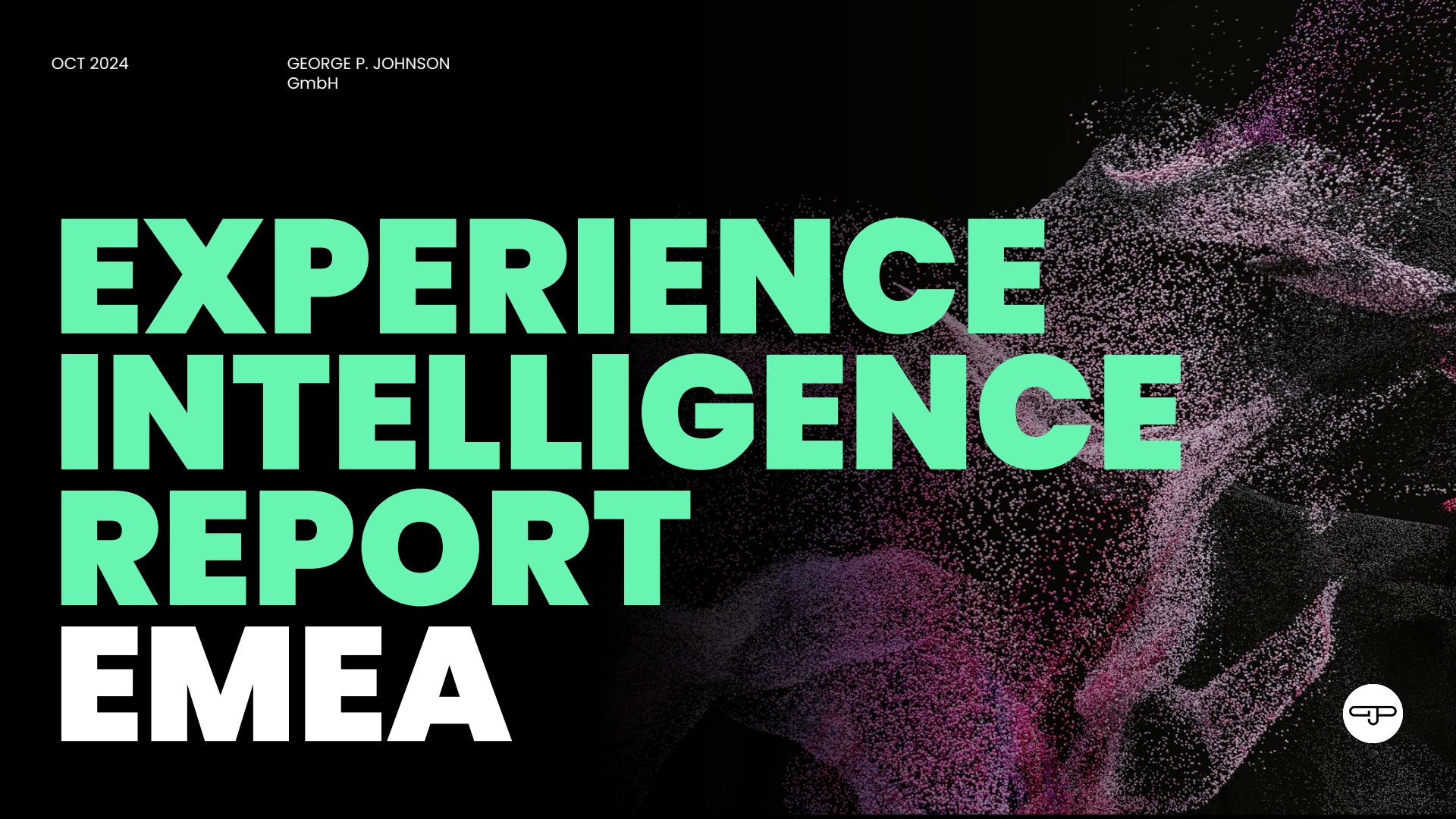
OCT 2024

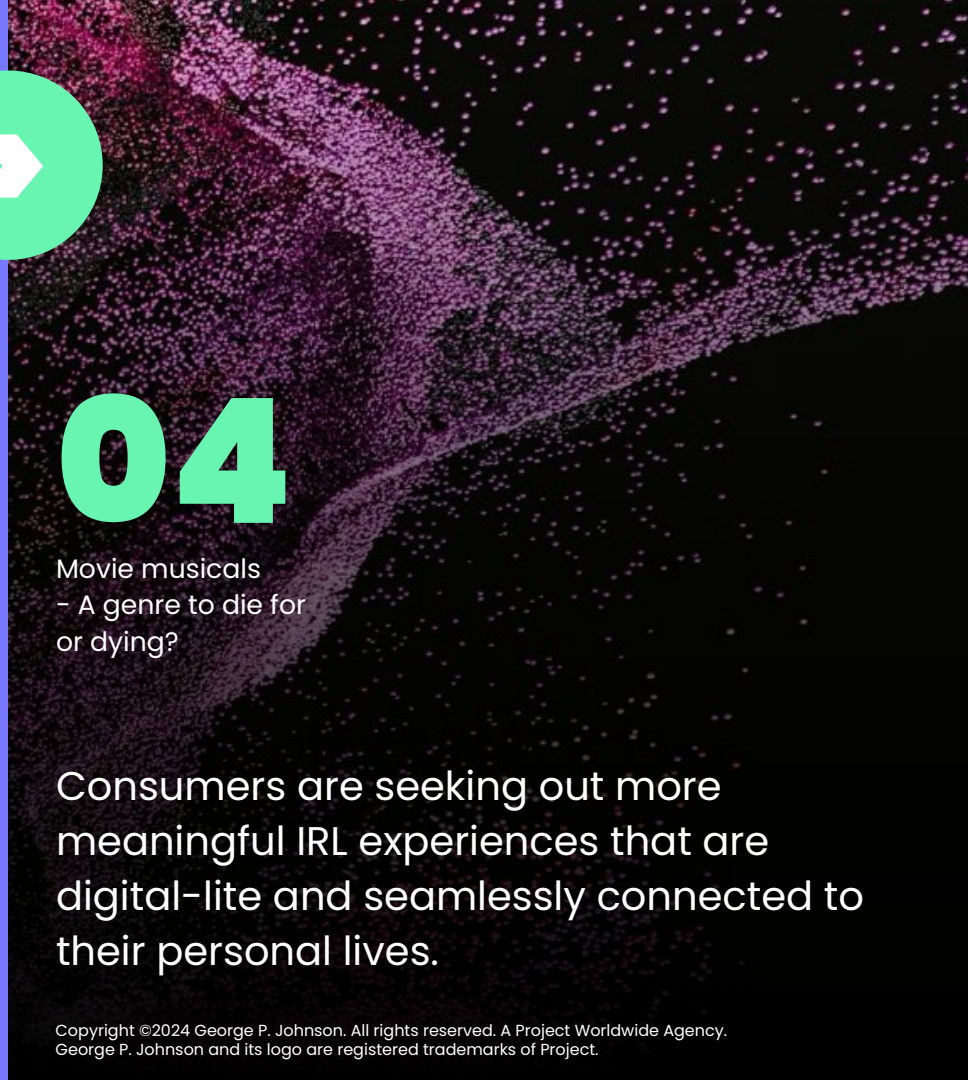
GEORGE P. JOHNSON GmbH

# EXPERIENCE INTELLIGENCE REPORT EMEA



EXPERIENCE
INTELLIGENCE
REPORT

GEORGE P. JOHNSON
GmbH



**01**

Leave your phone at home and disconnect to connect.

**02**

Gen Z is saying goodbye to stranger danger.

**03**

Pet-friendly experiences are the cat's pajamas.

**04**

Movie musicals - A genre to die for or dying?

Consumers are seeking out more meaningful IRL experiences that are digital-lite and seamlessly connected to their personal lives.

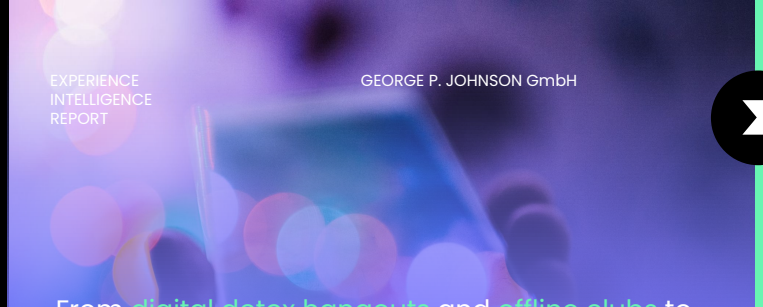
If you have questions about any of this content, or would like to learn more, please reach out to your GPJ account representative or Heidrun.Scholten@gpj.com

# 01 LEAVE YOUR PHONE AT HOME AND DISCONNECT TO CONNECT

**Desire is growing for screen-free experiences that make us feel more present.**

Hungary schools discuss on implementing bans on phone use and parents are strongly in favor whereas high school students in Florida and Indiana recently returned to school already facing new bans.

While these kind of policies are mandatory, they align with a broader, voluntary movement where people are increasingly seeking screen-free experiences.



From digital detox hangouts and offline clubs to phone-free concerts and screen-free cafés, more individuals are opting to disconnect. This trend is supported by a growing industry focused on intentional attention, with self-help books on focus, academic departments dedicated to "attention studies," and experimental schools exploring "radical attention."

**What it Means**

Concerns around technology have shifted from fears of data theft to worries about tech diminishing our ability to genuinely connect and be present. In response, some are taking drastic steps, like using physical app locks, buying nostalgic flip phones, or storing devices in signal-blocking phone cases.



›››

**Key Takeaway**

The brand moment built for instagram may need counterbalancing with moments meant to facilitate more tangible connections. From activations to large-scale events, brands should experiment with screen-free zones or voluntary lockboxes—and see what happens when being present becomes a draw.

# 02
# GEN Z IS SAYING GOODBYE TO STRANGER DANGER

**Gen Z is ditching the dating apps and seeking chance, IRL connections.**

Remote workers, digital nomads, and Gen Z transplants to big cities are joining a variety of clubs and using apps to find community.

Powered by AI and algorithms based on personality tests or user preferences, apps like Timeleft gives users the chance to meet five strangers over dinner.

Others allow users to book breakfasts, lunches, or other local activities with people they may never meet otherwise. Explicitly not for dating or networking, many of these apps do not require the cumbersome maintenance of profiles, DMing, or swiping—eliminating the work needed to facilitate face-to-face encounters.

**What it Means**

The app Geneva calls itself "the online place to find your offline people," with activities and clubs that provide communal third places outside home or work. For digital natives, who have never known a screen-free reality, there is novelty in unvetted, chance connections that are not siloed to social media or virtual communities who may never meet IRL.



›››

**Key Takeaway**

Nvidia GTC recently offered attendees "Dinner with Strangers" reservations at restaurants, which filled up quickly. This success shows Gen Z and remote workers crave authentic in-person connections over digital interactions. The event industry can capitalize by creating experiences that foster spontaneous encounters, using apps to reduce pre-event friction and boost organic engagement.

# 03 PET-FRIENDLY EXPERIENCES ARE THE CAT'S PAJAMAS

**Animal-inclusive experiences are rising in popularity to meet the growing demands of pet parents.**

Approximately 46% of all European households own pets. In comparison only around 23% of European households include at least one child. Brands are looking to tap into this new demographic of customers by increasing their pet-friendly offerings to accommodate man's best friend.

Whether it's an airline offering "white paw experiences" for its canine customers, to popular brands like Mars collaborating with Tripadvisor to improve pet travel.

To vacation homes and rentals becoming more dog friendly and restaurant weeks—everyone wants a slice of the estimated $259 million annual budget of pet parents.

**What it Means**

In a world where hyper-personalization is the expectation, and audiences are becoming more selective about the experiences that demand their engagement—increasing accessibility for our furry friends and finding ways to incorporate them into the experience could be a major factor in determining where someone spends their time and money.



›››

**Key Takeaway**

Choosing locations with pet-friendly accommodations, introducing pet-focused yappy hours, and focus on the pet experience as well can enhance experiences for animal-loving attendees, differentiate your experience from the rest of the pack, and more effectively tap into a lucrative demographic of consumers.

# 04 MOVIE MUSICALS - A GENRE TO DIE FOR OR DYING?

**For years, it seemed movie musicals had lost their magic. But now, the genre is returning with multiple releases this fall.**

Several major musical films are set to debut in the coming months, Including Emilia Pérez, Wicked, Moana 2, and Mufasa: The Lion King.

The resurgence of musical films reflects changing audience preferences and industry strategies, with recent hits like The Little Mermaid, Mean Girls, Joker: Folie à Deux and Wonka showcasing their blockbuster potential.

With fewer original musicals being produced, studios are focusing on adaptations of beloved properties that already have built-in audiences.

**What it Means**

Modern musical movies blend contemporary music and innovative narratives, appealing to wider demographics. Furthermore they offer a digital expansion beyond traditional theatre, merging live singing with cinematic entertainment, enhanced by elaborate visuals and intimate storytelling. This genre provides escapism and hope during challenging times, resonating with societal needs and indicating a renewed confidence in musicals' ability to captivate audiences.



›››

**Key Takeaway**

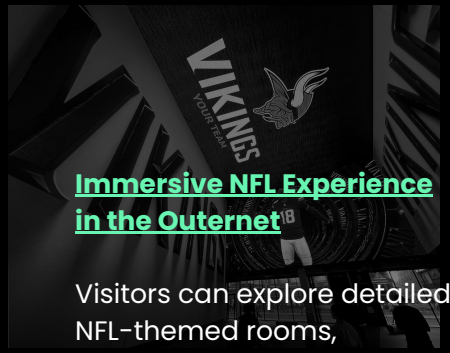
Just as musicals combine live performance with cinematic techniques, marketers should focus on emotional engagement and escapism, appealing to diverse demographics. This trend underscores the importance of storytelling in experiential marketing. By crafting narratives integrating digital and physical components, marketers can create more engaging and memorable experiences.

# OUT-THERE EXPERIENCES

People, brands and marketers continue to push the boundaries of physical and digital experiences, with new and creative executions popping up across the globe.

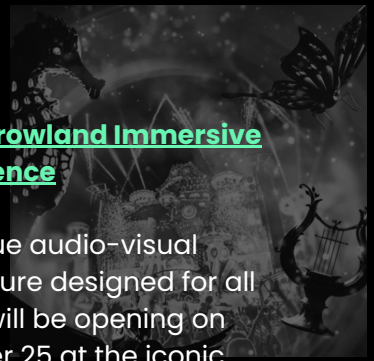
## Halloween-themed Adventure in London

Phantom Peak in London has launched Hallowed Peak, a spooky Halloween-themed adventure in its massive 30,000-square-foot town.




## Immersive NFL Experience in the Outernet

Visitors can explore detailed NFL-themed rooms, encounter the Minnesota Vikings, and take part in themed activities. The event blends VR and physical elements, offering challenges, insights into team culture, and photo opportunities, providing a rich, engaging experience for NFL enthusiasts.



## Tomorrowland Immersive Experience

A unique audio-visual adventure designed for all ages, will be opening on October 25 at the iconic WiZink Center in Madrid. This experience lets you step into Tomorrowland's magical world and explore its iconic themes in a new way.

## Berlin Festival of Lights

Marking its 20th anniversary, Berlin's Festival of Lights returns this month, illuminating iconic landmarks with stunning displays.

EXPERIENCE
INTELLIGENCE
REPORT

GEORGE P. JOHNSON
GmbH

If you have questions about any of this content, or would like to learn more, please reach out to your GPJ account representative or Heidrun.Scholten@gpj.com