

HOW



TO

BUILD A BRAND

IN



THE

MODERN



AGE

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# Building a brand in the modern age is tough: while reaching people is easier than ever, actually connecting with them is much harder.

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For years, we've worked for large, global brands and have seen the same principles play out in advertising. But the world has changed. Big brands are finding out that history and reputation aren't enough anymore: they need to speak to people in ways that feel real. Brands are stuck trying to figure out how to show up on TikTok, Instagram and other platforms where culture happens today, using old methods that don't work as well as they used to.

While in the meantime, empires are built by a new breed of brands that are rewriting the playbook on how to build a brand in the modern age. We've taken a close look at these young brands people love today and studied why they resonate with their audiences. By analyzing how they work and what they do differently, we've spotted some clear patterns. Here's what we learned about what it takes to build a brand that matters in the modern age.



■ **Willem Maijvis**  
Strategy Director



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Senior Strategist

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# CASE STUDIES

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LOEWE - VACATION - UPFRONT - GYMSHARK - ARC - JACQUEMUS - POPPI - PHILOS RUN

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# LOEWE

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## A luxury brand that does connect with Gen Z

Loewe has managed to break through the conventions of luxury brands and connect with new and younger audiences in an authentic way.

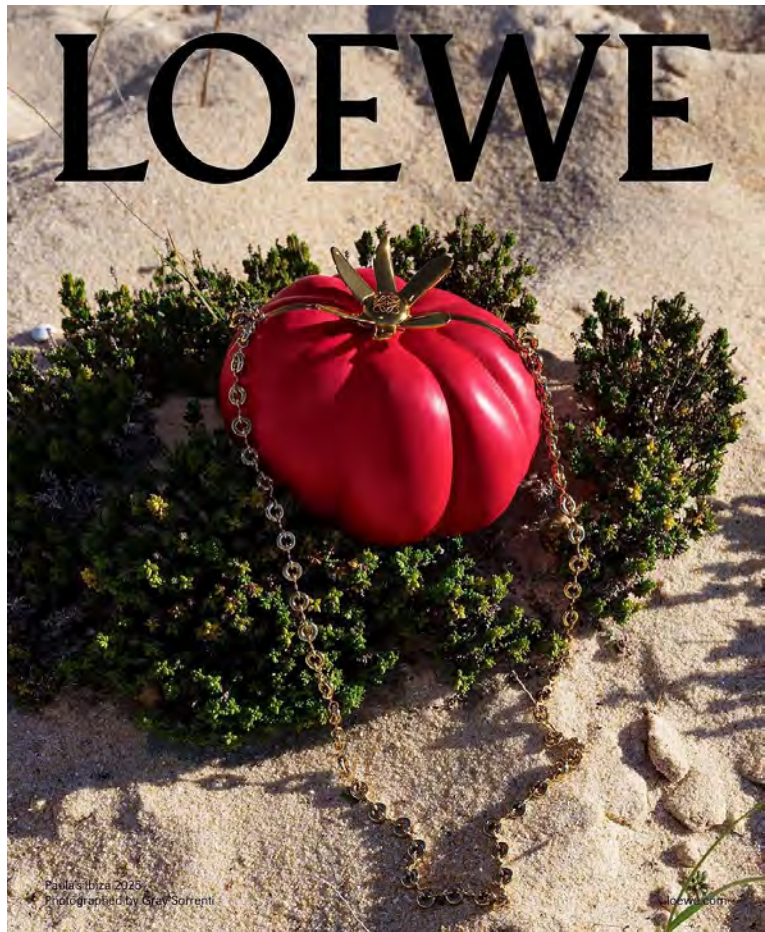
# LOEWE

Traditional luxury thrives on sophistication. Social media doesn't. It rewards **personality**, and Loewe knows exactly how to deliver that. While some luxury brands tiptoe in the chaos, Loewe dove in headfirst armed **with creativity and a fearless sense of fun**. Loewe feels less like a brand and more like a **cool friend** at the party, making everyone laugh and leaving a lasting impression. They also use Tiktok as a direct line to their audience and draw inspiration from it for product innovation – such as the 'Tomato Bag', inspired by a viral meme that stated that 'this tomato is so Loewe I can't explain it' which Jonathan Anderson (Loewe's former creative director) reposted and created 'from meme to reality'.

While other brands struggle to **connect with younger generations**, Loewe understands that today's approach is not about selling a €3,000 bag; it's about planting seeds of aspiration and cultivating emotional connections.

So here's the trick: **start small**. A scented candle for your first apartment. A bottle of perfume to celebrate landing that first "real" job. After time passes and people get older, brands will be able to reap the benefits and capitalize on the existing emotional connection. Another way to reach the younger generations is to **become part of cultural moments and add to it**, such as dressing Rihanna during her iconic superbowl performance and releasing a special collection from the popular Changers movie.

This strategy paid off: in 2024, Loewe was named world's hottest brand (Lyst Index), experienced a more than 20% sales increase YOY and broke the €1 billion barrier in global sales for the first time amid slowing luxury growth, according to recent industry and company reports.



- **Platform specific approach & storytelling:**  
you don't have to behave the same everywhere, as long as you're yourself.
- **Combining craftsmanship with contemporary creativity**  
Loewe proved that creativity in luxury is more than premium visuals & stories
- **Visible creative director**  
People love a present hero. Having the creator present increases closeness.
- **Don't take yourself too seriously**  
Humor works, also for luxury brands

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# VACATION

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## Making Sunscreen Cool

Vacation made sunscreen cool by turning it into an experience rather than just skincare. Instead of a dermatology-first approach, they built a world where SPF is an **aesthetic statement**, blending sun protection with cultural nostalgia.

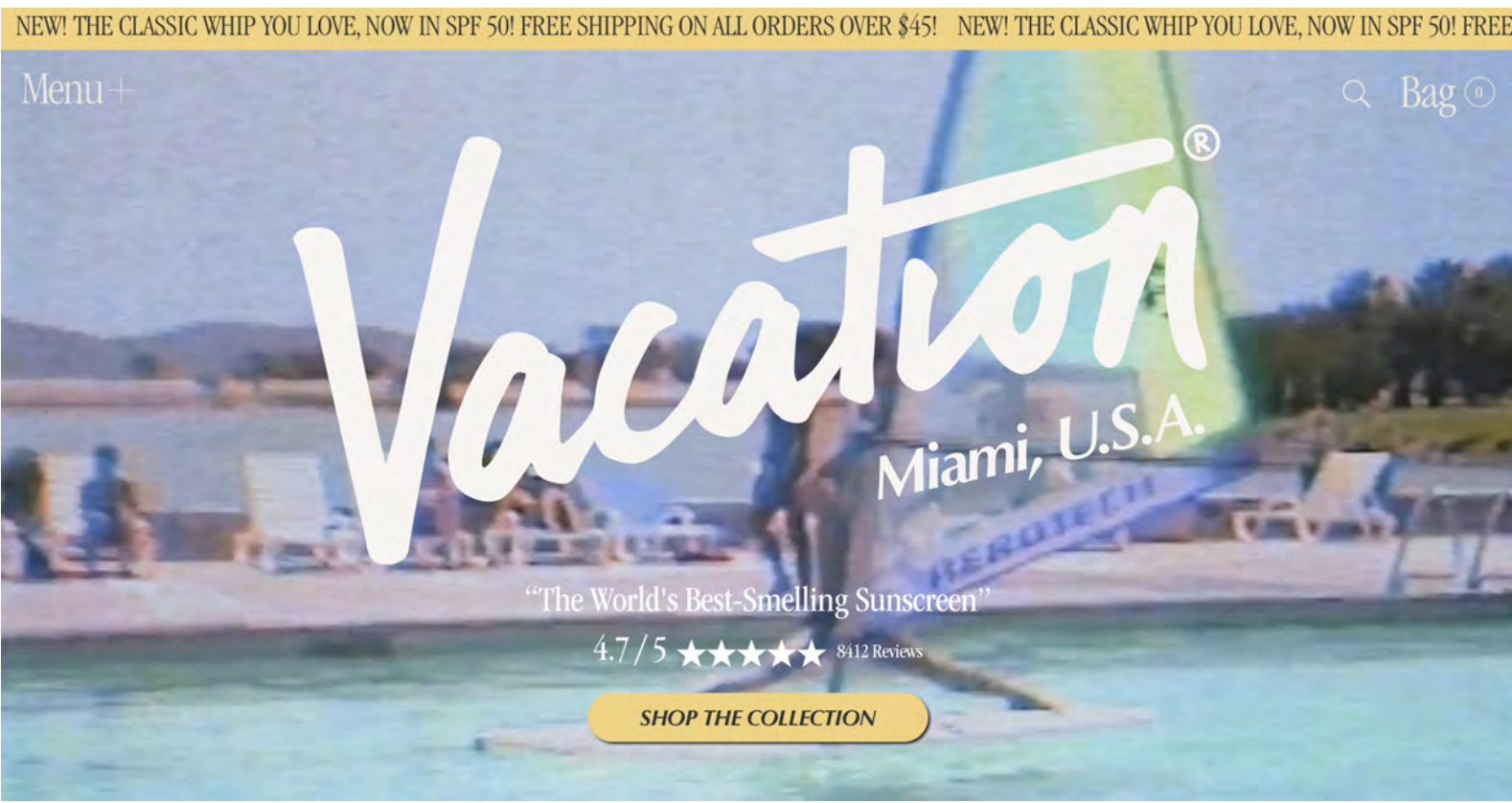
# VACATION

In 2021, Vacation debuted as “the world’s best smelling sunscreen” and is a self-proclaimed “leisure-enhancing” sunscreen brand based in Miami. Rooted in stylized 80s and 90s nostalgia, every detail—from whipped cream sunscreen to ‘Chardonnay’ tanning lotion—makes the brand distinctive, playful, and conversation-worthy. Their products are intentionally **designed to spark curiosity and conversation**.

Unlike typical consumer brands, Vacation didn’t start with a product but with a community. Created by the team behind Poolsuite, a cult-favorite online radio station, it naturally evolved from an engaged audience who already embraced the laid-back, sun-soaked lifestyle. This early buy-in set the stage for successful product launches, with fans eager to bring the brand’s world into their own lives.

Now, Poolsuite is extending its influence beyond sunscreen, launching projects like a **Polo Ralph Lauren NFT** for exclusive access to events and **Manor DAO**, a Decentralized Autonomous Organization where members collectively own and manage an invite-only hotel, embodying their signature retro-luxury aesthetic.

Vacation earned \$40 million in revenue in 2024 and is projected to hit \$80 million in sales for 2025. The company jumped from No. 24 to No. 13 in U.S. sunscreen sales rankings within a year , expanded into major retailers including Target, Ulta, and Costco , and completed a \$6 million Series A funding round in 2023.



- **Community first:** Built an audience before launching products.
- **A creative world, not just a product:** Builds an immersive brand lifestyle to which products are added.
- **Products designed for virality:** Nostalgic, playful, and shareable packaging.
- **Brand beyond products:** Expands into NFTs, DAOs, and experiences.



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# UPFRONT

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## The food brand that tells it like it is

Upfront's mission is to build the Anti-Unilever. Born out of frustration with misleading labels, unhealthy ingredients, and shady marketing, this Dutch brand is on a mission to make packaged food **honest, clear, and transparent.**

# UPFRONT

**No fluff, no gimmicks.** Upfront built a real community through raw, unfiltered storytelling, exposing the ways big food brands are tricking consumers. Its founders put themselves out there, sharing the good, the bad, and the messy, because trust comes from showing everything, not just the polished bits.

Their slogan, **“What is honest wins,”** isn’t just a tagline, it’s the rule they live by. That’s why their packaging is bold and simple: **ingredients and nutrition facts front and center.** No hidden tricks. No fine print. Just natural ingredients designed to help you live in a healthy way.

Upfront proves that **radical honesty works.** They’re not chasing profit at any cost. They’re creating a movement where education, trust, and realness matter more than marketing spin. And it paid off: in 2023, 3 years after the company was founded, revenue tripled to 6,3 million euros and prognosis for 2024 was to even grow to 20 million.



- **Mission-first:** Fighting misinformation in the food industry.
- **No ads, just content:** Storytelling built around honesty and transparency.
- **Founders & team as faces:** Founders and employees lead the brand’s messaging.
- **Honest packaging:** Ingredients and nutrition facts front and center.
- **Trust sells:** Integrity as a competitive advantage.



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# GYM SHARK

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## Grass-Roots Gym Apparel

Gymshark flipped the fitness apparel industry on its head.

**No celebrity endorsements. No massive ad spends. Just raw community power.**

# GYMSHARK

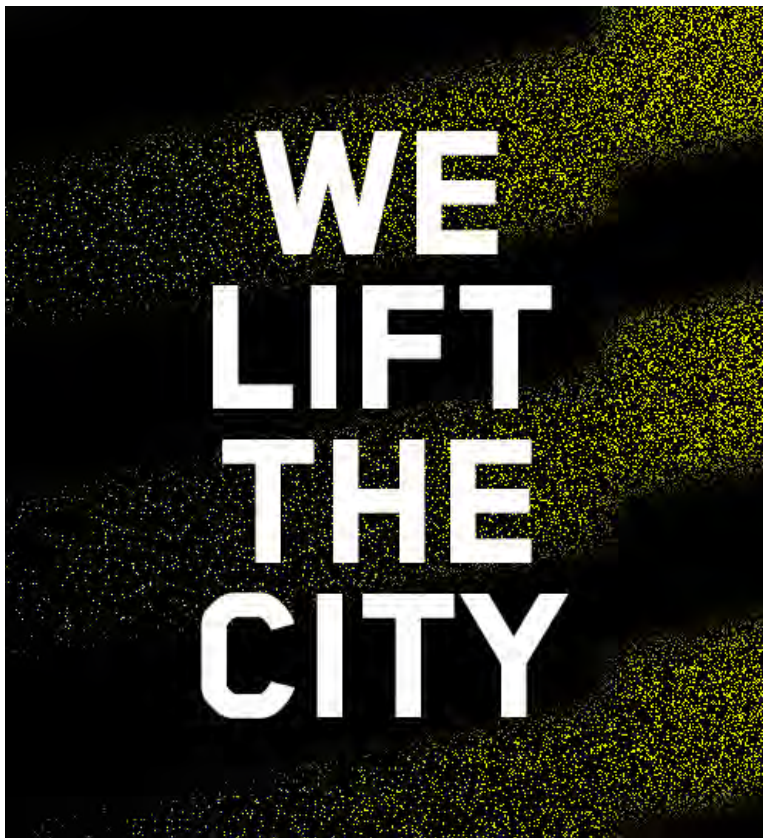
What started in a Birmingham student bedroom became a \$ 1 billion brand by **harnessing social media and grassroots influence like no other.**

Instead of chasing big-name athletes, Gymshark built a network of real fitness enthusiasts. **‘Team Gymshark’ is a badge of belonging.** The brand handpicked upcoming fitness influencers to share their workouts, progress, and personal stories. Founder Ben Francis and other employees frequently appear in brand content, reinforcing authenticity and making Gymshark feel more personal and relatable.

Gymshark’s marketing is built on the **engagement over promotion principle.** Their content isn’t about hard selling but about fostering motivation, education, and connection. They are a constant presence in their audience’s daily lives through workout guides, curated playlists, and behind-the-scenes insights make their brand a constant presence in their audience’s daily lives. Their product drops are a **masterclass in anticipation.** Teasers, influencer collaborations, and limited releases create urgency and exclusivity, with customer feedback shaping new launches.

Their **offline presence is just as strong.** Pop-up events like **“We Lift This City”** blend fitness classes, influencer meet-ups, and exclusive gear drops, turning Gymshark into an immersive real-world experience. Viral challenges like **“66 Days, Change Your Life”** further cement their reputation for community-driven brand building.

Gymshark proves that in today’s world, **community isn’t just part of the strategy: it *is* the strategy.**



- **Influencers first:** don’t partner with celebs, but turn upcoming fitness creators into celebs.
- **Founder-led:** Ben Francis and employees as the face of the brand.
- **Content over ads:** Motivation and education around shared passions drive engagement.
- **Hype-driven drops:** Teasers and exclusivity build demand.
- **Real-world impact:** Pop-ups and viral challenges boost connection.



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# ARC

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## Artisanal Software for Tech Lovers

Arc is a new type of web browser built to change how people use the internet. Instead of being just another browser, it adapts to users' needs, making online navigation easier, more organized, and collaborative.

# ARC

The company behind it, aptly named The Browser Company, prioritizes **transparency, community, and storytelling** over traditional marketing.

The Browser Company puts users at the heart of its evolution. Through **community-driven development**, it shapes features based on direct feedback, while **radical transparency** builds trust by openly sharing business decisions in regular 'Arc Updates.'

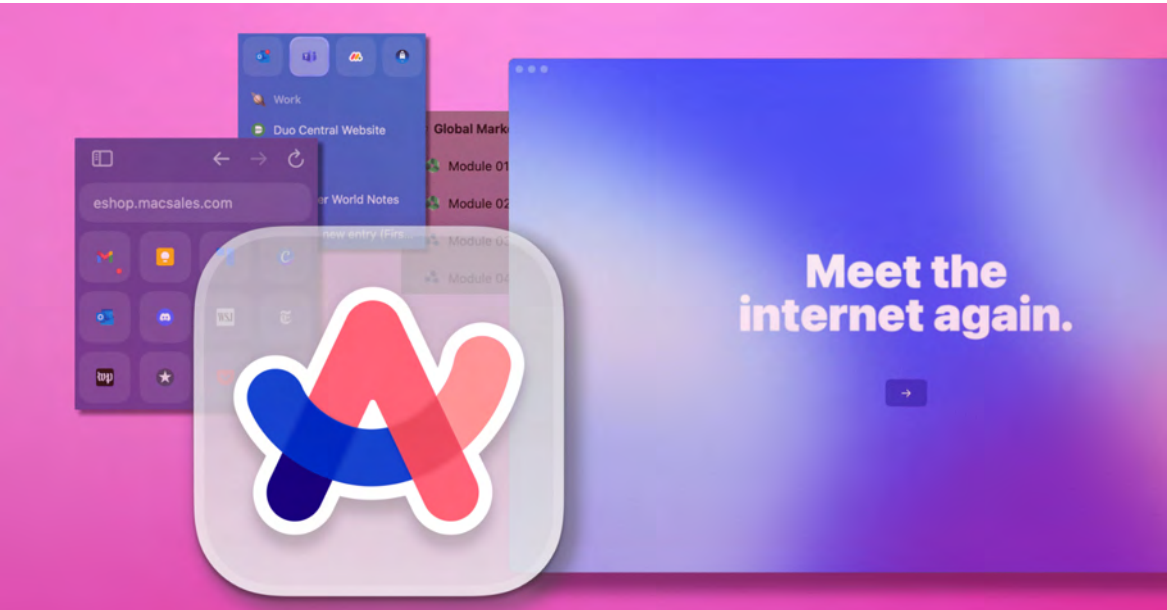
Its **invite-only launch** generated early excitement, refining the product before scaling and attracting **early adopters and tech enthusiasts** who aligned with its vision. Invite links quickly became sought-after status symbols in the tech scene.

Instead of relying on ads, they use a **content-first approach**, engaging users with short films, social media, and video storytelling. Rather than competing directly with major browsers, it **creates its own space**, offering a distinct experience that Chrome and other competitors lack. By making its team visible, sharing updates and engaging directly with users, Arc adds a personal touch that strengthens its community. Committed to **constant innovation**, Arc continues refining its browser together with their fans.

By putting users first, Arc has grown from an experiment into a strong player in the browser space, proving that transparency, community, and creativity can set a brand apart, even in a market dominated by giants. And that led to the Browser Company being acquired by Atlassian for \$610 million in September 2025.



- **Community-first development:** Users shape the product through direct input and feedback.
- **Transparency as a strategy:** Publicly shares business decisions and product evolution.
- **Content over ads:** Engages users through films, social media, and storytelling.
- **Exclusive early access:** Invite-only launch built anticipation and loyalty.
- **Defining a new category:** Positions Arc as an alternative rather than a competitor



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# JACQUEMUS

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## Cheeky & Chic

Jacquemus proves that fashion is more than clothing.  
It's a narrative.

# JACQUEMUS

This relatively young, independent luxury brand owes much of its success to founder Simon Porte Jacquemus’ **authentic** and **intimate** storytelling. By weaving his heritage, emotions, and personal flair into every stitch, he’s built a brand that feels less like fashion and more like a **heartfelt memoir** (with a chic French Twist: you can see, feel, smell, hear the French Riviera in everything Jacquemus does).

Rather than following established luxury playbooks, Jacquemus creates a world where luxury is **playful, approachable, and provocative**. The perfect mix between cheeky and chic.

To start with: everything you see is **visually appealing**, even **surrealistic**. From CGI bags rolling through the streets of Paris and fashion shows in lavender fields to bags being actual stores, it is **impossible to scroll past** the beautiful creations of the brand. The brand also **transcends its own category** by blending fashion with food and other immersive fashion shows. He creates experiences rather than sales events.

He’s built a brand that feels simultaneously **exclusive and intimate**, and visually distinctive. And that sells: Jacquemus has propelled its **growth** from €11.5 million in revenue in 2018 to approximately €280 million in 2023, expecting to hit €500 million in sales by 2025 driven by expansions into new markets, new product lines and a growing retail presence with flagship stores in Paris, Dubai, New York, and London.



- **Founder = the brand:** personal storytelling is at the core of the brand. You can feel, hear, see and smell the French Riviera in everything that Jacquemus puts out there. The brand feels intimate, like you’re part of his world.
- **Visual & viral:** everything about Jacquemus is shareable and stands out in your feed using CGI and design. Even products are designed to go viral, from oversized hats to tiny bags.
- **Challenge conventional norms:** he’s not afraid to take a stand.
- **Transcend categories & create experiences** (fashion, food, art, experience - everything is possible)
- **Community building:** he cultivates relationships with influential fashion figures, creates inclusive campaigns with models and engages with audiences directly through his personal social media

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# POPPY

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## Redefining soda for the next generation

What started as an experiment with apple cider vinegar to solve gut problems ended up as a prebiotic soda that disrupted the beverage industry.

# POPPI

I Instead of avoiding the word soda, Poppi reclaimed it flipping the script for Gen Z and Millennials who grew up being told soda was bad.

How the founders Allison & Stephen Ellsworth did it?

They rebranded “better-for-you soda” as a lifestyle flex instead of a science textbook solution. With vibrant **packaging**, **cheeky copy** and strategic **creator collaborations** they made gut health cool and made Poppi a pop culture phenomenon.

Unlike legacy soda brands that lean on **heritage**, Poppi **lives on TikTok**. After a 2020 Shark Tank appearance, Poppi went viral and built a cult following with **founder** Allison Ellsworth as the **face of the brand**. Their social-native strategy is built on playful, creator-led content and quick feedback loops, turning trends into brand moments in real time. Their success attracted A-list fans and investors like Hailey Bieber, Kylie Jenner, and Billie Eilish, and in 2024 they went full mainstream with a Super Bowl ad. Despite the hype, they remain culturally sharp and **committed to their community**.

Beyond social virality, Poppi’s marketing is a masterclass in **visual identity**. Poppi’s cans are designed for the **feed and the fridge**. The message? “Be gut happy. Be gut healthy.” The result? #1 soda on Amazon, a 19% market share—1.5x Coke’s—and a \$1.8B acquisition by PepsiCo in 2025. Not bad for a soda brand that dared to be different.



- **Function but make it fashion:** Combines real health benefits with a fun, aspirational lifestyle (including viral merch that fits right in the GenZ aesthetics)
- **TikTok-native brand:** Built on creator partnerships and viral content, not paid media.
- **Founder-as-creator:** Allison Ellsworth became the face of the brand and its hype engine.
- **Designed to win:** Colorful cans and cheeky tone drive shareability and shelf appeal.
- **Exclusive giveaways & collabs:** by collaborating with (high profile) brands and creators they are pushing towards new audiences of all ages



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# PHILOS RUN

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## Running as Ceremony

Philos Running isn't your typical sportswear brand. Founded by the initiator of one of the biggest run clubs in Europe (the Sunday Run Club in Amsterdam) it is **community first, product second**.

# JAQUEMUS

Philos rejects the hyper-masculine, performance-first narrative that dominates the sportswear industry. Founded with a mission to reimagine running through a feminine and ritualistic lens, Philos creates a space where **functionality meets a sense of belonging**. Drawing inspiration from ancient Greek philosophy and the historic Panathenaic Stadium it clearly positions running as a **physical and emotional experience**. It is about feeling strong, not just being strong.

They **foster their community** through weekly runs in Amsterdam and platforms like Strava, making the act of running a shared, almost sacred, experience. Philos doesn't just sell clothing; it **curates a movement**, one that celebrates vulnerability, connection, and the shared joy of running.

Sportswear giants often focus on technical superiority or celebrity endorsements to sell their products. Philos shows that **connecting on a cultural and emotional level** by blending storytelling, history, and community can carve out a **niche**. Established brands should rethink how they approach **underserved audiences**, in this case women, and really dive into culture to have an **authentic presence** with (new) audiences.



- **From Community to Community Brand:** founder started as initiator of the highly popular Sunday Run Club in Amsterdam and started a running brand after. Their place in the community gives the brand instant credibility, visibility and ambassadors
- **Ceremony over performance:** their POV 'running as a ceremony' and visual identity with links to ancient Greece makes clear that running is almost spiritual. And being part of this community is more than being a customer.
- **Serving a clear niche:** the brand speaks directly to women with a focus on elegance, comfort and functionality – filling a gap in a male dominated industry



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# COMMON TACTICS

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After analyzing these upcoming brands, from beverage disruptors to beauty innovators, clear patterns have emerged in how modern brands successfully challenge their categories.

Let's examine the key principles driving their success.

# BE A CREATOR, NOT AN ADVERTISER

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The days of isolated brand advertising pushed through traditional media channels are over.

The era of linear media and scheduled commercial blocks has given way to a dynamic digital landscape where attention is shared between publishers, advertisers, creators, and audiences. Forward-thinking brands have learned to navigate and leverage **this fragmented reality**.

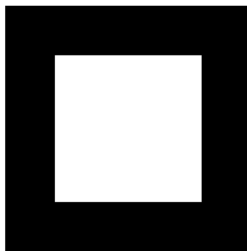
Today's consumers don't turn to social media for advertisements: they seek **entertainment, inspiration, and information**. The most innovative brands recognize this and position themselves as **media companies** rather than just product manufacturers. Instead of pushing product messages, they **cultivate dedicated followings** by creating targeted content that educates, inspires or entertains their audience, making it a two-way conversation.

By fostering strong **community** connections, they encourage authentic engagement both with the brand and among community members. As renowned marketer Marcus Collins aptly put it: **"First the soul, then the sale."** The strategy is to **stand alongside customers**, aligning with their interests and joining their communities, rather than shouting product messages at them from across the divide.

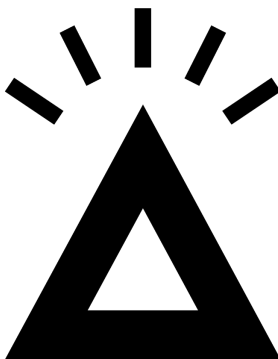
The outcome is powerful: a customer base already emotionally invested before product launch and a **direct channel of communication** with the audience. Philos Running exemplifies this approach, beginning as a running club before launching their women-focused running brand, making their products a natural extension of an existing community. Even now, their content celebrates the running community more than their merchandise. Similarly, Vacation built an immersive, nostalgic atmosphere through Poolsuite FM, engaging consumers with their brand world long before releasing their sunscreen products.



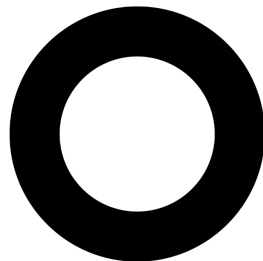
What conversations are you part of if you wouldn't be selling a product?



Convention:  
BRANDS ARE CORPORATE  
BROADCASTERS



Disruption:  
BRANDS ARE THE  
NEW CREATORS



Vision:  
FROM ADVERTISER  
TO CREATOR

DON'T BE  
FOR EVERYONE,  
BE YOURSELF

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The most effective brands today understand a core truth: trying to appeal to everyone connects with no one. Instead, they target their core audience, their niche, true fans, and create specifically for them.

Targeting your niche and creating for them **naturally attracts like-minded individuals** and eventually, makes sure the rest will follow. This requires profound understanding of your audience's values, **authentic participation** in their community, and the courage to articulate a clear vision of what it means to belong to this group. **Taking a stand also means making choices:** declining opportunities, acknowledging disagreements and inviting both alignment and opposition.

The strength of a clear perspective inevitably produces **divided opinion**. When Oatly boldly challenges the dairy industry or Liquid Death transforms water marketing, they intentionally attract their ideal audience and potentially alienate others. **Universal appeal is impossible.** Commitment to your core idea is essential, and necessary for distinctiveness. **To be truly remarkable, a brand must be distinctive.** Having a clear worldview and translating that perspective into creative expression is the key to making a lasting impact.

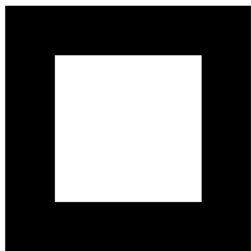
Modern brands demonstrate this principle in diverse ways. **Upfront** leads a movement against "Big Food," positioning themselves as the antithesis to industry bullshit. Their **dedication to transparency** infuses every business aspect, from ingredient sourcing to packaging design to sharing their vision and plans before realizing them. This genuine alignment between belief and action crafts a compelling narrative that consumers not only believe in but actively champion, rallying behind Upfront as both a brand and a company.

**Vacation** demonstrates a different approach. Rather than focusing on social reform, they commit to creating extravagant luxury experiences. This stance remains authentic because they **clearly communicate who they are** and for whom, but more importantly – **who they are not**. They've carved a distinctive space in the crowded suncare market by embracing indulgence and playfulness, demonstrating that **effective brand perspectives manifest in various forms**. They deliberately avoid appealing to broader audiences because that contradicts their core identity.

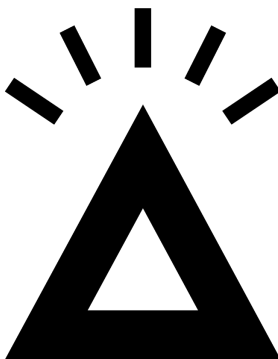


How can you develop and articulate a point of view that's authentic enough to inspire genuine connection, yet bold enough to stand out in an increasingly crowded marketplace?

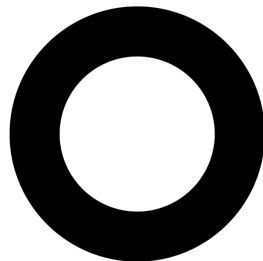
What party can you start for brand fans to join?



Convention:  
DO WHATEVER IS THE  
CURRENT THING



Disruption:  
POV FIRST



Vision:  
AN ENDURING OPINION  
AS NARRATIVE

# BREAK THE FOURTH WALL

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Most companies keep consumers in the dark.  
We rarely see how they operate or how their products come to life.

Today’s move toward founder-led storytelling reflects a broader cultural shift. People are **turning away from faceless institutions and gravitating toward authenticity**. Consumers no longer want to read a list of brand values. They want to meet the people behind the company, hear their voices, and understand what drives them.

Designer Simon Porte Jacquemus is a clear example. On Instagram, he **blends his personal and professional life with ease**. New collections appear alongside holiday snapshots and candid studio moments. His feed feels less like a marketing channel and more like an **invitation** to follow his creative journey.

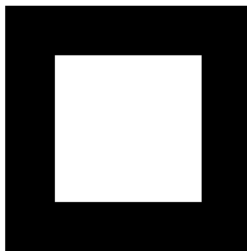
**Honesty** is what gives this approach its strength. When Upfront’s founders talk openly about failed product trials or the headaches of supply chain delays, they reveal the **messy reality** of trying to change the food industry. These moments cut through the polish of traditional corporate messaging and build **trust through vulnerability**.

Gymshark’s founder Ben Francis shows the same principle in action. He began as a teenager making workout clothes for himself and his friends. That story of a garage project growing into a global brand continues to resonate because he has **never stopped sharing** it. By posting about both wins and setbacks, he keeps the connection to the fitness community alive and reminds people of the brand’s roots. When founders step forward in this way, abstract brand values become real stories. And **stories, told honestly, are what people choose to follow**.

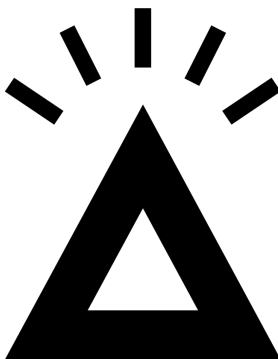


How might your brand leverage its human story to create deeper, more authentic connections with your audience?

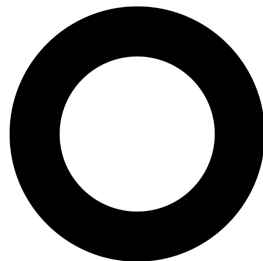
Who are the main characters in your brand’s story?



Convention:  
POLISHED STORIES FROM  
FACELESS BRANDS



Disruption:  
FOUNDERS & EMPLOYEES  
AS FACES OF THE BRAND



Vision:  
FROM SCRIPTED TO  
SHARED REALITY

# DON'T DEFINE YOURSELF BY A CATEGORY, CREATE A BRAND WORLD

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The most powerful brands aren't merely selling products—they're inviting customers into complete worlds.

Strong brands rise above **category boundaries**. They do more than sell products; they build entire worlds for people to step into. This begins with setting the stage: **creating a visual and creative universe that frames how the brand is seen, felt, and experienced**. The environment itself becomes part of the story, shaping design, communication, and every point of interaction.

For luxury players, this has become essential. **Louis Vuitton** and **Aimé Leon Dore** have extended their brands into food and hospitality, drawing people deeper into their universes. **Jacquemus** ties fashion to culinary experiences, weaving together different aspects of lifestyle into a cohesive whole. **Vacation** and **Poolsuite** demonstrate how a flexible creative vision can expand from sunscreen into music, culture, and even blockchain. **Upfront** began with protein bars and now offers olive oil and matcha, gradually widening its brand ecosystem.

In these cases, the **products are only one layer**. The real strength lies in everything around them: the immersive environments, the storytelling, the **multisensory** details, and the distinctive style of communication that makes each brand world feel alive.

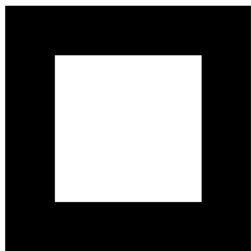
A useful exercise is to **imagine your brand as a person**. Where would it live? Where would it eat, train, celebrate, and unwind? Who would it associate with, and what kind of world would it move in? What reality does it inhabit, or aim to inhabit?

Bringing this world to life is the essential task of brand building. Once the foundation exists, everything else can grow naturally from it.

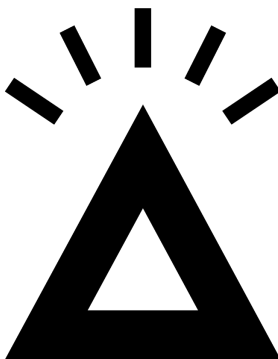


If your brand wasn't limited by its industry, what kind of world would it build?

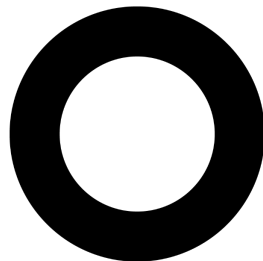
If your brand was a person, where would this person hang out?



Convention:  
BEING STUCK IN A  
PRE-DEFINED CATEGORY



Disruption:  
CREATE A  
BRAND WORLD



Vision:  
FROM CATEGORY  
TO UNIVERSE

# USE PACKAGING AND PRODUCTS AS TOOLS FOR (VISUAL) BRANDING

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In today's visually saturated world, packaging has become the product itself, an essential part of the brand experience that can't be separated from what's inside.

Brands like **Oatly** and **Aesop** have shown how far packaging can go when treated as more than a container. Their designs create moments people want to share. Aesop bottles turning up in real estate listings is no coincidence; the brand has **elevated everyday objects into status symbols through intelligent design.**

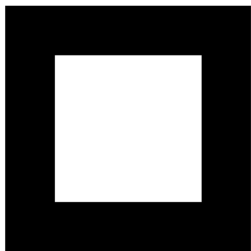
Disruption often begins with **breaking category conventions.** **Single & Fat** olive oil stood out with a bold pink tin in a field dominated by green and brown glass. **Graza** shifted how people use olive oil by introducing a chef-style squeeze bottle. **Vacation** turned sunscreen into a nostalgic throwback with packaging that looks like a whipped-cream can. Packaging can also become a **direct expression of values.** **Upfront** built credibility by placing ingredients front and center, transforming transparency from a claim into a visible design choice.

This evolution matters because **culture today is highly visual**, shaped by social media and the aesthetics of personal spaces. **Consumer goods are no longer only functional**; they have become part of interior design, self-expression, and the images we share with others.

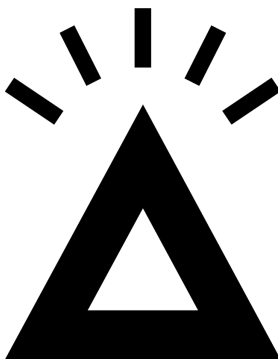
For brands, this creates a unique opportunity. **Packaging is no longer secondary to the product but a storytelling tool in its own right**, capable of breaking category codes through unexpected colors, unusual materials, striking forms, and clear design hierarchies.



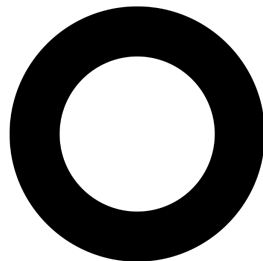
How could you disrupt your category’s conventional packaging with an extravagant, attention-generating packaging design that is built for social media sharing?



Convention:  
PACKAGING HOLDS  
THE PRODUCT



Disruption:  
PACKAGING IS  
THE PRODUCT



Vision:  
FROM UTILITY TO  
VISUAL IDENTITY

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Tactic #1

BE A CREATOR, NOT AN ADVERTISER

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Tactic #2

DON'T BE FOR EVERYONE, BE YOURSELF

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Tactic #3

BREAK THE FOURTH WALL

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Tactic #4

DON'T DEFINE YOURSELF BY A CATEGORY,  
CREATE A BRAND WORLD

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Tactic #5

USE PACKAGING AND PRODUCTS  
AS TOOLS FOR (VISUAL) BRANDING

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# WRAP-UP

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The final conclusions.

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# Building a brand in in the modern age isn't about being louder, it is about showing up differently.

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Modern brand building rewards **connection over noise**. The brands that succeed behave like makers and media outfits, not broadcasters. They show up where culture actually happens with work people **choose** to watch, read, and share, and they **speak to a specific community** with a clear **point of view** rather than chasing universality.

Trust deepens when the **humans behind the logo step forward**. Founder voices, team faces, and open process make choices legible and values believable. The cases of Upfront and Gymshark show this plainly: **credibility compounds when people are allowed inside the work**.

**The strongest brands build worlds**. They design environments, rituals, and symbols that feel coherent across products, platforms, and places. In a visual culture the object carries the story, so **packaging functions as media**: Aesop creates shareable moments, Single & Fat breaks codes with colour and form, and Vacation turns design into a cultural wink. **People often buy into the world before they buy the thing**.

Define **the stance you will defend** and the **community you will serve**. Make your **team and process visible**. Map the world your brand inhabits and express it through distinctive **experiences** and **unmistakable packaging**. Treat launches as cultural moments for **insiders first**, then widen the circle. Do this with **care** and **consistency**, and the brand gathers **gravity** long before anyone touches the product.

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# LET'S BUILD THE FUTURE TOGETHER

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If this piece sparked something, let's keep the conversation going.  
At TBWA\NEBOKO, we help brands stay ahead of the curve and break out of  
categories into culture. Whether you're building from scratch or reinventing what  
already exists, we'd love to explore together what the future holds for your brand.

Interested in a Brand Disruption  
Workshop for your team?  
Get in touch:



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