



Accenture Song

Accenture

life trends

2025

About the research

Collecting signals

50+ Accenture Song design studios and creative agencies globally

Accenture Research Song team

Identifying trends

The **Experience Innovation Radar**

Interviews with Subject Matter Experts / Futurists


Testing and validating

Video interviews of 50 people across 8 countries

+24,295 consumer survey covering 22 countries

In-depth conversations with Accenture SMEs

Secondary research for evidence and cases to make the trends come to life



As disruptive breakthroughs dramatically evolve people's digital experiences, they naturally react and adjust their relationship with technology to ensure it still serves them.

Right now, trust online is in the spotlight and people are increasingly scrutinizing what they see and what they believe, affecting how customers behave towards the businesses trying to reach them.

Trend 1



Cost of
hesitations

Trend 2



The parent
trap

Trend 3



Impatience
economy

Trend 4




The dignity
of work

Trend 5



Social
rewilding



Trend 1:

cost of hesitations

What's going on

Hesitation is becoming a reflex as people can no longer automatically trust product images, reviews, marketing campaigns and content they're served online. Organizations must make trust a priority or bear the cost of hesitations.

- Am I in control?
- Is this real?
- Am I safe?

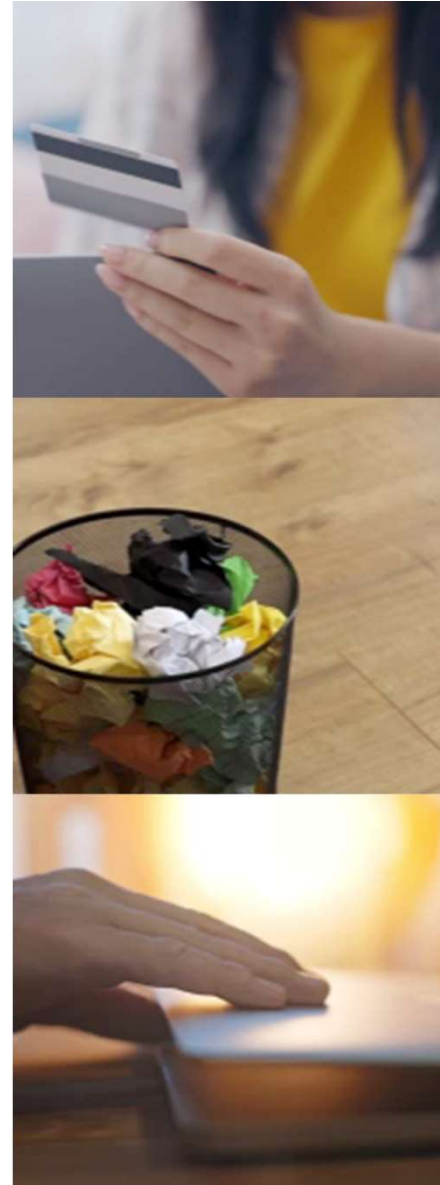
What's going on

Am I in control?

Every moment online is being exploited for value. Algorithmic nudges and suggestions make users question motivations behind everything.

Discovery has created more work for users as they sift through answers. "Slop" and low-quality generative AI content has flooded once-trusted channels.

Consumers are finding new places to discover information on the products and services they are interested in.



48%

of people surveyed feel like shopping is being pushed on them whenever they go online.

Accenture Life Trends survey, 2024

"Enshittification is coming for absolutely everything."

Cory Doctorow, Financial Times

End of the golden era of internet searching.

Janis Lesinskis

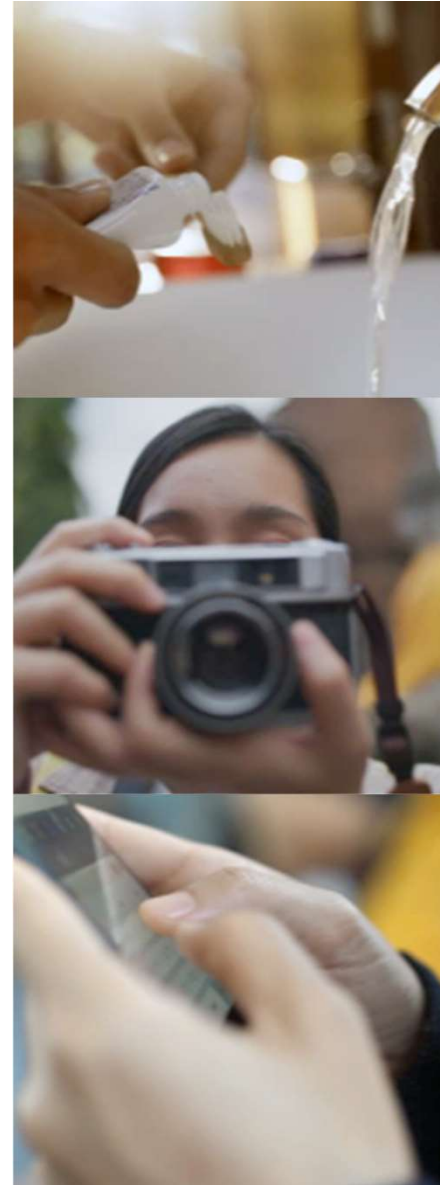
What's going on

Is this real?

Generative AI allows anyone to create content at scale and speed, causing widespread digital pollution.

For users, having to be vigilant to spot it is a new friction point. There is more mental filtering going on, leading to hesitation or even abandonment.

The cost of this impact flows two ways—to people and to the brand.



“BEWARE!! There’s a video out there promoting some dental plan with an AI version of me. I have nothing to do with it.”

Tom Hanks

“Personally, I find fake pictures or videos on the internet very unacceptable. Even though the internet is a virtual environment, virtual does not mean fake.”

YK Zhang, 33, China

Fake reviews: can we trust what we read online as use of AI explodes?

The Guardian

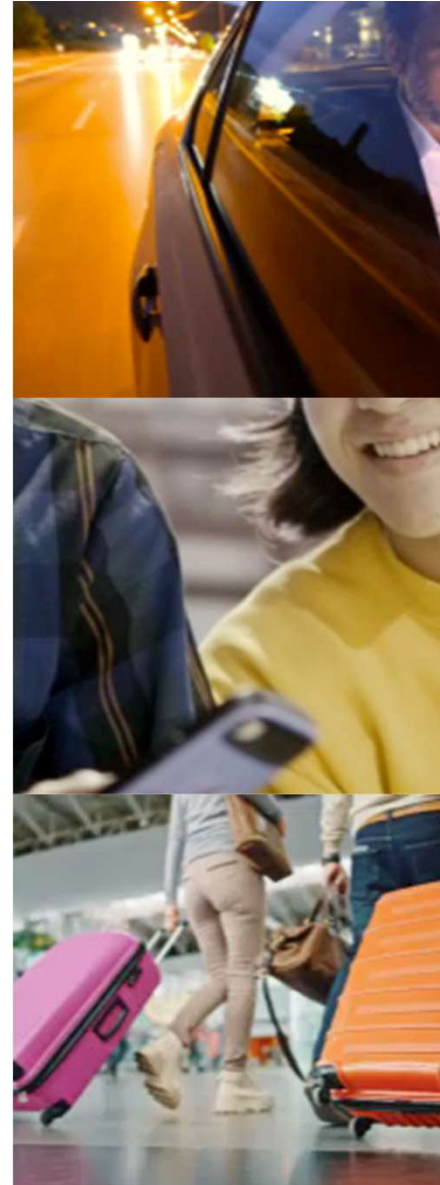
What's going on

Am I safe?

Hyper-personalized harm targets all demographic groups through AI-driven manipulation, exploiting vulnerabilities for scams and abuse.

This is driving acute distress and more chronic consequences.

Criminals whose aim is to scam or defraud people are targeting their finances, dignity and well-being—a task made quicker and easier by generative AI.



Unusual CEO fraud via deepfake audio steals US\$243,000 from UK company.

CNBC

“Every minute people were uploading photos of girls they knew and asking them to be turned into deepfakes,’ Ms Ko told us.”

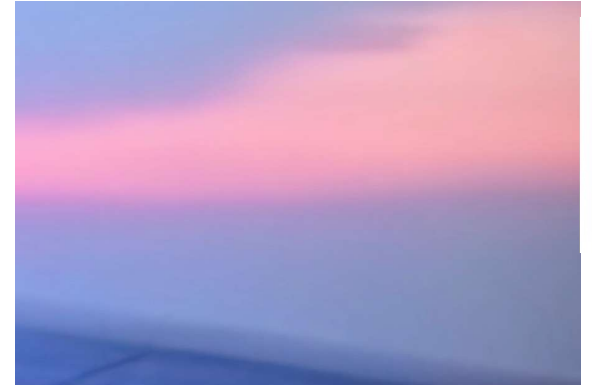
BBC, “Inside the deepfake porn crisis engulfing Korean schools”

Booking.com warns of up to 900% increase in travel scams.

BBC News

What's next

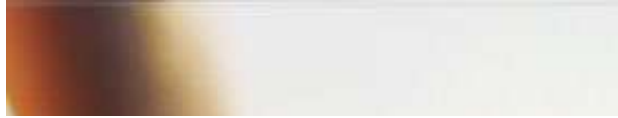
Hesitation alone could be costly for brands, but the next logical step would be devastating. How long will it be before hesitation turns to abandonment? Or a determination to find alternatives?



This affects discovery, sharing,
shopping and socializing.



Accenture Life Trends 2015



What's next

Convenience shifting to trust



Content moderation policies will need to be updated so that trust and safety is invested in and incorporated into the core value chain.

Design and marketing will need to work to help consumers find signals of authenticity in communications, products, and e-commerce websites.

It will be crucial to responsibly seek consent with consumers' data and creators' content. Authenticity is a win-win.

Decontamination, mitigation and permission are key.

We recommend

Platforms must modernize content moderation to address the exponential rise in harmful and deceitful content.

Brands should clearly define how customers can identify them and foster trust across communications and products.

Customers need support and reassurance to minimize risks from scams, with brands providing trusted solutions and advice.

Insurance companies may introduce products to cover deep-fake scams, offering protection for financial losses and legal fees.

Governments may enforce stronger consumer protections, requiring organizations to safeguard against fraud, deep-fake harassment and abuse.

Trend 2:

the parent trap



What's going on

One of today's biggest parenting challenges is helping the next generation shape a safe relationship with digital technology, and finding ways to protect them from the harms posed by unfettered online access. An acceleration of top-down policies from governments and bottom-up action from parents and schools to establish guardrails will have major repercussions for organizations—and soon.

- Living with unintended consequences
- Catalyst for action
- Course correction

What's going on

Living with unintended consequences

Young people are exposed to mental and emotional harm, unrealistic standards and explicit, targeted content and exploitation.

Loud, dominant voices are encouraging extreme behaviors and beliefs, specifically targeting young, developing minds.

The very real risks include long-term impacts on demographically defined attitudes, polarization and desensitization.



56%

of those aged 18–24 are more than twice as likely than those over 55 (23%) to agree that social media significantly impacts how they think about their own identity.

Accenture Life Trends survey, 2024

51%

of 16- to 21-year-old girls have been sent or shown explicit content involving someone they know, compared to a third (33%) of boys.

Children's Commissioner for England

Australia to place age limit on social media use for children.

Samuel Osborne

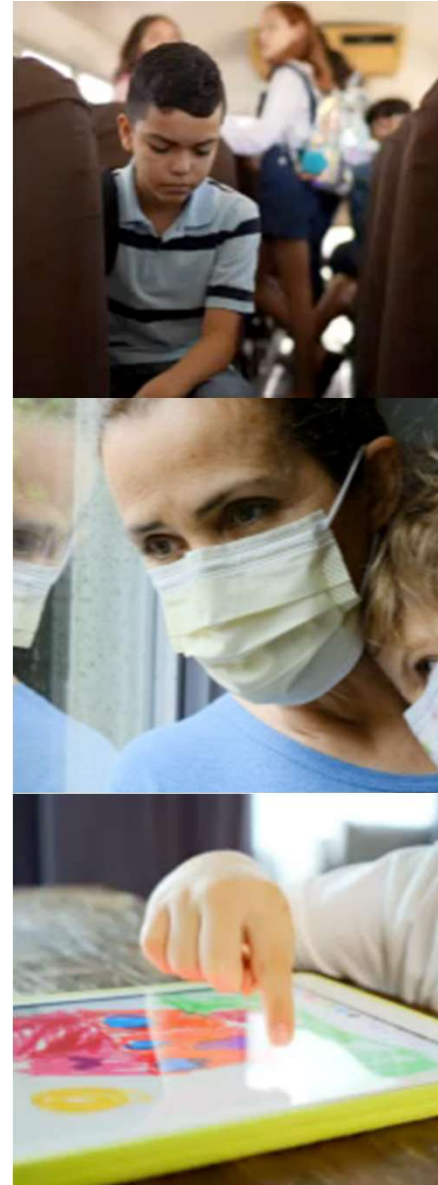
What's going on

Catalyst for action

Jonathan Haidt's book, "The Anxious Generation" was released, confirming what people have felt and suspected in families.

The book highlighted the effect of smartphones and social media on the mental health of younger people since 2010-2012.

Parents face a trap: They want the best, but their kids won't always agree and they model a dependence on tech themselves in daily life.



The Anxious Generation.

Jonathan Haidt

"In public health emergencies, we don't wait for certainty."

US Surgeon General, Vivek Murthy

"I think children spending a lot of time on digital screens is a bad thing. It makes them more isolated from the outside world. They become a bit detached from reality."

Peter, 49, United Kingdom

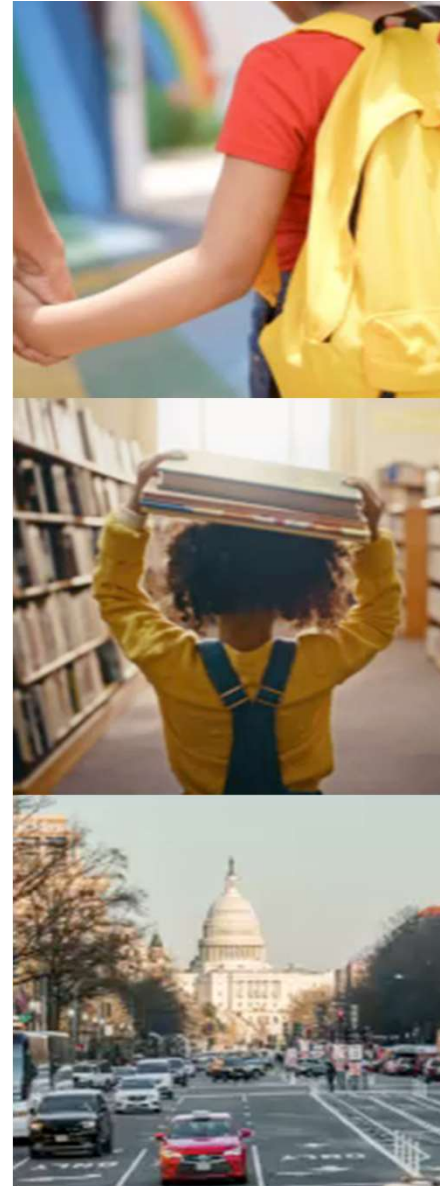
What's going on

Course correction

Bottom-up: Parents are uniting and organizing, wanting to make it normal for young people to live without constant smartphone access.

Schools are starting to ban phones to reduce the negative effect on education and discourage disruptive behavior.

Top-down: Health officials are calling for warning labels and governments are pursuing regulation on limits and usage.



EE warns parents against giving children under 11 a smartphone.

EE Newsroom

Going back in time: the schools across Europe banning mobile phones.

The Guardian

Senate passes the Kids Online Safety Act.

commerce.senate.gov

What's next

Sentiment will continue to spread now that the conversation is in the mainstream. We expect more school bans, more government action and more pressure.

However, as not all parents agree, navigating this will not be straightforward for brands.



What's next

Difficult conversations at home between parents and kids will continue—equilibrium is hard to find



Unbundling may be coming. Most parents want limited and simpler features for their children during highly impressionable years. Brand strategies may need a rethink for the under-16s in a world where simple tech is part of the culture.

Gen Alpha may have a different relationship with digital than Gen Z—and brands will need to adjust their expectations. This may affect a broader population than families as people debate their use of tech.

We recommend

Brands wanting to reach younger people should start to workshop a less digital/social media-dependent strategy.

Brands should redesign or create services that don't depend on smartphones, or that bypass controversial content domains.

Strategists and creatives must ensure they stay on top of what is culturally relevant to potentially fewer online younger customers.

It's important to think through an **organization's** permission space. Will using social media to engage with young people be acceptable for the company?

If parents' gatekeeping role for children and young people expands, **brands** should consider how to create parent-friendly propositions.



Trend 3:

impatience economy

What's going on

For many people, the pursuit of health, wealth and happiness feels slow and tiresome. The power of the crowd—and its strong, person-to-person affinity—is satisfying their impatience for new avenues and mindsets on how to navigate the pillars of a fulfilling life.

- Accessing alternative healthcare
- Earning, spending and investing
- Doing what people love

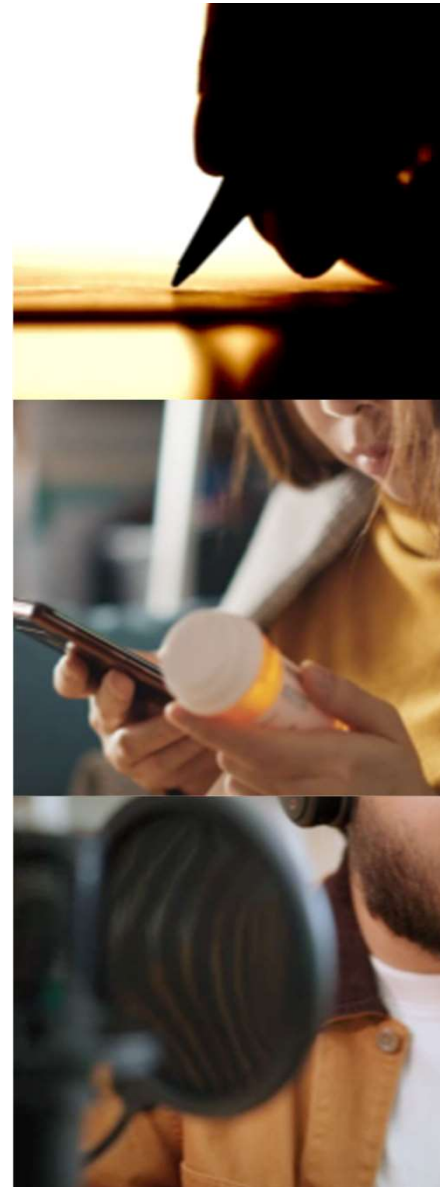
What's going on

Proactive health and well-being

People turn to crowdsourcing platforms for health guidance because the advice and experiences come from real people with similar life circumstances.

Self-diagnosis and alternative treatments are leading people to bypass the formal healthcare process.

Longevity and hyper-personalized health start-ups are allowing people to manage their health proactively.



People self-diagnosing ADHD and autism 'overwhelm services'.

The Times

"This economy is rough so if I have a mild symptom of something that I want to understand, obviously the internet is my friend. And obviously there's [social media] doctors that give you certain advice."

Mel, 40, South Africa

"Enter Andrew Huberman. He has a Ph.D. in neuroscience, with research expertise in optic nerve signaling. His wildly popular podcast claims to make science more understandable while giving you simple, "zero-cost" protocols for your health."

Slate

Accenture Life Trends 2025

What's going on

Alt finance

People increasingly rely on influencers for quick financial advice, bypassing traditional sources, which can lead to both innovative wealth strategies and risky financial behaviors.

Traditional wealth-building is changing form due to social media's promotion of side hustles, personal finance tips, and alternative investments like meme stocks, gambling, and gold.

This may shift consumer attitudes towards traditional institutions like banks.



28%

of people have started a side hustle to boost their income in the past 12 months.

Accenture Life Trends survey, 2024

"I look for shortcuts in every area that I can. Anything that I can do to speed my life, help make things go faster, better, more accurate."

Stan, 46, US

FinTok: how [social media] is helping young people use cash wisely.

The Guardian

What's going on

Affordable joy

Consumers are seeking cost-effective alternatives to experience the joys of their everyday life, like entertainment, content and fashion.

On social media, people find DIY ideas, tips on almost anything, and influencers who share products, places and ways to find joy—within budget.



46%

of people with VPN access use it for streaming services as illegal streaming is surging around the world.

Forbes Advisor 2024

Tyson Fury vs Oleksandr Usyk illegal streaming numbers revealed.

GiveMeSport

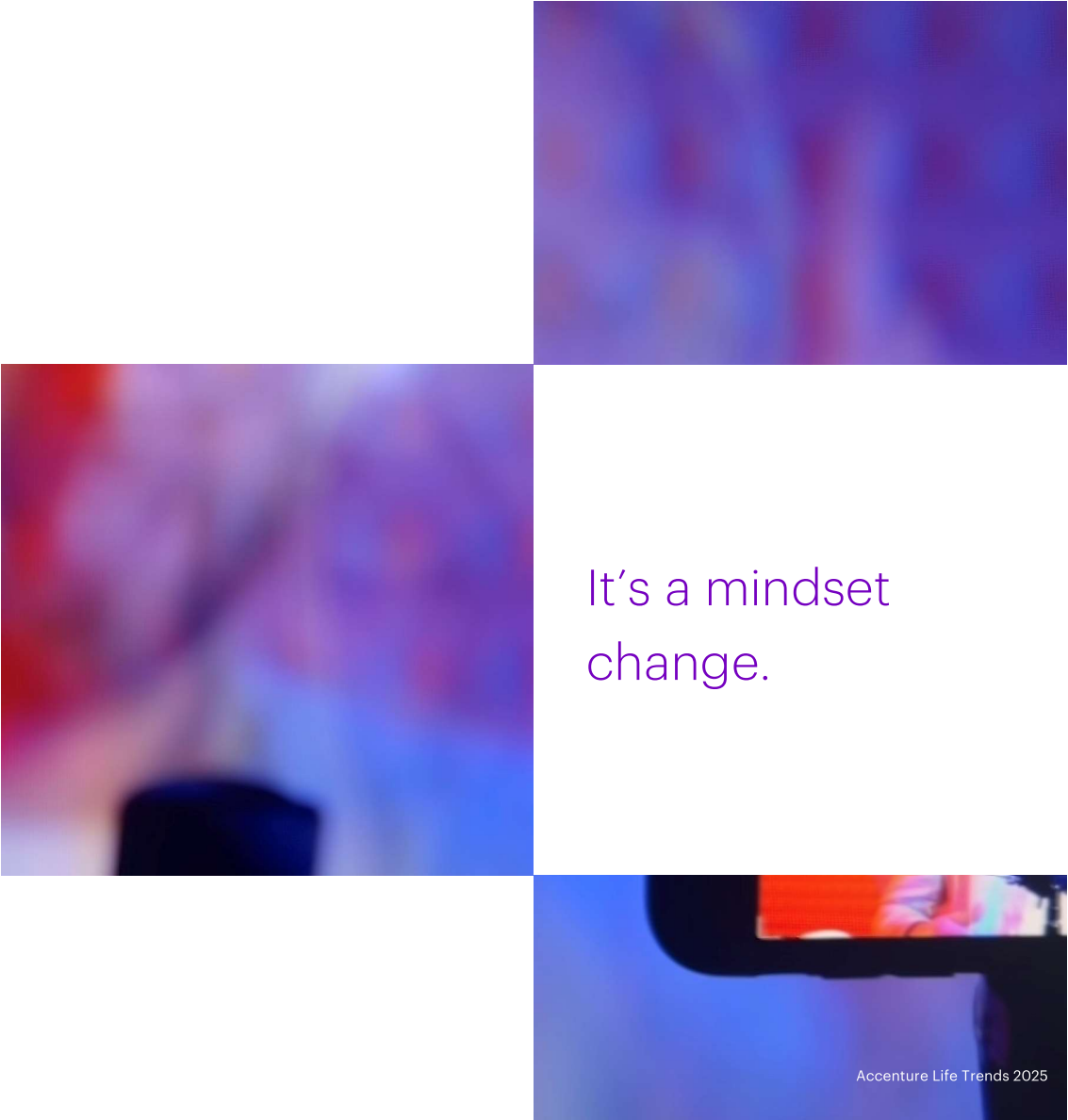
Find stuff you can actually afford.

Dupe.com

What's next

The well-documented role of influencers on discretionary spending (including travel and fashion) is increasingly being applied to big milestone decisions (including jobs, education, investment, retirement, health).

While Cost of hesitations articulates a response to the questionable content people are served, Impatience economy is about the content they seek out and the opportunities that come with that quest.



It's a mindset
change.



What's next

Impatient, proactive and assertive



Influencers' content is relatable. Content and connection are not the same thing.

The opportunity is to serve trusted (and safe) information through brand channels. The key is to understand the motivations behind people's new solutions.

The mentality around direct customer relationships needs to shift from cost to investment.

Is AI a solution? Connection needs to be compelling and—most importantly—human.

We recommend

Brands should be mindful of experience delivery, looking for aspects of the experience that could be minimized—in other words, automated or seamlessly handled through invisible interfaces

Organizations should put customer-centricity at the heart and learn from people's new behaviors. The crowd's power to navigate alternatives shows that there are unmet needs.

Marketing should capture the opportunities found in exploring different routes to provide relatable guidance on how they can better navigate their lives. There's opportunity here to increase the brand's relevancy in the places where people are looking for information.

People are more impatient than ever. Brands should seek out opportunities to position their products and services in other contexts and ecosystems.

Customer service should be put back into focus. People simply aren't getting what they want from brands/businesses, presenting an opportunity to differentiate.



Trend 4:

the dignity

of work

What's going on

The dignity of work is a critical pillar of a healthy workplace, but it's increasingly being shaken by business pressures, technological advances and evolving human dynamics. If employees aren't motivated—with agency—how can they be expected to deliver first-rate products, services and experiences to customers?

- How we got here
- Employees are emotionally distancing
- Perceptions of organizational dehumanization
- Economic pressures are pushing an EX recession

What's going on

How did we get here?

We see many signals that work is feeling increasingly transactional.

Workplace energy seems to be in decline, but the value exchange between employer and employee depends on it. Is neither side investing in it?

The pandemic acted either as an accelerator or catalyst.

For employees, autonomy leads to satisfaction, motivation and creativity. Working from home offers autonomy, but monitoring tools take it away—the return to the office is controversial for similar reasons.



Forrester research predicts that between 2022 and 2024, global employee engagement fell from 41% to 34%, and culture energy from 63% to 55%.

Forrester

82%

of employees say it's important for their organization to see them as a person rather than just a "human resource," but only 45% believe their organization does view them as such.

Gartner

53%

of employees chose not to attend an end-of-year party in 2023. It's a small but significant signal.

People Management

Accenture Life Trends 2025

What's going on

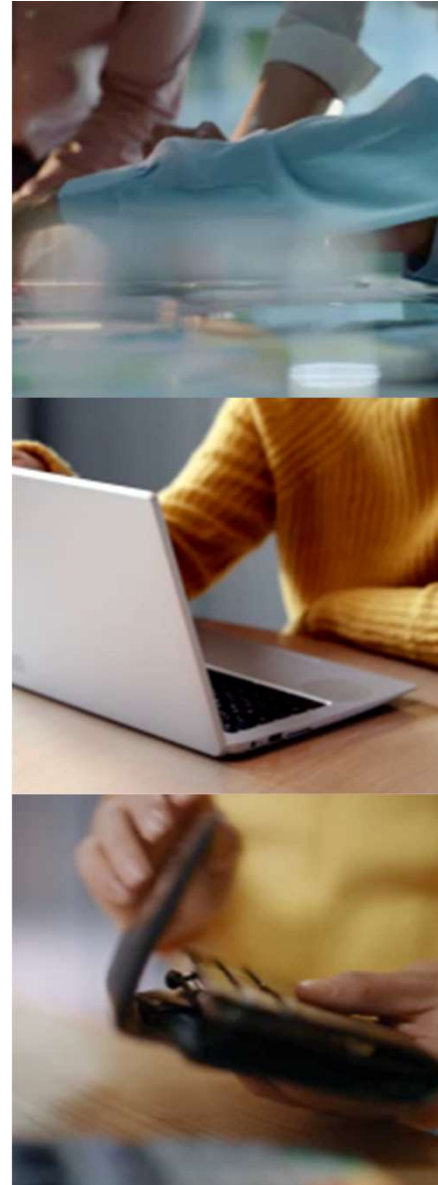
Employees are emotionally distancing

"Improving productivity" is the message most frequently heard (49.5%) by employees from their employers.

Only 29% of employees feel their employer has their best interest at heart.

People are "acting their wage" and investing the effort they feel aligns with their salary.

Workers are airing their grievances and advice online.



29%

of employees trust their company's leaders to have their best interests at heart.

Accenture, Future of Work study

"Susan, do I look like 2 people to you?": influencer is going viral for her philosophy of 'acting your wage' at work.

@sarahisthreads

Money dysmorphia.

The New York Times

What's going on

Organizational dehumanization

Organizational dehumanization refers to employees' perceptions that their organization reduces them to mere tools or instruments at its service.

Technostress describes the pressure of constant tech changes, requiring people to learn new systems alongside other expectations.

As processes and policies strip employees' decision-making power, autonomy is being eroded.



75%

of organizations don't yet have comprehensive strategies to ensure positive employee experiences and outcomes with generative AI.

Accenture

"I've found that the dehumanization of work has been the biggest factor in creating unhappy and disengaged employees. It begins and ends with leadership driving a corporate culture that fails to recognize its workforce as people first, producers second."

**Rasmus Hoogaard for Forbes, CEO
Potential Project**

This HR company tried to treat AI bots like people—it didn't go over well.

The Verge

What's going on

The employee experience recession

Employers' commitment to the employee experience has come into question, according to Forrester.

DEI investment is predicted to decline in the next year—and the same is true for training, despite it being a priority for workers.

Like consumers, employees were primed on more than a decade of talk about the importance of employee experience, so this is a blow.



Forrester predicts that organizational DEI investments will fall from 33% in 2022 to 20% in 2024.

Forrester

28%

decline in training investment among UK companies observed since 2005. However, 32% of employees cited improved training and development as key to boosting their engagement at work.

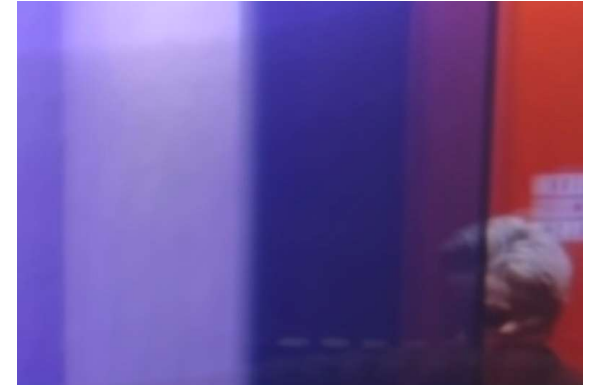
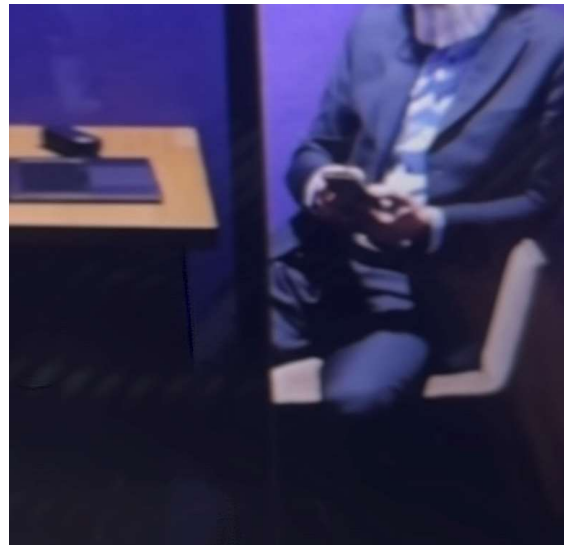
Learning and Work Institute

The UK has seen a significant decline in investment in adult education and training.

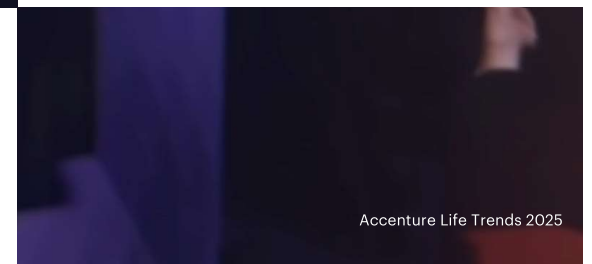
IFS

What's next

We expect to see growing pressure for human agency and dignity to be reasserted in the face of a challenging work culture and new technologies.



This is a
leadership task.



Accenture Life Trends 2025



What's next

Generative AI's ability to create more content fast might create more work, not less—at least initially. In time, however, it will lead to new roles.



Energy is not a given. The best leaders will find it in themselves, then focus on the value exchange in their enterprise, fostering human connection.

As generative AI is rolled out, top-down action on the culture of working with it will be essential, but bottom-up use cases will create more momentum.

Ignoring dignity at work could lead to worse outcomes for customers and business growth. Employee experience drives customer experience—and is a differentiator.

We recommend

Leaders need to kickstart the re-energizing of the workforce.

People need to be treated like people and machines like machines—and AI shouldn't be personified.

Managers and leaders should design fulfilling work structured with dignity and respect to retain the best talent.

Employees must have their voices heard and respected when it comes to AI adoption.

Change management is a constant requirement. Leadership involves creating the right conditions for strategic changes to be made.

A person is riding a bicycle, silhouetted against a bright, hazy sunset or sunrise sky. The person is wearing a light-colored shirt and dark pants. The background is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue tones, suggesting a coastal or open landscape. The overall mood is serene and active.

Trend 5:

social

rewilding

What's going on

In the same way rewilding restores nature's innate rhythms, social rewilding revives people's connections to each other and to the world around them. Finding fulfilment in today's fast-paced world means taking time to disconnect and focus on satisfying activities and meaningful interactions in real life, which is changing the opportunity for businesses.

- Pre-digital nostalgia
- Real-world relationships with the self and others
- Grounded in culture and place

What's going on

Pre-digital nostalgia

Digitally native generations are seeking textures from the past that hold joy and novelty for them.

It's a yearning for a time when friendship was more than tapping Add Friend, and when imperfect audio and visuals were considered charming.

Dumb phones, modern classic cars, disposable cameras and vinyl records are all niche areas that represent an exploration of simpler tech.



CDs up, downloads down? Latest data from the States suggests a revival for every physical format.

MusicRadar

"Kodak has seen demand for film roughly double in the last few years and in July, Harman, Britain's only manufacturer of 35mm film, announced a multimillion-pound investment in new equipment inspired by growing demand."

The Guardian

One year with the Light Phone 2.

The Verge

What's going on

Real-world relationships with the self and others

People are searching for and appreciating deeper emotional connections with others in the real world.

We're seeing a revival of IRL connection and a decline in engagement on dating apps.

Running clubs are a global trend where socializing over a common passion is creating rewarding communities.

A rise in hand-crafting and hobbies is allowing people to deeply focus on one thing, which is becoming rare in modern life.



42%

of respondents said their most enjoyable experience in the previous week was a physical one, while only 15.3% said it was digital.

Accenture Life Trends survey, 2024

"In the past year, I have participated more in physical, face-to-face activities such as reading books, attending live performances, exercising and taking walks. I think brands can interact with me more by organizing more offline events such as activity days, consultation days or exhibition days."

M. Xie, 44, China

62%

say they've sought to have more in person dates over the past 12 months, switching away from online equivalents.

Accenture Life Trends survey, 2024

Accenture Life Trends 2025

What's going on

Grounded in culture and place

Local culture and national pride anchor people to where and who they are. It's an emotional connection to their roots.

People are looking closer to home and to local traditions for inspiration in how they live, from fashion trends to local travel destinations.

Unmistakably human elements are returning to design and creativity, with brand blandness under scrutiny.



Why 2024 will usher in the dominance of loud luxury.

Vogue Australia

China's Gen Z 'city walk' phenomenon is good for brands.

Jing Daily

Beyond the sans serif: how type can move on from 'blanding.'

D&AD

What's next

In the 1990s, digital firms used to say, “Everything that can be digital, will be.” Now, people are questioning whether it should be. This is about people being less surprised and delighted by their smartphone’s latest features and rediscovering sources of joy in the real world.

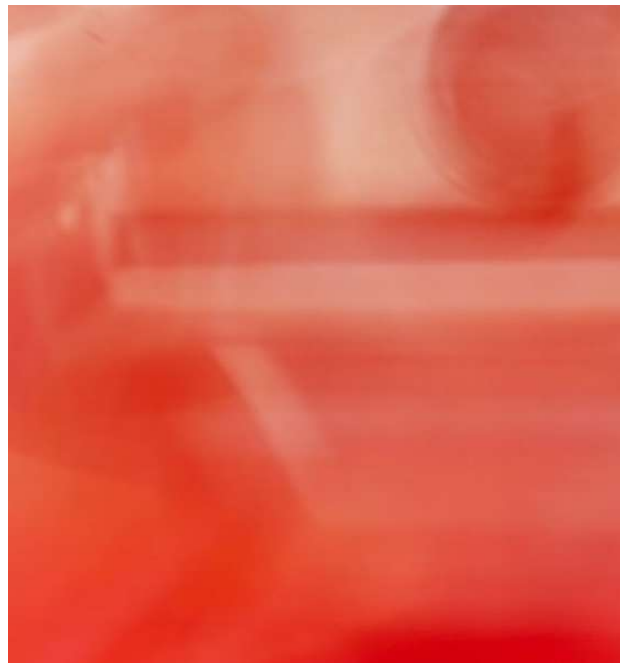


It's a cultural
movement.



What's next

How customers want brands to engage and the channels they prefer may be changing



People will increasingly be balancing digital experiences with physical connection, depth and sensory engagement. This trend may drive sustainability/green issue acceptance and behavior change.

Brands can seek their new sweet spot by:

- Increasing texture in the customer journey.
- Grounding more in local (with nuance and sensitivity).
- Engaging (and measuring) beyond social media.

The pendulum needs to swing back from short-term response on socials to building the brand by telling stories and creating affinity with customers.

We recommend

Designers must consider the brand's role in non-digital experiences by actively seeking out ways to authentically connect with customers in the moments when they're looking for textural, face-to-face experiences, at a time when many brands have shifted the focus to digital.

People are valuing simpler technology. As people reach for simpler technologies in the moments that matter to them, organizations should consider the mindset they're in when they do so and how it may affect their expectations of a brand in that moment. The aesthetics that simple tech advocates have adopted (including film grain and digital noise) are important.

Brands should go local, without the clichés. Brands can build affinity by sensitively connecting with local cultures—without stooping to stereotypes—and highlighting the texture and nuance.

It's time to go green. Certain brands may benefit from embracing the nature-led aesthetic that is becoming increasingly important to people, and/or exploring events or even business models centered on people's desire to get outdoors.

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thank you

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