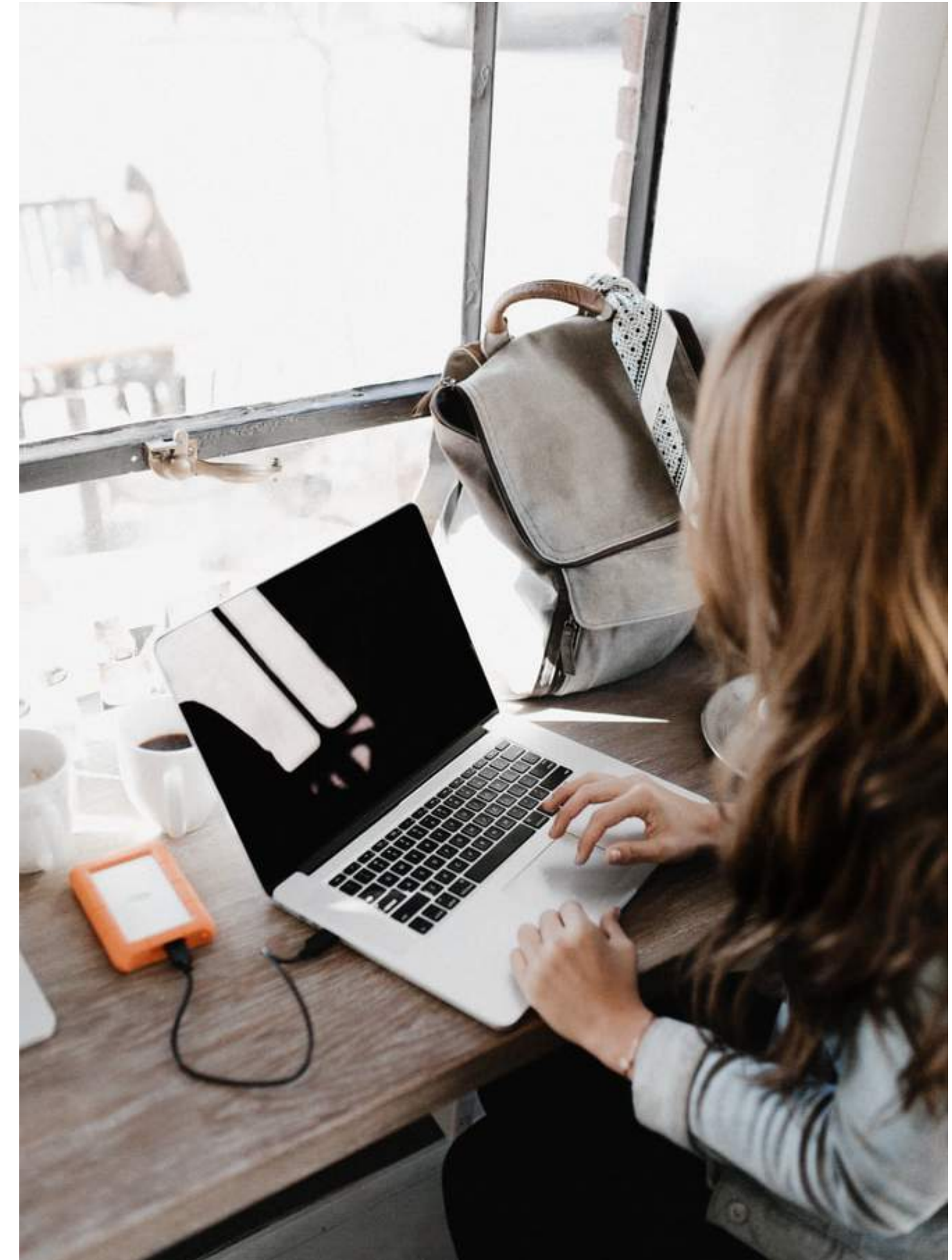
Due to the pandemic, Christy Dawn started to craft sustainable masks that are non-medical grade and made of 100% deadstock washable cotton. For each order, five masks get send to the customer while the other five are given to those in need.¹⁵



6

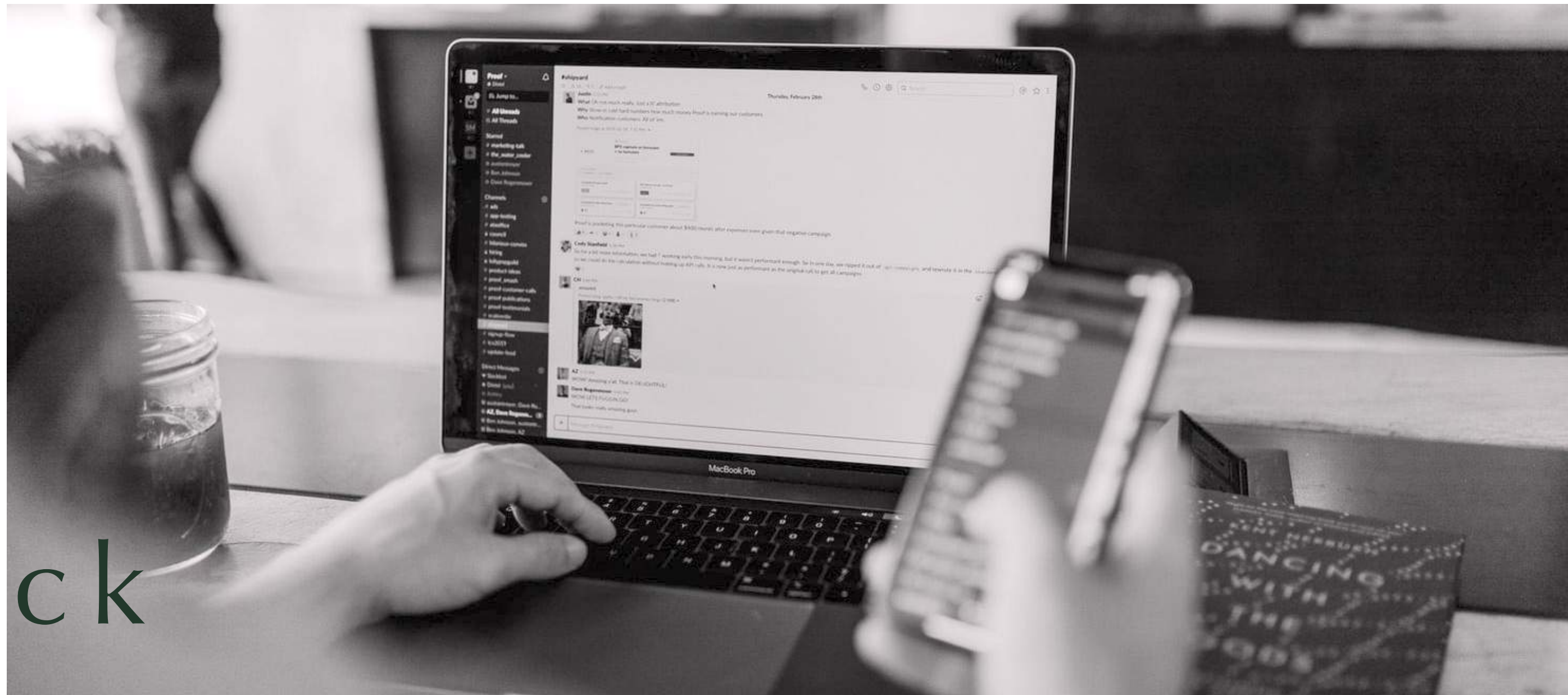
Remote Productivity

Starting with the pandemic, the taboo of working from home unwillingly took a 180 degree turn. During the time of lockdown, we were able to gain the trust and freedom of employers, proving that the pros can outweigh the cons. We embrace technology and realised that there are benefits from working remote as well. This poses an opportunity for businesses to consider the role of their office spaces and whether that can save by downsizing, while at the same time giving employees the freedom to balance out their work and life cycle. With this new working world that is rooted in technological connectivity, people are able to choose where they live based on their wants, no matter where they work. We can expect The Settlers moving away even more from hectic urban cities, and to be closer to nature.



Best practice
trend no 6

Slack



With the premise of being "on a mission to make your working life simpler, more pleasant, and more productive", Slack successfully managed to combine an intuitive UI with both group and person-to-person messaging. Being perceived as a cool, edgy brand, everyone seems to be on Slack and people actually feel very passionate about it. Designers love it because it's visually appealing and yet functional, Developers love it because of the integration tools, APIs and partnership with big brands and, well, everyone else seems to really dig Slackbot, the helpful bot that guides you through the platform. Slack for sure took our remote productivity to the next level!¹⁶

7

Digital Communities



In the last couple of years, we already saw the evolution of social media. Quarantine and social distancing contributed to this journey and new digital spaces started to fulfil human connection in the absence of physical contact. As public venues have strict regulations and clubs are still no longer an option for socialising, people are using the benefits of digital spaces and social platforms. In the need for communication, we are finding new solutions, diving into the digital sphere and practising our favourite activities online - from doing a yoga class, partaking in a vernissage or having a virtual drink at our favourite bar.

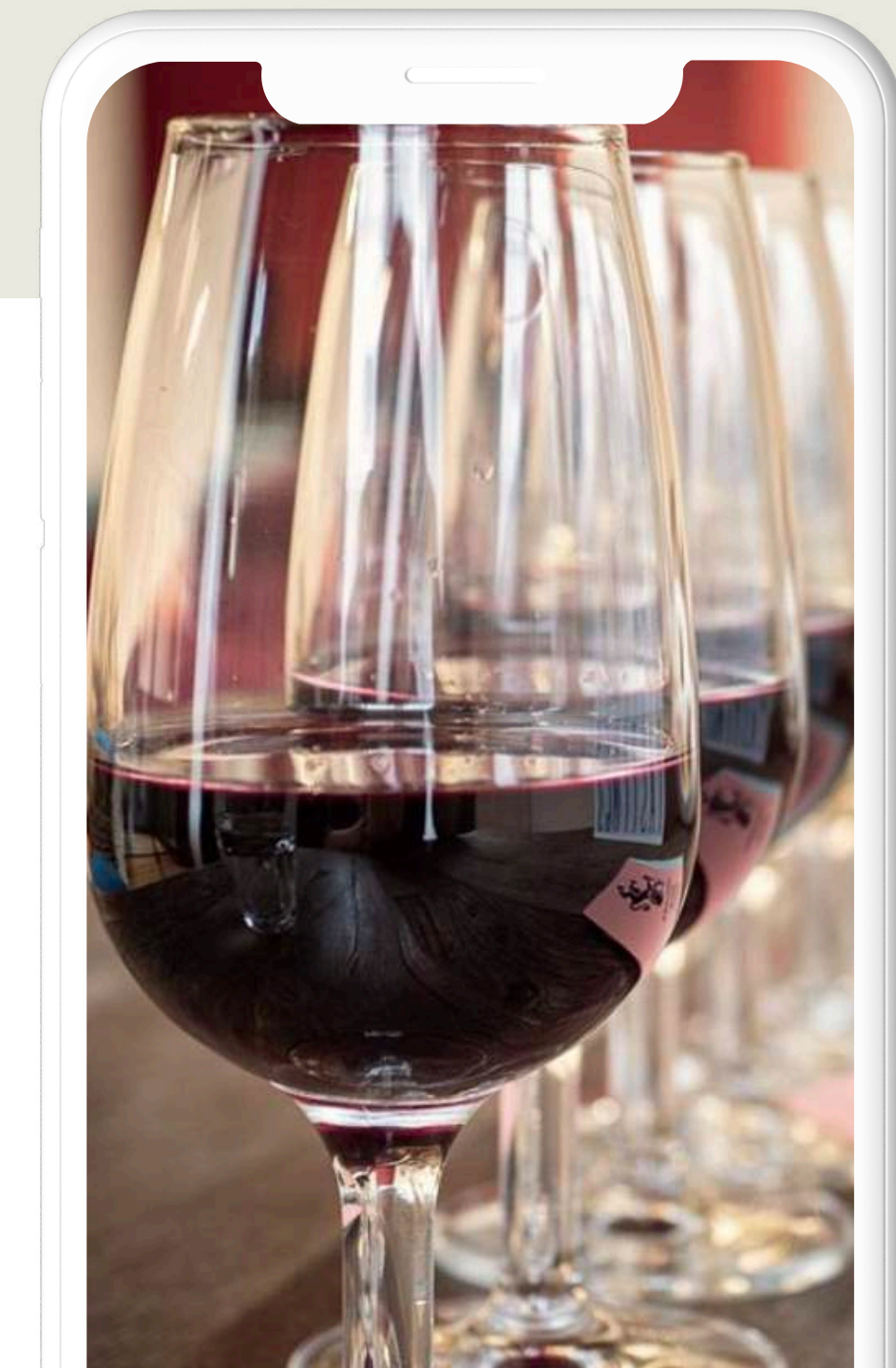


As many of us were seeking a glass of something cheerful during lockdown, Caroline Conner was there to help us out. The Lyon-based American-British sommelier runs online virtual wine tasting sessions, adding her own authentic taste to it.

Wine Dine Caroline

Best practice trend no 7

Her sessions are easy-going, taking the intimidation factor out of wine tasting and making it accessible for every wine lover all over the world. ¹⁷



8

Health Business

COVID-19 presented us the dark side to our healthcare systems and worker rights. Especially right now, we see an increasing focus on health - whether it is physically or mentality. With the virus spreading, the advice from the government and healthcare to “wash your hands” became louder and louder. During lockdown, we realised who actually has an impact in times of crisis: The blue-collar healthcare and grocery store workers. Right in front of our eyes, we saw the lack of workers protection and the need for change. Brands need to play the caregiving role and make it as their priority to support the health for consumers and employees. At the end of the day, pursuing a “healthy strategy” will be the major differentiator in the future.¹⁸



Best practice
trend no 8

Twitter

Twitter was one of the first companies starting to work from home due to the pandemic, yet, they will for sure not be the first ones returning back to offices. As they keep to protect the health and safety of its employees as their top priority, everyone can decide on its own when and if they would like to return. Additionally, Twitter is setting a great example by helping its “Tweeps” arranging their home offices, paying equipment, such as desks, chairs, and ergonomic chair cushions.¹⁹



9

Hyper Localism

You'd assume a lockdown inspires people to travel and be free as soon as possible. In reality though, the opposite is happening. Living in times of uncertainty, people are scared to leave their home, a place where they feel the most self and secure. As countries allowed their shops and restaurant to re-open again, not every owner simply had the financial means to stay alive. For richer countries like Germany, the government has extended a lending hand to the various businesses as a way to keep the economy moving, but that's not necessarily the case for a lot of other countries. Until now, our favourite restaurant might be the next one having to close down. Keeping this in the back of our minds, we feel somehow responsible and desire to support local businesses. Our wish to retreat to familiar places and yet still escape and explore will manifest in our desire to travel inside our own countries as well.



Comida Independente



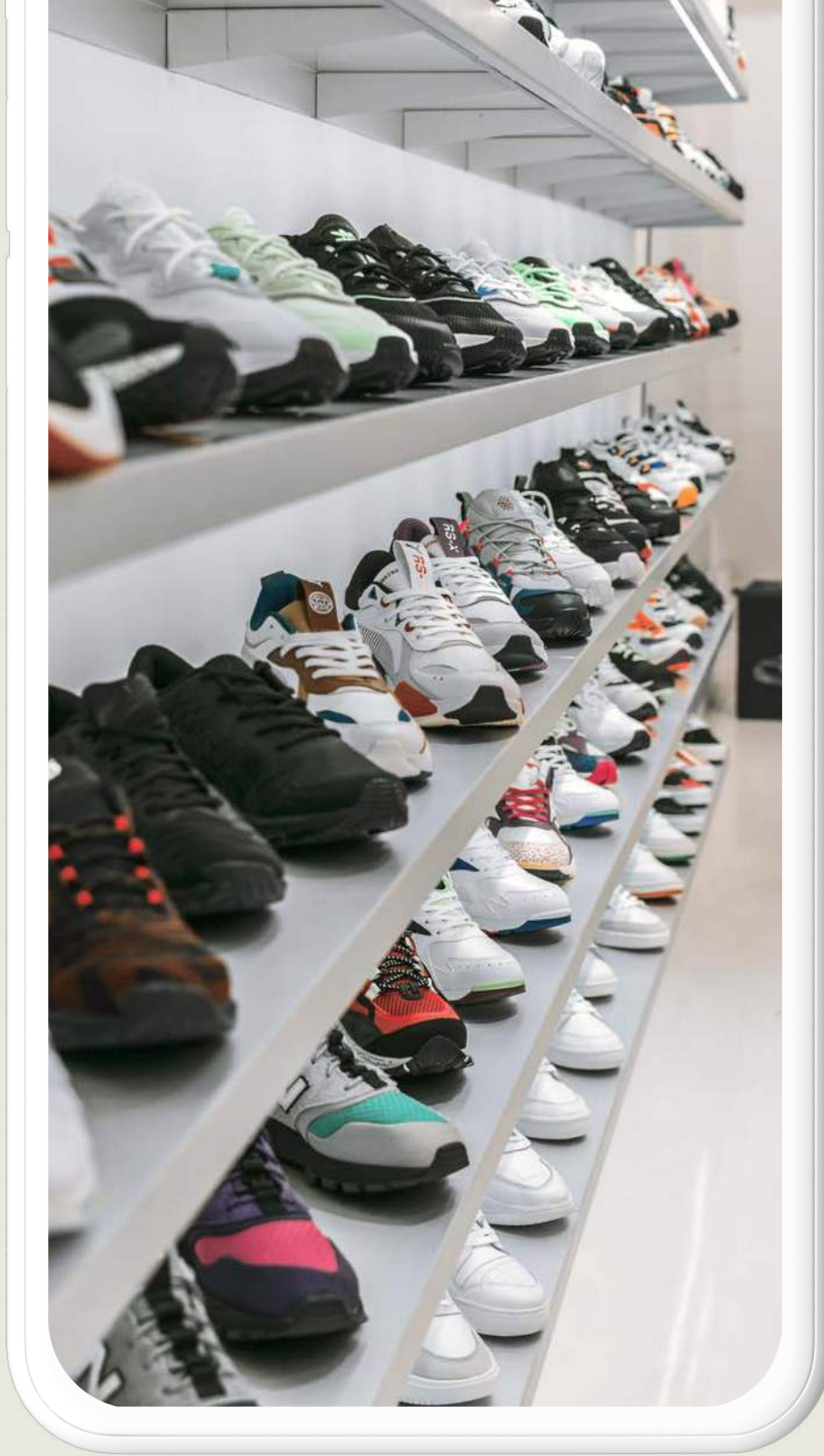
Comida Independente - "Independent Food" - is a place that brings the "farm to table" concept to life by offering high quality products (e.g. wine, cheese, sausages) from small, local producers. During lockdown, they started to sell fresh veggies and fruit baskets every week, either directly delivered to homes in Lisbon or to pick up at their shop, ensuring they do their part in helping small, independent farmers to survive.²⁰

10

Hyper Personalisation



With the unlimited access to online information, customers have the freedom to choose products and services depending on their needs and wants. Instead of listening to brands who tell us why their product or service is great, we now research and experience the brand in our own way because we have the power to easily move from one brand to the other. With that said, a great holistic customer experience, yet personalised has to go hand in hand. Advanced technology gives brands the opportunity to speak directly to us - one-to-one -, making us feel valued and giving back something more personal.

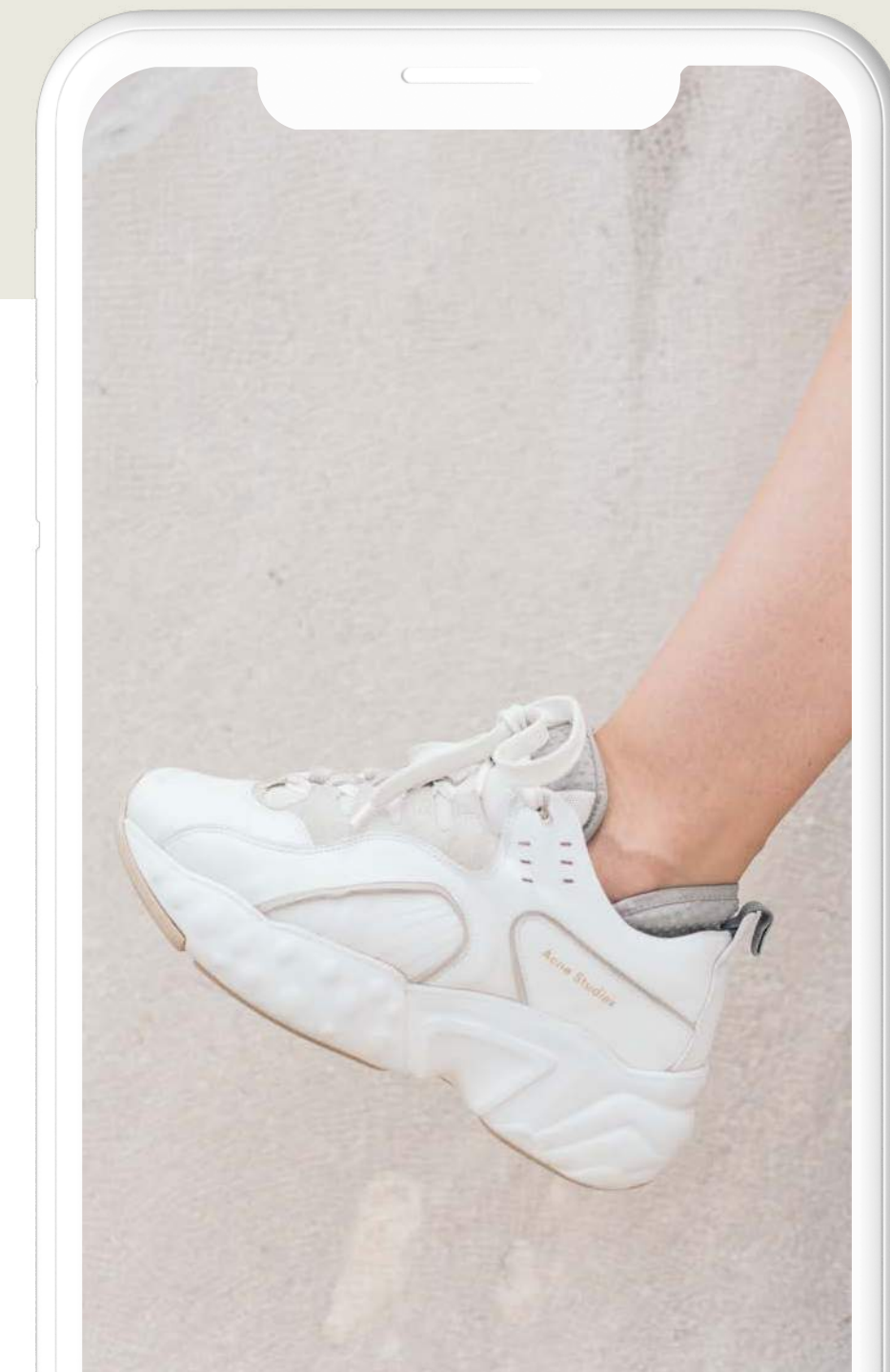


Fashion giant [Farfetch](#) just launched its sneakers “virtual try-on” function in their iOS app. The technology allows users to see how the style of particular selected sneakers will appear on their foot.

Farfetch

Best practice trend no 10

The virtual closet is an opportunity for customers to make sure the sneaker they are about to buy meets their expectations without having to order a pair and then send them back again.



Brand reset

The following presents our five recommendations on how brands can come out stronger from the Covid-19 crisis, taking their business to the next level.

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“Normal life as we knew it has been upended by a global pandemic, laying the foundations for an entirely new normal that will shape the years ahead.”

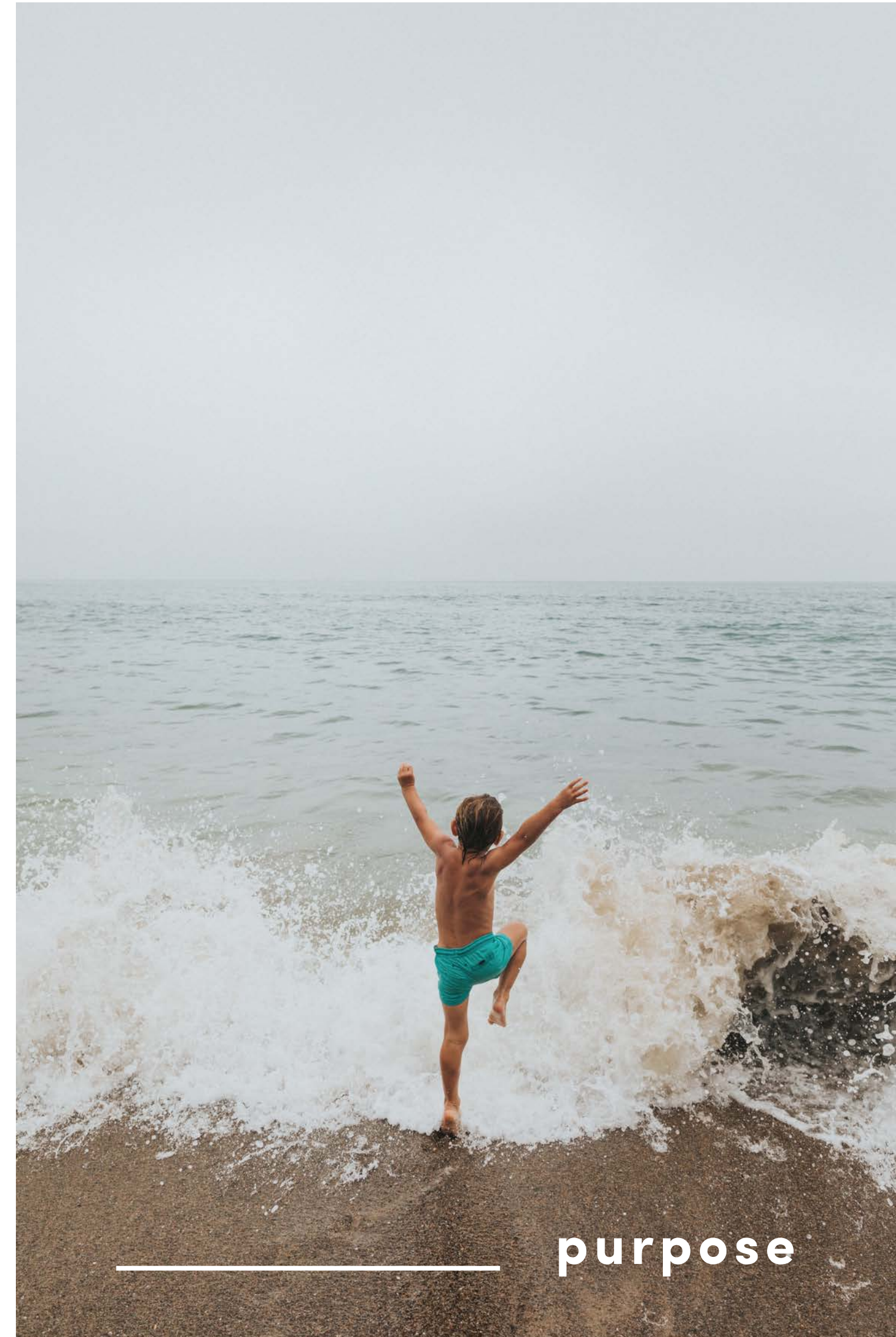
Emma Chiu

(Global Director at Wunderman Thompson Intelligence)

1

Remember the reason why your brand exists

Remember the reason why you get out of bed every morning, because that reason, will guide you through tough times - just like a north star. Having your purpose clearly defined, helps to ensure that the whole team is working towards the same goal and this does wonder to the performance. Because if your employees feel connected and inspired, they will start to care deeply about your business. And as we know, employee satisfaction = productivity = results.





2 Listen and react to changing human needs

Always be aware what is happening in the world around you and become a detective for changing human needs to quickly react. With that said, the act of social listening goes a long way. Unsure what it means? Well, you know those hours we spend scrolling down our social media feeds? Next time you do it, try to understand why people are showcasing certain behaviour. Try to understand whether there's a wider phenomena happening behind. Read the comments posted on your competitor brands. This is the cheapest and most efficient way of getting on board the changing consumer behaviour.

3 Humanise your brand



Brands are not entities. They are relationships, thriving on human characteristics. In the podcast “The Consumer VC”, [Sasha Strauss](#) delves deeper into this topic: “a brand is just a mechanism that you use to bridge a relationship between a product or service and the audience”.²¹ As a consequence we need to ask ourselves how do we want to present ourselves? How do we speak? And how do we behave? All these go beyond a brand's logo. So between one cocktail and another, ask yourself, if my brand was a human, who is it?

4

Embrace the digital without letting go of the physical

We're obsessed with building relationships and during these tough times, we lent a hand to ambitious business owners by sharing some of our secrets through weekly blog posts, posted across our social media channels. As we're equally obsessed with good quality coffee and in an effort to lend a hand to our neighbourhood spot, we've handed out pre-paid coffee tokens, so that our local printer had a reason to do business, our local coffee shop a reason to sell coffee with optimism and everyone else a reason to enjoy a good cup of coffee.





Love your employees and customers

How you treat your employees and customers should be your main driver for success. They make up the base for your business and are highly visible. Make that your number one priority because if you treat them well, they will always be there as your support system - even in rough times. Take the time to know how they are doing and be transparent with what's happening.

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