

A young woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue and white striped long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and black sneakers with white socks, is performing a handstand on a sandy beach. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background features several colorful beach huts: a blue one on the left, a purple one with a teal door in the center, a yellow one with a blue door to the right of the purple one, and a blue one with a teal balcony on the far right. The huts are built on wooden stilts. The ground is covered in golden sand with many footprints. The sky is overcast.

# **10 TRENDS** **NEXT GEN** **FUN**

**Kelton**



## KEEP MOVING

In the ever-shifting cultural landscape, savvy companies keep pace with the times. For brands, relevance means staying in step with broader cultural shifts, understanding that what is now small and fringe might one day be mainstream. An awareness of the cultural forces that influence consumers is fundamental to staying relevant – or even jumping ahead of the curve.

Kelton Cultural Insights identified **10 Trends** around the theme of FUN that are impacting consumers worldwide. Use them to better understand where FUN is headed and, more importantly, to inspire creative thinking.





An aerial view of a city skyline at sunset, with the text "next gen fun" overlaid in large, white, lowercase letters. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, and the city lights are visible in the background.

# next gen fun

## WHY FUN?

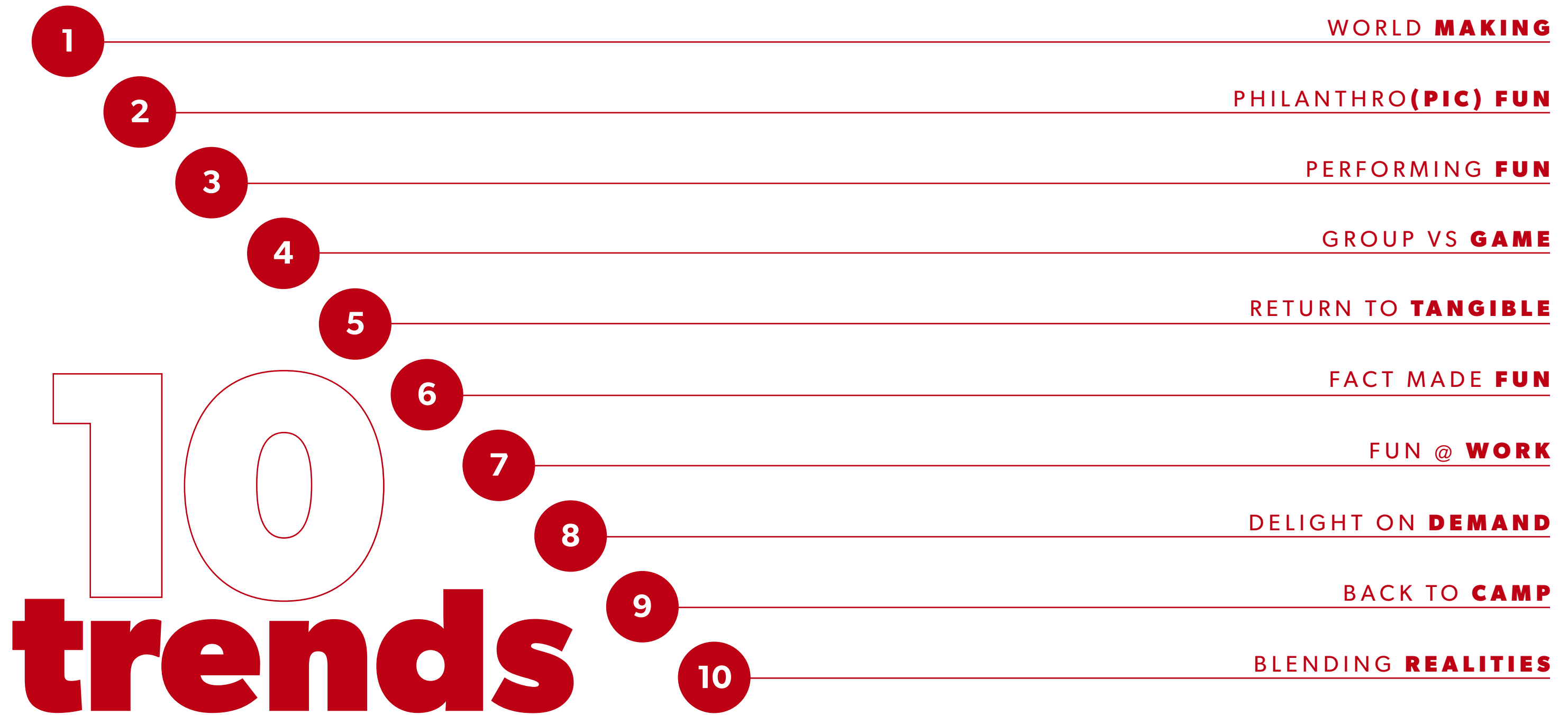
Of all the emotional needs for a brand to serve, fun is among the most powerful. It promises a break from our responsible everyday lives, and provides a natural platform for creative exploration, self-expression, and human connection.

Because of this intrinsic power and appeal, typically 'un-fun' categories like auto insurance and nutrition, are adopting the philosophy that fun makes life worth living - and consumers are taking note.

## SHIFTS IN FUN

The infusion of technology into our daily lives has impacted our experience of fun— for better and for worse. Some fun trends harness the inherent power of (smart, mobile) technology, and others champion the renunciation of screens altogether.

As smartphones and their ilk become even more ubiquitous, the pushback against them grows in response. This dichotomy represents a dividing line that any brand leveraging fun will face: **Digital Enhancement versus Digital Rejection.**





# EXAMPLE

## FALLOUT 4

One of the most successful video games of the year allows players to build and customize personal settlements. Many players have coopted the feature as a canvas for self-expression, or as a platform to demonstrate architectural skills.

1.

## WORLD MAKING

### WORLD MAKING

Starting with Will Wright and Sim City, gaming has awakened the human need to build entirely new sets of tools. From cutesy farms to post-apocalyptic settlements, games are now seen as platforms for creativity and self-expression, not just cutthroat competition. As these worlds mature, there are as many roles for brands in these virtual worlds as in real life.

### THOUGHT STARTERS

- Define credible value-add roles for your brand within virtual worlds.
- Consider advertising in virtual worlds in addition to real ones.

## 2.

### PHILANTHRO(PIC) FUN

As CSR has become a part of virtually every business, many companies are embracing the idea that doing something serious doesn't have to be done seriously. From an adult charity spelling bee to trivia games that donate food for participation, companies are leveraging the power of fun to make the world a better place.

### THOUGHT STARTERS

- How can you use fun as a motivational force to do good?
- Try focusing messaging on the light hearted side of CSR endeavors.

### PHILANTHRO(PIC) FUN

## EXAMPLE

### WE B-E-E SPELLING

This non-profit organization coordinates adult spelling bees, complete with a live band and comedian host, for charities in an effort to make their fundraising efforts more fun.





# EXAMPLE

## VIDMOB

This mobile app connects users with professional editors to get their photos and videos transformed into polished, artistic videos.



3.

## PERFORMING FUN

### PERFORMING FUN

Fun is no longer simply experienced - it's captured, edited, filtered, shared, and commented on. Inventions like the selfie-stick, drone-camera, and crowd-sourced video editing all make fun feel as much like a performance as an experience. As we share our photos and videos with the world, fun experiences will adapt to be more performative and stage-ready.

### THOUGHT STARTERS

- How can user-generated content infuse fun into your brand?
- Create branded services that make user generated content more shareable.

# 4.

## GROUP VS GAME

Most games pit player against player, but a number of new experiences focus on collaboration and cooperation instead of outright competition. The excitement of these new group games comes from the challenge itself rather than the thrill of competing with another person. Solving the 'puzzle' is the ultimate goal, and cooperation is the means to achieving it.

## THOUGHT STARTERS

- Create a group-based loyalty program.
- Gamify problem-solving within your organization.

## GROUP VS GAME

## EXAMPLE

### PANDEMIC

This cooperative board game challenges players to work together, with each person leveraging a different role to find the cure for four civilization-threatening diseases.





## EXAMPLE

### RANDOLPH'S BAR

This Montreal establishment prominently features a wall lined with board games for play or purchase, and a staff of game experts to provide recommendations.



5.

## RETURN TO TANGIBLE

### RETURN TO TANGIBLE

As the world around us becomes increasingly digitized, the tangible side of fun – things we can see, touch, feel, and smell – are still valuable. Engaging in analog experiences allows us to recapture the pleasures of human contact that can get lost in the digital shuffle. While tech-forward experiences are becoming more prominent in our experience of fun, analog still has the power to entertain.

### THOUGHT STARTERS

- How can your marketing campaign be more tactile?
- Integrate multi-sensory branding into your experiential strategy.



# 6.

## FACT MADE FUN

In the Information Age, access to basic data (like news, time, or weather) is often taken for granted. In response, brands and developers have found creative new ways to present this commoditized information, creating fun, dynamic, and intuitive experiences to engage consumers with this necessary-but-boring information.

## THOUGHT STARTERS

- How can you make things like user manuals and transaction information more fun?
- Can the informative content in your retail environments become more interactive?

FACT MADE FUN

## EXAMPLE

### THE EFFING WEATHER

This cheeky app delivers the forecast with sarcasm, sass, and brutal honesty to provide essential information as well as a laugh.





# EXAMPLE

## WEWORK

The startup offers freelancers or budding companies access to flexible co-working spaces in metropolitan areas. WeWork's offices provide a community-oriented vibe with open areas for discussion, and an interior that looks more like an upscale lounge rather than a traditional office.



7.

FUN @ WORK

## FUN @ WORK

Work is no longer the domain of the serious and restrained. With businesses recognizing the benefits of creative lateral thinking, workspaces are gradually adapting to inspire and de-stress, featuring aesthetically pleasing spaces and objects of leisure to inspire creativity and innovation. With this shift, the Google Garage is quickly replacing the cubicle as an embodiment of the modern office.

## THOUGHT STARTERS

- What elements in your workspace take the fun out of creativity?
- How can retail design ignite collaboration for your customers?



## 8.

### DELIGHT ON DEMAND

Virtually everything in the world today is available at the touch of an app, and fun is no exception. Brands are tapping into this growing expectation by offering instantaneous access to whimsical experiences at the tap of a screen. Now, even playtime with a puppy is just a button-push away.

### THOUGHT STARTERS

- How can you further digitize your products or services to make them more instant?
- What partnerships can you leverage to create moments of delight for your consumers?

## DELIGHT ON DEMAND

### EXAMPLE

#### UBER PUPPIES

Once a year, Uber partners with local humane societies to deliver 15-minute play sessions with puppies to homes and offices for a quick injection of fun.





# EXAMPLE

## CAMP GROUNDED

This series of camps offers adults the chance to digitally detox in a number of scenic settings, socialize, take classes, and engage in classic activities that they used to love as kids.



9.

## BACK TO CAMP

### BACK TO CAMP

Adult summer camps have emerged as a legitimate vacation destination, offering responsible members of society a break from their everyday routines. These spaces of relaxation, indulgence and free play provide campers the opportunity to relive childhood in many ways– including a self-imposed ban on technology during their stay.

### THOUGHT STARTERS

- Incorporate 'disconnection zones' into working and shopping environments.
- Find ways for your brand to tap into innocent, childlike fun.



# 10.

## BLENDING REALITIES

Gaming is just the beginning when it comes to Augmented Reality's role in fun. Some app developers are using this new technology to layer digital components over the real world, either by providing contextual information (like architectural details) or by gamifying real life actions. This technology will have implications well beyond the entertainment sector, offering limitless opportunities to enhance retail and social experiences for brands.

## THOUGHT STARTERS

- How will Augmented Reality change omni channel shopping for your consumers?
- How will it impact your advertising and media buying strategy moving forward?

## BLENDING REALITIES

## EXAMPLE

### POKEMON GO

This widely anticipated mobile game allows players to feel as if they are actually in the Pokemon environment. It's developers used major real-world cities as inspiration for the virtual world that they created.





WANT TO LEARN MORE?

**GIVE US A RING**  
— OR —  
**DROP US A NOTE.**

310.479.4040 | [bizdev@keltonglobal.com](mailto:bizdev@keltonglobal.com)

**Kelton**