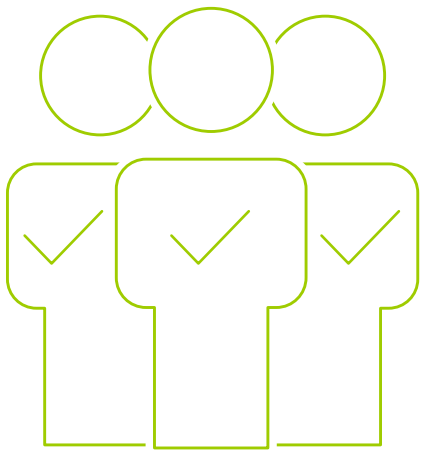




# *the value of brand experiences*

**Creating Connections in an Increasingly Digital World**

*Brand experiences can speak to audiences in ways that resonate and help them connect with your brand.*



**80%**

**of millennials prefer  
face-to-face meetings**

You might expect, with the rise of millennials, that digital interactions would be increasingly preferred — but that's not necessarily true: 80 percent of millennials prefer face-to-face meetings, and they're increasing the number of live experiences they attend per year at a rapid rate, according to Eventbrite's report on millennials and the experience economy.<sup>1</sup>

This preference speaks to the intrinsic human need for connection. As a brand marketer, leveraging face-to-face events and experiential marketing is a way to cut through the digital noise and establish a tangible connection with your target audience. When it comes to powerful marketing, brand experiences can speak to audiences in ways that resonate and help them connect with your brand.

From an industry perspective, we're seeing a massive shift toward live experiences, with Forrester showing that events claim the largest overall revenue stream in B-to-B marketing<sup>2</sup> and Ad Age's *State of the Agency Market* report<sup>3</sup> finding experiential-marketing investments are rising faster than those of media, advertising, and public relations.

So what does all this mean for marketers? Live brand experiences are able to enchant and engage audiences while also driving business results further and faster than other marketing channels. That's why they *must* play a major role in your marketing portfolio.

## How Do Live Brand Experiences Add Value?

Outside of the benefits they provide to marketing audiences, brand experiences offer a lot of value for marketers who are seeking to positively affect business strategy and sales, elevate brand perception, and work smarter — not harder — to achieve their marketing goals.

## Live Experiences Produce Measurable Business Results

When tied to overall business strategy, brand experiences contribute to an organization's goals and, ultimately, to sales. The May 2016 *Experiential Marketing Content Benchmarking Report*<sup>4</sup> notes that more than 77 percent of brands see an ROI of as much as 20:1 from a brand experience, and 12 percent report an even greater ROI.

On the customer side, EventTrack<sup>5</sup> notes that 98 percent of survey respondents said that participation in an event or live experience for a product or service they're interested in increased their inclination to buy. And when you look at the experience-hungry millennials, who are on track to become the largest purchasing market in the U.S., that's a lot of buying power you can apply directly to your bottom line.



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## Live Experiences Give Customers a Personalized Experience

For marketers, live experiences provide a road map to customers' hearts and minds, helping deliver what their customers want, when they want it. Whether connecting brands to customers, employees within an organization, or communities of professionals, experiences make every connection more personal.

That's why it's so important to get to know your audiences — what interests them, what they find valuable, their pain points, and how they gather information. Event technology allows marketers and organizers to track attendee behavior to discover these things — and much more — then use this information to deliver a targeted, personalized experience that helps create affinity and brand loyalty.

## Live Experiences Integrate Well with Online Marketing

One way to personalize a brand experience even more is to tie it in to your online marketing. After all, people no longer connect to a single source for their news, entertainment, and information. Today's consumers live in an omnichannel universe, bouncing from one platform to the next — both digital and analog — and being bombarded with competing messages everywhere they turn.

Ideally, a brand creates a seamless customer journey between online and offline media that supports and amplifies the brand experience. The most successful marketers are working to connect these two powerful channels.

For instance, many people begin by exploring a brand online, then move to a live interaction like attending an event. After the event, marketers can provide more information, offer new opportunities to interact, and continue the engagement online, reinforcing the brand experience and building on its momentum.

## Experience Is the Future of Marketing

Brand experience isn't just an important part of your portfolio — it's fast becoming the new currency of marketing. Making brand experience part of your marketing mix is investing in the attention of your audience — especially millennials.

Between the value it brings to organizations and the value it provides customers, brand experience is a future-proof tactic that amplifies messaging, builds brand loyalty, drives sales, and creates an authentic connection with customers that lasts well beyond just a single event.

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<sup>1</sup> Eventbrite, "Millennials: Fueling the Experience Economy," 2014

<sup>2</sup> Advertising Age, "B2B Marketing Budgets Set to Rise 14% in 2014: Forrester," January 21, 2014

<sup>3</sup> Advertising Age, "State of the Agency Market: What You Need to Know," April 26, 2015

<sup>4</sup> Event Marketing Institute, Experiential Marketing Content Benchmarking Report, May 2016

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.



# *create connections*

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