

Emergent Futures

A collection of provocations about the state of Japan post-pandemic and how to approach opportunities with human-centered design.

May 2021

IDEO
tokyo



Who We Are

IDEO is a multi-disciplinary company of designers, researchers, scientists, and MBAs. We create positive impact through design.

From creating the first manufacturable mouse for Apple to advancing the practice of human-centered design, IDEO has long been at the forefront of creating change through design. Since our pioneering days in Silicon Valley, we've designed and influenced many of the things that you interact with on a daily basis.

With nearly a decade in Japan, we believe creativity is a powerful force in enabling change. We hope the following document inspires hope and curiosity for Japan's post-pandemic future.

**We believe Japan will rise
from this crisis stronger and
more creative.**

We should start by saying that we don't know what the future will hold. But it shouldn't stop us from imagining what it could look like and **how design helps us prepare for uncertainty**. We started where we always do: with people. Observing ourselves, our families, and our communities.

This document serves as a starting point for us to explore the constraints and possibilities of design in its relationship to emerging human behaviors accelerated by COVID-19 in Japan. **Our goal is to provoke collaboration and creativity as a community** navigating this unprecedented challenge.

The goal of futuring is not to predict the future, but to prepare for the possibilities.

By observing how we live now, we hope to reimagine the way we live in the future.

To rise to the challenge, our response must be human-centered, innovative, and radically imaginative.

To facilitate this discussion, we established 9 possible futures we believe will emerge. Under each future, we describe how it looks, what kinds of behaviors prevail, and what design opportunities exist in such conditions. Each future can be consumed individually, or combined with the others to form interesting clusters.

Please feel free to share far and wide, and let us know what else we should explore.

We've created 9 Emergent Futures.

The futures are imaginative
but definitive. They provide
constraints to ground our
design outcomes.

Each future begins with **World Building**, highlighting key shifts and exploring design opportunities.

Design Fictions are short explorations serving to ground our emergent futures in tangible outcomes. More will be added over time.

To validate each future, we highlight **What We Are Seeing** in Japan, picking up on clues and context that validate our speculations.

Finally, we provide actionable takeaways for becoming more resilient and **What It Means For Organizations** focused on Japan.

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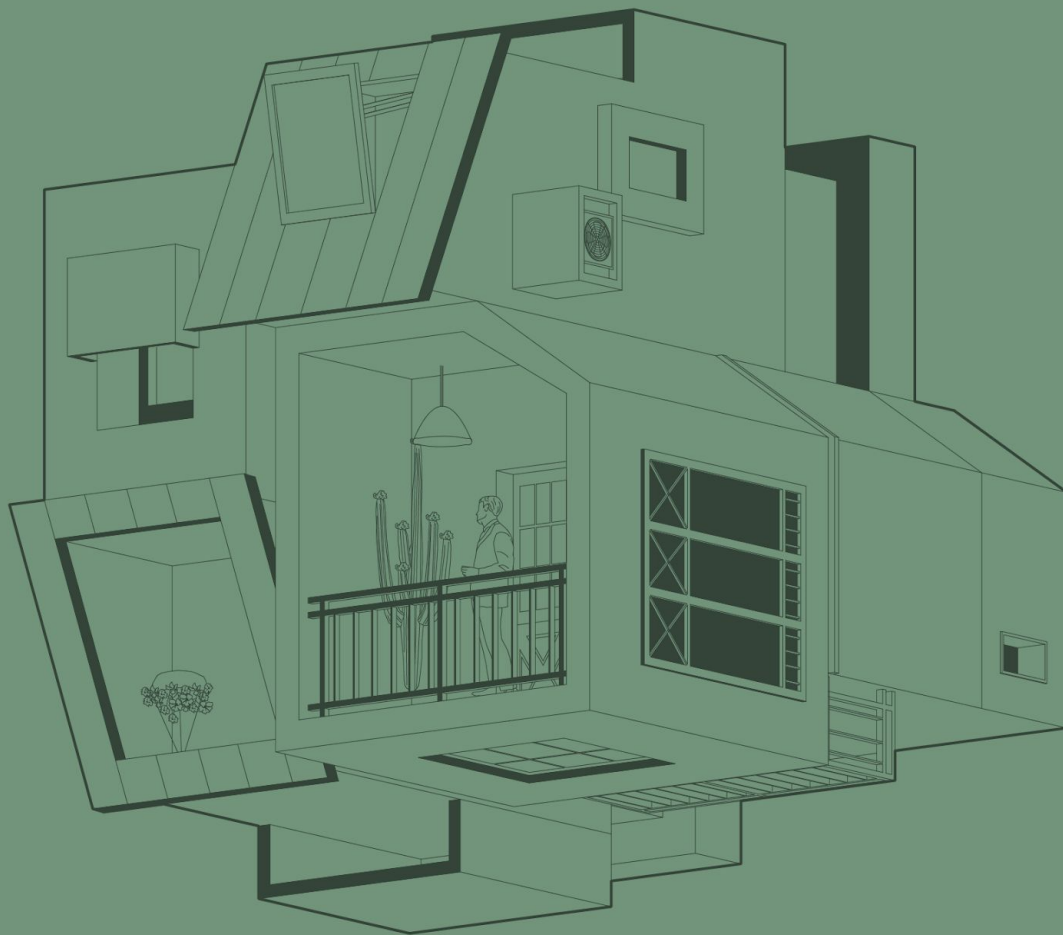
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I

Leftover Spaces

Physical spaces will become much more dynamic. Our spaces will adapt and change multiple times a day, responding to new metrics for how we value usage and judge capacity.

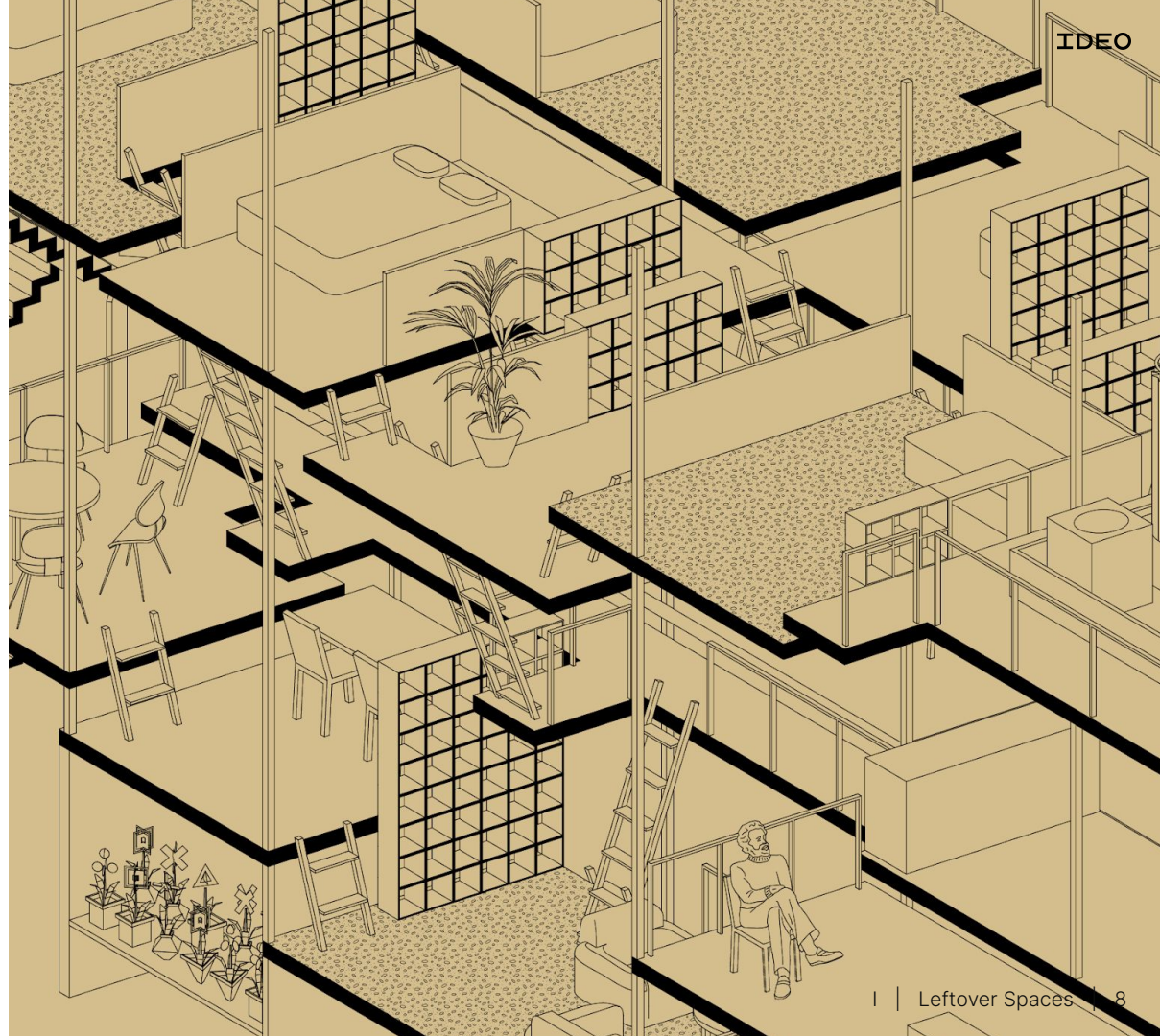
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Ideal capacity no longer means maximum capacity

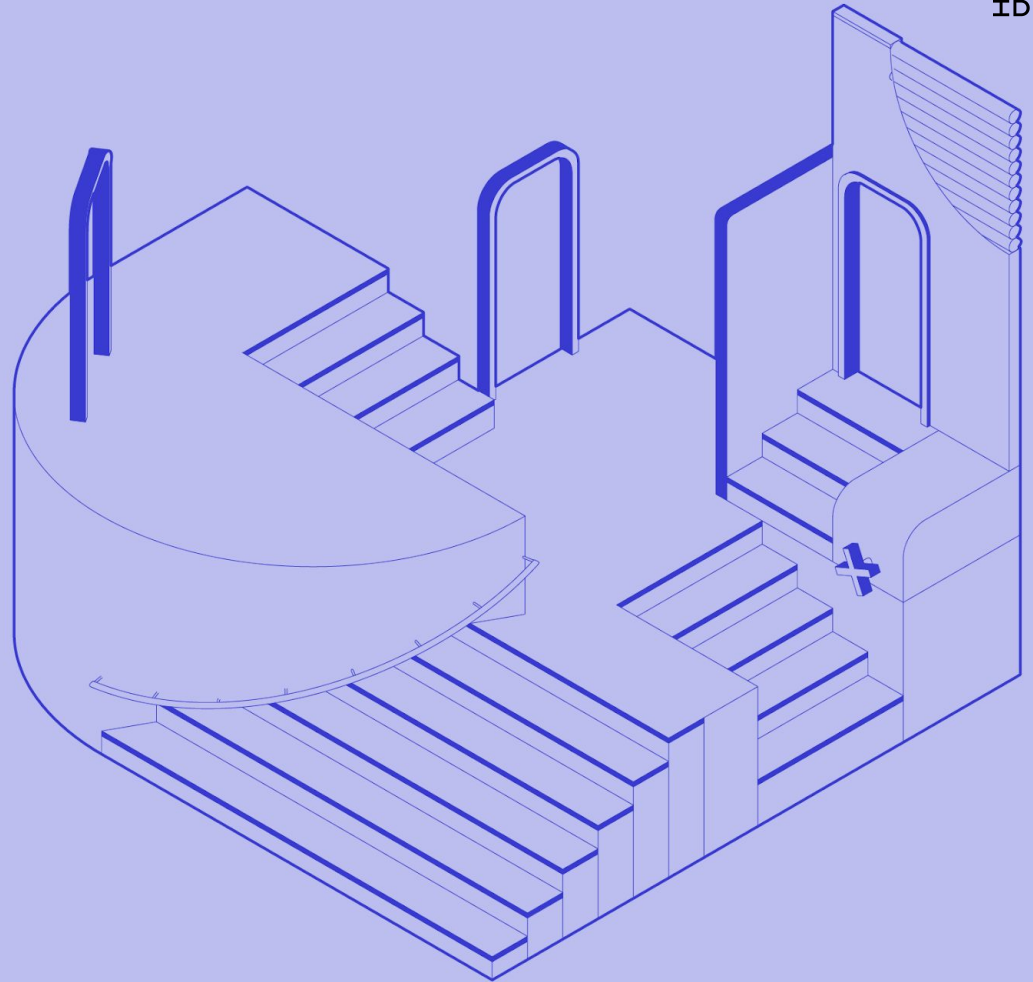
In response to increased public health and safety regulations, the max capacity of physical spaces dramatically reduces. Businesses, events, and retailers that previously relied on maximizing turnover of guests will fundamentally rethink how to best use the space left over as occupancy falls.

The ability to monetize space takes on multiple models based on shifting consumer preferences for safety. Concerns like avoiding peak hours, understanding who used the space before you, and the intention of a visit influence the design and selling of spaces. Creative utilization models such as charging more for private appointments emerge as alternatives to the standard block of open hours.



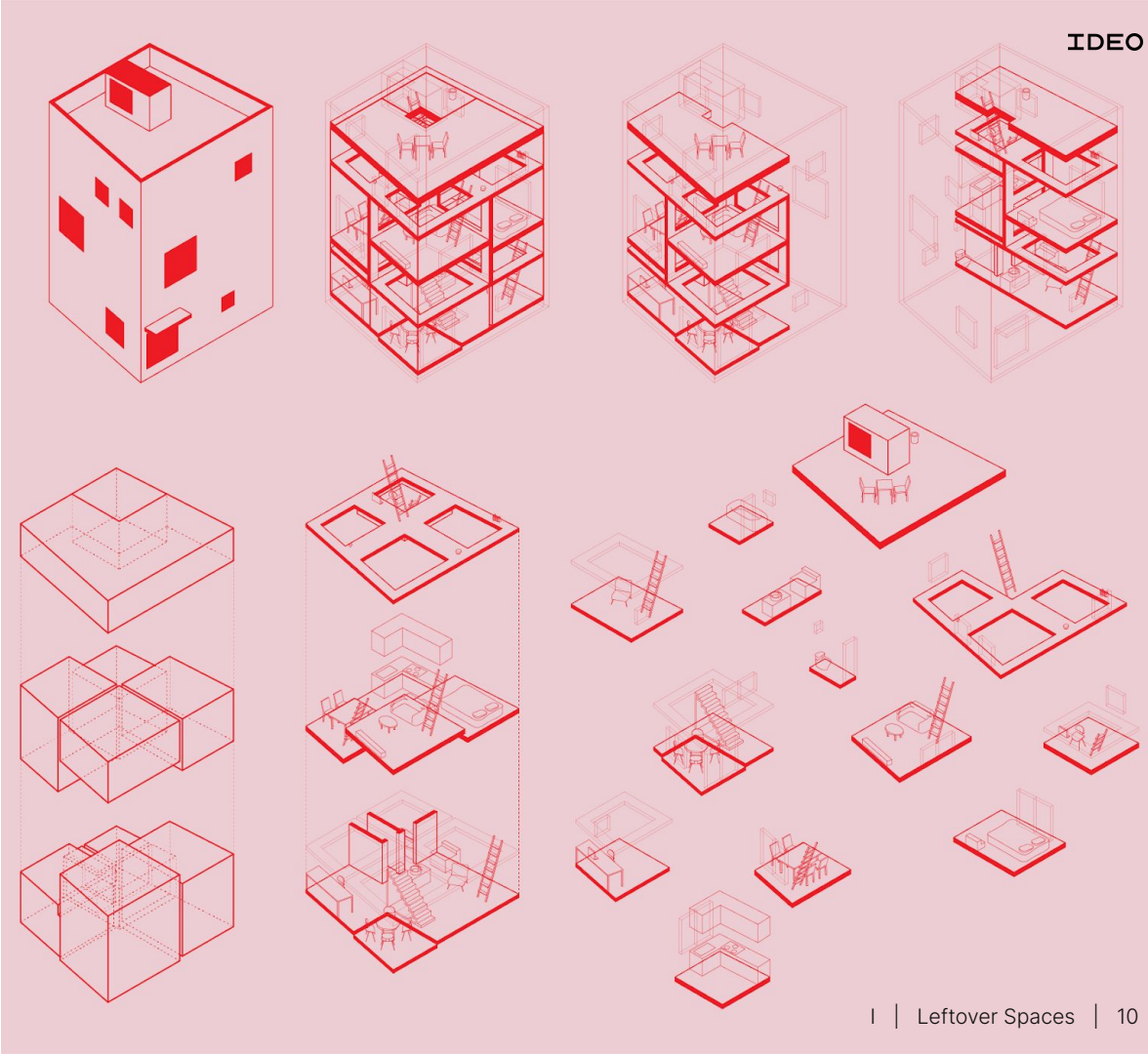
Physical experiences happen less but are of higher quality

Emerging consumer values directly influence different models for space usage. Expectations for different modes of use, depending on our needs, rise as travel happens less. Increased health concerns lead to heightened scrutiny of the spaces we inhabit and greater expectations when we do commit to in-person experiences.



Physical spaces absorb multiple modes of use

Every moment holding onto a space means making the most out of it. Rent fundamentally changes as spaces become highly dynamic, changing from one function to another, or one business to another, multiple times a day. Co-ownership and sharing becomes the norm; designing for that transformation surfaces as a major opportunity.



How might we design for Leftover Spaces?

With the world building constraints in mind,
what are the primary design considerations in this future?
What aspects of existing products, services, and systems
need to change? What new ones will emerge?

We explored this world through the cooking passion of
Kei Iwashita, an aspiring part-time chef obsessed with
curry.



How might we create a new space usage model within the world of Leftover Spaces?

Kei lives a busy life as a designer, but it doesn't stop her from pursuing her hidden love for curry. She craves every opportunity to hone her craft as a chef, but has reached a bottleneck preventing her from improving further.

She doesn't mind putting in the effort to share her recipes, but the investment in physical space — as well as the implication that she would be tied to a location — makes her hesitant. **Kei needs an infrastructure that supports her.**

We know Kei is not alone. Many other communities have small players just like her. How do physical spaces shift to enable passions to grow and thrive?

A New Pop-up Ecosystem Concept

We propose a new pop-up store system whereby multiple businesses can cycle through the space throughout the day. With a storage, pickup and delivery platform, entrepreneurs can bring their services to prime locations via small modular Kei Trucks. In the busy early morning rush, the space could be a bakery and cafe. By early afternoon, a new business has moved in, selling clothes and craft goods only to be replaced by a lively izakaya by the evening.





Good for Businesses, Big and Small

To Individual Sellers: Assuming people like Kei who want to do a side gig but don't want to commit to big fixed costs/investments

To Manufacturers: Could these trucks be experimental grounds for them? They never have direct access to consumers, so they could use this space to test new products/services and see consumer feedback towards these goods. Also, could be pure, straight up marketing.

1. Food and/or device manufacturers sponsor trucks
2. Sellers can rent trucks by the hour (pop-up store)
3. Premium plan: Seller can store inventory and deliver removable storage boxes to their pop-up store locations
4. Seller sells goods/services to the consumer

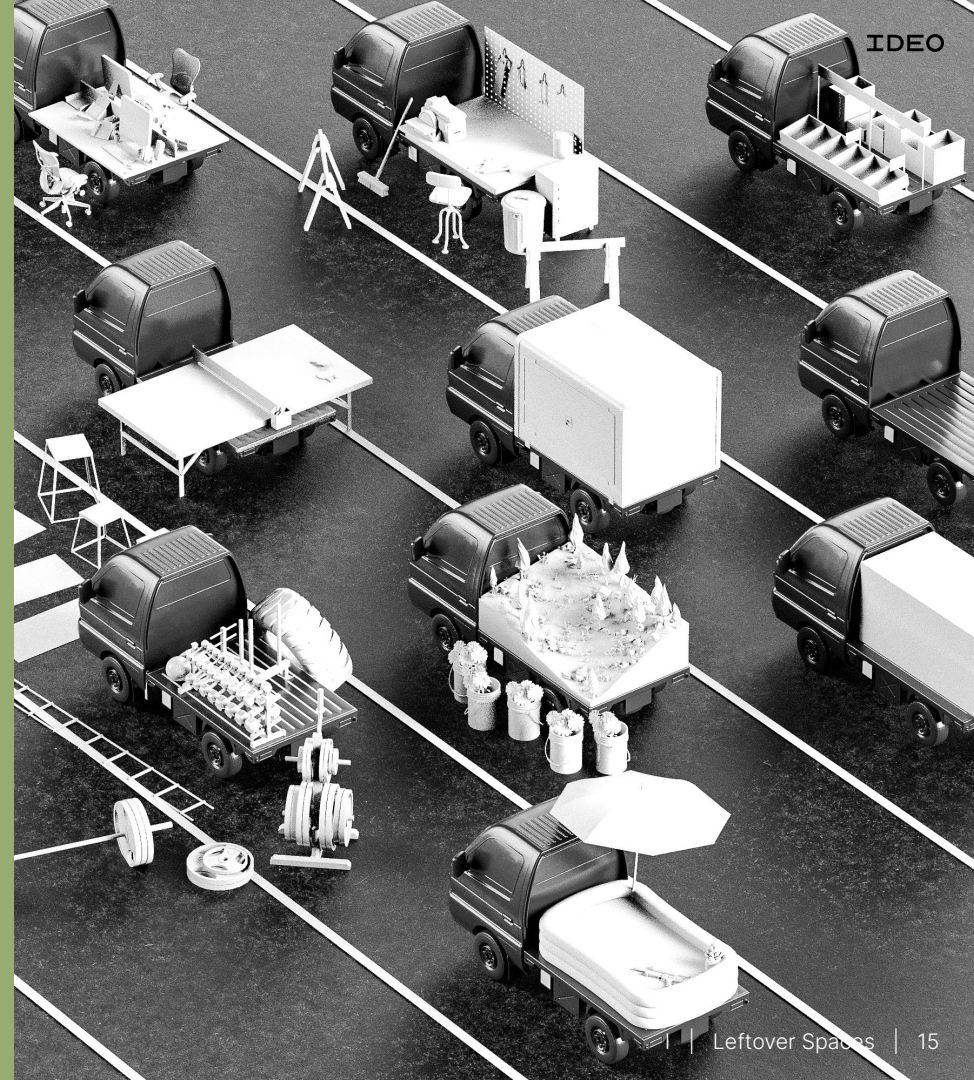
Endless Possibilities, Open to the Imagination

With the Kei Truck as the mobile foundation, the module design is completely open to the imagination. Fledgling entrepreneurs can create their own mobile businesses and deliver services to their customers in a variety of environments.

The system is particularly impactful when the business' stock includes large, heavy items that would otherwise be too difficult to transport to pop-up locations.

Imagine this scenario: A personal trainer starts a crossfit business, where he/she meets their paying customers at the local park. The sheer size and weight of the gym equipment would be impossible to store at home, but this service makes the physical assets mobile.

Using this system, what could a florist look like? How about a co-working space, a mobile workshop?



I | What we are seeing



Hoshino Resorts tracks customers' facility usage to keep social distance

The ryokan operator is developing ways to show their customers how many people are using which facilities so they can maintain social distancing while enjoying their stays at Hoshino Resorts.

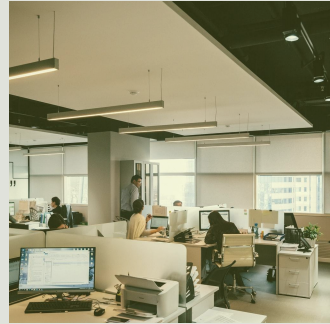
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Docomo utilizes GPS data to populate crowd map

Docomo released hourly crowd data based on locations of 80 million mobile devices. The company expects the data will help corporations and regional governments organize events and draft new policies.

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Companies to diversify office locations

Japanese companies will shift towards having multiple office locations to diversify the risk of clustering all operations in one place, real estate analyst Tomohiro Makino said.

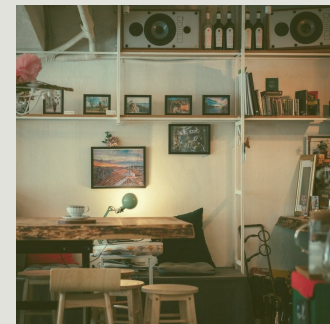
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Physical spaces adopting multiple modes

A number of Japanese restaurants are evolving to serve as corner stores, too. Restaurant chain Kushi Katsu Tanaka is operating as a restaurant as well as selling unused vegetables in "mottainai boxes" and "drive through veggie boxes."

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The future of work is more like living in your office

Providing support and encouraging downtime is important when we all end up living and working in the same space.

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I | What **Leftover Spaces** means for your organization



If personal safety becomes a priority for space design,
Organizations Need A Human-Centered Approach to Data.

[Learn more](#)



If physical spaces exist to serve different modes of use,
Organizations Need A More Adaptable, Creative Workforce.

[Learn more](#)



If consumers have greater expectations over their in-person physical experiences,
Organizations Need to Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Mindset.

[Learn more](#)

II

Rapid Evolution

Organizations that have the agility and creativity to repurpose their resources — people, infrastructure, and offerings — will be more resilient and competitive.

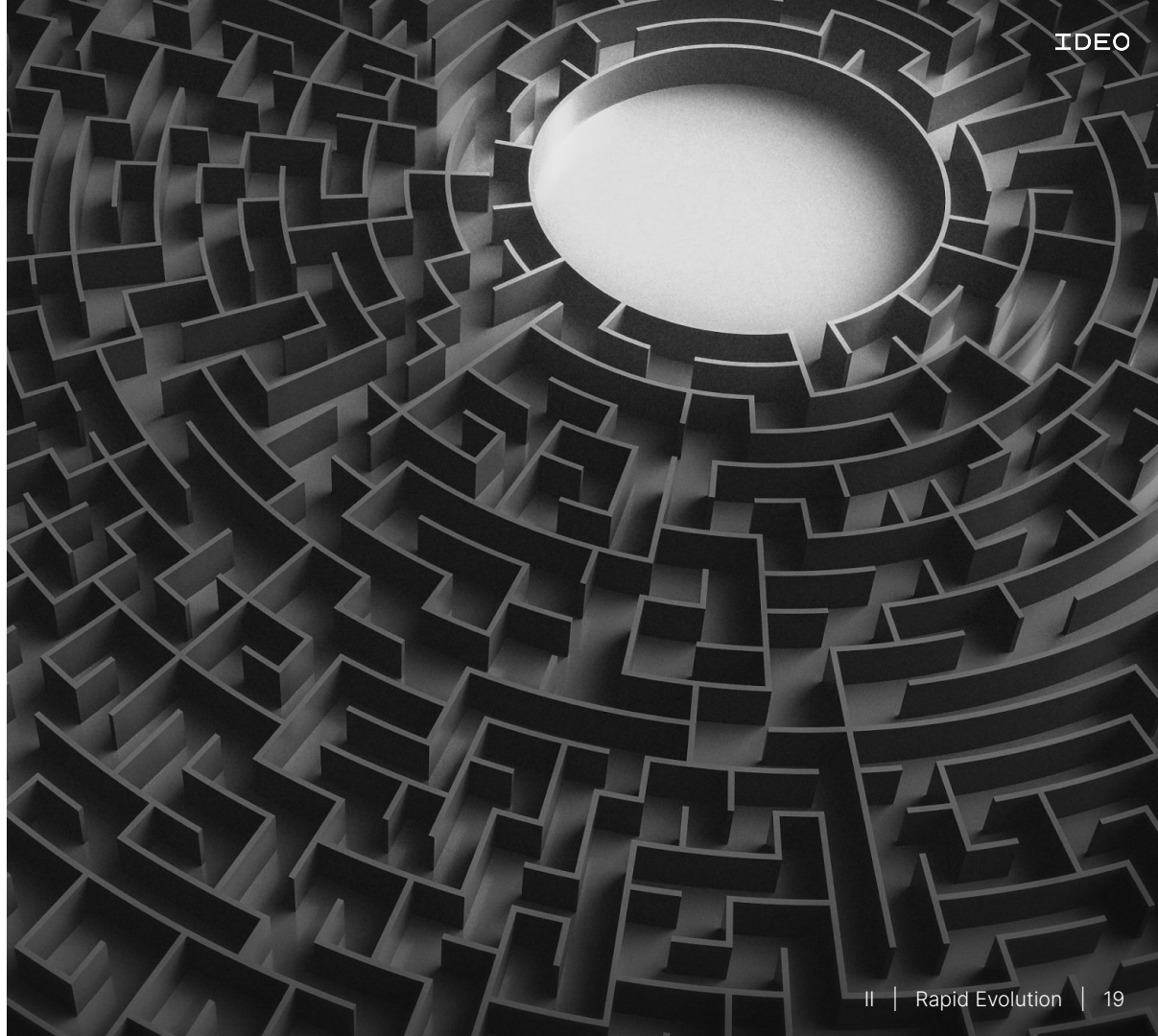
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II | Rapid Evolution

Designing shifts to extreme focus on the short term

The highly unpredictable future renders any multi-year plan irrelevant. Our plans change every few months, weeks, or even days. A hyper-focus on the now creates opportunities for more dynamic pricing and offerings that reflect supply and demand in real time. Imagine paying more for peak hours and exclusive access. Or transforming inventory management systems from backend tools to front-end interfaces that enable visibility of essentials.

This extreme focus on the short term isn't limited to businesses alone, but requires redesigning how we think about weddings, sporting events, concerts — frankly any large-scale event planned far in advance.



II | Rapid Evolution

Everything is built with repurposability in mind

Businesses with high fixed costs suffer most. Flexibly deploying resources where and when needed emerge as the most resilient in times of crisis.

This creates opportunities for services that enable nimble manufacturing and supply chains, such as the ability to retrofit factory lines or produce goods in smaller lots. This also applies to platforms and partnerships that enable organizations to share people and resources thoughtfully and responsibly. Essentially giving businesses the ability to scale and shrink operations as if they are different modes of existence.



II | Rapid Evolution

De-risking the future means experimenting with multiple futures

The post-pandemic world increases ambiguity for everyone — past precedent and performance no longer apply as indicators of future success. Creating diversified offerings is necessary for de-risking businesses, and developing a non-linear prototyping mindset is more important than ever. Prototyping comes naturally to start-ups already prone to pivoting. This looks different for bigger companies as established corporations possess an unfair advantage — having the resources to explore a variety of ideas at once, and design for the most desirable outcomes.

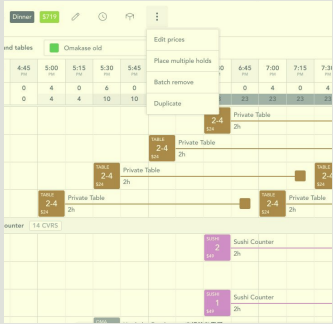


How might we design for Rapid Evolution?

With the world building constraints in mind,
what are the primary design considerations in this future?
What aspects of existing products, services and systems
need to change? What new ones will emerge?

Co-design for this future with us.

II | What we are seeing



New technology allows restaurants to implement dynamic pricing

Tock, a US-based restaurant booking site, offers a dynamic pricing system to help restaurants maximize revenue based on booking demand. Such system also incentivize consumers to grab food on slower days or at less popular times.

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Restaurant chefs, local producers join hands to offer home-cooking service

Sharedine and Tabechoku started a service that allows Japanese households to book restaurant chefs to cook at their homes with fresh local produce. The collaboration between the two startups aims at helping chefs and producers affected by COVID-19.

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Kuradashi helps restaurants sell perishables at discount

Kuradashi is a Japanese startup aims to reduce waste by selling expiring products to retail customers. Kuradashi's sales more than doubled during COVID-19 as restaurants and hotels tried to get rid of their perishables.

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Chinese supermarkets hire idle restaurant staff

Hema, a Chinese supermarket chain, temporarily employs staff from restaurants, hotels, and cinemas who are out of their jobs during lockdown.

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Fujifilm brings technological know-how to cosmetics

Fujifilm started exploring how to apply its film-related technologies to other industries in 2007. The effort led to the creation of its cosmetics and pharmaceutical businesses.

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II | What **Rapid Evolution** means for your organization



If excellence requires a hyper-focus on the short term, **Organizations Need A More Adaptable, Creative Workforce.**

[Learn more](#)



If success requires an unbounded appetite to try and courage to fail, **Organizations Need to Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Mindset.**

[Learn more](#)



If resilience entails the ability to repurpose resources, **Organizations Need to Create Circular or Regenerative Products, Services and Systems.**

[Learn more](#)

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III

Permeating Identity

The online versions of ourselves will take on new responsibilities as data collection, interpretation, and management have heightened physical significance.

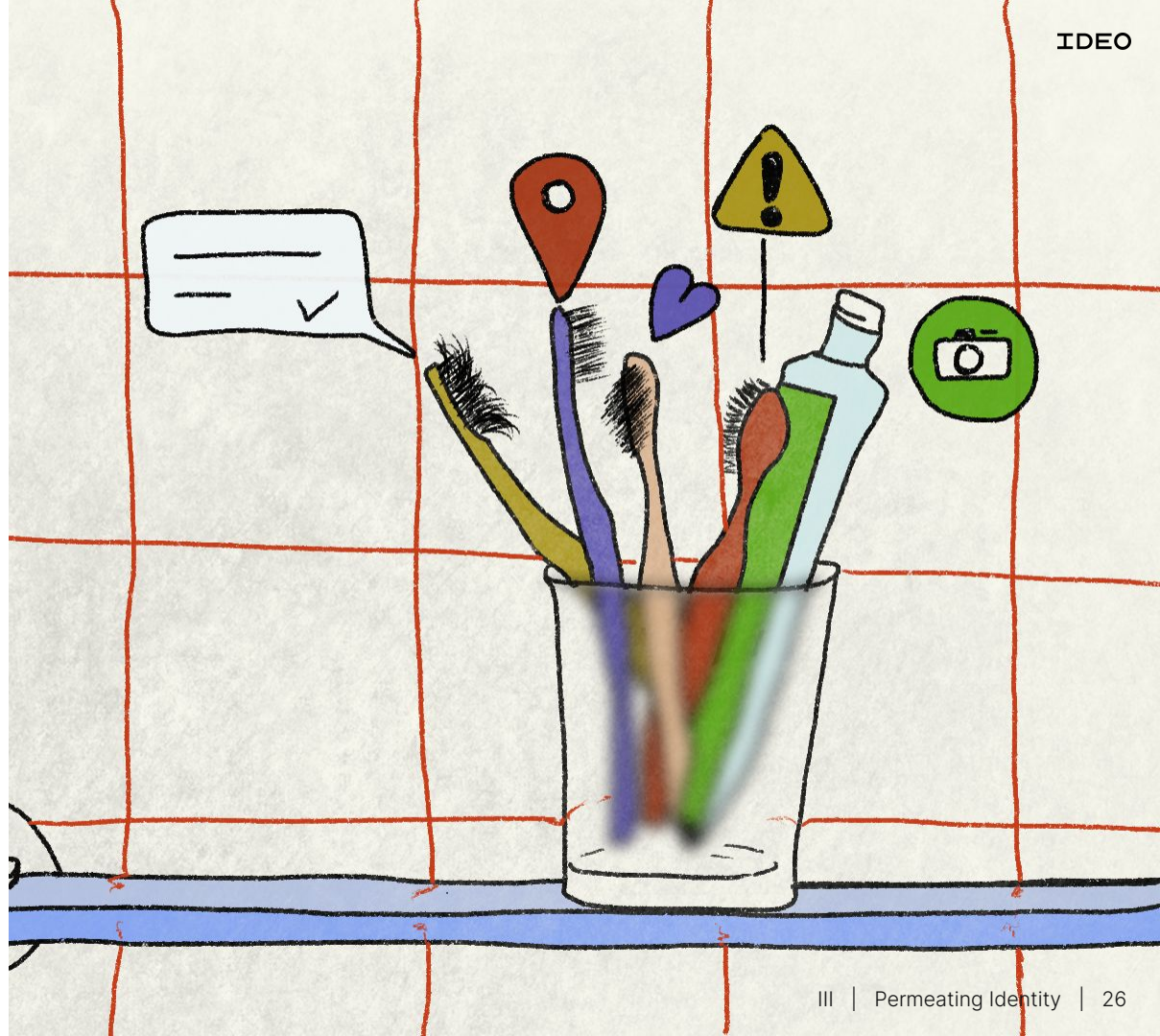
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III | Permeating Identity

Our physical interactions now leave digital footprints

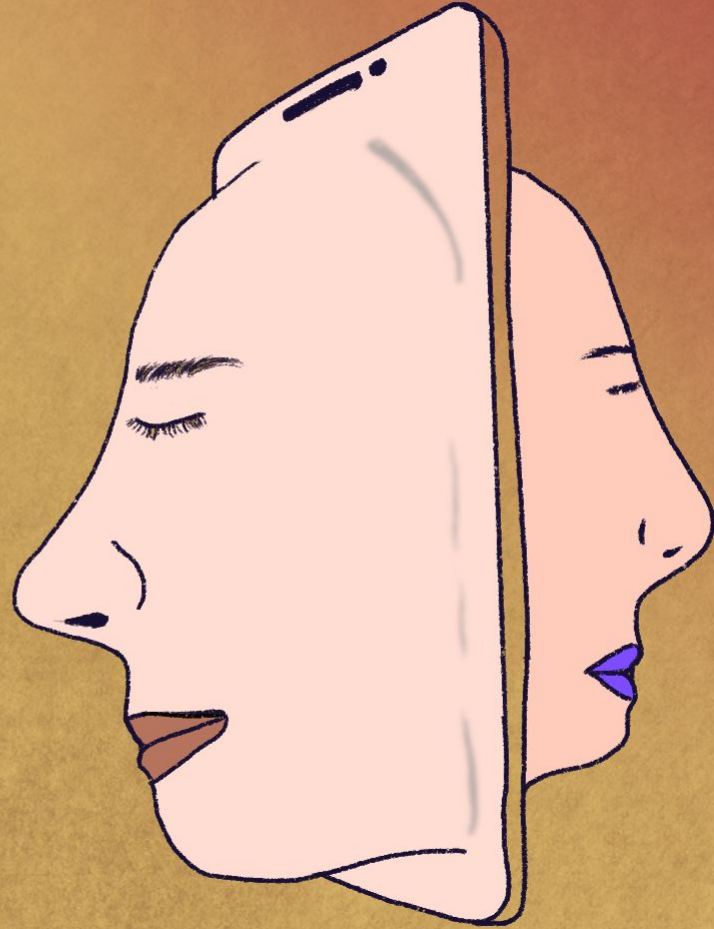
It's easy to keep track of our own interactions in the world but trusting the health and safety of others proves tricky. Shareable tracking of connections and relying on concrete data collection to provide both peace of mind and reassurance is done in the interest of public health and security. Think internet cookies, but physical. Information such as where we've been, what we did, who we met with — all gets tracked and embedded into our digital selves for smarter decision making and risk assessment.



III | Permeating Identity

Our digital identities possess physical significance

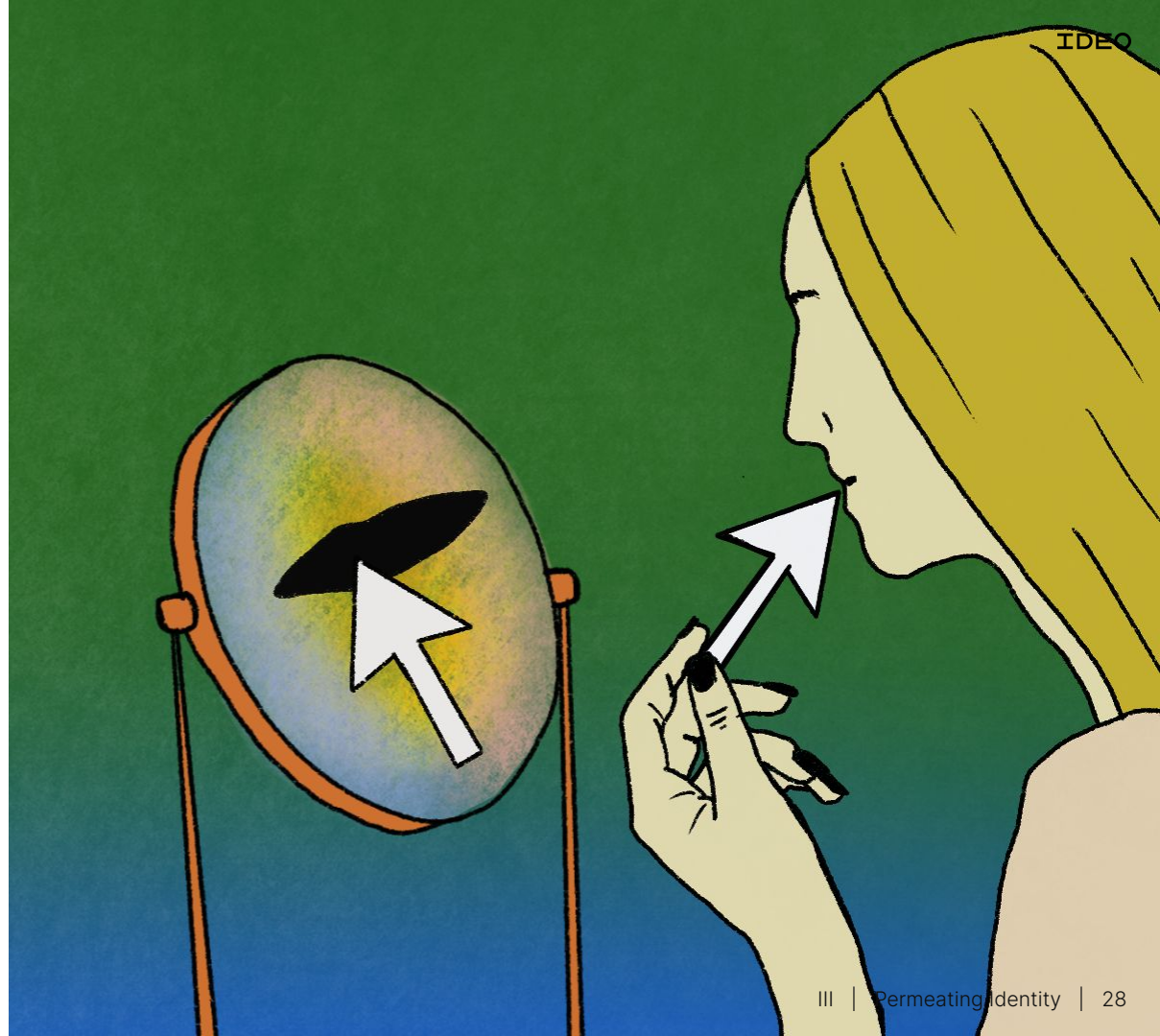
Looking to lead healthier lifestyles, we take steps to not put ourselves or the people we care about at risk. Our digital selves become much more important as they take a greater role in the choices and actions we make in person. The online data that represents us begins to push out, influencing physical interactions to a much greater extent.



III | Permeating Identity

People expect more agency in designing their digital identities

Due to the increased physical significance of our digital identities, we crave more control over shaping our online presence. We require more transparency in how our actions affect our data because information no longer anonymously collects with interpretation of our actions done by a backend system. Learning to engage and craft data emerges as an important next step in how we interact with the physical world.



How might we design for Permeating Identity?

With the world building constraints in mind,
what are the primary design considerations in this future?
What aspects of existing products, services, and systems
need to change? What new ones will emerge?

We explored this world through the dual lives of
Kensuke Koshijima, who works as a data scientist during
the day and evolves into a hip hop musician at night.



How might we enrich our personas within the world of Permeating Identity?

Kensuke, aka *Boy Genius*, uses his spare time and weekends to pursue his love for music. He belongs to a Tokyo-based hip hop band he and his friends started in college called Afro Parker.

The COVID-19 situation forced their shows online, increasing the amount of digital interactions with fans, and surprisingly accelerated their popularity despite not being able to perform in person.

The band wants to build on this new online momentum, but wonder how to craft the Afro Parker digital persona to engage their remote fans.

III | Design Fiction

Crafting unique personas to cater to a distributed fan base

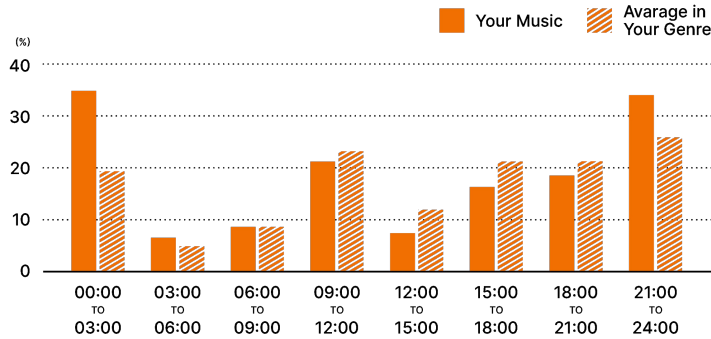
Afro Parker band members take the time to craft unique personas and build the aspects of their identities they want to share with fans, openly available to anyone watching the concert, digitally or physically. They take full advantage of the digital medium to share things they normally couldn't in the short time span of a physical event, such as the backstories of their favorite songs and meaning behind lyrics.

For *Boy Genius*, he noticed from the last concert that his fans were very curious about what he wore and what instrument he played. He took note and reminded himself to add that information before the next gig. “The story about how I almost broke my keyboard might be interesting to the fans,” he thought.



What time do your listeners listen to your music

Last 3 months



What your listeners are doing while they listen to your music

Last 3 months



Your Music	36.6 %	20.6 %	18.5 %	15.2 %	8.3 %
Average in Your Genre	20.4 %	16.2 %	21.8 %	14.7 %	9.2 %

Creating experiences for the fans, by the fans

Afro Parker incentivizes its fans to engage with them continuously both digitally and physically.

When fans watch the band's music videos, stream its songs, or buy its merchandise, they leave behind digital footprints that would grant them a higher chance to to see them live at concerts, which are limited to a small crowd and often sold out within days.

Boy Genius also likes digging into the metadata of their fans' music preferences when planning the next album. For example, he noticed a lot of fans has also been listening to DJ Krush recently.

“I want to give our fans a little surprise,” he said. “So I reached out to DJ Krush for a collaboration.”

III | Design Fiction

Capturing physical elements for digital reinterpretation

All content and interactions generated during a performance are captured and embedded with openly accessible data.

An aspiring musician breaks down *Boy Genius*' keyboard solo, feeling inspired to create his own piece.

Future event-goers look at well-shot videos of the concert from different angles, visualizing where they would want to sit at their next live show.

From the stage, *Boy Genius* himself spots a fan wearing a cool custom t-shirt. Checking the metadata of the fan, he discovers information about the t-shirt's creator. This unexpected encounter leads to an artist collaboration and new Afro Parker merchandise.

This ecosystem of profiles unveils new interactions between attendees, performers, fans, and bystanders, enriching our personal identities with curated data as our physical actions serve greater purpose.



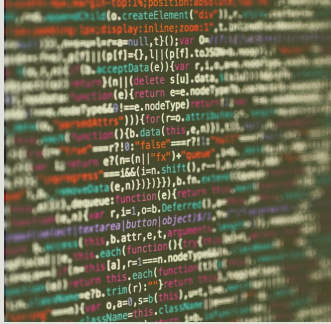
III | What we are seeing



China develops software to mark citizens' health status

Ant Financial partnered with local governments in China to develop an app that gives users color-coded designations based on their health risks. Different colors allows different levels of freedom to travel.

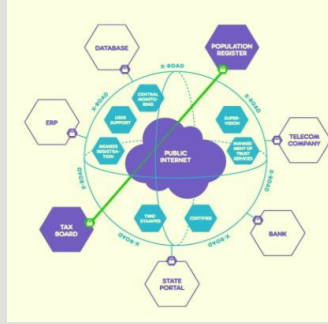
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Governments pass laws to give consumers control over their data

There have been legislative initiatives to give users ownership of their data, such as Europe's General Data Protection Regulation and the California Consumer Privacy Act in the US.

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Estonia creates 'simplex' system that allows citizens to manage their data

X-Road is a data infrastructure developed by the Estonian government. Each piece of personal data is only saved in one place. Any parties who want to access that info must go to the same place with data owner's approval. As an individual, it also means you just need to update the information once.

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III | What **Permeating Identity** means for your organization



If data of online activities possess physical significance, **Organizations Need A Digitally Flexible Organization and Offering.**

[Learn more](#)



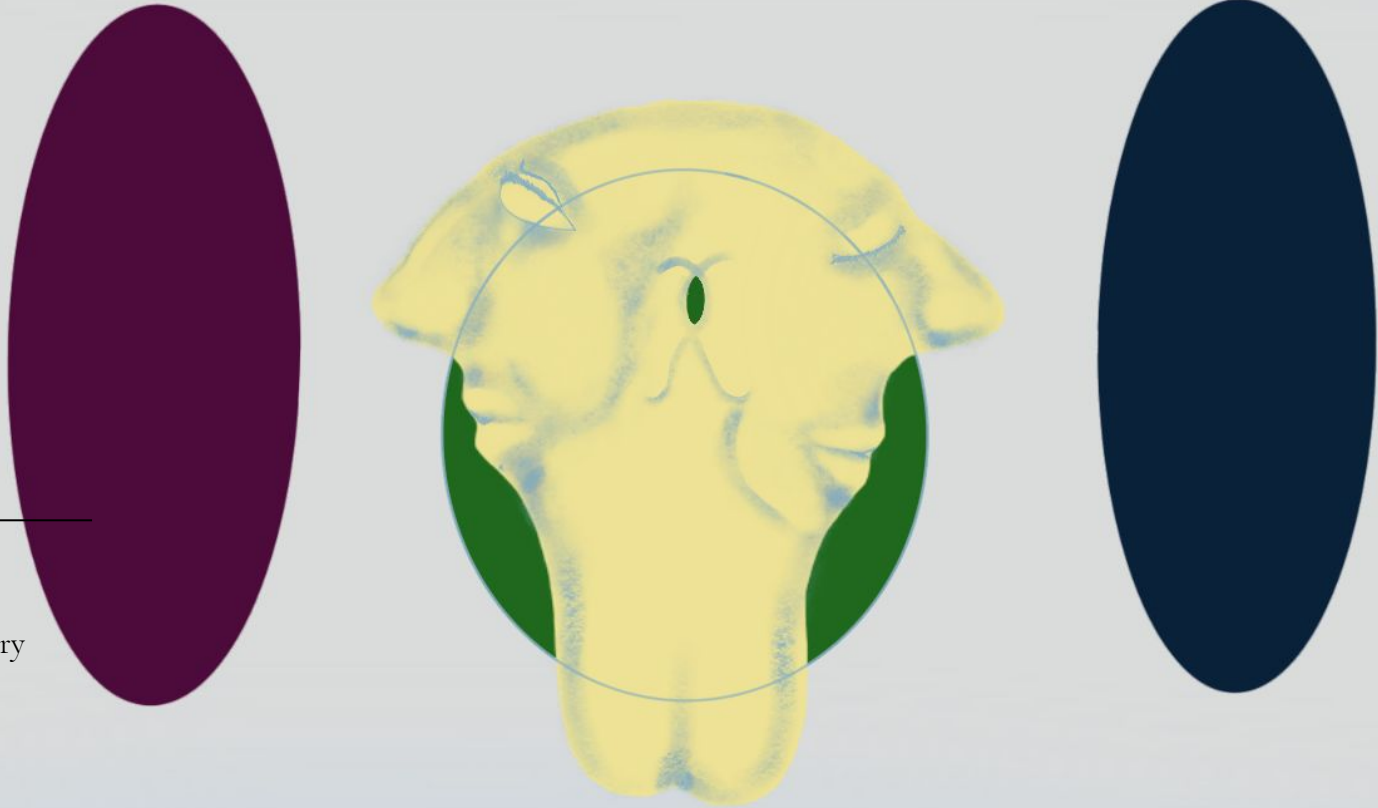
If people crave more control over their digital identities, **Organizations Need A Human-Centered Approach to Data.**

[Learn more](#)

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IV

Fraternal Reality



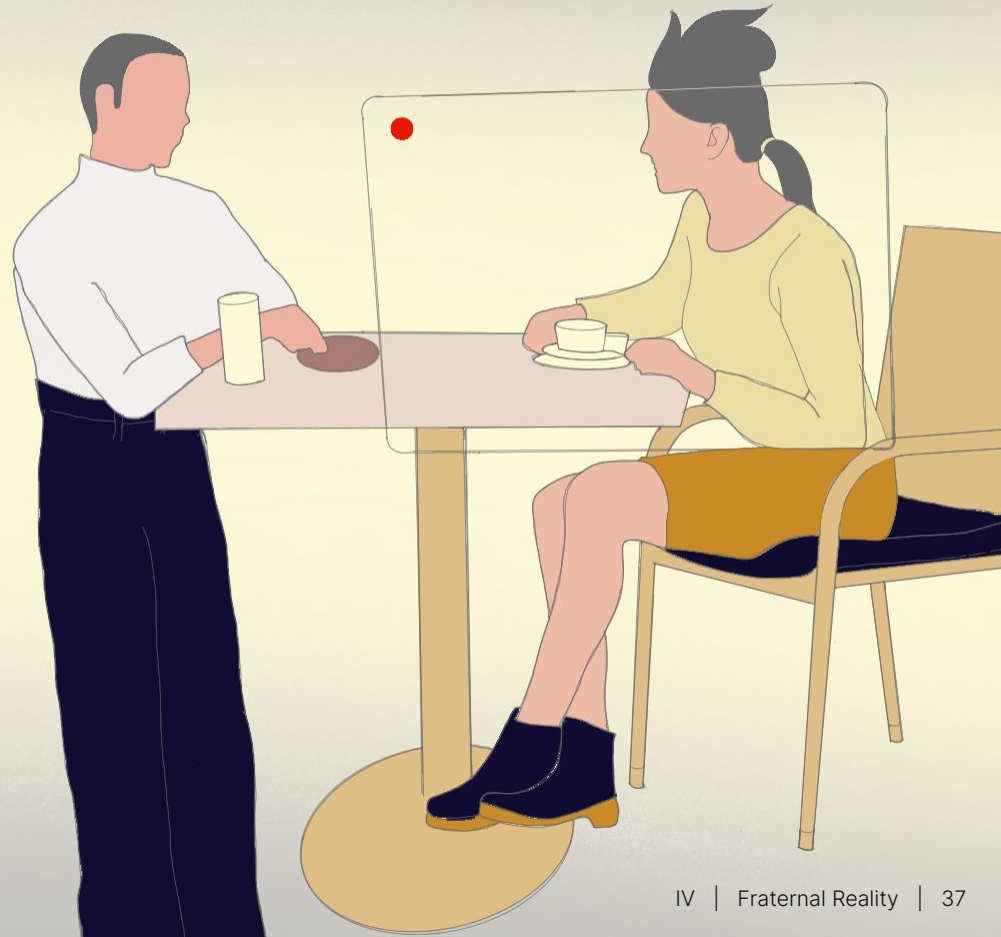
Mixed reality is the new reality. Online or offline, they are just different entry points to the same entity.

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IV | Fraternal Reality

Participation by default means in person and virtual

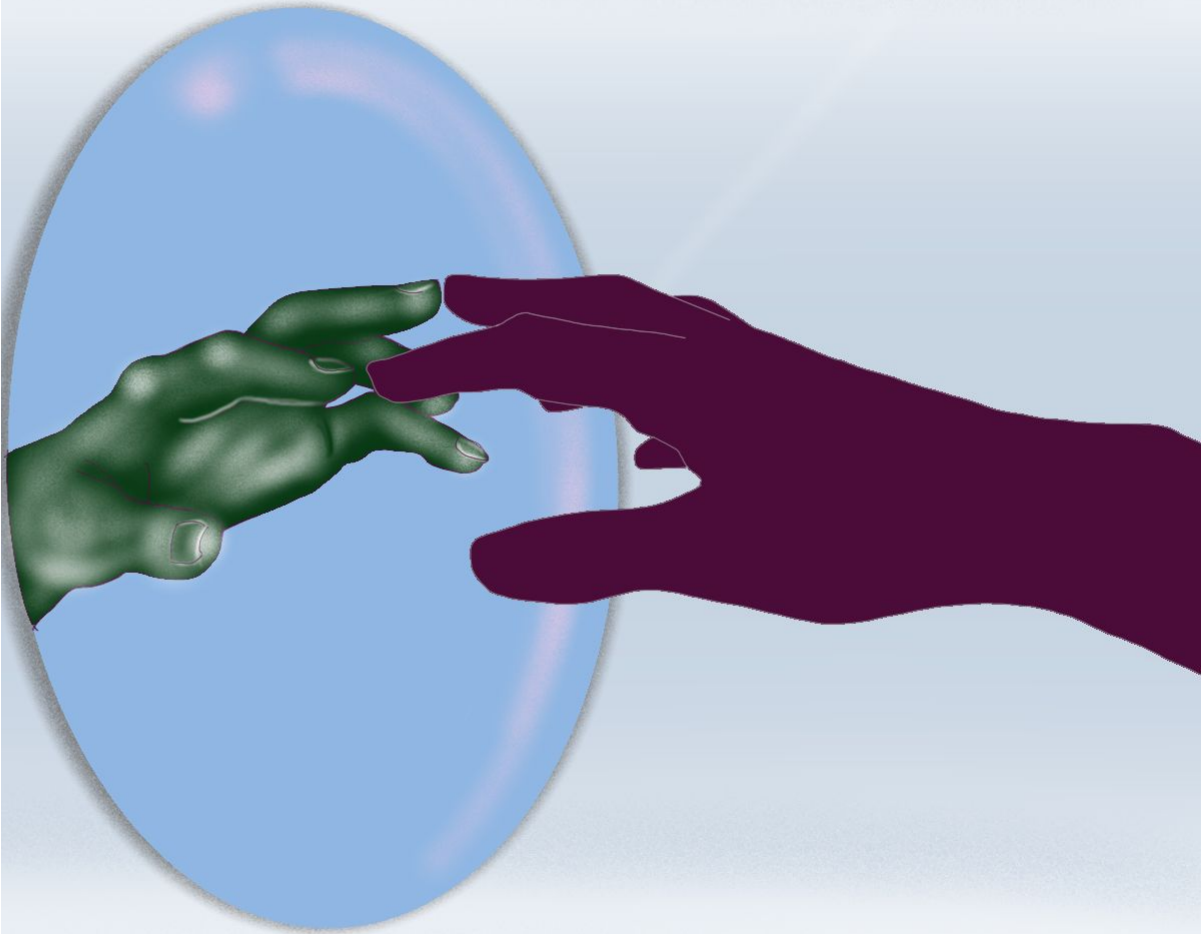
In a world where physical gatherings cannot be taken for granted and talents are spread geographically, the definition of “getting together” means participating in person and virtually. Bias towards physical or digital engagement disappears — they are just different. We possess the freedom and fluency to switch between different mediums to suit our needs, without compensating the quality of the engagement.



IV | Fraternal Reality

Mixed reality just means reality

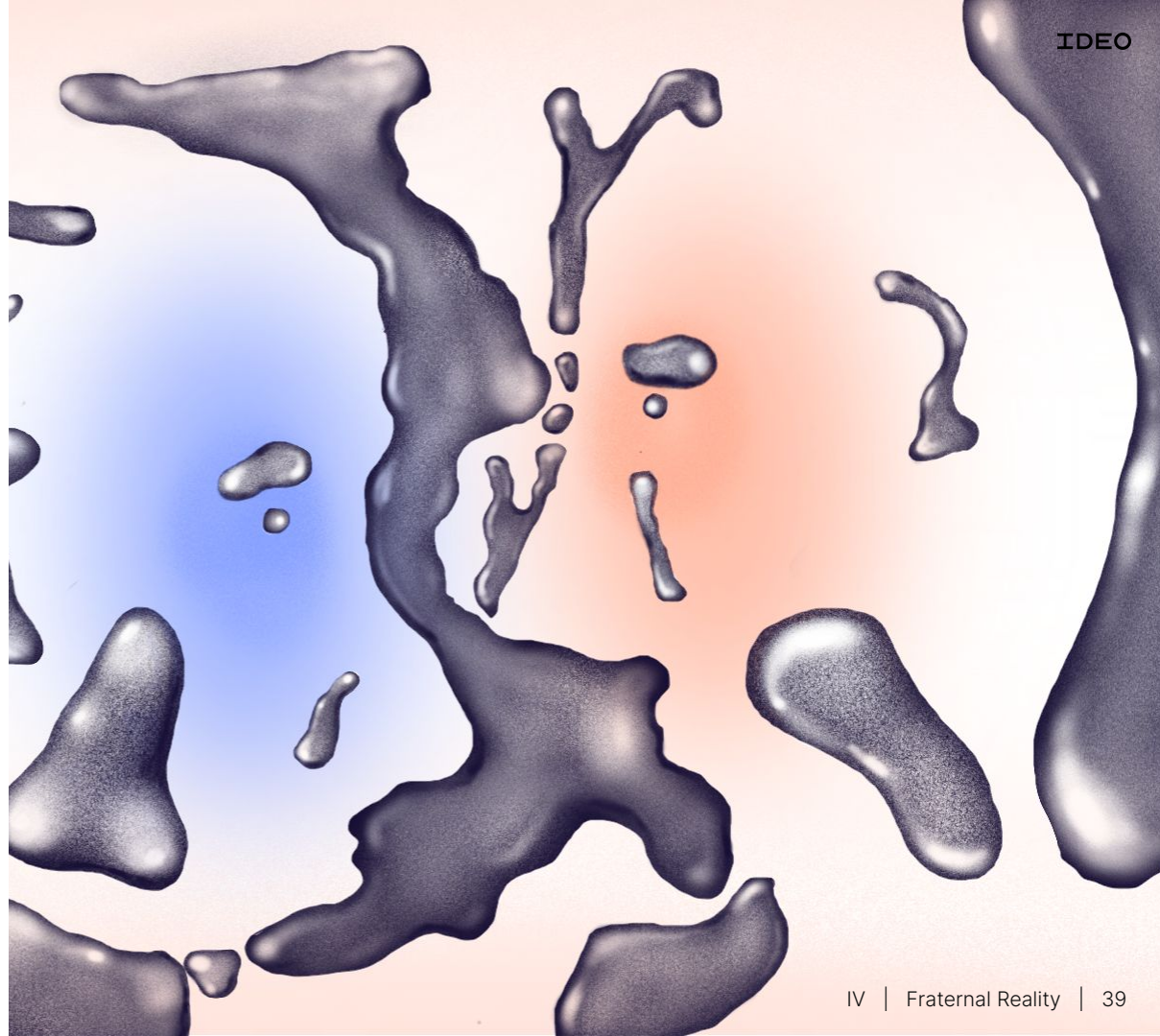
Physical-first or digital-first is the wrong question to ask. The new default is digital *and* physical. Products, services, and events which previously existed only physically will develop digital counterparts, and vice versa. In this new reality, interactions between people, and between people and objects, happen across mediums.



IV | Fraternal Reality

Physical and digital versions are uniquely designed

Digitization of what currently exists in the physical world is not enough. Physical and digital versions express their own character and unique touchpoints. Together they complement each other and create a complete ecosystem, designed simultaneously, but with very different considerations in mind.



How might we design for Fraternal Reality?

With the world building constraints in mind, what are the primary design considerations in this future? What aspects of existing products, services, and systems need to change? What new ones will emerge?

We explored these questions through the hobby of **Hide Takeda**, a staunch motorcycle lover who can't imagine a digital riding experience.



How might we design a mixed motorcycling experience within the world of Fraternal Reality?

For Hide, motorcycling is exciting because the experience is very physical. Nothing will replace the sensory overload of riding a bike in person. It's hard to imagine a digital motorcycling experience.

That's why we chose him for this design fiction.

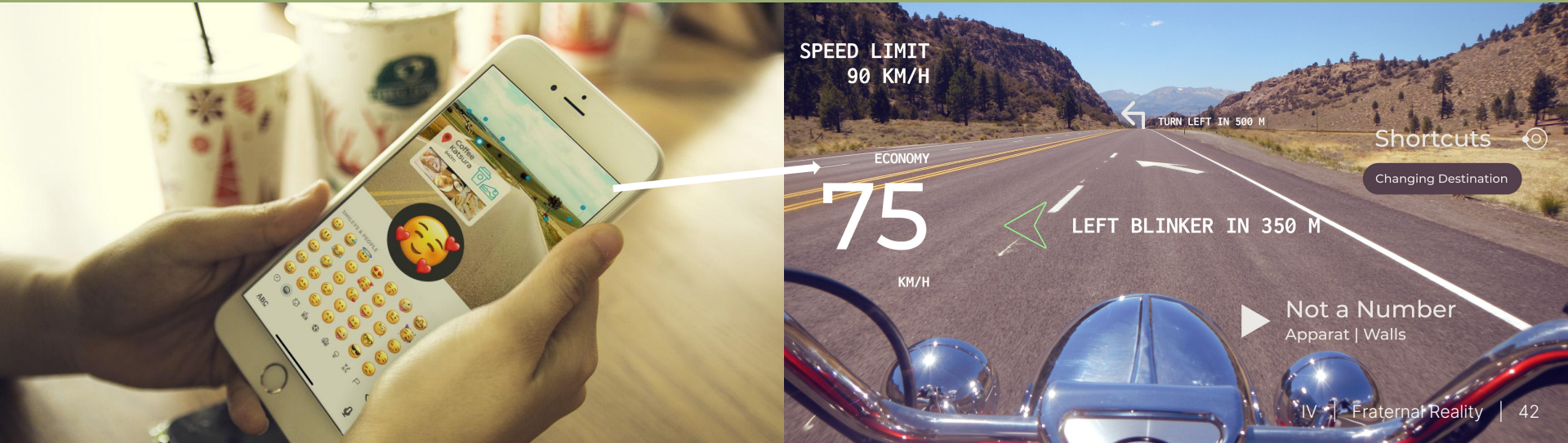
Hide sees motorcycling as part of his life, not just a hobby. He enjoys customizing every detail of the experience — from the clothes he wears to the accessories and bike itself — all serving as an expression of his particular lifestyle.

The Tokyo native loves taking his bike for long rides on the weekend, but sometimes struggles to decide the destination and finding fellow riders to join him. He also doesn't know who he can look to with questions about customization and maintenance.

IV | Design Fiction

Physical ride, digital interaction

When Hide is riding his bike, he is joined by his friends and family from anywhere in real-time. He can interact with them as if they are riding side by side, but without taking his focus away from the road ahead. Knowing that Hide often has trouble settling on a destination, his girlfriend can live push updates to Hide's head-up display, indicating an interesting restaurant for him to check out in the neighborhood. **Make sure you bring back some omiyage, Hide!**

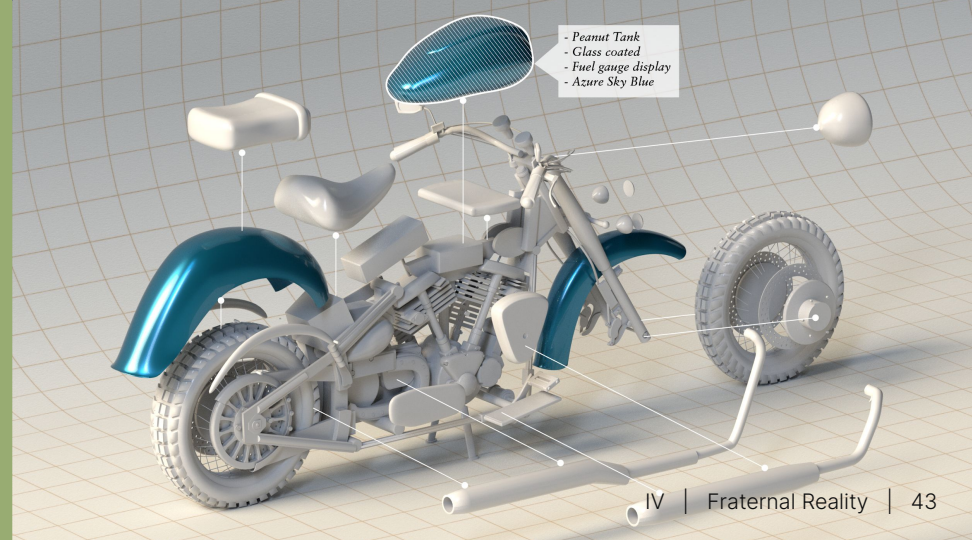


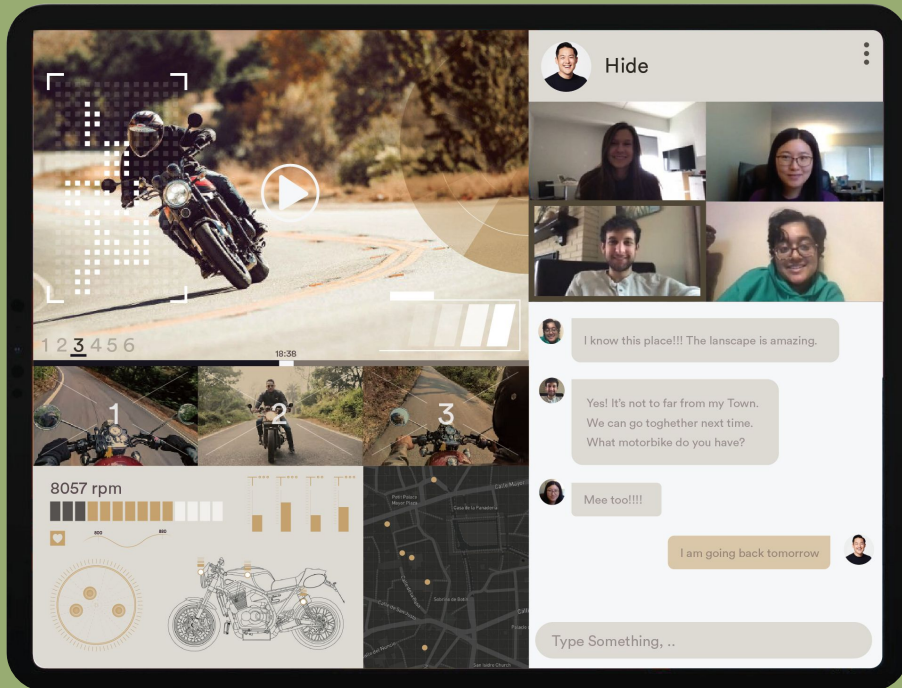
IV | Design Fiction

Customize digitally, implement physically

When Hide wants to customize, **his bike becomes a canvas** where he can preview changes with an AR overlay on his mobile. He can also see what other bike lovers' customizations look like on his own bike. Once he makes up his mind, he can place the order to his favorite bike shop with one click to implement the changes.

For DIY customization and maintenance work, Hide can use AR to give him step-by-step guidance. He can also ask for help in real time from the bike community worldwide.





Ride now, relive later

After the ride, Hide can relive the moment and see it from different perspectives. The sunset that has escaped from his peripheral sight during the ride, the revving sound when he was speeding down the highway... he can play, pause, and replay as many times as he wants. The technical breakdown satisfies his curiosity while the route recommendations inspire him to dream about the next ride.

The physical ride was over, but the experience continues to live digitally and serves as a focal point for conversations with his friends.

IV | What we are seeing



Danish soccer team hosts virtual viewing party

Aarhus-based AGF invited 10,000 spectators to join a giant Zoom meeting to watch their game against a local rival. AGF's fans shouts were channeled into the stadium's loudspeakers and their faces were projected as a video wall.

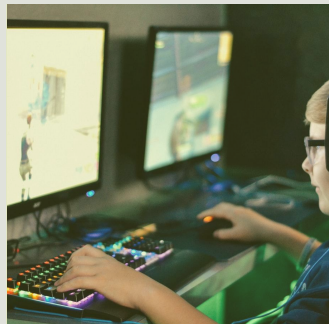
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Topia takes karaoke online with personal avatars

Topia is a live-streaming karaoke app that allows users to represent themselves in highly customizable avatars.

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Travis Scott x Fortnite

Travis Scott hosted his first virtual performance in Fortnite, with 12.3 million concurrent players participating.

[↗ Link](#)



Animal Crossing

Animal Crossing on the Nintendo Switch quickly became the highest selling online game of all time. Escalated due to quarantine, people are reliving and recreating events in the game as replacements for the physical experiences they could no longer attend.

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Ikitsuke takes drinking bars online

Ikitsuke is a marketplace for online izakaya. Customers make a "reservation" in advance, and the food and drinks are delivered to their homes. They then enjoy the same meal with other customers virtually at the same time, as if they are meeting up at the restaurant.

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IV | What Fraternal Reality means for your organization



If every consumer experience requires a mixed reality approach, **Organizations Need A Digitally Flexible Organization and Offering.**

[Learn more](#)



If different skill sets are required in a mixed reality world, **Organizations Need A More Adaptable, Creative Workforce.**

[Learn more](#)



If challenging assumptions becomes an essential process to create new experiences, **Organizations Need to Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Mindset.**

[Learn more](#)

V

Proactive Courage

When standards and norms can change overnight, adapting to new environments much faster is pivotal to surviving and thriving. Both learning and teaching must evolve to suit these needs.

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V | Proactive Courage

Specialists must also be generalists, and vice versa

Specialization in Japan works well when the rules, roles, and responsibilities are clearly defined. But as the world becomes more unpredictable and the skills required become more fluid, the workforce must learn to reframe and apply learnings in multiple contexts to remain competitive. Survival means working with adjacencies — finding the opportunity and moving into it.



Rapid transformation of the workforce is essential

The ever-changing world requires the workforce to perpetually reinvent itself, as the natural replacement of the workforce would never catch up. We can achieve this in two ways — train and retrain existing workers at a much faster pace in order to stay on top of relevant challenges, and embrace flexible engagement models by constantly looking for outside expertise and replacing the old with the new.



People develop a lifelong learning mindset

Infrastructure develops to support individuals and employees as we develop new skills and hop into new roles. Different metrics to evaluate performance emerge as careers grow not only vertically, but horizontally. This goes hand in hand with a more inclusive work culture where individuals who possess the courage to choose their own paths are celebrated instead of being treated as an anomaly.



How might we design for Proactive Courage?

With the world building constraints in mind,
what are the primary design considerations in this future?
What aspects of existing products, services, and systems
need to change? What new ones will emerge?

Co-design for this future with us.

V | What we are seeing



End of lifetime employment in Japan

Keidanren, Japan's top business lobby, said last year the lifetime employment system is not sustainable because rigid employment policies have restricted Japanese firms from acquiring outside talent to meet emerging skill demands.

[↗ Link](#)



Japanese startup incubator Mistletoe gets rid of office

Mistletoe, a startup incubator founded by Taizo Son, got rid of their office in 2018. The company told its workers to not be full-time employees and to go off and do their own things.

[↗ Link](#)



Street Academy creates skill-share platform in Japan

Street Academy is an online lesson marketplace in Japan. Users can list the topic they want to teach and host the lectures online. The platform has more than 40,000 lectures about a wide range of topics.

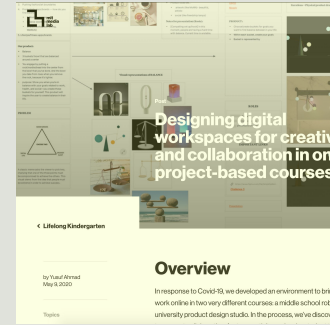
[↗ Link](#)



Colectivo23 prepares learners for digital era

Colectivo23 is a collaboration between La Victoria Lab and IDEO to form the next generation of digital talent in Latin America. The platform allows learners to choose from modules about technology, design, and business to create their own learning path.

[↗ Link](#)



MIT tests new collaboration tools as courses move online

The MIT Media Lab experimented with new tools to bring their intensive in-person courses online in the wake of COVID-19. The experiments led to new strategies to support collaboration, foster creativity, and make student thinking visible.

[↗ Link](#)

V | What **Proactive Courage** means for your organization



If standards and norms can change overnight, **Organizations Need A More Adaptable, Creative Workforce.**

[Learn more](#)



If the breadth and depth of knowledge are equally crucial, **Organizations Need to Advance Learning and Education.**

[Learn more](#)



If courage and decisiveness are keys for survival, **Organizations Need to Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Mindset.**

[Learn more](#)

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VI

Deliberate Adventure

People demand safety and rely on their trusted circles in times of uncertainty, yet they still crave moments of serendipitous discovery. Within safe boundaries, they take calculated risks to explore the unknown.

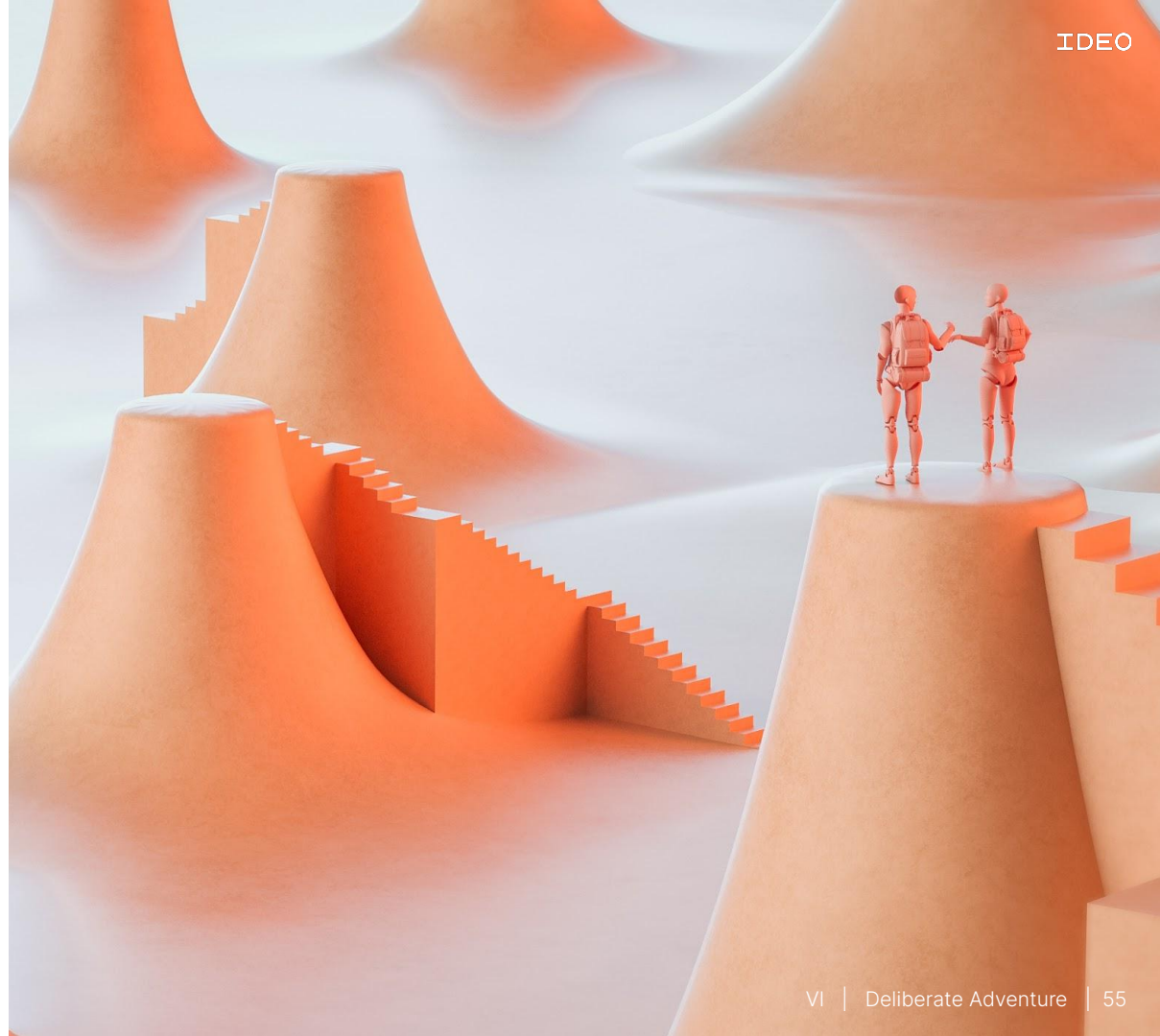
[← Back to Index](#)



VI | Deliberate Adventure

Relationships are more intentional and highly curated

In times of emergency, we prioritize safety and crave comfort in familiarity. Because the stakes are high and missteps are costly, we become more sensitive to taking risks and choose who to interact with more consciously. Such responses reinforce existing relationships with people we already trust and strengthen our biases.



VI | Deliberate Adventure

Adventure means trying as much as possible in a safe space

Traditional ways of advertising and marketing no longer expose the right audience to products and services — instead, discovery happens through the circle of trust built around ourselves. This circle forms the safety rails that provide the peace of mind to explore the unknown. Within this safe space, individuals within a company or organization are more influential than the entity itself in nudging consumer behaviors.



VI | Deliberate Adventure

Safe exploration is contextual and always evolving

Our circle of trust helps us feel safe, but it also creates invisible boundaries that keep us from exploring further. Exciting products and services won't be enough to win over new customers, because in order to expand our worlds, the starting point must feel familiar and give us courage and reassurance. Meanwhile, safe boundaries are highly contextual, personal, and dynamic. Different boundaries are built for different subject matter, and boundaries are constantly reshaped based on perceptions we form over time.



How might we design for Deliberate Adventure?

With the world building constraints in mind,
what are the primary design considerations in this future?
What aspects of existing products, services, and systems
need to change? What new ones will emerge?

We explored this world through the explorations of
Marco Lui, an avid mountain runner who loves
challenging himself.



How might we encourage safe trail running within the world of Deliberate Adventure?

Marco is an experienced trailrunner who likes to explore different routes both on his own and in groups. However, since COVID-19, he's become more wary of the safety of his adventures. Is this a secure route? Does he feel comfortable? Is he endangering anyone?

Being an outdoor sportsman, Marco is constantly aware of the changing state of himself, of others, and of the environment. **He is looking for adventures that take him beyond his comfort zone, but stay within his safety range.** Achieving that balance can be challenging, especially when he doesn't know what information he can trust or who he can rely on.

VI | Design Fiction

Planning a route to feel safe

Marco prefers running when the trail has fewer users, especially if going with his family. Weaving technology into nature gives him peace of mind.

When someone passes by within proximity, sensors embedded along the trail register the movement, log the time, and send a signal to a server in real time. These RFID tags, powered by solar energy, are placed on the trees along the trail at regular intervals.

When he checks this information online, he can see how many people are currently on the trail, as well as its peak hours, so he can plan ahead of time and decide on the appropriate route.



VI | Design Fiction

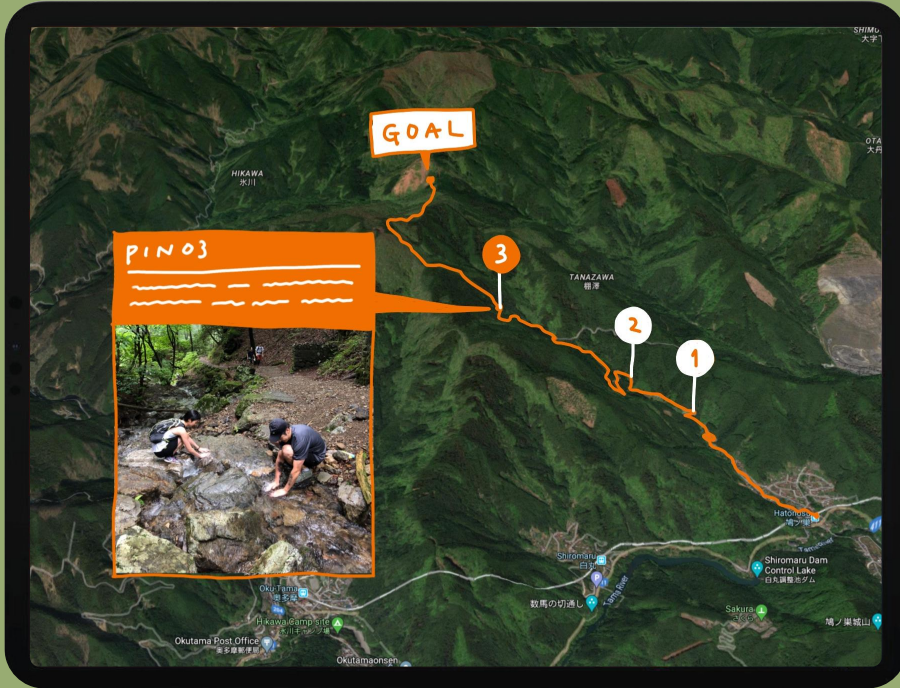
Checking in and out to keep track

When Marco and his friends arrive at the trailhead, they “check in” on their phones before they start running. Because their progress is captured by the tags along the route, families and friends can track their locations from afar. At the end of the run, they “check out” to indicate that they’ve come safely off the mountain.

If anyone gets lost or injured, emergency services can access their data to easily locate them and arrive swiftly to provide assistance.



VI | Design Fiction



Sharing back and inspiring the next

After Marco finishes his run, he shares his experience and observations online — how many fellow runners he encountered, which section of the trail he found more scenic, and what gear he used for the run.

Marco can also see what his friends in the running community have documented for their own adventures. Every now and then, he would reach out to them and ask for their recommendations on preparing for his next trip, such as which route to take, what equipment to bring, and what safety precautions to keep in mind.

Thanks to this collective knowledge base, he feels confident and safe to explore mountains that he has never been to before.

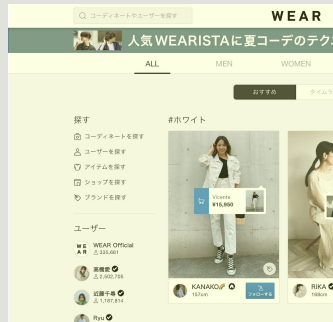
VI | What we are seeing



Turning employees into influencers

Lin Qingxuan, a Chinese cosmetics company, closed 40% of stores, and redeployed its 100+ beauty advisors to become online influencers. Customer engagement drove 200% growth in online sales.

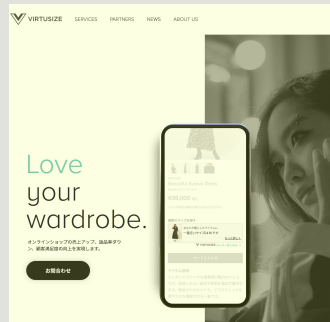
[Link](#)



Zozotown leverages user-generated content to drive sales

WEAR is a site where users post photos of how they coordinate clothing. The site, developed by online fashion retailer Zozotown, serves as a reference point for customers to decide what to buy on Zozotown.

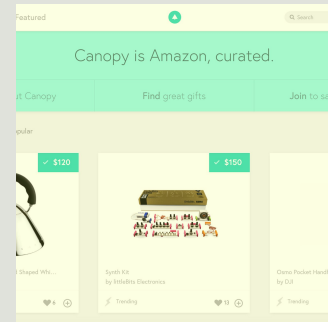
[Link](#)



Virtusize helps retailers improve sales, reduce returns

Virtusize is a virtual fitting startup that helps customers find their right size and fit by comparing a garment they want to buy with a garment they own. The company helps online retailers significantly increase sales and reduce returns.

[Link](#)



Canopy curates Amazon's massive catalog for consumers

Canopy is a curated storefront trading exclusively in beautiful products that happen to be sold on Amazon. All products displayed on the site were hand-picked by Canopy staff.

[Link](#)

VI | What **Deliberate Adventure** means for your organization



If individuals carefully curate their inner circles, **Organizations Need A Human-Centered Approach to Data.**

[Learn more](#)



If individuals' safe spaces are constantly evolving, **Organizations Need A More Adaptable, Creative Workforce.**

[Learn more](#)



If existing tactics are insufficient to win over customers, **Organizations Need to Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Mindset.**

[Learn more](#)

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VII

Aggregate Placemaking

Geographic borders no longer matter as much, as resource distribution follows the flow of people who choose to live locally while participating globally.

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VII | Aggregate Placemaking

Cities de-urbanize

As more of us shift to telework, we rediscover the simple joys of staying home with family and by ourselves. Those of us averse to crowds look to move out of cities in order to better manage our health, reduce expenses, and be close to nature. As a result, the trend towards density and urbanization will slow and begin to reverse as the value and benefit of local communities become more appealing.



VII | Aggregate Placemaking

Opportunities democratize

Already an enduring trend pre-quarantine, human resources are no longer sourced locally, but globally as people live across national borders. We can participate in any country and economy that needs our skills and expertise without compromising because of where we live. The same goes for organizations, which can create more diverse teams and cross-disciplinary collaboration by accessing a global talent pool that was once exclusive to multinational establishments.



VII | Aggregate Placemaking

Resource distribution decentralizes

With this new dissemination of talent, investing heavily in a physical office may no longer be relevant. Resource distribution takes on new forms, placing more emphasis on serving the individuals and following the flows of individuals.

On top of that, local governments and organizations where people live must respond by designing new 'urban' level services and products to better serve global citizens in order to keep and attract new types of digital workers.



How might we design for Aggregate Placemaking?

With the world building constraints in mind,
what are the primary design considerations in this future?
What aspects of existing products, services, and systems
need to change? What new ones will emerge?

We explored this world through the family of
Eri Tsutsumi, a devoted mother, avid traveler, and
inspiration seeker.

VII | Design Fiction



How might we create a flexible and mobile lifestyle within the world of Aggregate Placemaking?

Eri is a design researcher who consistently looks for inspirations to stimulate her mind and body. She is also a busy mom. Juggling work and family, including her 5-year-old son Fusuke, she's also a passionate researcher of the world.

While she enjoys working in Tokyo, she also loves taking a trip to the countryside on weekends with her family to enjoy nature. As remote working becomes the norm, she seeks a **more flexible and mobile lifestyle that can balance work, family, and life in both the city and nature.**

How can she achieve her desired lifestyle without compromising certain aspects of her life? What kind of infrastructure needs to be in place?

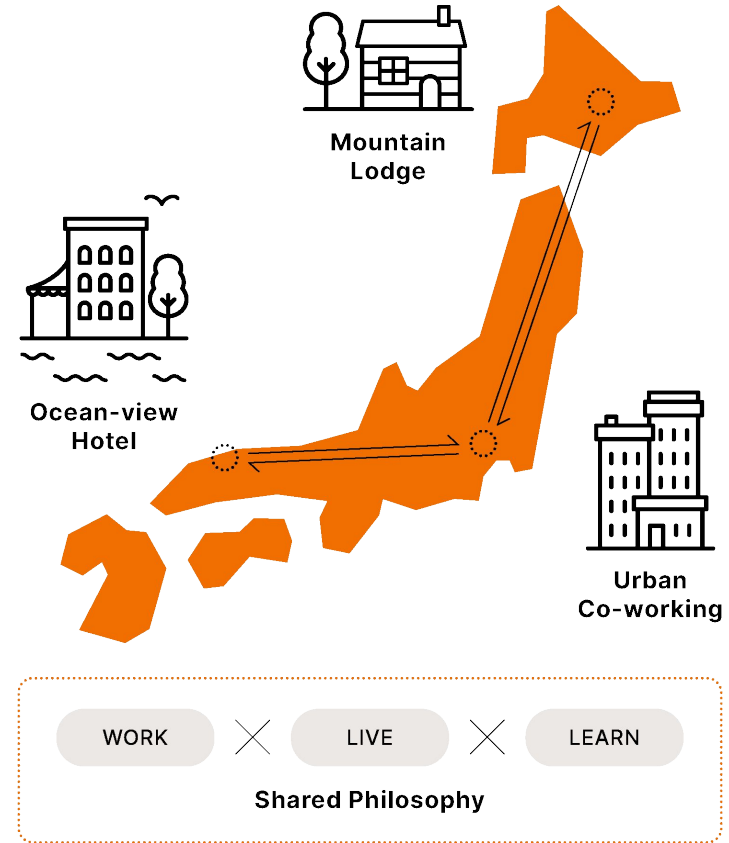
VII | Design Fiction

A mobility-focused, networked system of services around Japan

As much as Eri values in-school education for her child, she also values local real-life experiences that can only be learned by experiencing. That is one of the reasons why she frequently goes out of the city.

If remote working enables her to work from anywhere, work locations can be diverse — like working in a mountain lodge one day and by the ocean another day — depending on family schedule, seasonality, mood, or interest.

If local school could also be assigned fluidly based on where she's working at the moment, her son can join her and make local friends, searching for his favorite bugs in the mountain or fish in the ocean. Existing infrastructure like hotels, B&B, vacation rentals, and co-working spaces all contribute to this network of systems to support Eri's mobile lifestyle and create a unique value that differentiates from traditional accommodation value.



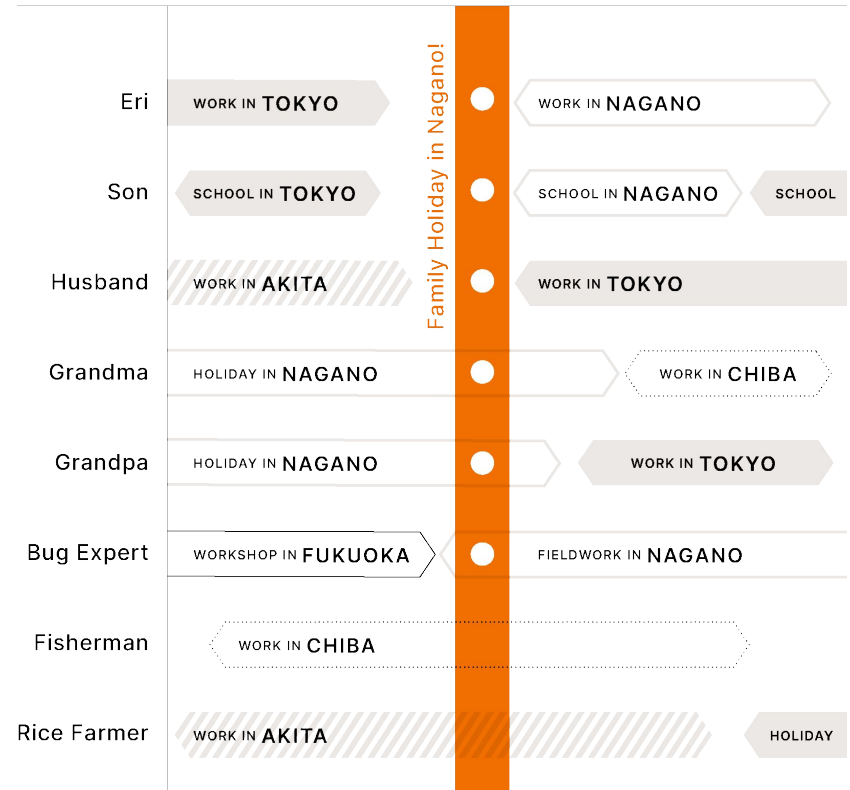
VII | Design Fiction

Fluid scheduling to match lifestyle interests

It is the beginning of August. Eri and her son are in Tokyo while her husband is on a business trip in Akita.

Eri notices that her son's favorite bug expert will be available in mid-August before starting his fieldwork in Nagano, where her mum and dad are taking their summer vacation. So she aligns everyone's schedule for an ad hoc family trip to Nagano to visit the bug expert for inspiration. After the trip, her husband continues his business trip in Tokyo while Eri stays in Nagano and works in a mountain lodge for the rest of the month. Her son, nature-loving just like his mum, stays with Eri and attends school near a paddy field.

Schedule of August



Meet and connect with like-minded people

By designing a network of systems that support this new mobile lifestyle, it creates a diverse range of communities in every location.

You can have a rice farmer community where a farmer can teach you how to plant and harvest rice together, a bug expert who can teach your kids about mountain bugs, and a local fisherman community that can teach you how to catch and cook fresh fish. No matter the age, you gain experiences that cannot be learned in a traditional setting.

This extensive network attracts people with shared values, forming new communities of like-minded individuals. No longer fixed to a location, you have the freedom to connect with anyone, regardless of where they are from.



VII | What we are seeing



Tokyoites express interest in moving to prefectures

People living in the Tokyo Metropolitan area say they consider moving to other regions, according to a government survey of 10,000.

[↗ Link](#)



Japanese workforce says remote work will stick

Over 80% of workers said work-from-home will become a norm and create opportunities for people to do side jobs and move out of cities, a Biglobe survey showed.

[↗ Link](#)



ADDRESS turns empty homes in Japan into gems for remote workers

This Japanese startup refurbishes vacant homes across the country and turns them into livable places. Customers pay a monthly subscription fee for unlimited stays at any location.

[↗ Link](#)



Kamiyama Valley, role-model of the satellite offices

Since 10 years ago, Kamiyamacho in Tokushima became a center of satellite offices for many companies that value decentralized lifestyle.

[↗ Link](#)

VII | What **Aggregate Placemaking** means for your organization



If resources follow talents who are widely distributed,
Organizations Need A Digitally Flexible Organization and Offering.

[Learn more](#)



If geographical borders are no longer a barrier to entry,
Organizations Need to Advance Learning and Education.

[Learn more](#)



If demand changes fluidly along with the movement of people,
Organizations Need to Create Circular or Regenerative Products, Services and Systems.

[Learn more](#)

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VIII

Radical Resilience

In the face of uncertainty, the pursuit of optimization and efficiency becomes less relevant, while taking care of ourselves and our immediate surroundings take over as first priority. Preserving locality is no longer “someone else’s job” — it is personal. Technologies of the future will embody care and compassion to enable this value shift.

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Success and intimacy intertwine

The value of leisure and fun grow and possess more advantage in how we tackle difficult challenges as we shift away from the incessant urge for optimization and efficiency. Solitude and observation develop not only as ends in and of themselves, but inalienable rights belonging to anyone lucky enough to be alive. We realize some things are more important — that the present time and place, and the people here with us, are simply enough.



VIII | Radical Resilience

Locality grows and thrives

Local businesses initially take a lot of damage but resurge with a greater empathy for their existence as our attention shifts from the office to our homes and communities, which are now more important than ever. Investing in our immediate neighborhood means building stronger and more capable communities that can weather any future storms.



Technology fosters our connection to our immediate surroundings

We suddenly experienced a mass global adoption of digital as the perceived barriers to entry disappeared. The quarantine jumped multiple hurdles at once and as a result, more of us than ever before embrace technology to solve problems and soothe emotions during difficult times. With more diversity and points of view entering digital spaces, technology adapts and becomes more nurturing to fulfill these deeply personal needs and desires.



How might we design for Radical Resilience?

With the world building constraints in mind, what are the primary design considerations in this future? What aspects of existing products, services, and systems need to change? What new ones will emerge?

We explored these questions through the relationships of **Yuriko Yamaguchi**, a loyal neighbor who hopes to build a resilient community full of people who are comfortable sharing soy sauce with each other.



How might we foster a greater connection to our neighbors within the world of Radical Resilience?

Yuriko lives in a short block of apartments with only six units where it's quite hard to ignore the people living next door. Putting her neighbors out of mind is impossible.

She feels stronger when connected to her surroundings.
That's why we chose Yuriko.

Yuriko is a very sensitive person who sees her surroundings as an extension of herself and worries about her impact on others. When she wants to play her music, she only does so because she knows her neighbors, otherwise she wouldn't.

The quarantine pushed her to build stronger connections with her neighbors. By making a connection, she feels more complete and more connected to her surroundings.

VIII | Design Fiction

“You know you’re safe if you can casually borrow soy sauce from your neighbors.”

It's amazing how often we still hear people say this, but it's always followed by lamentations of how this is not the case anymore in many neighborhoods today.

Our neighbors are different from our friends or colleagues. They are closest to us when something happens (whether an illness, crime, or natural disaster), and when we need immediate help.

We might need encouragement to connect with them, especially when from different generations. As the current COVID-19 situation keeps us in our homes and neighborhoods, it's an **opportunity to rethink how better connection to the people around us encourages strength in tackling the unknown.**





Building resilient local infrastructure

For Yuriko, **resilience can be as simple as knowing her neighbors**, but she knows that's not always easy in the city — it could even feel socially awkward.

This jigsaw puzzle gives Yuriko playful permission to connect with her new neighbors. Giving each neighbor a piece of the puzzle to fill in, sharing their name and a short message. Collect the pieces back and assemble on the fridge door. This ritual gives new residents a circle of neighbors they can easily turn to for help both big and small.

VIII | What we are seeing



“Grown local, consumed local” emerges as new value

The pandemic fuels a movement towards self sufficiency as a local community. As imports fall and safety concerns rise, local producers and their products thrive with the backing of the people who know them well.

[↗ Link](#)



Stays by local residents expected to revive hotel industry

Yoshiharu Hoshino, CEO of Hoshino Resorts, expects micro-tourism — travels made by tourists who live within the region — will take hold because of COVID-19 and drive the revival of the hotel industry in Japan.

[↗ Link](#)



Supporting local restaurants with meal prepayment

Sakimeshi is a service that allows diners to prepay for their future visits to support local restaurants affected by COVID-19.

[↗ Link](#)



Universal basic everything

A push for universal basic everything, which is co-created, accessible to everyone, open source, simple in design, and circular in its production.

[↗ Link](#)

VIII | What **Radical Resilience** means for your organization



If success is different for each person, **Organizations Need A Human-Centered Approach to Data.**

[Learn more](#)



If technology must cater to more individuals than ever before, **Organizations Need to Advance Learning and Education.**

[Learn more](#)



If customers have a heightened awareness of their environment, **Organizations Need to Create Circular or Regenerative Products, Services and Systems.**

[Learn more](#)

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IX

Asynchronous
Rhythms

When work and life happen at the same place, balance means switching mindsets rather than changing locations. As work time and family time irreversibly weave together, relationships take on new dynamics, as do the products, services, and spaces that serve them.

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IX | Asynchronous Rhythms

Gender roles and expectations reset

In Japan, long work hours keeps family life secondary, with a strong division of labor — one dedicated to work, and the other protecting the home. This model breaks down as families discover the value of spending more time together. As domestic responsibilities gradually redistribute to be more equal, opportunities emerge for men to take care of the home and family, while unburdened women share their voice in career settings. Equality at home translates to greater equality overall.



IX | Asynchronous Rhythms

People craft work-life rhythms on their own terms

The notion of standardized working hours and working 5 days a week fades as we spend more time at home — both professionally and privately. The division between work and home is no longer based on where we are physically, but how we spend our time at a given moment. The distinction between on and off is no longer spatial, but chronological. In this world, we are liberated from the collective, synchronous timetable, putting ourselves in charge of personalizing our own work-life rhythm, responding to contextual needs on a daily basis.



Individual patterns shape our cities

As our lifestyles become more asynchronous, the ways we use our spaces, products, and services dramatically shifts to accommodate families who live together, but work separately — in the same place. Peak hours are no longer a universal truth, but very much a decision that varies from person to person. Reshaping our cities means questioning the default and finding opportunities to cater to this diversity of rhythms.



How might we design for Asynchronous Rhythms?

With the world building constraints in mind,
what are the primary design considerations in this future?
What aspects of existing products, services, and systems
need to change? What new ones will emerge?

Co-design for this future with us.

IX | What we are seeing



Family ties get stronger

Couples living together said their relationships improved during COVID-19 as they spent more time together, according to a survey by a Japanese marriage agency.

[↗ Link](#)



Daiwa House adds work-from-home feature to apartment design

The Japanese developer proposes construction options, such as sound-proof systems, to support work-from-home households.

[↗ Link](#)



Love hotel makes rooms kid-friendly for working mums

A love hotel operator in Fukuoka City turned its rooms into spaces for kids to stay while their mums work in the facility. The privacy and cleanliness of love hotels make them a perfect choice for parents working remotely who want a safe place for their children.

[↗ Link](#)



A call to redesign the work week

New Zealand's Prime Minister encourages a 4-day work week or creative approaches to boosting business and tourism.

[↗ Link](#)



A push to make remote work more sustainable

When the number of people working remotely climbs to 30%, fundamental changes to the nature of work become necessary.

[↗ Link](#)

IX | What Asynchronous Rhythms means for your organization



If opportunities lie in catering to a diversity of rhythms,
Organizations Need A More Adaptable, Creative Workforce.

[Learn more](#)



If work dynamics are changing along with home dynamics,
Organizations Need to Advance Learning and Education.

[Learn more](#)



If questioning the default is an indispensable quality,
Organizations Need to Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Mindset.

[Learn more](#)

What these futures mean for organizations.

Regardless of what the future holds for Japan, we are confident that organizations with the following DNA will prove the most resilient and sustainable in the years to come.



What these futures mean for organizations

Organizations Need A Digitally Flexible Organization and Offering.



What these futures mean for organizations

Before 2020, organizations were asking, “Should we reinvent ourselves for the internet era?” This question is no longer relevant. In Spring 2020, digital transformation happened to the world.

↗ IDEO surveyed its network of 55 global business leaders spanning 25 cities and 18+ industries about what problems are keeping them up at night and what promising digital solutions keep them leading with optimism.





Every business must be much more digital than it was before — both in IT operations and offer. To survive, organizations must either take a digital mindset to existing offers or launch new offers with an internet-era mindset.

All the perceived barriers to digitally transforming an organization have quickly fallen away — whether between businesses and customers, internal business units, between competitors. Now is the time to capitalize.

The key is to start small. Identify one team or service that needs saving; the business will fail without courageous experimentation. With learning in place, businesses can build and see how the process applies to the larger organization.

In other words, **Rescue, Rebuild, Renew.**

For over 40 years, IDEO has seen that organizations that change the fastest are the ones with their backs most strongly against the wall in crises.

Rescue

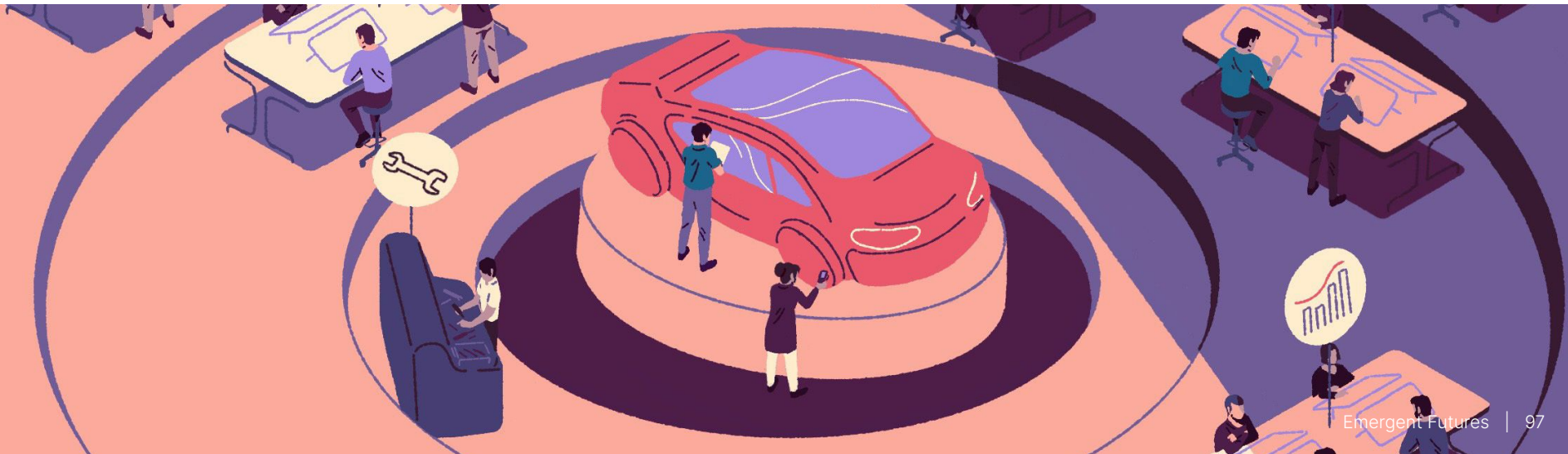
What needs saving the most?
How can we drive revenue
in a new way with digital?

Rebuild

What can we learn from other digital
organizations' culture, processes, business
models, and technologies to build an offer
that's better and more resilient than before?

Renew

How do we cope with a new future?
What current digital practices can scale
to other parts of the organization?



IDEO and Ford have partnered on this digital transformation journey to prototype experiments that reframe a legacy car company's place in a rapidly changing world of mobility and digital.

Along with global competitions, collaborations with universities, and opening up their hardware and software platform Open XC, these experiments help Ford meet the needs of a fast-changing mobile world. "As we drive [digital] innovation in every part of our business," Ford states, "we are determined to learn, to take risks, to challenge custom and question tradition, and to change our business going forward."

[How Design is Driving Ford to Reimagine What a Car Company Can Be](#)

[Helping Ford evolve from an automaker to a mobility provider](#)



There's no better time than now to rescue, rebuild, and renew your organization for the digital era.

IDEO works with organizations seeking growth, influence, and agility to design and build the next generation of digital products, services, and experiences.

[Start Conversation](#)

What these futures mean for organizations

Organizations Need A Human-Centered Approach to Data





Sustaining and reinventing industries during and after a pandemic is going to require Japanese organizations to offer more responsive and flexible products and services. Restaurants, retailers, public transportation, hotels, and venues operating at lower capacity will all need more sophisticated applications of real-time data and machine learning algorithms to put data to good use.

Some businesses are already taking action. Hoshino Resorts is currently developing ways to show customers how many people are using facilities so they can let people stay at their hotels at half the capacity. By combining data for community spread with how crowded or used facilities are, Hoshino can make decisions on how much to open, and people can decide where to go.

Data will invariably impact your business as well.

[Data is revitalizing Japan's prefectural food industries through tools that visualize agricultural production sites and benefit both producers and wholesalers.](#)



At IDEO, we believe that data-driven solutions are stronger when the services that leverage that data are human-centered. Human-centered data science comes from interdisciplinary teams incorporating design thinking into their approach. Instead of a version of data science that is narrowly focused on researching new statistical models or building better data visualizations, a design-thinking approach recognizes data scientists as creative problem-solvers. We're not suggesting that the disciplines of data science and design merge; rather, if practitioners work together and learn each other's art, they will produce better outcomes.

Many of the techniques we use in our human-centered design process at IDEO — user research, analogous inspiration, sketching, and prototyping — work well with data-driven products, services, and experiences. Engaging data scientists in all stages of the design thinking process pays off in incalculable ways. Interdisciplinary collaboration that pulls data scientists away from their screens and out into the world produces powerful results. It transforms data from a crude tool to measure your business into a sophisticated tool that helps your business survive — even grow — in these trying times.

[↗ Harvard Business Review unpacks what happens when data scientists and designers work together.](#)

AI-powered technologies will shape every industry in the next few years. To succeed, these technologies must be grounded in human needs and work to extend and enhance people's capabilities, not replace them.

IDEO is the world's foremost organization combining data science and design to create human-centered solutions.

[Start Conversation](#)

What these futures mean for organizations

Organizations Need A More Adaptable, Creative Workforce





Our current health and economic crisis is requiring organizations to adapt quickly with innovative solutions. To solve these challenges, we require new perspectives, multidisciplinary teams, open collaboration models, creative leadership, and entrepreneurial mindsets.

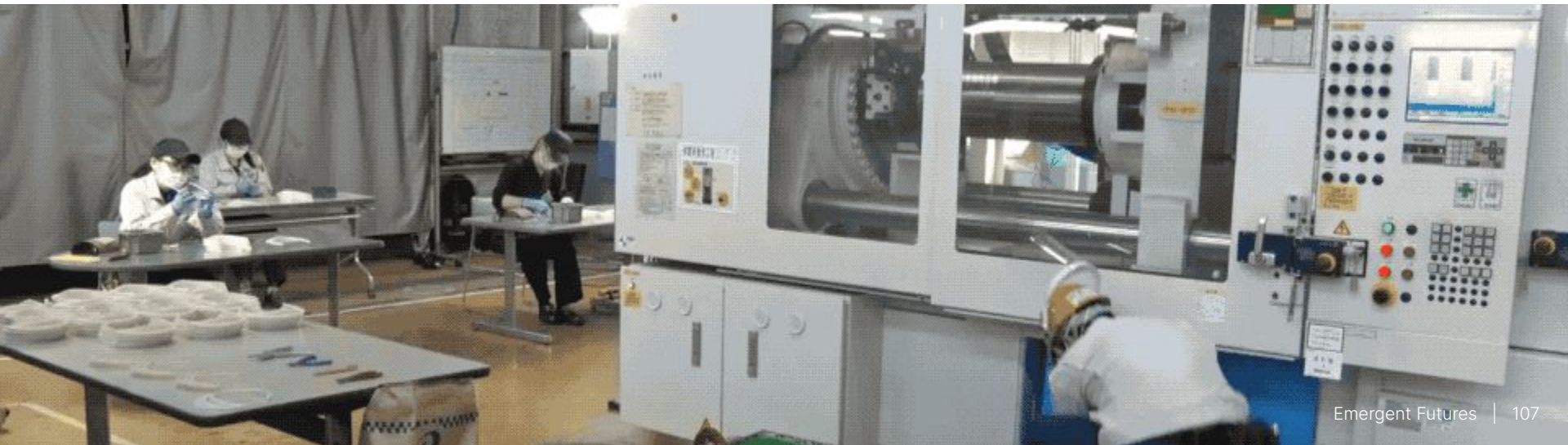
We require creative, dynamic workforces.

Creative workforces survive through challenging times because they can adapt quickly and in unconventional ways.

“In Japan, there are many creative ideas everywhere, and I think anyone can come up with ideas. I feel that what is lacking in Japan is not “creative ideas” but “creative decision making”...When a new idea is born, we need creativity to bring it into an interesting business, which requires diverse perspectives and flexibility within the organization.” —Daisuke Iizawa, Mitsubishi Electric Corporation

In March 2020, Toyota pivoted to have its workers and production lines create medical face shields and PPE for healthcare workers on the front lines of the COVID crisis ([video](#)). In April, Toyota rolled out new vehicles specifically designed to transport seriously ill COVID-19 patients ([press release](#)). In May, Toyota announced its participation as a founding member of the IP Open Access Declaration Against COVID-19, an open collaboration model to fight COVID-19 alongside other declaration members ([press release](#)). This from a company that started manufacturing automatic looms 100 years ago and now manufactures automobiles.

“You must always be learning something new, no matter how old you are.”
—Akio Toyoda



What these futures mean for organizations

Organizations Need to Advance Learning and Education



Most governments around the world have been forced to temporarily close schools in an attempt to contain the spread of COVID-19. Closures are impacting over 91% of the world's student population ([↗ UNICEF](#)). In response, educational institutions and teachers have had to reimagine their roles, shifting to digital ways of engaging with students and families.

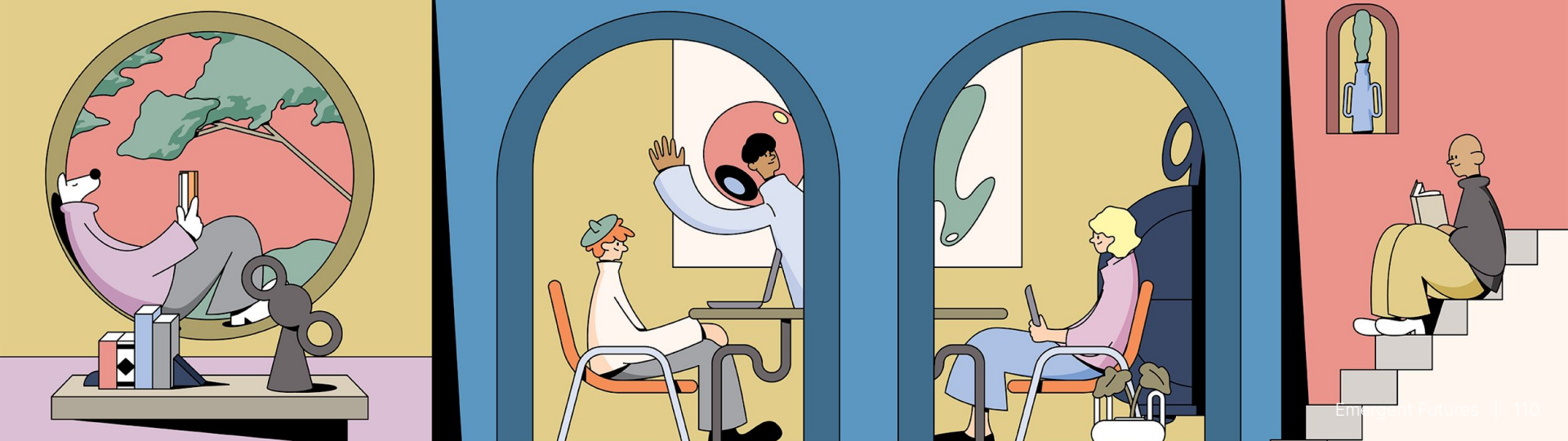
Beyond education, school closures have highlighted other socio-economic challenges around the world: student debt, discrepancies in access to digital learning, food insecurity, child care, health care, housing, and specific ability services. The impact is far more disruptive for disadvantaged children and families, causing interrupted learning, compromised nutrition, childcare issues, and consequent economic costs to families who cannot work.

[↗ IDEO designed a school system in Peru from the ground up with a financial model that enables curriculum, educational strategies, school buildings, operating plans, and school networks to be run and scaled quickly.](#)



In April, UNICEF and Microsoft announced the rapid expansion of the online learning platform *Learning Passport* to support country-level curriculum for children and youth affected by school closures ([UNICEF](#)). The platform also provides key resources for teachers, educators, and parents.

In Japan, private schools have turned to digital platforms and tools such as Google Classroom, Zoom, Classi, and Edmodo. However, many public schools have little to no access to digital devices and online learning, severely limiting the ability to continue learning during lockdown ([Japan Times](#)).





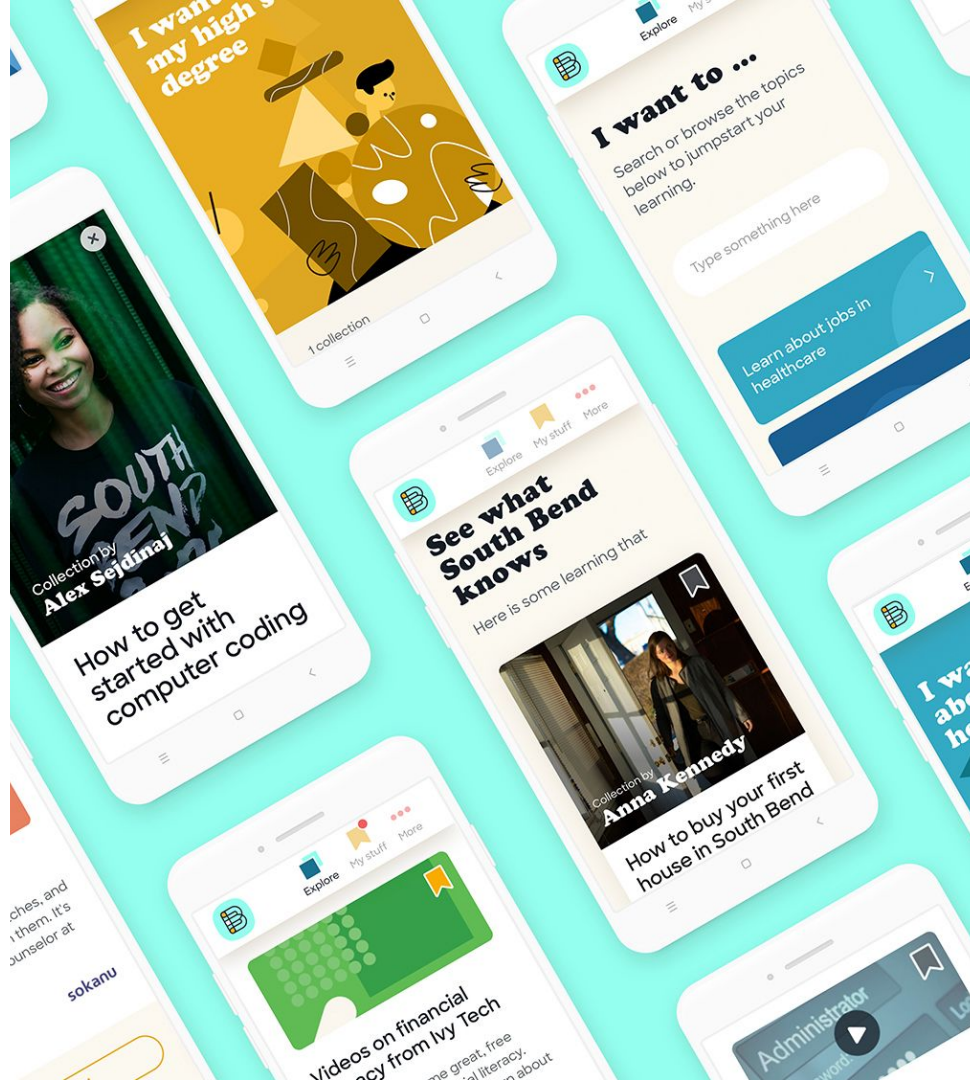
In addition to new ways of accessing and engaging with education online, the skills necessary for the future are also shifting. With students being able to access knowledge and learn technical skills online, learners now need to acquire and practice resilience, flexibility, creativity, collaboration, and communication ([↗ World Economic Forum](#)).

Tokyo College of Music partnered with IDEO to design their new campus as a collaborative learning platform. The team designed The Creative Lab, a new venue for live musical performances as well as workshops and events on topics such as cultural exchange, business, and technology.

[↗ Transforming a Historic Music College into a Collaborative Learning Platform](#)

The Drucker Institute, a social enterprise in the US dedicated to making leaders and organizations more effective, collaborated with IDEO to design a scalable, community-curated platform that connects people with opportunities to learn from each other, with topics ranging from professional development to personal interests.

➤ [Building a City of Lifelong Learning in South Bend, Indiana](#)



The shift in education to embrace digital tools and online platforms has accelerated due to the pandemic — and will only increase.

IDEO helps people engage in lifelong learning to ensure their skills remain relevant in a constantly evolving world.

[Start Conversation](#)

What these futures mean for organizations

Organizations Need to Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Mindset



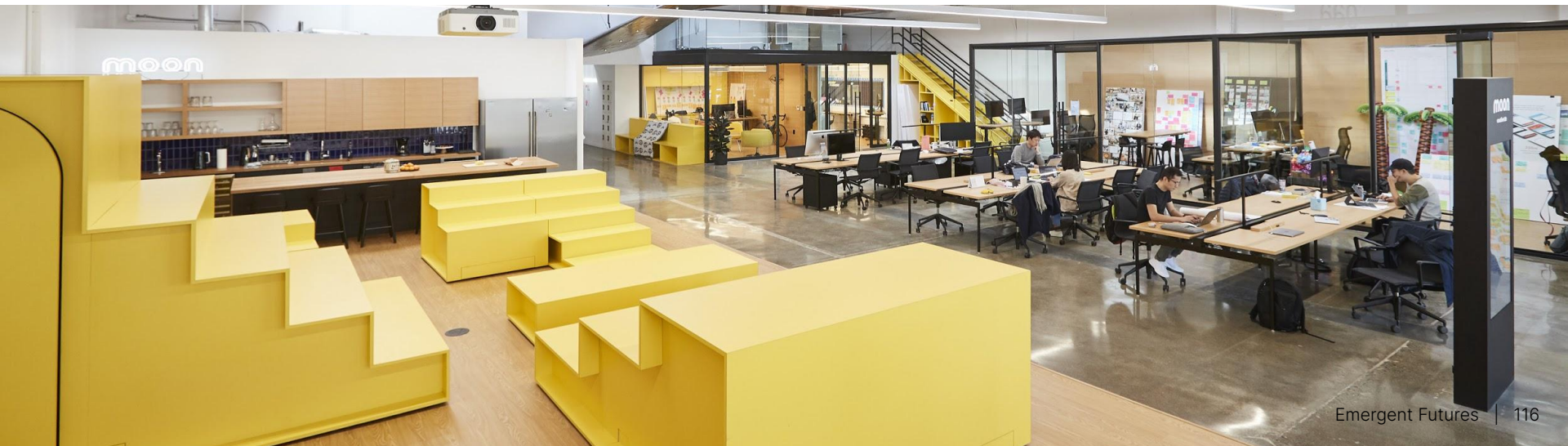
Pre-COVID-19, an “entrepreneurial mindset” was reserved for start-ups and new business units. Moving forward, thinking like an entrepreneur will be critical for any business — both big and small — to survive.

Entrepreneurs have an unwavering vision of the future they want to create. They constantly build, test, and boldly iterate on their ideas because they cannot rely on precedent to make business decisions. Similarly, post-COVID-19, we will all venture into uncharted territory. Physical businesses such as restaurants, theaters, airlines, and stadiums must experiment to find new business models that do not rely on maximizing space utilization.

Fat Rice, an acclaimed Chicago restaurant, imagines the future of the restaurant to resemble a corner store, and has [closed their eatery to permanently transition to selling meal-kits.](#)



In China, there is a saying that “great businesses are the children of winter.” There is no better time than a crisis to make long overdue changes to your business.



How does one cultivate an entrepreneurial mindset?

Moon Creative Lab was created in collaboration with IDEO to power the creation of new businesses for Mitsui & Co. The idea was to create a standalone organization with a unique identity and culture — at Moon, people are encouraged to think beyond business units and immediate profits, and focus on building a “bold, crazy future.”

“Although Mitsui and other sogo shoshas are making money, the key question that everyone is struggling to answer is, ‘What’s next?’ I’m here at Mitsui to answer that. I want to change the image of the sogo shosha....we aim to be a company that incubates and develops new businesses. our diverse pool of talented individuals can take the initiative in creating new businesses... to create new value.”

Toru Matsui

General Manager of Corporate Planning & Strategy

[↗ Moon Creative Lab](#)



There are smaller, scrappier ways to cultivate this mindset as well. Spotify organizes an annual Hack Week for employees to set aside “normal work” and form teams to conceive and build inventive passion projects. In 2019, over 100 teams from across the world signed up. Hack Week has even produced some of Spotify’s most iconic product features, such as the Discover Weekly playlist ([z Spotify blog](#)).



Regardless of the approach, cultivating an entrepreneurial mindset today helps you emerge stronger, and might even future-proof your business against other unforeseen challenges.

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What these futures mean for organizations

Organizations Need to Create Circular or Regenerative Products, Services, and Systems



As we face the COVID-19 crisis, there is another crisis we are being warned of, but have similarly been slow to address — the climate crisis. In our current ‘take-make-waste’ model, companies extract materials faster than the world can regenerate, apply energy and labor to manufacture and bring to market, of which the majority of products end up in landfills after short use. With five decades of population growth, over-consumption, and energy use pressuring the ecosystem, we currently live beyond the Earth’s biocapacity at 1.7 planets.

➤ Full Cycle Bioplastics is a company that converts organic matter like inedible food waste into a compostable alternative to oil-based plastic. As the top contender in IDEO’s Food Waste Challenge, the company received \$50,000, allowing it to dramatically scale up material production and product development efforts.





With COVID-19, we shift abruptly from a mindset of abundance to one of scarcity. Businesses must learn to design for circularity — to design out waste and be resourceful with their raw materials, energy use, and materials recovery — or be left vulnerable to upcoming climate events. Getting ahead now allows businesses to be future-proof, lead with purpose to attract new talent and customers, avoid being legislated out of business, as well as create long-term financial savings.

[➤ Designing Waste Out of the Food System](#)

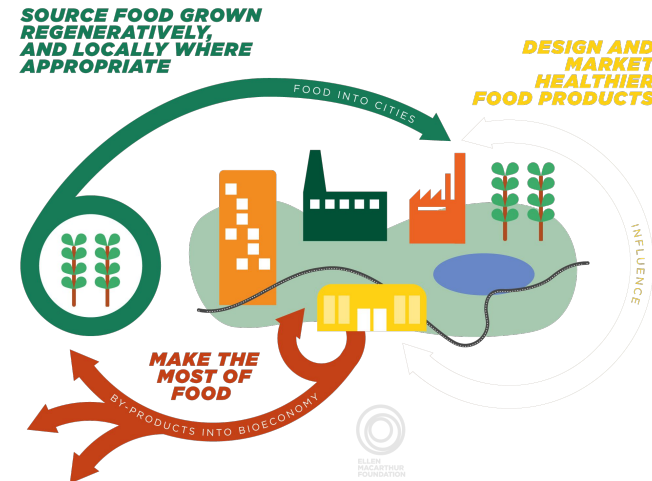
The principles of a circular economy:

Design Out Waste
(to reduce emission across value chain)

Keep Products in Use
(to retain embodied energy)

Regenerate Natural Systems
(to sequester carbon in soil).

Can you switch to renewable energy or turn byproducts into energy? Can you use materials that are more durable, recyclable, or biodegradable? Can you service to extend product life, or collect used products to recover their value? Can you turn your product into a service and guarantee a level of performance? Can you dematerialize and virtualize? Can your byproducts be raw materials for another company?



How can we design the next generation to-go cup to be recoverable while maintaining the performance standards we know and trust?

In 2018, Starbucks and food companies partnered to [crowdfund alternative solutions](#) for the to-go cup. After 500 ideas and [12 winners](#), IDEO is pilot testing reusable to-go cup solutions across multiple cafes in San Francisco.



IDEO facilitates collaboration with key players pre-competitively, building prototypes that visualize new industry standards in line with circular principles.

[Start Conversation](#)

What these futures mean for organizations



Organizations Need A Digitally
Flexible Organization and Offering



Organizations Need A
Human-Centered Approach to Data



Organizations Need A More
Adaptable, Creative Workforce



Organizations Need to Advance
Learning and Education



Organizations Need to Cultivate
an Entrepreneurial Mindset



Organizations Need to Create
Circular or Regenerative Products,
Services and Systems

Contact

Questions?

Comments or thoughts? Please reach out.
Let's discuss your company's challenges
and design for them together.

tokyo@ideo.com

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Credits

Cory [↗ Bio](#)

CURATOR

Davide [↗ Bio](#)

1 - LEFTOVER SPACES

Chris [↗ Bio](#)

3 - PERMEATING IDENTITY

Nathan [↗ Bio](#)

5 - PROACTIVE COURAGE

Ted [↗ Bio](#)

7 - AGGREGATE PLACEMAKING

Amelia [↗ Bio](#)

9 - ASYNCHRONOUS RHYTHMS

Michio [↗ Bio](#)

GRAPHICS

Kei [↗ Bio](#)

2 - RAPID EVOLUTION

Hidetsugu [↗ Bio](#)

4 - FRATERNAL REALITY

Kenichi [↗ Bio](#)

6 - DELIBERATE ADVENTURE

Marco [↗ Bio](#)

8 - RADICAL RESILIENCE

Mio [↗ Bio](#)

GRAPHICS



Emergent Futures

“You never change things by fighting
the existing reality. To change something,
build a new model that makes the existing
model obsolete.”

—Buckminster Fuller

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