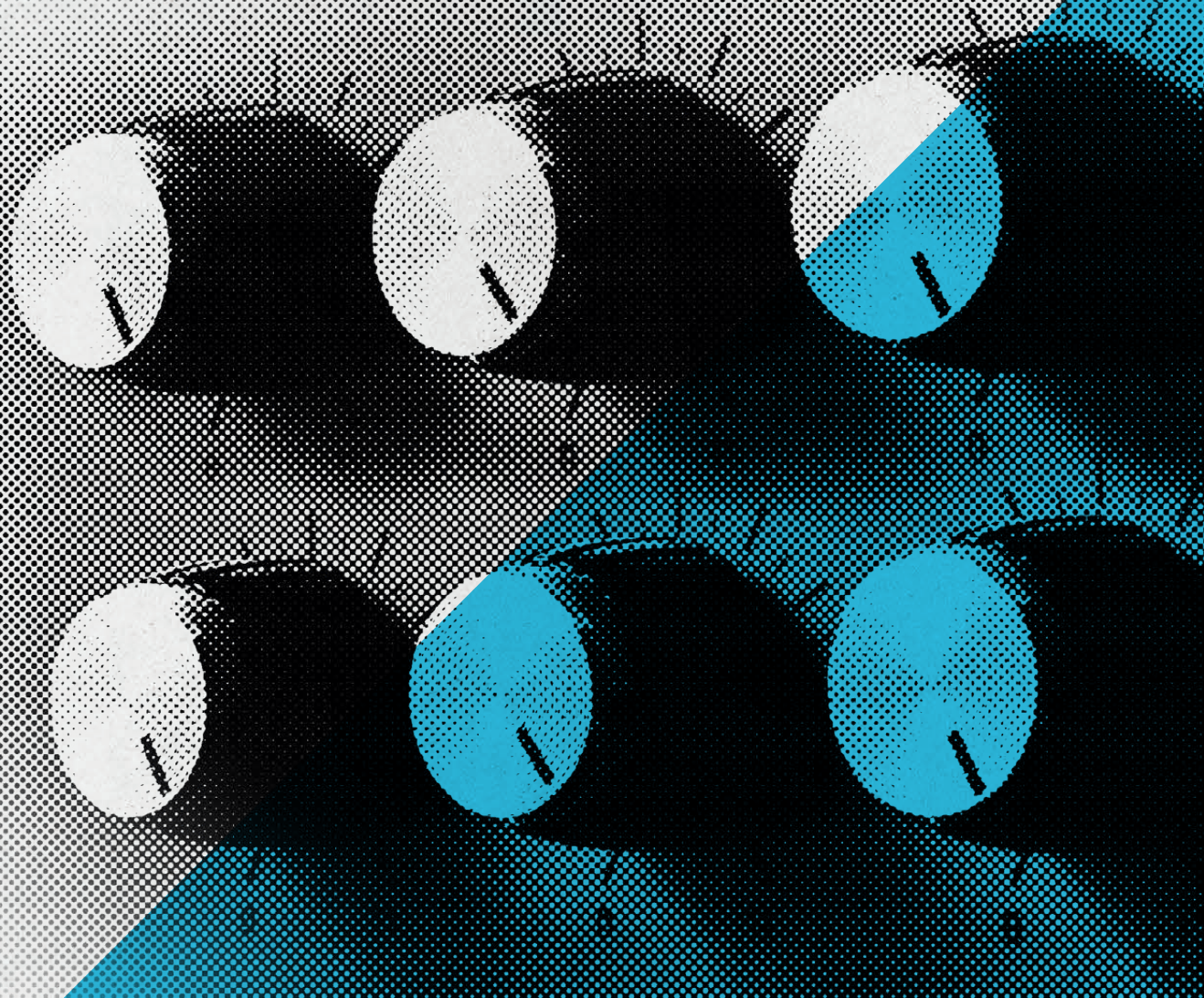


INITIALS

LIVE AMPLIFIED

Why Experiential is essential to your brand's success and authenticity.
And how to get it right.





Introduction from Rachel

We believe Experiential is the most honest communication channel.

"In a world of fake news and curated online profiles, consumers want to have experiences that put them in touch with the real world and raw emotions."

So says Jo Bennett from Camp Bestival / Live Nation, one of the expert partners we talked to for this paper; and I'd like to start by thanking them all for their time and insights.

First and foremost, brands are built on trust: the belief that they'll deliver what they promise and behave with consistency, commitment and responsibility. In recent years, this trust has started to fray. Excessive re-targeting, data abuse, undeclared influencer strategies, hidden product downgrades, tax avoidance – they've all played a part.

To forge a real connection with their audience, brands must behave with conviction and authenticity. They need to come out of hiding and show what they stand for. For me, that's the true power of Experiential. It proves that a brand is willing and eager to meet consumers on equal terms and start a two-way conversation.

Done right, Experiential has unparalleled potential to drive interest and involvement, strengthen or re-shape brand perceptions, and create trust. The problem is... too often, this potential isn't realised.

Initials has been working in this space for more than a decade. We've learned a lot about how to get Experiential right: how to define its exact role and set clear, measurable objectives; how to develop compelling ideas that cut through and provoke precisely the actions required; how to find the right partners to deepen the story and drive reach; and, critically, how to ensure the channel is integral to the overall brand strategy rather than standing in isolation.

We've boiled these learnings down to Six Success Factors that will help your brand get the best out of Experiential. This paper covers the Six Factors in detail. For those of you short of time, there's a quick-read summary on page 6.

I hope you enjoy it. Of course, if there's anything you'd like to discuss further, we'd be delighted to have a chat.

Thanks,

Rachel Bateman
Head of Experiential

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ADAM CLYNE

Adam is the Founder and CEO of Coolr; an agency that uses social media to transform brands inside and out. He is a recognised leader in the digital space – having previously taken two agencies to be Digital Agency of the Year and run social publishing phenomenon LADBible, as their first COO. He is also an expert on hummus.



PAUL DRURY-BRADEY

As Connector of Play at Reuben Feels, Paul works with the team on theatre, dance and narrative moments – creating bespoke stories for clients. Previously spending ten years working for three of the UK's leading culture agencies, immersive storytelling has always been central to his most successful campaigns: working with Diageo, 20th Century Fox and Stella Artois.



JAMIE BELNIKOFF

Jamie heads up 2CV: EXP; 2CV's dedicated research unit that evaluates experiential activity. He has significant experience working with brands in all sectors to evaluate and optimise their experiential activity, maximising ROI. Having worked in market research for over a decade, he has broad cross-sector expertise. He's also a big fan of using behavioural science techniques to go beyond a respondent's stated response to help reveal business-changing insights.



HEATHER ANDREW

Heather is CEO of Neuro-Insight in the UK with a background in marketing and strategy. She originally worked for Rowntree Macintosh (now Nestlé), marketing brands Yorkie and KitKat. Subsequently, Heather moved into consultancy with PWC and OxfordSM, where she ran international marketing and strategy projects. At Neuro-Insight, Heather manages projects for both brand owners and media owners, in order to maximize communication effectiveness within and across different media.



LEANNE JOHNSON

Having worked for Heineken for over 7 years, Leanne brings her experience as Brand Manager on Strongbow to this paper, having been instrumental to the delivery of many stand-out experiential campaigns for the brand.



JO BENNETT

Jo is Senior Brand Partnerships Manager for Camp Bestival, an award-winning festival within the world's leading live entertainment company, Live Nation. A strategic live events specialist with 20 years' experience in the creative development of large-scale events and cultural venues, managing experiential campaigns and building commercial partnerships on behalf of music festivals, agencies and consumer brands.

STRONGBOW
EXPERIENCE



**LIVE
AMPLIFIED,
SUMMARY**



Brands are facing a crisis of trust; and marketing must shoulder a lot of the blame. Consumers feel bombarded by intrusive messages. They worry their personal data is being abused. They sense that many companies are acting selfishly and unscrupulously.

In this climate, **brands must focus obsessively on demonstrating their authenticity.** They must be vitally aware of the role they play in consumers' lives; original in the value they bring, and clear as to their beliefs. They must behave with sincerity and conviction.

Experiential is the most effective channel for proving brand authenticity. It puts a human face on the brand, shows that it 'does' as well as 'says' and builds one-to-one connections.

The benefits ripple well beyond the activation itself; Experiential creates content with meaning, igniting interest across multiple touchpoints.

Precisely because Experiential is such a powerful weapon, it needs to be handled with care. If you're going to do it, you need to do it right.

WE'VE IDENTIFIED SIX FACTORS THAT ARE CRUCIAL FOR EFFECTIVE EXPERIENTIAL:



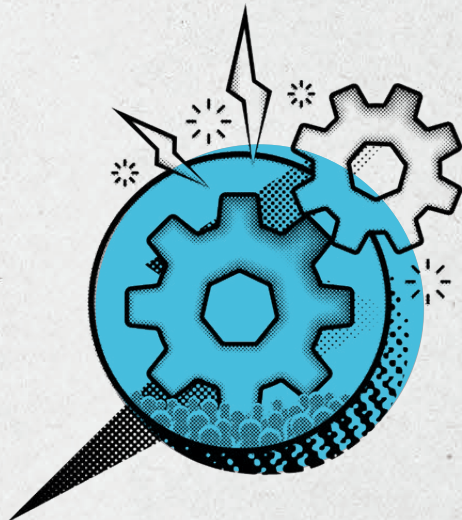
1 LISTEN UP

In Experiential, your brand is entering people's worlds in a direct and highly physical way. If they're to accept you, you need to show you understand their motives and have their best interests at heart. Your behaviour must prove you respect their needs and share their passion.



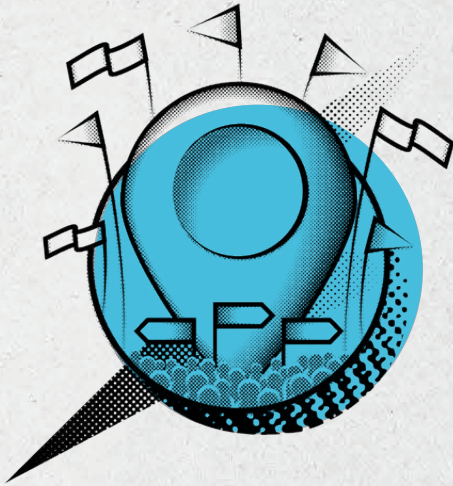
2 ADD TO THE CULTURE

You need to give to get. Be generous in contributing to the surrounding culture, and deliver a service or experience that is highly relevant to time and place. Feed people's desire to discover the new and encourage active participation.



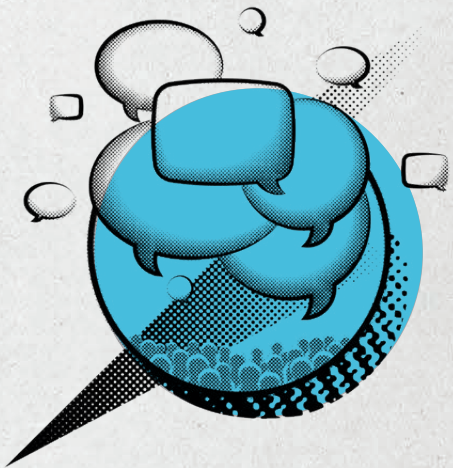
3 BUILD PARTNERSHIPS THAT SPARK

Deep collaboration with event owners and social publishers is critical. Take the time to understand your partners' agendas and trust their insights. Work together to build a compelling creative story that will resonate before, during and after the experience.



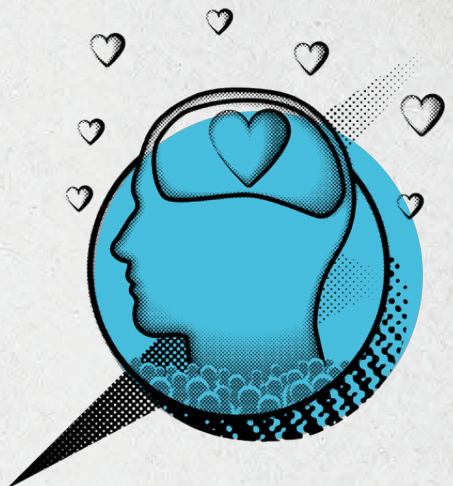
4 KNOW YOUR PLAYGROUND

Brands must not only identify the right place, but the right point within it, if they're to maximise cut-through and consumer response. Once you've found the most relevant places to play, commit over time in order to become an integral part of the experience.



5 TELL A POWERFUL STORY

Consumers want brands to step into the daylight and reveal their true selves. Experiential shows you're willing to stand up and be counted. Capitalise on the time available to create a dynamic, multi-step narrative; and maximise involvement by using proven storytelling techniques.



6 EMBED RICH MEMORIES

Our brains are hard-wired to remember real-world events of high intensity. Design your experience to deliver a series of emotional peaks that build to a climax. Touch all five senses, encourage playful behaviour, and don't be afraid to take people out of their comfort zone.

Experiential has unparalleled power to change people's attitudes and behaviours. To realise its potential, you need these six factors, alongside high-quality insights, a great creative idea and strategic and executional rigour.

BRAND AUTHENTICITY: A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH

BRANDS ARE FACING A CRISIS OF TRUST; AND MUCH OF THE BLAME LIES AT MARKETING'S DOOR.

Consumers feel bombarded by commercial messages, many of them intrusively delivered. They worry their data is being abused. They suspect they're being hood-winked by new techniques like influencer marketing. Fuelled by media coverage, there's a growing sense that bad actors are afoot. High-profile documentaries like *FYRE* add to the flames.

According to research just released by Credos¹, **public favourability towards advertising is at a record low of 25%**. In 1992, the figure was 48%.

Even the most genuine and honest brands are now viewed with scepticism. There is an urgent need for marketers to respond; and Experiential is fundamental to tackling the challenge.

Why? *It allows brands to showcase their authenticity.* This isn't just a nice to have; it's a business imperative. *People are much more likely to buy from brands they feel have genuine integrity.*

What defines an authentic brand?

- It's **original**: it brings something new and different to the market.
- It has **clear and well-articulated beliefs**: it stands for more than just making money.
- It's **passionate** about the role it plays, and works hard not to let customers down.
- It's **honest** in how it talks about itself, and is willing to engage with consumers one-to-one.
- It's **consistent** in how it behaves, and always **acts with genuine conviction**.
- It has a **relevant and engaging story** to tell, and communicates it in powerful ways.

¹ SOURCE: CREDOS, "PUBLIC TRUST IN ADVERTISING", JANUARY 2019





NEWS

fear

economic turn

Oil

perception

with care,

unc

WHY EXPERIENTIAL IS VITAL

According to the 2018 IPA Bellwether Report², *spend on Experiential has risen continuously for the last five years.*

It's now taking a much larger share of brand budgets.

This is partly because *Experiential helps brands grab attention in an 'always-on' media culture.* As Heather from Neuro-Insight says: "We're all receiving more messages from brands. But many of these messages are weak, especially in some forms of social media. Experiential delivers something bigger, brighter, more emphatic".

² SOURCE: IPA BELLWETHER REPORT, Q1 2018



AUTHENTICITY MATTERS





One of the key reasons for the growth in Experiential is that it's the best way for brands to prove they are truly authentic.

IT PUTS A HUMAN FACE ON YOUR BRAND

As a channel, Experiential is open, honest and front-footed. It shows that a brand is willing to come out of the shadows and meet its audience face-to-face. Jamie from 2CV Research talks about how "Experiential brings brands to life; it gives people something they can identify with and relate to".

IT BUILDS ONE-TO-ONE CONNECTIONS

Great Experiential delivers intense and highly personal moments that people feel they're sharing alongside a brand. It takes them away from their screens and back into the real world. For Paul at Reuben Feels, this is why "Experiential forges stronger connections. Letting someone immerse themselves in your story changes their heart as well as their mind."

IT SHOWS YOU WALK THE WALK

Consumers want brands to do as well as say; and 'doing' is at the heart of Experiential. As Leanne from Strongbow points out: "Brands need to have a clear opinion about the role they want to play in people's lives. Experiential lets you express your purpose in very tangible and compelling ways".

IT CREATES CONTENT WITH MEANING

Done right, Experiential's impact can spread well beyond the activation itself. In particular, it can generate the content brands need to win online. In the words of Adam from Cool: "Experiential not only lets you create something extraordinary for the few; it gives you powerful content you can play out to the many."

IT IGNITES YOUR BRAND IN SOCIAL

In their global live music fan study, "The Power of Live"³, Live Nation found that three in four of those surveyed agreed that a live music experience was one of the most memorable moments in their lives; and that their positive memories were amplified over time by word-of-mouth and sharing. As Jo from Camp Bestival / Live Nation says: "Brands that demonstrate they understand this audience and create a relevant experience within this space make themselves truly share-worthy".

In the quest to showcase your brand's authenticity – are you drawing fully on the power of Experiential?

³ SOURCE: LIVE NATION MULTIGENERATIONAL LIVE MUSIC STUDY, UK MARKET, 2018

**PROCEED
WITH
CAUTION**

.....
INITIALS

Get Experiential right, and there's no surer way of making
your brand feel authentic, human and relatable.

Get it wrong, and you could forfeit all claim
to credibility... perhaps forever.

A person wearing a white long-sleeved shirt is holding a smartphone in their hands. They are standing next to a large white map of the United States that is covered in a dense layer of colorful confetti. The confetti consists of many small, circular pieces in various colors, including purple, green, yellow, and red. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The text "BRING YOUR CONVICTIONS TO LIFE FOR PEOPLE" is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the middle of the image.

**BRING YOUR
CONVICTIONS
TO LIFE
FOR PEOPLE**



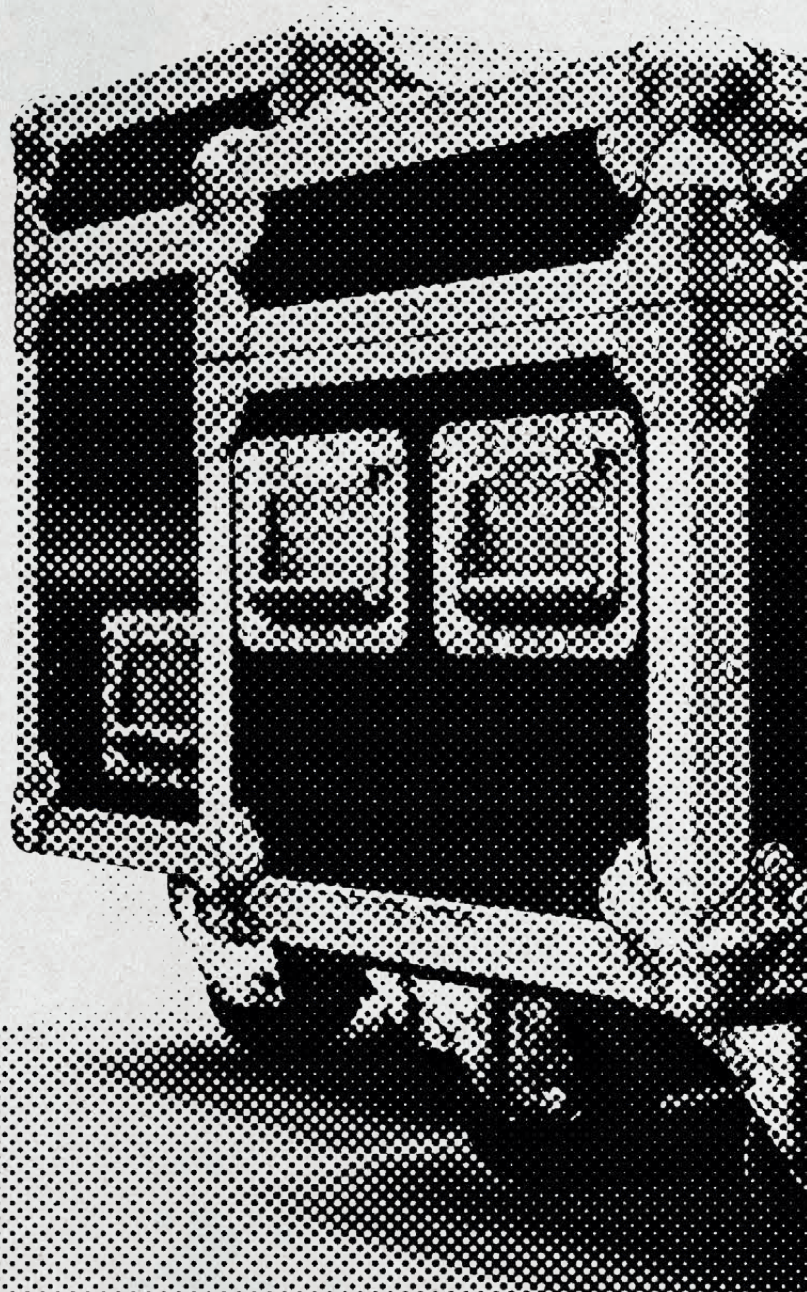
IN EXPERIENTIAL, THE BEST IDEAS CAN BE FATALLY UNDERMINED BY EXECUTION.

Experiential can't be ad-blocked; people can't switch to another channel. Its immediacy creates a **deep and visceral response** from consumers. And because they're highly likely to share their feelings – good or bad – via social media, the **impact is massively and instantaneously magnified**.

Before you invest in Experiential, you must have a **clear understanding of what the human manifestation of your brand** looks like, how it talks, acts and behaves. If you know who you are and what you stand for, Experiential is the perfect way to bring your convictions to life for people. If you don't know... why not?

Even if you have a powerful, culturally relevant story, you need to be certain you're delivering it in the right way. **In Experiential, the best ideas can be fatally undermined by execution.** One loose brick can bring the whole house tumbling down. Make sure you're working with experts you can trust to handle logistics, complex structural builds, technical on-site innovation, and ambassador recruitment and training.

Don't assume Experiential is easy. Getting it right isn't. It takes experience, insight and rigour. If you're going to do it, make sure you're not gambling with your brand's reputation.





SIX FACTORS BRANDS NEED TO GET RIGHT

In Experiential, both the risks and the rewards are extraordinarily high.

If you're going to do it, you need to get it right.

Based on hard-won experience, we've identified the Six Factors that – combined with a powerful creative idea – make for outstandingly effective activations.



1. LISTEN UP



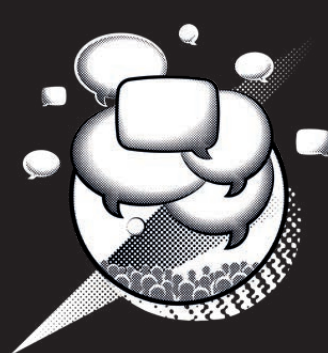
**2. ADD TO
THE CULTURE**



**3. BUILD PARTNERSHIPS
THAT SPARK**



**4. KNOW YOUR
PLAYGROUND**



**5. TELL A
POWERFUL STORY**



**6. EMBED RICH
MEMORIES**



Most of the time, people won't be expecting to encounter your brand. So you have to start by understanding their reason for being there. Context is king."

Jamie Belnikoff, 2CV Research



LISTEN UP

In Experiential, you're physically taking your brand into the audience's world. You're not just knocking on their door; you're walking into their living room. This makes it imperative, as Adam from Coolr says, that "you play to their agenda, not your own".

Paul from Reuben Feels points out that "good brands are good listeners". They use both ears; hearing both what's brought people to that place and what role they're prepared to let you play.



HOW A PASSION FOR CREATIVITY CAN DRIVE CONNECTION



Get Naked and Colour

Naked Juice wants to help people get more out of life. Its primary focus is 25 – 40 year old 'dynamic doers': people who crave the chance to express themselves and take part in new experiences.

We identified the right places to talk to this audience: festivals with a creative, inclusive vibe like Latitude and Wilderness. But the real challenge was to find a powerfully playful idea that would liberate individual creativity. The solution Naked and Initials developed, was to capitalise on the trend for adult colouring.

The call-to-action was irresistibly cheeky: 'Get Naked and Colour'. Inside an immersive woodland hideaway, festival-goers found walls of monochrome art designed by award-winning illustrators Good Wives & Warriors. They were then given materials and invited to let their creativity flow, colouring in the images as they were refreshed with samples of Naked Juice.

The activation massively outperformed targets. Across the two festivals, 14,000 people visited (one in four of all attendees), with 38,000 free samples given out. Inviting people to share the brand's 'weird and wonderful spirit' also drove high levels of advocacy, with social reach of 15.4m.

Consumers will reject brands that don't seem to fit or feel like they're trying too hard; but they'll buy in if they believe you're present for the same reasons they are. You need to put yourself squarely in the audience's shoes:

UNDERSTAND MOTIVES AND NEEDS

What are the emotional drivers? Are people indulging their love for music at a festival or dealing with the hassle of the weekly shop? Then dive deeper. We attend events or go shopping for many different reasons. Which segment is your priority, and how can you best appeal to it?

SHOW YOU REALLY CARE

Experiential can happen in highly impassioned contexts like major

sporting events. To connect, brands must demonstrate not just that they understand the audience's passion; they must behave in ways that prove they share it.

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Many experiences are collective; that's part of their appeal. But our interactions and memories are highly personal. Make sure your experience feels individualised. Let people play an active role, and give them ways to customise and 'own' the experience.



**You obviously need to be relevant.
But you also need to be original.
To win, you need to create unexpected
moments of surprise and delight."**

Paul Drury-Bradey, Reuben Feels



ADD TO THE CULTURE

Effective Experiential is about 'doing' in a way that's precisely tailored to context. Successful brands work hard to contribute positively and add richness. In Leanne from Strongbow's words: "The acid tests are: do you feel an authentic part of the environment? And then, are you adding something new to the environment?"

The most ambitious brands in Experiential are true enablers. Red Bull is the prime example. Another is House of Vans, which exists to fuel creative expression in local communities through art, music, skateboarding, BMX, street culture and fashion.

HOW TO STAND OUT BY BRINGING PEOPLE CLOSER TO THE ACTION



Pepsi Max Fan House

The goal was clear: ensure Pepsi Max was at the centre of excitement in the days leading up to the UEFA Champions League final in Cardiff.

The solution was to create an innovative experience that would tap into fans' passion and let them feel what it's like to be a top player entering one of the biggest games in the world. The Pepsi Max Fan House included a 'passion-reactive' vending machine, and a play-to-power foosball table. The highlight was an immersive journey beginning with VR: participants sat beneath personalised digital shirts in a virtual changing room to hear the manager's pep talk, which became reality as actors appeared. They then walked through a sensory tunnel onto a digital pitch, where they had to shoot at targets. When they hit, the interactive digital 'crowd' roared with delight.

The event reached over 200,000 people on social media, 33,000 Pepsi Mocktails were enjoyed and more than 1,900 people participated in the immersive football experience.

Even if your budget doesn't stretch very far, your focus must be on enhancing the wider experience:

BE GENEROUS

As Jo from Camp Bestival / Live Nation puts it: "Shift your mindset from 'What can I get?' to 'What can I give?' – whether that's addressing a consumer need, adding creative value or being socially responsible. Make sure you provide a service or experience that's mutually beneficial."

FEED THE URGE FOR DISCOVERY

How can your brand help people experience the unexpected? Paul from Reuben Feels talks about "making the

new and progressive accessible. If you can involve people with something they've never encountered before, it's incredibly powerful".

LET PEOPLE PLAY

Don't just show people something; give them the chance to immerse themselves in the experience. Active involvement not only drives connection; because we all learn by doing, it increases recall.

In Live Nation's global study "The Power of Live", 91% of live music fans said that brands could enhance their experience at an event. However, while they're open to brand involvement, they're also highly discerning. The onus is firmly on brands to make a unique contribution that's relevant to time, place and audience.

⁴ SOURCE: LIVE NATION MULTIGENERATIONAL LIVE MUSIC STUDY, UK MARKET, 2018

“

Any partner worth their salt will have their own personality, style and tone of voice that fits their audience. To get the most out of them, you have to cede a degree of control... and some brands struggle with that."

Adam Clyne, Coolr



BUILD PARTNERSHIPS THAT SPARK

One of the big changes in Experiential over the past 5 years has been the shift in mindset from sponsorship to partnership.

Finding the right partners is key to maximising Experiential's potential. This applies to all partners from event owners, to the social publishers who are critical in 'turning up the volume.'

HOW A DEEP CROSS-PLATFORM PARTNERSHIP CAN AMPLIFY IMPACT



Strongbow Dark Fruit

Launched in 2013, Strongbow Dark Fruit has quickly become a cultural phenomenon. The brand engenders extraordinary levels of commitment: superfans organise Dark Fruit nights out; they bake Dark Fruit cakes; they even get Dark Fruit tattoos.

Strongbow wanted to hero these superfans and use their passion to infect others. It knew the best way to do this was by working with a social publisher that could talk to the target in its own language. LADbible has proved the perfect partner: close collaboration has enabled the brand to find fans with interesting stories to tell, build and publicise experiences around them, and amplify the content generated.

As just one example: LADbible led Strongbow to a superfan called Kyle who had invented his own Dark Fruit ice cream recipe. Strongbow and Initials helped Kyle to mass produce his ice cream and then took him on tour to city centres and music festivals. The resulting film on LADbible has already racked up 3.3 million views.

It's not just about what a partner can bring to the table; they need to be aligned with your brand's ethos. Having picked your partners, you then need to work with them closely to ensure everyone wins. This demands a particular mindset and approach:

BE TRANSPARENT AND TRUSTING

Partners know the hooks and tone-of-voice that work best for their audience. Capitalise on their insights by involving partners early, being clear on your agenda and respecting the outcomes they're looking for.

BUILD THE BIG IDEA TOGETHER

Command and control won't cut it. As Adam from Coolr says: "At the end of the day, the most important thing is that there's a creative story that the partner

will be keen to endorse. That's much more likely to happen when there's shared ownership".

THINK LONG-TERM

Typically, a partner's relationship with its audience extends well beyond the experience itself. For instance, 50% of attendees at Camp Bestival (part of Live Nation) consider it their primary holiday of the year; so they're fully engaged across multiple months, from pre-planning to sharing treasured memories afterwards. Capitalise on this to deepen and lengthen connection.

Authentic partnerships are fundamental to getting Experiential right. They can help you magnify impact at the event, amplify reach around the event and connect the dots across every stage of the campaign.



You can't buy credibility. There's a fine line between investing in culture and exploiting it; and the brands that reap the most rewards demonstrate that they share an event's core values. That creates a base level of trust from the audience, opening them up to a conversation."

Jo Bennett, Camp Bestival / Live Nation



KNOW YOUR PLAYGROUND

Events, of course, are brands too. They have a distinct identity that makes them particularly attractive to a group of consumers. Often, they command levels of engagement and loyalty that most marketers would die for.

Any third party entering this environment needs to fit natively. If its presence feels inauthentic, it's likely to be ignored – or even actively rejected.

HOW BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE CAN INCREASE CUT THROUGH



Jeep at Tough Mudder

Jeep's UK sponsorship of Tough Mudder started in 2014. The fit was natural: both brands are adrenaline-fuelled, have a sense of fun and encourage people to explore their limits. Continuity helped Jeep become an integral part of this hugely popular event series.

But Initials realised that the area designated for partners wouldn't provide a relevant consumer experience or any brand cut-through. Only by sending a team from the agency to run the 13-mile course was it clear that the brand's sponsored obstacle was the key.

Half way round the course, participants were tired and far from the cheers of supporters. Initials transformed the Mud Mile obstacle into 'Jeep Fest'. As Mudders waded through a series of quagmire humps, a mini festival experience provided a surge of energy. Competitors were spurred on by a DJ in a converted Jeep Renegade, Jeep-branded supporters and fun inflatables.

Back at base camp, Mudders could prepare for Jeep Fest and get their faces 'war-painted' at the Jeep Fest Service Station. They were even given branded car seat covers to protect their vehicle on the way home.

Is your brand playing in the right places to maximise acceptance and receptivity?

DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT

Consumers recognise and value commitment. Brands that establish a regular presence at events are seen to be fully invested. Over time, they can weave themselves into the cultural fabric and become an integral part of the experience.

SWEAT THE DETAILS

You need to do more than simply find the right location. Many other companies will be playing there too and your brand needs to cut through. You need clever

thinking to pick exactly the right spot or point in time to get an unfair share of attention.

LEAN INTO SEASONALITY

Jamie from 2CV points out how seasonality gives brands a powerful shortcut, allowing them "to tap into all the cues and emotions associated with that time of year". As Leanne from Strongbow says, this was fundamental to the brand's strategy: "Strongbow has always been synonymous with summer; and for this audience, the summer means festivals. It's not rocket science, but it is essential".

Identifying the 'right place' is at the heart of Initials' engagement strategy. Brands need to be sure that they're engaging the right audience at exactly the right moment within the experience, if they're to get the response they want.



Experiential empowers you to give your brand story a deeper meaning for a specific, high-value audience."

Leanne Johnson, Strongbow



TELL A POWERFUL STORY

Data abuse and other forms of digital malpractice hide in the shadows; consumers want brands to step into the daylight. Experiential shows you're eager to let people get up close, explore your story from all sides and test it for holes.

Because the channel is intrinsically human and interactive, it's the perfect platform for communicating your message with power and conviction. As Paul from Reuben Feels puts it: "The strongest stories are driven by people and performance, not algorithms".



HOW INFLUENCERS CAN HELP BUILD A TRUE NARRATIVE



Camp Copella

Ever since it was launched in 1969, every bottle of Copella fruit juice has been pressed at Boxford Farm in Suffolk from hand-selected apples. There's no use of concentrate and no added water.

Provenance and product integrity are of high interest to consumers; but how could Copella communicate its message in an intrinsically authentic way? With Initials helping set the stage, the solution was to invite 15 hand-picked influencers to spend 24 hours on Boxford Farm. Their stay at Camp Copella included orchard tours with the farm's owner, cooking classes, mindfulness sessions and interactive mixology lessons.

By letting credible commentators spend time with the brand, touch it first-hand, and then tell the story in their own words, Copella was able to break through the shield of consumer scepticism. The programme generated 141 pieces of unique content and reached 1.25 million people.

Stories are an integral part of how we define ourselves and others. How can storytelling in Experiential sharpen your brand's identity and give it greater emotional heft?

EMPLOY BEST-IN-CLASS TECHNIQUES

A key mantra at Reuben Feels is that "playful brains are porous brains". Create experiences that are genuinely two-way: seize every opportunity to get the audience involved and make them feel they're co-creating the story. Mix storytelling with storydoing: find original ways to bring your brand's beliefs and behaviours to life.

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

Bring a strong opinion and express it clearly. For instance: New Zealand cider brand Old Mout proves its passion for sustainability via Kiwi Camp, discrete areas at festivals built

with environmentally friendly materials. The Camp runs upcycling courses, and recycling schemes help fund endangered species...including, of course, the kiwi itself.

CAPITALISE ON THE TIME AVAILABLE

Whilst activities like sampling demand quick, frictionless interactions, Experiential often gives brands the luxury of extended time with their audience. Exploit this by building dynamic narratives that span the archetypal story arc: anticipation (the call to adventure); exploration (the journey of discovery); and resolution (the challenge successfully accomplished).

Jo Bennett from Camp Bestival / Live Nation emphasises this last point: "Consumers connect with brands who make them 'feel' something and that care about the same issues – so we'll start to see more Experiential with meaning as these concerns trickle down from the public consciousness into how brands express themselves".

Experiential lets brands tell authentic stories via multiple voices. Ambassadors at the event are essential to ensuring your message remains strong and involving. Partners can add new dimensions and depth. So too can influencers, as long as they feel true to the brand and play a relevant role.



Our brains have evolved to remember real-world events that impact us personally and powerfully. That's why Experiential can create such intense brand memories."

*Heather Andrew,
CEO Neuro-Insight (UK) Limited*



EMBED RICH MEMORIES

The human brain does a great job of making the most of its storage capacity. What we actually remember are more like 'snapshots' than 'videos'. Our memories consist of a finite number of individual moments in time; the brain then essentially 'makes up' what happened in between in order to construct the bigger picture.

Incidents of high emotional intensity create the most powerful 'snapshots'. Because it's first-hand and often involves an encounter with the new and unexpected, Experiential can achieve this intensity more effectively than any other channel.

How can brands maximise these emotional peaks?

STIMULATE ALL FIVE SENSES

Many communication channels are audio-visual, but only Experiential allows you to engage all five senses simultaneously. Bring your brand to life via touch and taste. Pay particular attention to smell: it's directly connected to the part of the brain responsible for emotion and memory and so can be highly evocative.

CHALLENGE PEOPLE'S COMFORT ZONE

We all forget the everyday, but we all remember the first time we tried

something different. Give people the opportunity to step into the unknown; properly handled, there can be real benefits in taking people out of their comfort zone.

BUILD TO A CLIMAX

A compelling multi-step story is much more likely to be encoded by the brain. Create emotional peaks at key junctures throughout the narrative, but save your best till last. What is the climactic experience that best summarises your brand message?

HOW COMPELLING EXPERIENCES CAN EMBED POSITIVE BRAND MEMORIES



Walkers Crisp Sarnie Club

We Brits love a sarnie; we eat 11 billion a year, often with crisps. So naturally Walkers partnered with Heinz to develop a range of sandwich-flavoured crisps.

The challenge was to generate stand-out in a category awash with new variants. To solve this, the brand worked with Initials to create The Walkers Crisp Sarnie Club. The Club was concealed behind a movable shelf in a pop-up called Chris Peter's News (call us if you want the pun explained). To gain entry, people had to give a secret password: "I'm barmy for a sarnie". Inside, people found a highly sensorial experience packed with sandwich-themed activities.

2,500 people visited the Club over its four-week life; but its impact spread well beyond those experiencing it first-hand. The richness of the idea allowed Walkers to leverage it across multiple channels. It even became the venue for a web-series dating show hosted by Paddy McGuinness.

The results? #barmyforsarnies achieved 8 million impressions on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. There was a huge uptick in positive brand sentiment. Most importantly, the activation helped fuel £8m of sales, smashing all previous records for a Walkers' limited edition.

By creating moments of heightened intensity, you'll not only increase engagement; you'll embed powerful memories that can be triggered by follow-up activity that recalls the original experience.

Heather from Neuro-Insight uses the analogy of a 'brand room' to explain the way the brain gathers and stores brand information it receives.

"In our heads we carry networks of associations for the things that we encounter in our lives. As we gather new information about brands, our associative memory links it to our existing knowledge and our brand networks grow. We can think about these networks as 'rooms' in our heads, with one for each brand we come across. Some of these rooms, for familiar and loved brands, will be well-decorated and furnished with lots of associations, and the feeling of the room will reflect all our experiences and impressions about the brand. Rooms for brands that we know less well will be more sparsely furnished."

Experiential, being such a potent medium for storytelling, plays an important role in helping to furnish or re-decorate brand rooms. Providing the brand is clearly associated with the experience, this association will be triggered by any future encounters with that brand, serving to 'light up the room.'

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE



Smart brands know that the lines between channels are vanishing fast. They make sure that Experiential bleeds into everything else they do. And vice versa".

Adam Clyne, Coolr

As Experiential grows in importance within the marketing mix, so does the need for companies to take a more strategic approach. Rather than developing one-off initiatives, the focus should be on how the channel can help build deeper relationships with key audiences over time.

All our expert partners echoed this.

Leanne described how Strongbow's multi-year commitment to festivals has been instrumental in giving the brand a new level of authenticity and relevance. Jamie from 2CV talked about how many clients now regard Experiential as highly complementary to other channels, sparking conversations that can be developed elsewhere.

Adam from Coolr underlined the point: "Smart brands know that the lines between channels are vanishing fast. They make sure that Experiential bleeds into everything else they do. And vice versa".

We believe our Six Factors for Experiential Success will hold true in the future. They are elemental: the need for relevance, human connection and rich, emotionally resonant stories is only going to grow.

If you want to become the brand of choice for tomorrow's consumers, you need to step up now and show your true colours by delivering unforgettable live experiences.





*Thank you for your interest in our
Live Amplified white paper.*

We're genuine believers in the power of Experiential. We know it represents a huge opportunity, both creatively and commercially. Bringing great ideas to life in the real world can generate extraordinary results; making brands more relevant, more famous and more desirable.

Experiential has always been important. Now, it's essential. With people becoming increasingly mistrustful, the brands that win will be those that feel most authentic... and live activity is the best way to prove your authenticity.

But the stakes are high. There's no hiding place with Experiential. Not from the people you touch first-hand. Nor from the friends who follow them on social.

If you're going to do it, you have to do it right; and the Six Success Factors listed here will go a long way towards skewing the odds in your favour.

I hope you find our insights valuable.

Richard Barrett
Managing Director

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