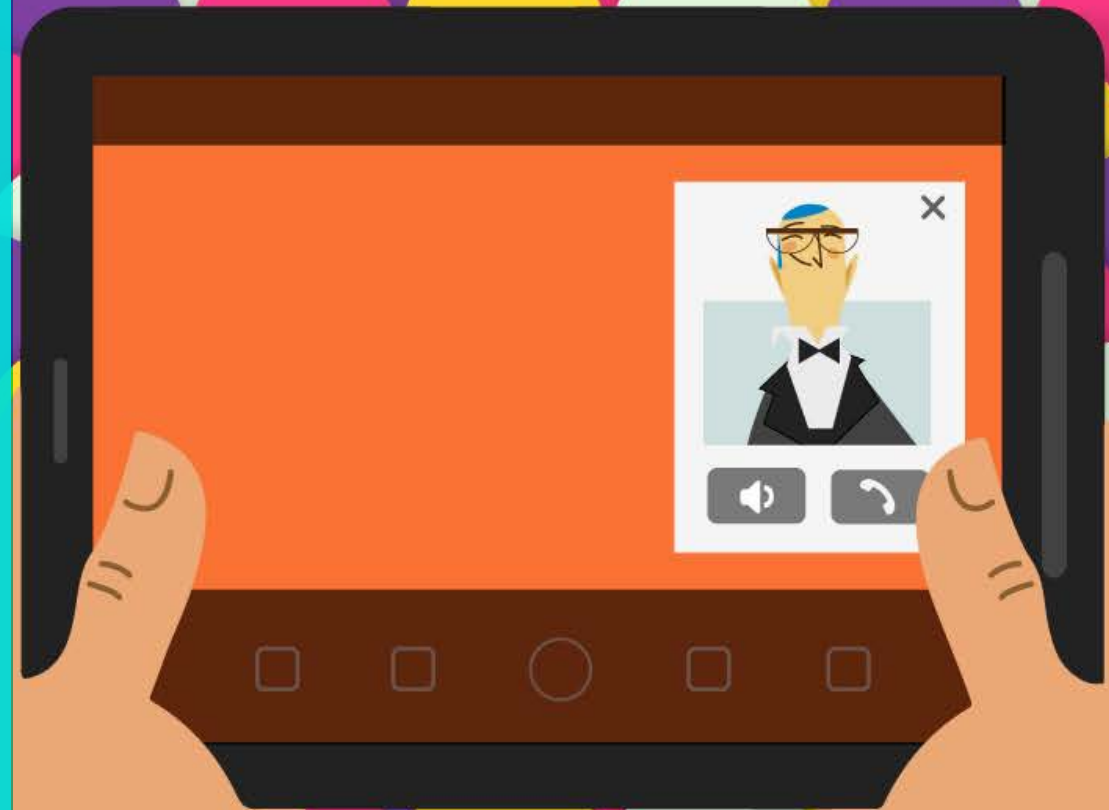




SEPTEMBER 2014  
GLOBAL TREND BRIEFING

# THE FUTURE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

Five trends that will redefine  
great service in 2015 and  
beyond.



# Receiving great customer service triggers the same cerebral reactions as feeling loved.



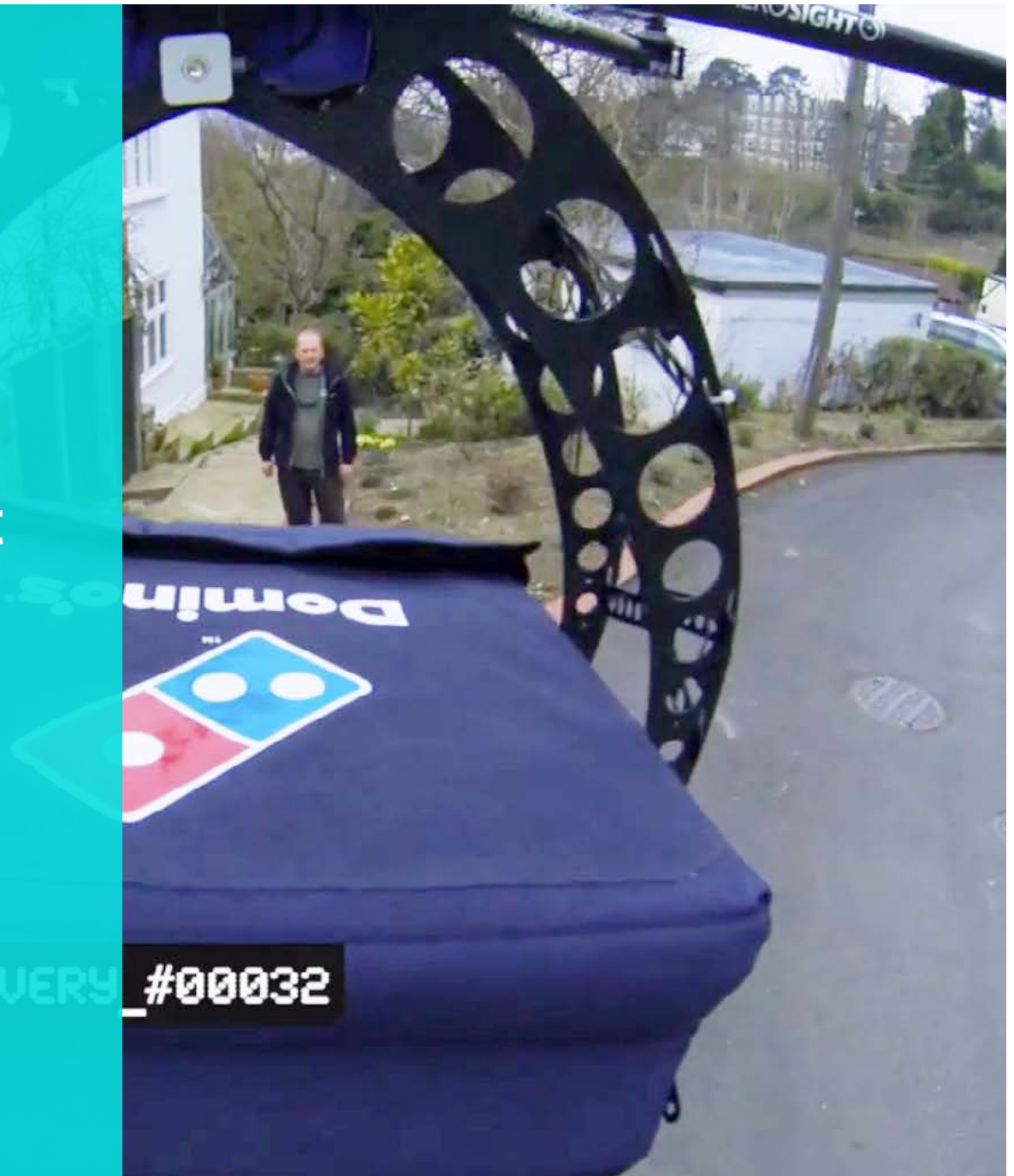
*When 1,620 consumers were tested under laboratory conditions, 63% said they felt their heart rate increase when they thought about receiving great customer service.*

*For 53% of those tested, receiving great service triggered the same cerebral reactions as feeling loved.\**

The takeaway? **When it comes to customer service, it's not about what consumers think. Great service is about feelings.**

\* American Express Service Study, September 2013

**The future of customer service is more than just drone delivery.**



DOMICOPTER\_TESTDELIVERY\_#00032

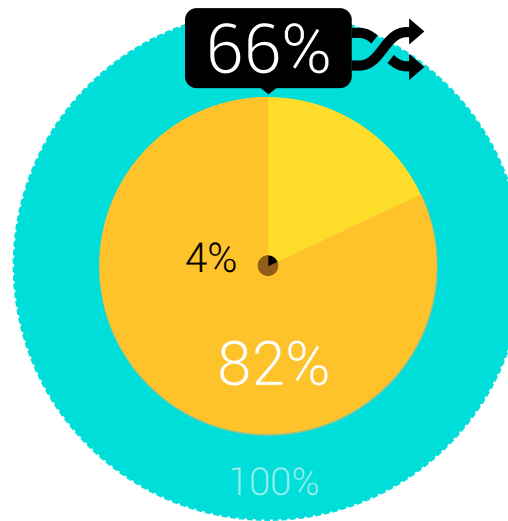
# Plenty of brands are mainlining the hype around new customer service technologies, concepts, and yes, even trends.

Trouble is, customers aren't feeling any better.

Our hunch? There are plenty of new technologies, clever concepts and even trends that *could* help brands offer better service to consumers. **But too few brands understand that amid all this rapid change, the fundamentals of great service remain the same.** It's about the feeling of being recognized. Listened to. Valued and cared for.

Smart brands will find new ways to serve those age-old imperatives. They could start by applying one (or all!) of the five trends below.

Of course, these trends offer just a glimpse of THE FUTURE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE, not the entire picture. But they're five manifestations of the shifting consumer expectation that will redefine great service in 2015 and beyond.



*Globally in 2013, 66% of consumers switched brands or business due to poor customer service, a 4% increase on the previous year. Some 82% of those who switched said the brand could have done something to stop them.*

# Five trends helping to define THE FUTURE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE in 2015 and beyond.

---

## 1. PLAN B

Products that come with their own backup plan.

---

## 2. VIDEO VALETS

Face time, any time.

---

## 3. DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS

Delivery. And then some.

---

## 4. SIXTH SENSE

The customer-focused brand has a new sense: info-sense.

---

## 5. POLITENESS PAYS

Because good customer service is a two-way street.

# 1. PLAN B

Products that come with their own backup plan.





## 1. PLAN B

Plenty of brands are playing lip service to the 'every product a service' mantra.

One ongoing, powerful shift in consumer expectation:

"Why own a single product, when I can have access to the right product when (and only when) I need it?"

A host of forces are driving that expectation shift, from **the rise of the sharing economy, to ever-busier, more itinerant urban living, to the relentless [NEWISM](#) that sees consumers thirst after a constant stream of new products.**



## 1. PLAN B CONT...

**In 2015 truly customer-centric brands will offer a PLAN B.**

One way inventive brands are reconciling ownership and access – *and* fueling NEWISM?

By selling products that come with a PLAN B: that is, **access when needed to an alternative or backup product which overcomes limitations in the original, puts right an emergency (I've run out! It's broken! It's lost!), addresses a common pain point, and more.**

One key benefit of some PLAN B innovations? By providing an alternative, they remove the risk associated with outright purchase of new/unfamiliar products – allowing consumers to indulge in carefree NEWISM! Want to see how BMW did just this? Scroll down!

## PLAN B: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# BMW i3

Electric car owners get access to petrol vehicles to ease 'range anxiety'





PLAN B: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

## EE Festival Power Bar

Telecoms company offers replacement battery service to festival-goers



PLAN B: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

## Forever 21

Costa Rican fashion retailer gives customers access to emergency clothes truck





## 1. PLAN B

# NEXT

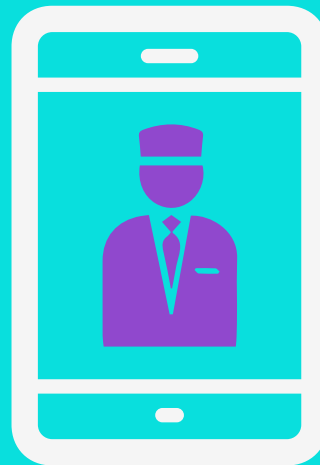
Smart brands will be brave enough to be honest about product limitations, and to confront common customer pain points. For the bravest? Partner with another brand to offer alternatives you can't. **See how eBay joined forces with UK retailer Argos to roll out 'click and collect'.** PLAN A: your eBay purchase is delivered to your home.

PLAN B: we'll deliver it to your nearest Argos store.



## 2. VIDEO VALETS

Face time, any time.



## 2. VIDEO VALETS

So I can Skype my  
elderly grandmother...

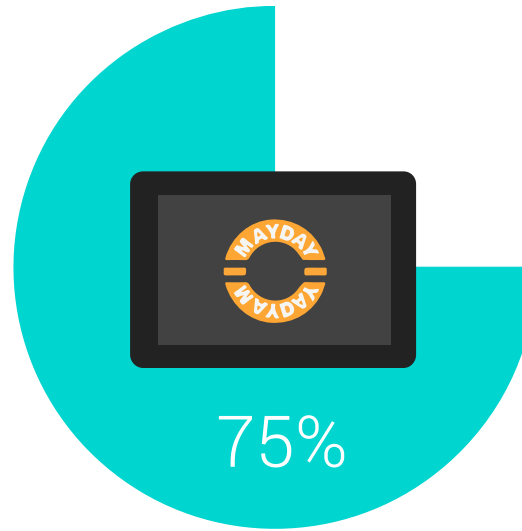
But the brands I buy from don't own  
webcams?

Millions of consumers worldwide have had enough of ineffective virtual 'assistance' by web or phone.

What's more, they've been enjoying on-demand face time with their friends for years now. The tech exists – why can't brands catch up?

Now, forward-thinking brands are finally doing just that: by **providing webcam-enabled face-to-face interaction with their customer service representatives** – as and when consumers need it.



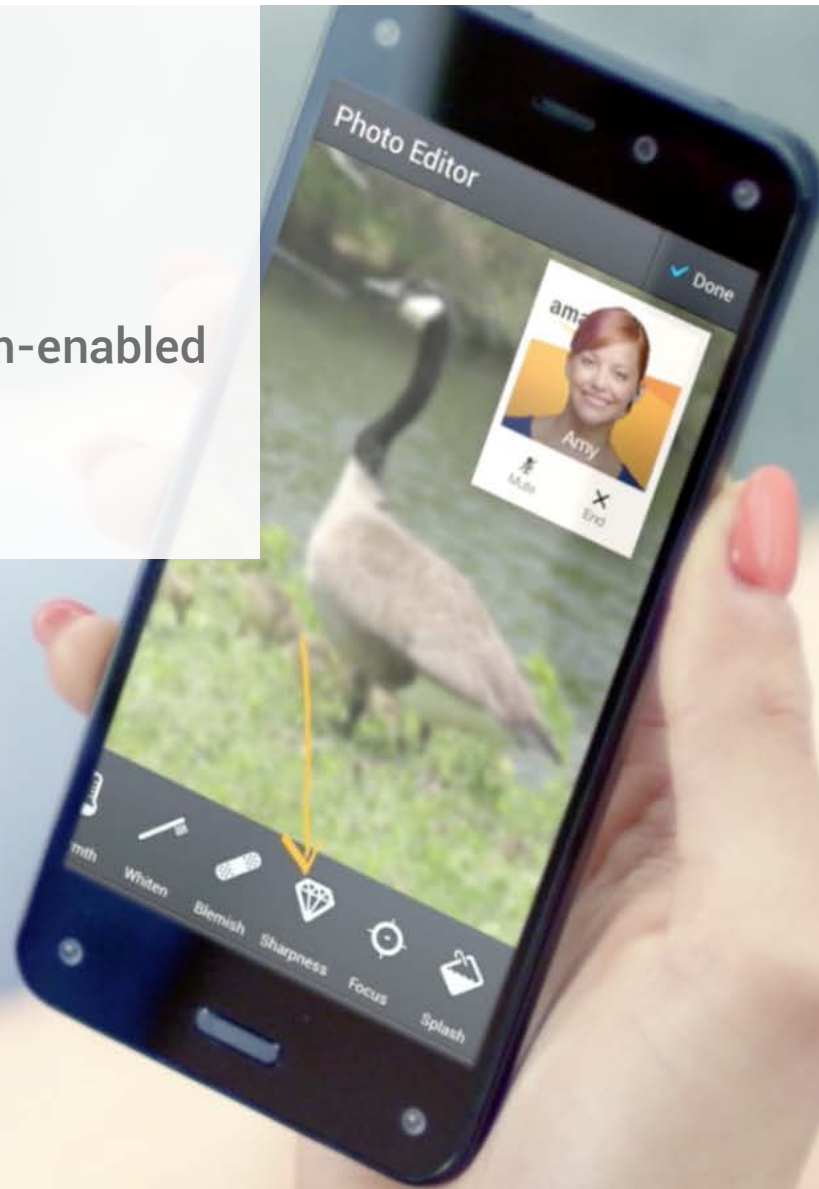


*The Amazon Mayday button connects Kindle Fire HDX tablet owners to an Amazon customer service representative via webcam. Among tablet owners, 75% of customer service interactions now come via the button.*

VIDEO VALETS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# Amazon Fire Phone

Mayday button for instant webcam-enabled chat with Amazon staff



## VIDEO VALETS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# IndusInd Bank, Bank of America & mBank

Banks offer webcam-enabled live chat



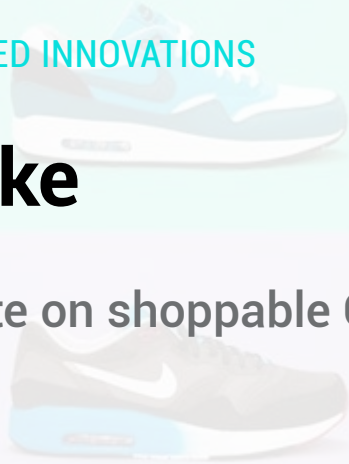


VIDEO VALETS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

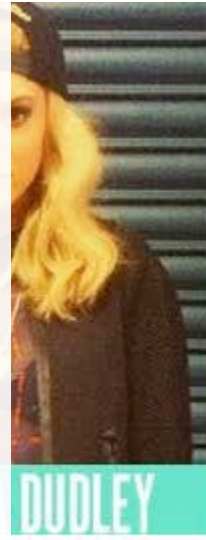
# ASOS & Nike

Brands collaborate on shoppable Google hangout

NATASHA WRAY



REBECCA DUDLEY



ZEBA LOWE



Nike Air Max Day

+65



Hosted by:  
ASOS

2,130,187 have them in circles

+ Add to circles

Did you watch?

# Fiat Live Store

Brazilian online platform for webcam-enabled car browsing

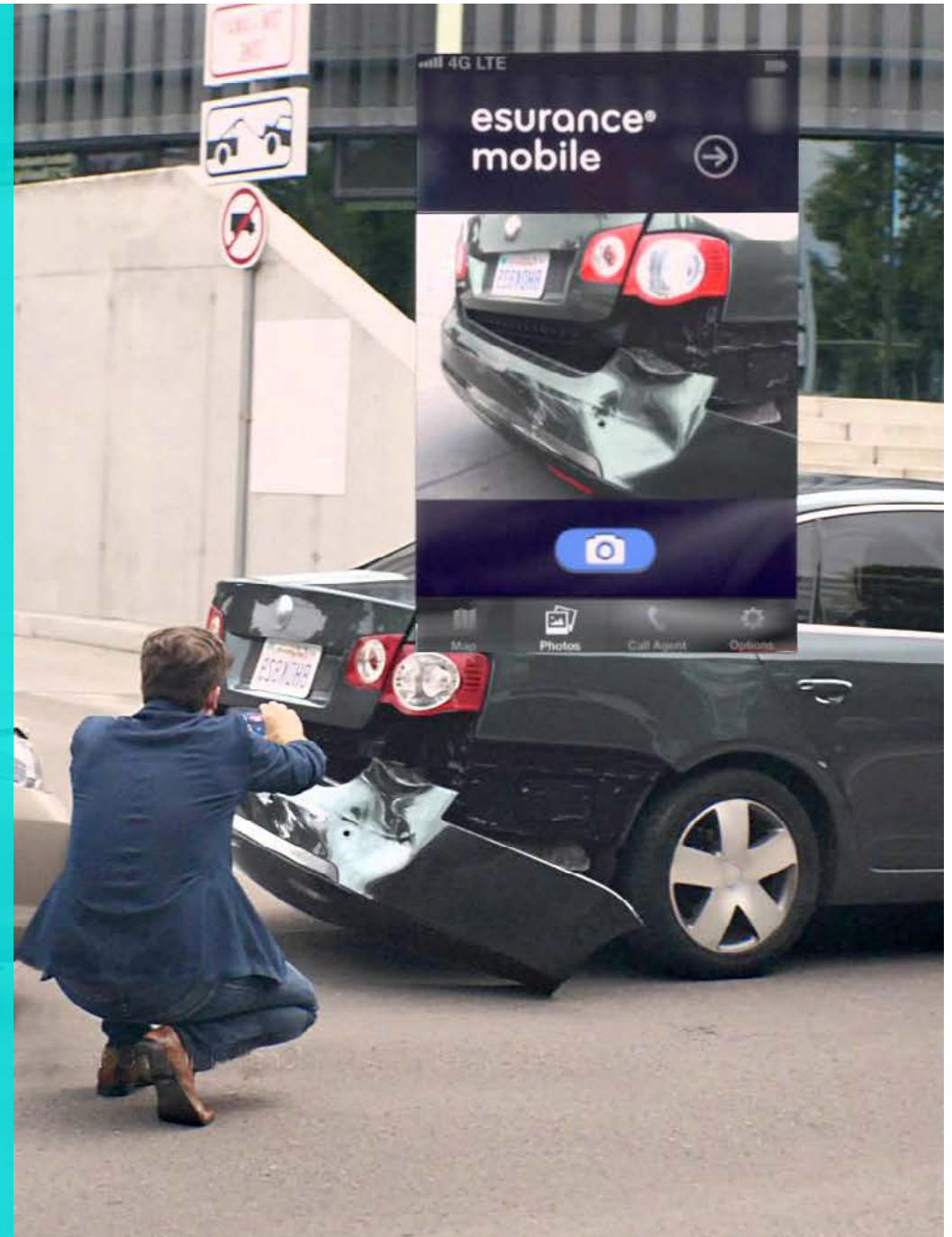




## 2. VIDEO VALETS

### NEXT

VIDEO VALETS don't have to be about dealing with customer questions or complaints. Can you offer new experiences, trials and tests via webcam? Or even undertake key processes via webcam: [see how US insurance company Esurance now allows webcam-enabled accident appraisal via smartphone.](#)



# 3. DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS

Delivery. And then some.







1 2015 Trend Report



We obviously offer much more  
than monthly Trend Briefings...



2 Trend Framework



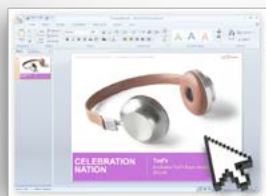
3 Innovation Database



4 Industry Updates



5 Apply Toolkit



6 Monthly Updates



7 1-page Trend Handouts

# Our Premium Service

Your complete trend and innovation solution.

Find out more >

### 3. DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS

## Delivery startups are hot again (thanks Uber ;)

But truly customer-centric brands – established or new – will understand that delivery is just the start.

Tap to summon a taxi – done. Now, rising numbers of consumers will expect to tap to order just about anything. And this time (unlike in the early 2000's, when the first crop of internet delivery businesses crashed) the logistics are viable. Get ready for a smartphone-fueled rush of delivery innovations.

Meanwhile, for countless retailers big and small, delivery is *already* the key touch point they have with customers.

One consequence? **In 2015, smart brands will see delivery as so much more than functional.**

Whether that means cramming additional services and added extras into their delivery, delivering to unusual (and mobile) locations, or turning a standard delivery service into a force for broader good in the world, they'll DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS.

# 1,500,000,000,000



*Global B2C e-commerce sales are expected to total  
USD 1.5 trillion in 2014.*

EMARKETER, FEBRUARY 2014

DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# JeansOnline & Lamoda

LOOKS

BRANDS

OUTLET

Search



Courier will wait 15 minutes and take back unwanted items





DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

## Volvo

App lets users designate car as delivery location



DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

## Pizza Hut Panamá

Delivered pizzas cooked in transit to ensure freshness

*THE FIRST DELIVERY SERVICE*  
**THAT COOKS**





## DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# L.

Get a packet of condoms delivered, give one to the developing world

SHOP PRODUCTS

1 HR DELIVERY

OUR MOVEMENT

MAKE an IMPACT

MEDIA

WANDERLUST

LOGIN CART {0}

GET L. NEWS.

x enter email

submit



MARINA  
PAC HEIGHTS  
FINANCIAL DISTRICT  
SOMA  
SAN FRANCISCO  
MISSION

SF x NYC x LA  
discreet delivery in under  
**1 HOUR**  
starting at  
**\$5**

MIDTOWN  
CHELSEA  
EAST VILLAGE  
MANHATTAN  
WEST VILLAGE  
SOHO  
LOWER EAST SIDE

Tweet Like

1 hour delivery available on items below in select areas of Manhattan, San Francisco & Los Angeles

NYC: 24 HRS EVERY DAY, \$8 FLAT RATE

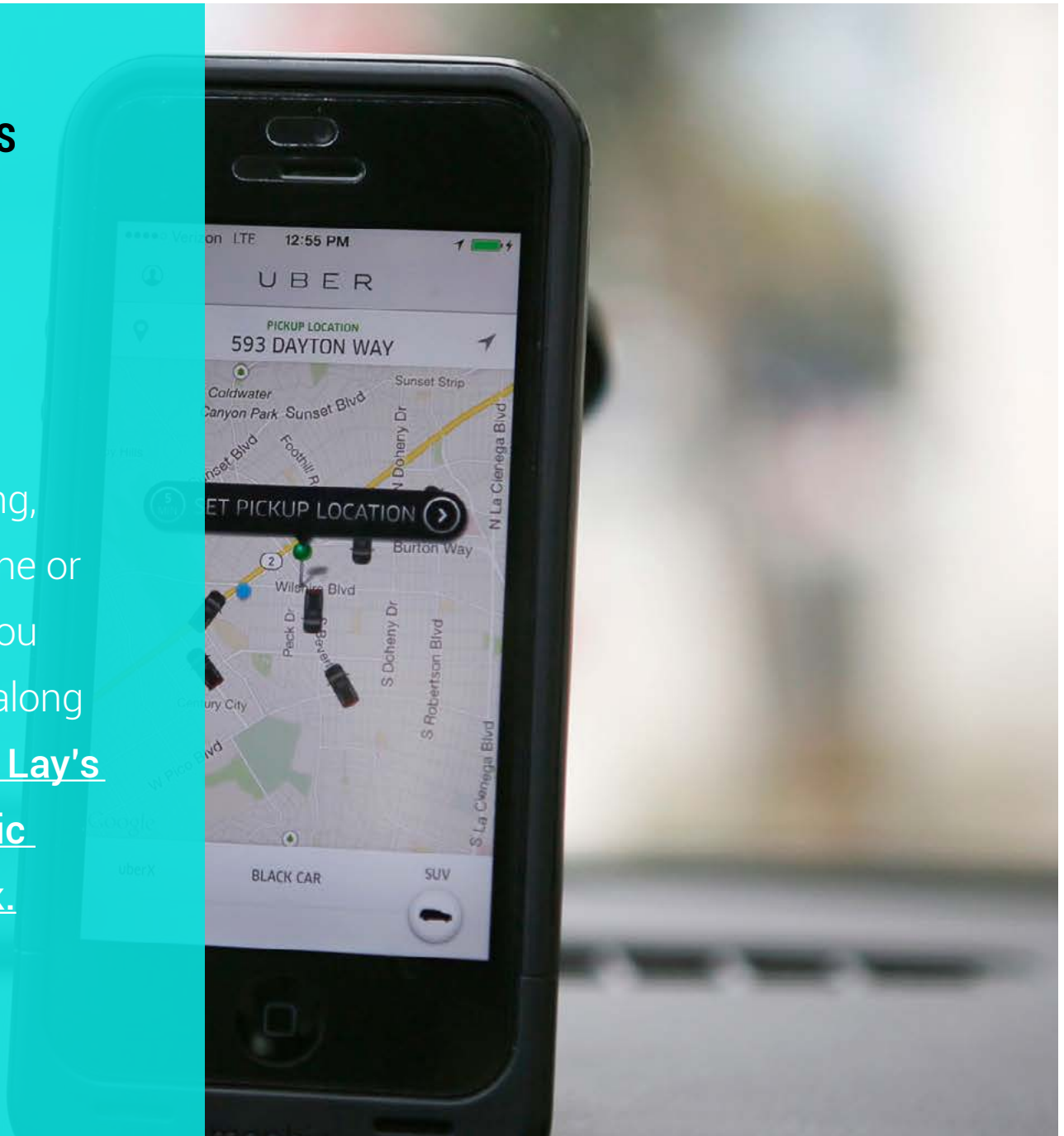
SF + LA: 11AM-7PM EVERY DAY, \$5 FLAT RATE



### 3. DELIVER (MORE THAN) THE GOODS

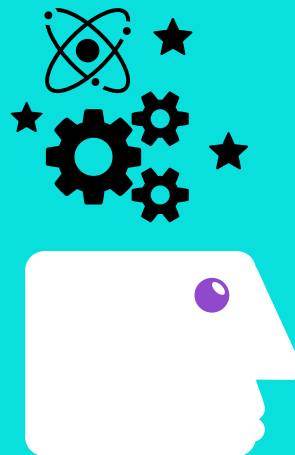
## NEXT

The delivery ecosystem is blooming, thanks to a host of startups and one or two billion-dollar megaliths. Can you find a way for your brand to hitch along for the ride? [See how chips brand Lay's partnered with Uber to offer picnic delivery for two days in New York.](#)



# 4. SIXTH SENSE

The customer-focused brand has a new sense:  
info-sense.



## 4. SIXTH SENSE

Even stupid brands are collecting consumer data.

Only smart brands have a SIXTH SENSE for it.

Smart sensors, face and object recognition technologies and wearable devices mean it's possible to gather and analyze information about consumers – their location, preferences, purchasing histories and much more – in real-time as never before.

Not to mention that consumers have been creating and trailing data online now *forever*. Online, they're long accustomed to seeing that data used to personalize the products they buy and the experiences they enjoy.

**Now, consumers in physical spaces will increasingly expect the use of real-time data to shape and enhance the service they receive.** In 2015, it's time for brands to develop and use a SIXTH SENSE for information.

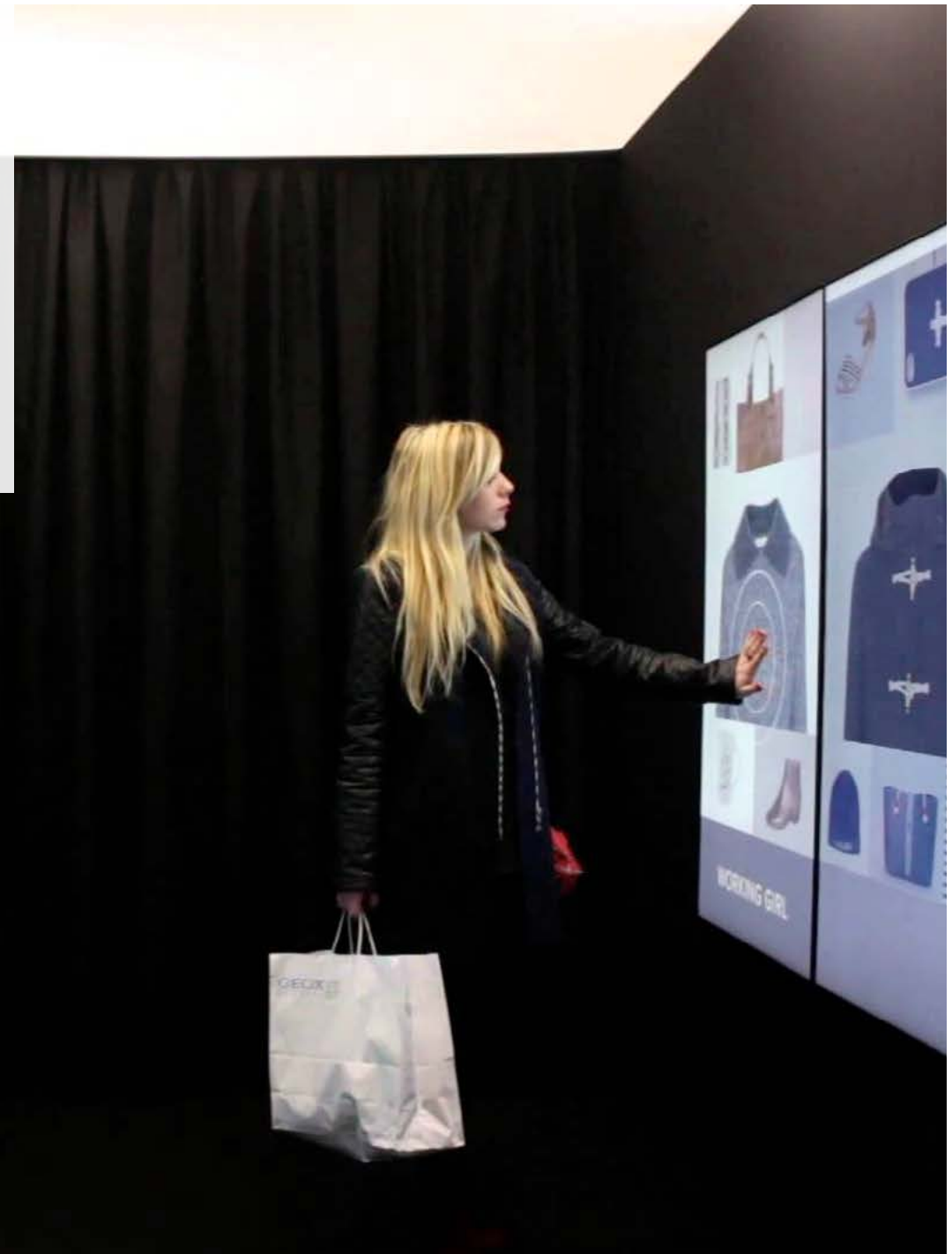


*In 2014, 36% of global consumers are willing to share their current location with retailers via GPS – that's almost double the number who were in 2013.*

IBM, JANUARY 2014

# Klépierre

Touchscreen corridor offers personalized product suggestions





SIXTH SENSE: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

## Prorail & NS

Train station LED display gives real-time data on carriages





SIXTH SENSE: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# Virgin Atlantic & Copenhagen Airport

Airline and airport trial Google Glass for passenger-facing staff





## SIXTH SENSE: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# Ulybka Radugi

Russian cosmetics retailer uses emotion recognition software to offer customized discounts





## 4. SIXTH SENSE

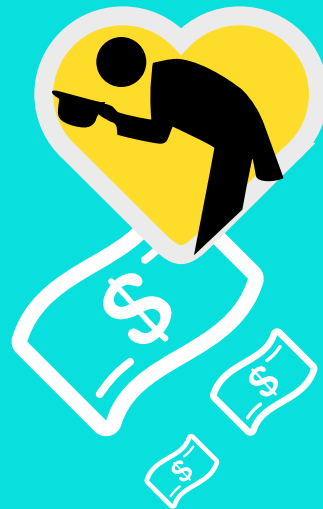
### NEXT

We know what you're thinking. Privacy! Brands with a SIXTH SENSE must be cool and not creepy when it comes to seamless data use and collection. Rising numbers of aware consumers will want to know where you're storing their data, and how you plan to use it. Transparency and common sense are key.



# 5. POLITENESS PAYS

Because good customer service is a two-way street.





## 5. POLITENESS PAYS

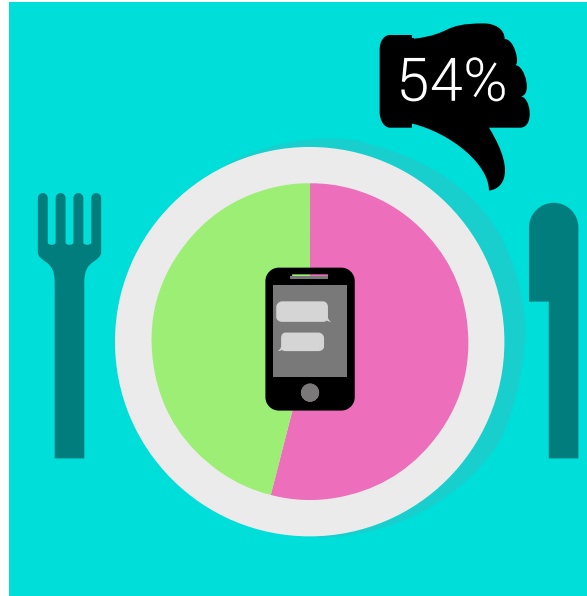
# The worst part about a whole range of consumer experiences?

The other consumers, of course ;)

Yes, the brand/consumer relationship is democratized as never before. But – as we've discussed with trends such as [DEMANDING BRANDS](#) – that has led to some counterintuitive results.

In a relationship of equals, demands can go both ways. And that's why rising numbers of consumers are willing to let brands demand something of them – a little contribution, effort, even pain – in the name of some broader good.

The implications for customer service? **In 2015, smart brands will realize that it's often other consumers who have the greatest impact on customer experience – good or bad.** So they'll encourage – or even force – every consumer to do their bit when it comes to creating a positive atmosphere and ensuring processes run smoothly.



*54% of New York consumers say it is rude and inappropriate to text, tweet, email or talk on a cellphone during a restaurant meal.*

ZAGAT, OCTOBER 2013

POLITENESS PAYS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

# La Petite Syrah

Café rewards polite patrons with discounts





## McDonald's & Coca-Cola

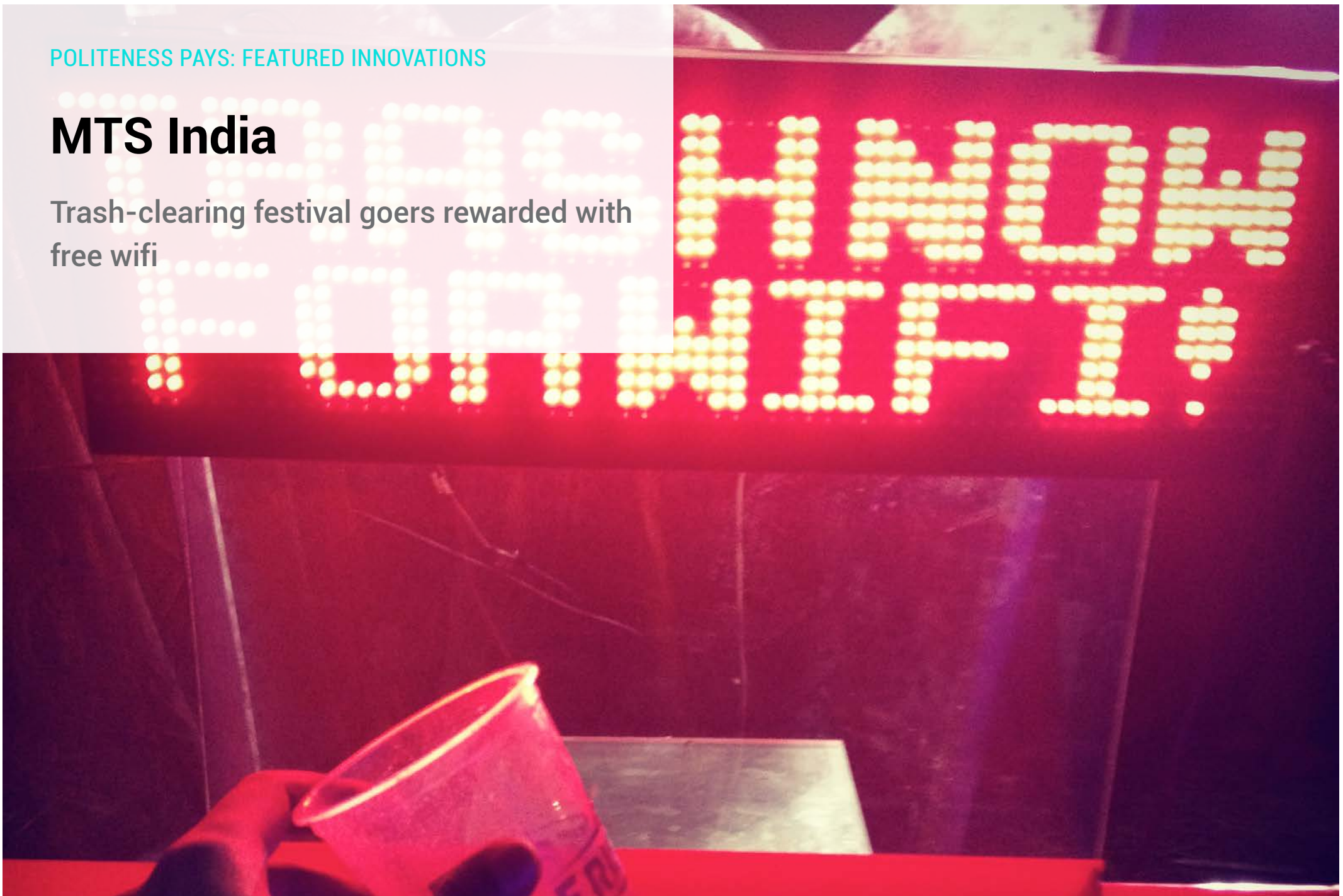
Philippine restaurants reward diners for not using their phones



POLITENESS PAYS: FEATURED INNOVATIONS

## MTS India

Trash-clearing festival goers rewarded with free wifi

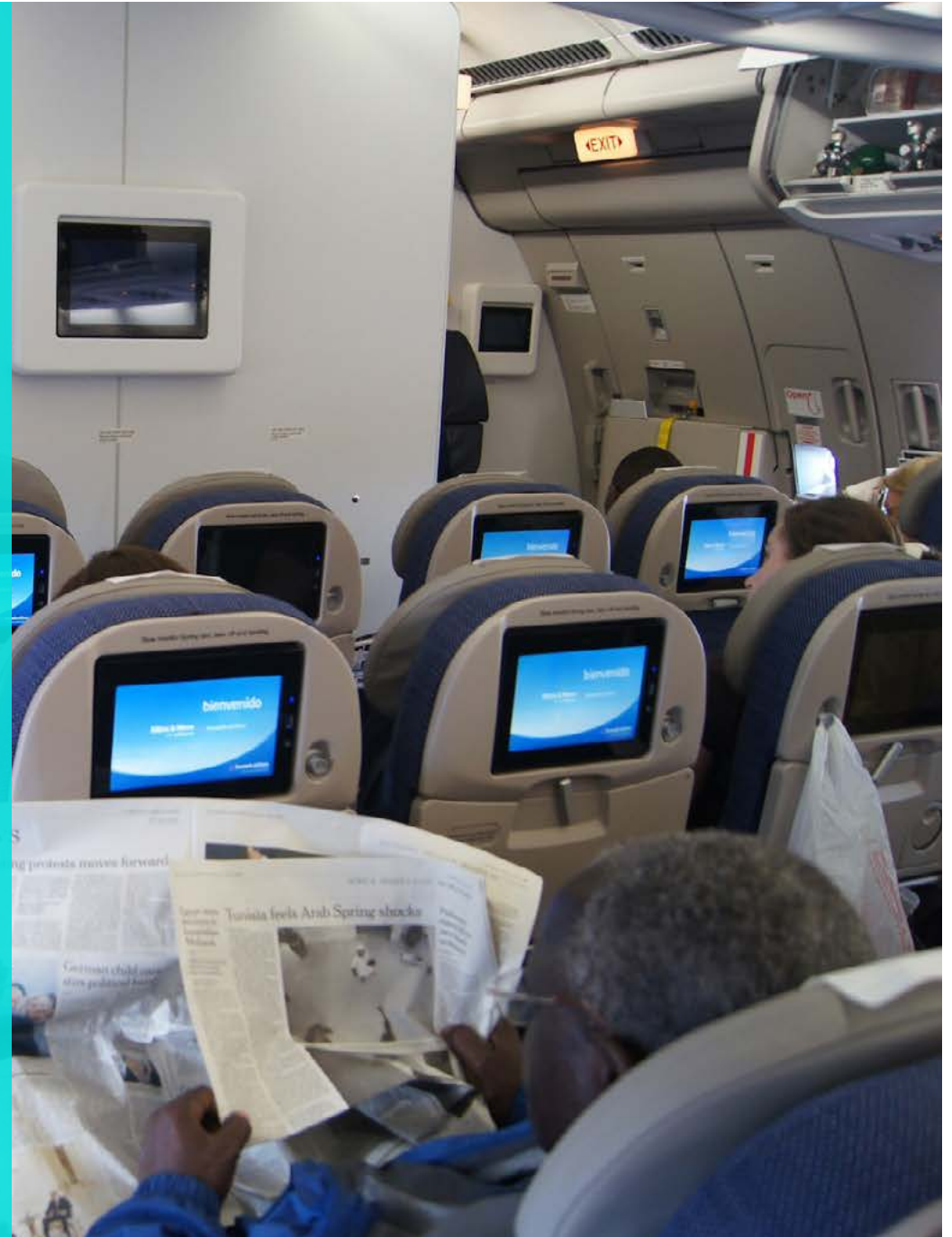




## 5. POLITENESS PAYS

### NEXT

Yes, we've noticed too: right now restaurants and cafés are all over the POLITENESS PAYS trend. But expect it to spread anywhere consumers impact on each other's experiences. Flights? Cinemas? Shopping malls? Swimming pools? The list of potential applications is endless.







IN CONCLUSION...



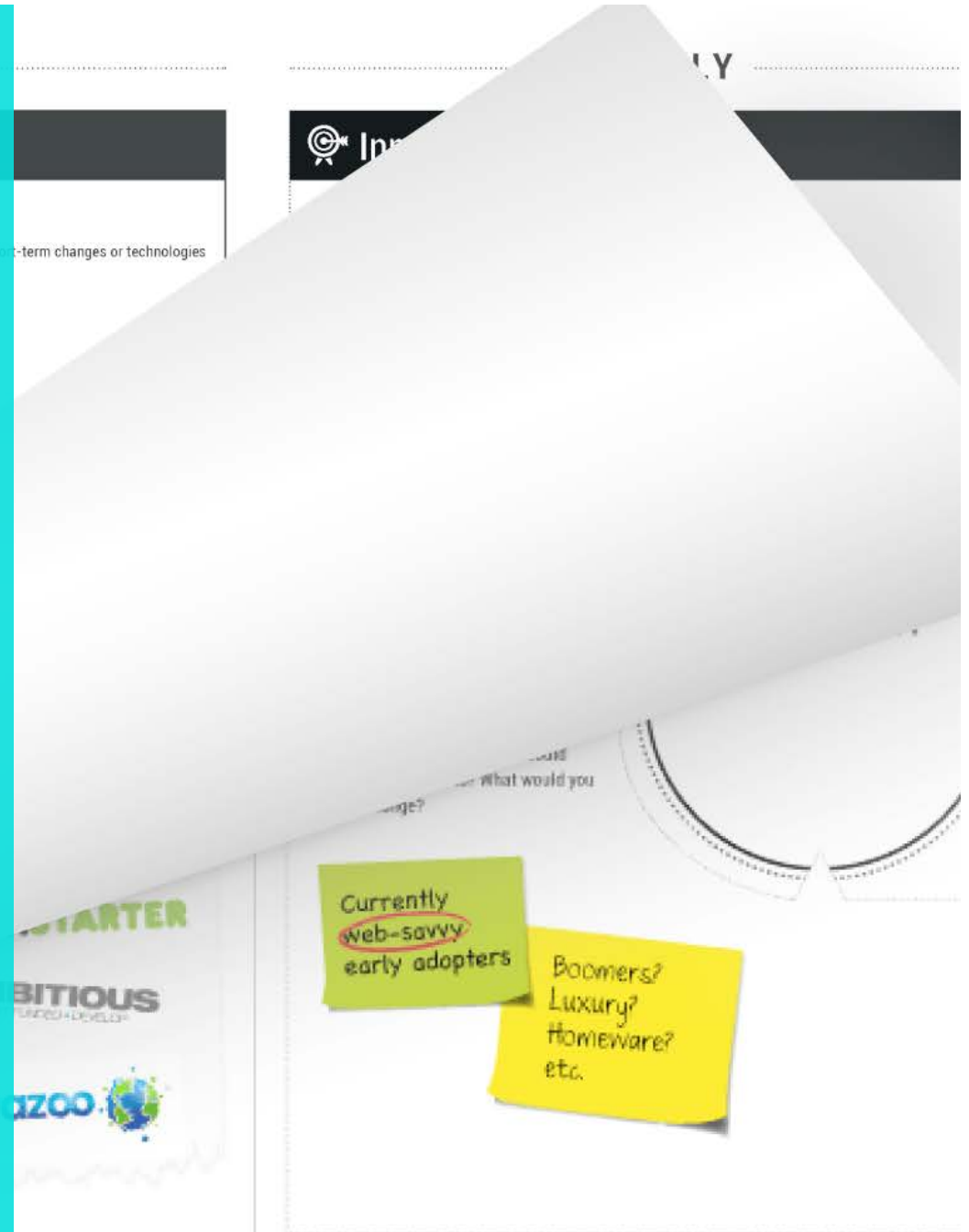
# It's not about the trends.

Ultimately, trends are only a means to an end. That is: delighting, surprising, and serving consumers. So GET GOING!



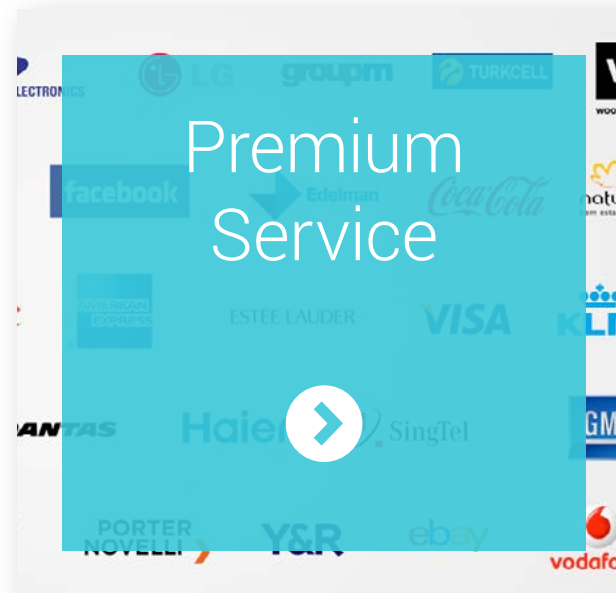
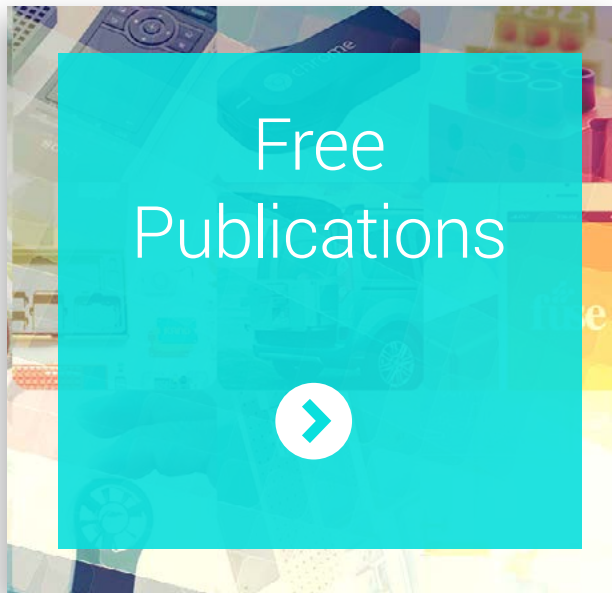
# Want to apply these trends? Use our free CONSUMER TREND CANVAS

This free tool will help you and your team unpack a trend, adapt it for your own context and apply it. And remember, THE FUTURE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE is (forever) about making consumers feel loved!





# — Want more? —



If you have any comments, suggestions or questions then please do let us know. Just email:

**PAUL BACKMAN**  
Chief Client Officer  
[paul@trendwatching.com](mailto:paul@trendwatching.com)

## ABOUT US

Established in 2002, trendwatching.com is the world's leading trend firm, scanning the globe for the most promising consumer trends, insights and related hands-on business ideas. Our Premium Service counts

many of the world's leading brands as clients, while our free monthly Trend Briefings go out to over 250,000 subscribers in 180 countries.

More at [www.trendwatching.com](http://www.trendwatching.com)

