

PREPARING FOR THE NEW NORMAL



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THE NOW, NEAR, NEXT OF LIVE EXPERIENCE

Someday events will make a full comeback. We'll return to festivals, mobile tours and immersive experiences, but they won't be like before. We've all seen a lot happen since March: brands have heroically stepped up to help those in need and consumers have found creative new ways to distance together. During these times, we've also seen how experiential marketing can help brands and consumers do those things in a way that can drive our industry's comeback. By pivoting #IRL physical experiences into #IVL virtual ones, brands can provide the entertainment, solace and human connection home-confined consumers are looking for.

At Mosaic, we've been able to pivot many of our experiential programs to exist in this ever-evolving world of social distancing. With COVID updates happening daily, we've begun to think about brand engagements on a more agile timeline: The Now, The Near and The Next. This has enabled us to quickly pivot to digital experiences, while re-writing the playbook on physical ones; all while embracing technology to balance real life with virtual life. —Justine Greenwald and Jennifer Shankman, Mosaic North America

THE NOW AND NEAR: BALANCING IRL AND IVL

We don't have a crystal ball. But what we do have is a strategic approach that gives us flexibility to adapt to new realities. Brands can blend physical and digital worlds to create meaningful consumer experiences at a time when consumers are looking for brands to act.

We've been able to successfully do this with our ABInBev clients, Michelob ULTRA and Stella Artois. In both cases, we had live experiential planned and ready to go this summer but had to quickly pivot these platforms to exist online instead.

For MOVEMENT by Michelob ULTRA, instead of hosting live wellness events, we live-streamed workouts to help fitness studios impacted by the pandemic. This has become a weekly series hosted on Facebook and Instagram Live where fitness instructors from across the country are paired together with



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celebrities like Mario Lopez and Diplo to bring a 30-minute workout and post-class happy hour into consumer homes, all while raising funds for the featured fitness studio. The MOVEMENT by Michelob ULTRA LIVE series has had more than 6 million viewers and raised \$165,000 for fitness studios so far.

Stella Artois had planned to bring food, style and music from some of the world's most iconic cities to parts of the United States with the Port de Stella experience, which debuted at the Super Bowl in Miami earlier this year. Keeping the brand's purpose of helping people enjoy *The Life Artois* together, we took a key pillar of the Port De Stella experience – The Stella Sessions – and re-created them for IGTV, YouTube and Pinterest.

The Stella Artois Sessions@Home features celebrities, celebrity chefs and local chefs showing consumers how to cook restaurant-quality dishes at home. Through a partnership with Instacart, consumers can add the ingredients for each week's session to their grocery order so they can fully participate. Plus, all content drives to Tables for Tomorrow which instantly enables consumers to buy gift cards for restaurants in their community and support the hospitality industry during the pandemic. Nearly 8 million viewers have tuned in to Sessions@Home to-date, and viewers are frequently adding Stella products to their digital shopping carts and buying gift cards.

In both cases, by balancing #IRL elements together with #IVL elements, we've been able to successfully maintain the essence of the live experiences we initially planned. The key to pulling it off? An innovative production plan that can bring a premium event experience into a consumer's home, and a way to engage with the brand in a positive way while social distancing.

THE NEXT: DESIGNING FOR DISTANCE

When looking ahead to experiential's comeback, we're thinking about how to rewrite the playbook for this new normal. No doubt a critical part will be prioritizing health and safety. If the images of re-opened parks, beaches and bars are any

indication, we expect consumers will want certain activities to return to the way they were pre-pandemic. However, the reality is, until a vaccine is rolled out, there will be certain limitations.

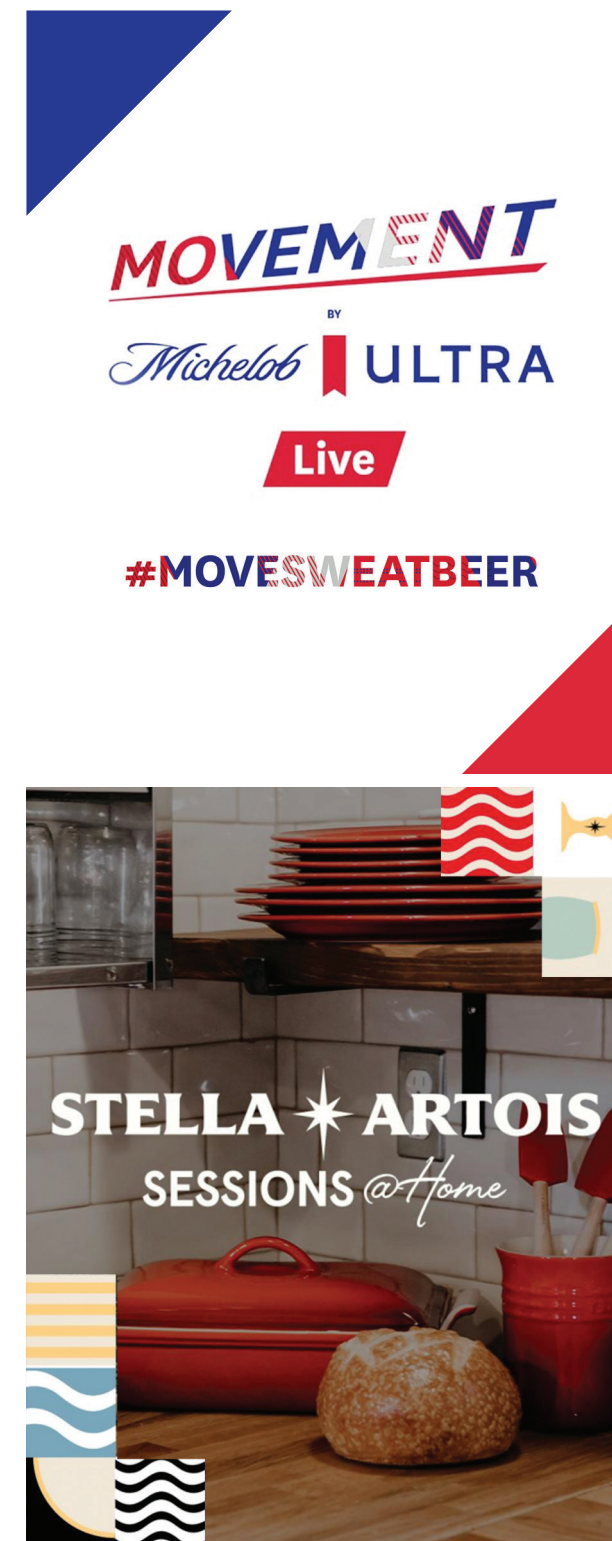
Brands will need to ensure their partners take extra care in meeting new safety measures at activations, which might seem intimidating, but we see them as huge opportunities. Executing events will require new ways of thinking, like designing for distance. This will include spatial analyses and reimagining the consumer journey, creating entirely new, rich creative territory that will provide brands unique opportunities for owned solutions and consumer engagement.

A post-COVID comeback also presents opportunities to innovate physical experiences with new technology. The pandemic has not stopped the proliferation of 5G and the Internet of Things. Event marketers will now have both at their disposal to make safety seamless while at the same time enhancing experiences in bold new ways. For example, brands might invest in augmented reality that allows attendees to use their phones to engage, or RFID technology might keep people at a trade show moving around in smaller groups.

We also need to prepare for the reality that some people might not be ready for the full comeback. Technology will be the ultimate solution to addressing this. By continuing to digitize the live world, and humanize the digital world, brands will be able to make whatever is next, a holistically impactful experience.

Predictions of smaller physical attendance numbers might sound concerning. But when you weave a live event together with technology, brands can engage thousands more people at the same time. Executing in the digital world not only allows for a wider reach, but also a deeper connection with consumers. For example, during Stella Artois' Sessions@Home, celebrity tastemakers gave consumers a virtual seat at their kitchen table, providing unprecedented access to live conversations between celebrity friends. MOVEMENT by Michelob ULTRA LIVE allowed participants to directly engage with live talent, asking questions during the virtual happy hour component, which would not be possible at a physical event.

The experiential comeback predictions will change by the day, just like this pandemic. However, what won't change is consumers craving for connection and community. Brands that use the #IRL and #IVL tools at their disposal to help fill that void in The Now and The Near will be set up for success when live events return in The Next.



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