

EVALUATIVE COMMENTARY

MASTERS PROJECT
"CAPSULE CULTURE"

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ABSTRACT

The project '*Capsule Culture*' aims to explore the key concepts of contemporary travel lifestyles and personalised wardrobe planning, by evaluating fundamental theories of the current *Experience Economy*. Millennials are driving a paradigm shift in consumer culture through their '*experience*' over '*commodity*' approach. Thus arising an urgency to rethink traditional travel strategies to provide authentic, alternative lifestyle solutions. As the idea of ethical travel takes centre stage, an attempt is made to understand the present '*conscious traveller*'.

The objective is to inspect the idea of sustainability as a lifestyle solution and establish that it can be more than just our purchase habits. Through personalised curation of a limited ethical wardrobe, *Capsule Culture* intends to establish a community of informed consumers who consider ethical consumption and production alike. Moreover, it aims to assess the prevailing minimalistic-hipster worldview of the millennial demographic, through validating their '*conscious consumer*' theory. Together with modern technological advancements, the project pursues unique future scopes of sustainable travel and fashion.

Finally, through a careful analysis of generational beliefs and digital opportunities, this project aims to design a holistic travel platform which defines the spirit of the times.

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1. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Through this project, I intend to evaluate and rethink two distinct parts of our travel experience - the wardrobe and the lifestyle. The project is directed at bridging the gap between current travel trends and sustainable alternatives to these, by delving deep into facets of millennial consumerism and aiming to deliver authentic, holistic experiences to benefit both the consumer and the concept of travelling responsibly.

OBJECTIVES

To achieve the stated aims, the following objectives have been determined :

- Research and analysis of audience behavioural patterns in context to corresponding market analysis and competitor reviews.
- Construct a digital platform to capture curated, personalised travel capsules that adhere to the concept of sustainability as a lifestyle choice.
- Build a community of early adopters turned curators who will employ ethical travel solutions through endemic, contemporary experiences.
- Understand and explore upcoming trends that impact the future of personal styling and travel curation through innovative, immersive technological solutions.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 BACKGROUND AND RELEVANCE

Over the last one year, Instagram has seen a staggering two hundred and forty-five million *travel* related hashtags ([iZea, 2018](#)) dedicated to the current globetrotting culture. As travelling halfway across the globe becomes easier than ever, the present generation of urban travellers is consciously repurposing the root concept of “*travel*” in the context of a modern lifestyle. We have always travelled for business, education, leisure and festivities, but of late, defining lines between these varied purposes/reasons of travel seem to be merging as travel duties become more flexible. As a generation obsessed with gathering new experiences and learning about diverse cultures, it is only imminent that the current millennial demographic look at travel as “*food for the soul*”.

“The Millennial generation, defined as those between the ages of 16 and 34, is more interested than older generations in travelling abroad as much as possible — by a 23-percentage-point margin. The United Nations estimates that 20 percent of all international tourists, or nearly 200 million travellers, are young people, and that this demographic generates more than \$180 billion in annual tourism revenue, an increase of nearly 30 percent since 2007.” ([Machado, 2014](#))

As young adults have begun looking for careers that provide opportunities for travel within the job description itself, we see a steady growth in 'Bleisure' travel ([Spinks, 2018.](#)). They make the most of having fewer responsibilities at home and often extend their business trip to an extended weekend break for exploring hidden gems and truly 'soaking in' the destination of the visit. More often than not, they venture out to the neighbouring cities to optimise their personal travel experience.

As the demographic enters the economy and becomes the core consumers in the market, we also see a rise in social awareness more than ever. The young consumers believe in recycling coffee cups ([Luxmoore, 2018](#)), vegan leather collections ([McCartney, 2018](#)) and sustainable functionality. Fast fashion brands are being actively boycotted by the social influencers and the need for quality over quantity is emphasised like never before ([McVitie, 2017](#)). The millennials are socially aware and desire an active on-the-go lifestyle which can adapt to their constant need for seeking out new experiences.

Experience is the key word here. These are the times of the Experience Economy as millennials become the primary driving forces of the consumer market. Three out of four millennials are more likely to spend money over a desirable experience than buying something tempting, according to an online survey conducted by Eventbrite ([Eventbrite, 2016](#)). Another report by Harvard Business Review dives into understanding the millennial consumer habits and states "*a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event.*" ([Pine II, Gilmore, 1998](#))

The driving forces of this economy are correlated to yet another millennial concept referred to as 'FOMO' ([Dass, 2017](#)). So while this demographic is all about creating, sharing and capturing memories acquired from meaningful experiences, they also have this constant urge to broadcast these '*memories*' across social media. Thereafter starts a vicious circle of the fear of missing out phenomenon, which drives them to collect more experiences and tick it off their bucket lists.

Experiential travellers are looking for immersive adventures, they are looking for wholesome travel experiences as an escapade from the mundane. Hence even though this generation lives through the current troublesome economic uncertainty, the thought of a little getaway from it all seems even quite enticing.

"They call it the "experience economy", which gives it the sense of a grand theory. And there is science behind it, but it's also very simple: regardless of political uncertainty, austerity and inflation, we are spending more on doing stuff, choosing instead to cut back on buying stuff." ([Osborne, 2017](#))

2.2 DEFINITIONS

To understand certain terminologies used in the course of this evaluative commentary, a set of definitions are provided. Here it is essential to understand that these definitions are in relevance to this specific project and are explained to provide a necessary context to the chapters that follow.

Capsule Wardrobe

The term capsule wardrobe formally refers to “a collection of clothes and accessories that includes only items considered essential”.

Primarily a collection of classic silhouettes and styles in neutral colours, which can be mixed and matched to create multiple ensembles for various purposes. More elaborately, it can be referred to as a collection of all-purpose, basic essentials which can be worn throughout the year with certain seasonal additions to provide a combination of outfits for every occasion, without buying excessive pieces of clothing.

The term was coined by the 1970s by *Susie Faux*, for a collection of essentials which don't go out of style. She initially suggested “2 pairs of trousers, a dress or a skirt, a jacket, a coat, a knit, two pairs of shoes and two bags” should be the ideal capsule wardrobe (Faux, 1988).

However, the term was only popularised after designer *Donna Karan* launched her “7 Easy Pieces” collection in 1985 (Wilson, 2015).

“Her aim was to fill what she referred to as “a void in the marketplace” for a stylish and practical wardrobe designed with working women in mind. When the collection debuted, she showed eight models dressed only in bodysuits and black tights. The models then began to add items of clothing such as wrap-skirts, trousers, and dresses, to demonstrate her interchangeable style of dressing.” (Strom, 1994)

Sustainable Travel

The World Tourism Organisation defines sustainable tourism as “development [which] meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support system.” (Carbone, Yunis, 2005)

According to National Geography's 2017 article, “The three pillars of sustainable tourism are employing environmentally friendly practices (reduce, reuse, recycle); protecting cultural and natural heritage (restoring historic buildings or saving endangered species); and providing tangible social and economic benefits for local communities (ranging from upholding the rights of indigenous peoples to supporting fair wages for employees)” (Christ, 2017).

The idea of sustainable travel is associated with numerous analogous movements like slow travel, eco-travel, ethical travel, etc. - all of which preach interconnected viewpoints on how the world can review and mend the ways we tend to travel.

The Millennial Consumer

The term millennial is generally associated with individuals born between the years 1980 and 2000. The demographic typically came of age pre or post the tragedy of America's 9/11 and the global economic

recession. They were also the first to have experienced the digital revolution, which has shaped most of the generational ideologies and consumer habits ([Donnelly, 2017](#)).

Cited as being more self-assured and confident than their predecessors, millennials also have “*a strong sense of civic responsibility, a healthy work-life balance and have socially liberal views...they are characterised by their familiarity with communications, media and technology...they would have grown up in a more liberal political and economic world than before.*” ([Moloney, 2017](#))

Millennial consumers are typically young individuals with an urban lifestyle, who “*on an average, check their smartphone 43 times a day*”. They are early adopters of technology who prefer shopping through web channels and stay updated through social media platforms. ([Oetting, 2015](#))

2.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The project is predominantly based on qualitative research through primary and secondary methodologies. As *Capsule Culture* is a niche platform targeted at an urban audience of early adopters and influencers, an evaluative study of such individuals was felt necessary. To understand the potentials of the perspectives which construct this project, four key concepts were explored:

- Recognising consumer outlooks towards sustainability and relevant lifestyle choices
- Understanding the value of personalisation in fashion and travel industries
- Evaluating the current trends in millennial travel and buying habits
- Assessing personal attitudes of creative millennials towards immersive/intrusive new technologies

For the same to be achieved, a combination approach of structured interviews, surveys and focus groups was taken. Below is a brief synopsis of these approaches, their aims and analysis.

Structured Interviews

- **Maria Lee** - Based in New York, Maria is capsule wardrobe specialist who employs something she calls “*Wardrobe Science*” to build her capsule every season. The aim behind interviewing her was to understand her outlook towards capsule wardrobes as a sustainable alternative. Through her interview, she shared some insights into her personal sustainable habits and the ‘science behind wardrobe planning’
- **Kim Gerlach** - A sustainable fashion enthusiast and blogger based in Stockholm, Kim is a leading voice on conscious and ethical fashion. The intention behind her interview was to understand her unique attitude towards slow fashion and minimalistic lifestyles. She emphasised on sustainability as a lifestyle choice - like buying fewer wardrobe pieces.
- **Tiphaine Marie** - A fashion and travel blogger who currently studies in a university in London, Tiphaine travels incessantly to balance her professional work with her academic classes. She was interviewed primarily to understand her viewpoint on sustainable fashion as a fashion

blogger and understand her wardrobe planning process she follows during her frequent travels.

- **Bhavya Chawla** - Chief Stylist at a personal styling e-commerce company based in India, Bhavya is a style expert and image consultant. The interview conducted with her revolved primarily around personalised styling and the potential it possesses. She also shared her insight on personal styling guidelines for automated algorithms, which curate ensembles based on machine learning.
- **Charlie Marchant** - A green travel blogger who is presently based out of Brighton, Charlie's work covers ideas like zero-waste travel, local cooking lessons and giving back to the local community. Through her interview, some fundamental concepts of sustainable travel were explored and assessed.
- **Brenda O'Connor** - Senior consultant with a luxury travel personalisation company, Brenda was approached for her clarity on current travel trends among consumers. She discussed the scope of personalisation in travel and consumer outlook towards sustainable travel.

Web-Based Survey

The survey was directed at a group of handpicked, early adopting millennials based out of economically developed cities with a urban and liberal lifestyle. A total of 33 people were approached for the same and were presented with a set of ten precise questions. The questions were designed to evaluate current consumer habits and travel trends among the selected, niche audience.

Focus Group

A group of six creative millennials were brought together to discuss their daily digital habits and viewpoints on emerging technologies. Each one is a student at University of the Arts London, but across different disciplines - from '*interaction design*' to '*service design*' to '*illustration*' and '*photography*'. Though each one of the participants uses technological solutions heavily, the idea of intrusive new technologies was not well received. Participants had extensive doubts regarding the safety and privacy of their online data, in these digital times.

Combined with the secondary research, the analysis of the aforementioned qualitative methods was implemented through a comprehensive approach across the project.

3. RATIONALE

3.1 THE GENERATION OF TRAVELLERS

3.1.1 The Millennial Perspective

As the demographic coming of age in the post-digital era, millennials are ever-evolving, fast-paced and self-reliant consumers, hence it has become increasingly essential for the travel industry to adapt to their requirements. Arguably one of the hardest hit victims of the recession, millennials majorly live by the *#yolo* (*You Only Live Once*) motto. Being realists, they are aware of how unpredictable the future can be and how even well-laid retirement plans can fail, given the current global economic conditions. They are constantly looking for stimulating knowledge and exhilarating experiences to “*validate*” their lives. *"Millennials are also known to be the leaders of the “Experience Economy”, with 72% of us choosing to spend more money on experiences than material goods. We look for something intangible that can enrich our lives. We collect experiences the way our grandparents once collected stamps."* (Joseph-Flatts, 2017)

An article by *Forbes*, written by states that more than 71% of millennials are more like to rent a car, whereas 59% would rather rent a house than buy one. Additionally, 61% of the demographic report they can't afford to invest in a house with the current state of the economy and unemployment rates, where many of them are admittedly still living with their parents to compensate for the crushing student loan debts. This could precisely be the reason why millennials count on exhilarating experiences to add a certain value to their everyday lives (Schawbel, 2015).

The article further predicts that a considerable inheritance of over \$30 billion will be relocated from *Baby Boomers* to the millennials in the near future which will, however, fail to change the spending habits of the generation. Which is a surprising observation as one might think the liquid cash inflow is more likely to change this anti-consumerist attitude.

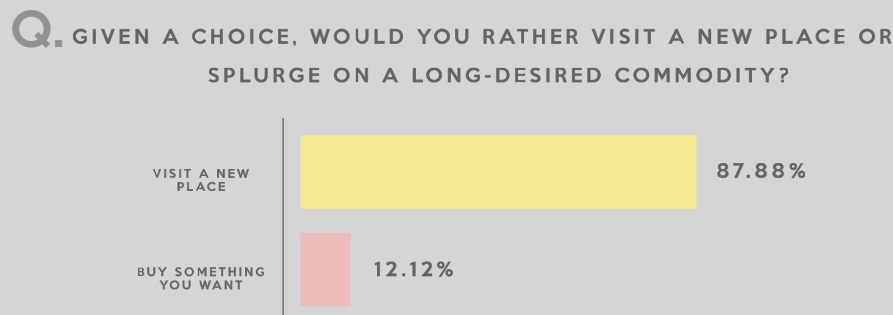
“*Conscious Consumption*”, as it is referred to the book *Determining The Characteristics Of The Socially Conscious Consumer* (Webster Jr., 1975), is slowly but steadily becoming the claim to fame for this generation. Webster eloquently describes the movement's idealist to be “*a consumer who takes into account the public consequences of his or her private consumption or who attempts to use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change.*” Millennials are actively taking up such roles as their constant struggle for balance through experiential materialism continues at an exponential rate. This has been the primary reason why companies and brands have had to reinvent themselves to cater to these adventure seeking eco-consumers.

In relation to the aforementioned experience economy, a close cousin - namely the *Sharing Economy* has also been frequently mentioned of late (Morgan, 2015). Millennials stand for reducing consumption, separating their daily waste and buying local, atleast the socially aware ones do. Maria Lee (Interview With Author, October 2018), a wardrobe minimalist and photojournalist, concludes that “*We all want to be environmentally friendly, but the structure to make it happen doesn't exist in a practical sense for most of us so it doesn't seem like a priority and therefore not a problem.*”

At the heart of it all, this generation primarily wants to spend their money being with others. According to a study by Evenbrite, 69% of the respondents admit that attending live experiences help them connect better with their friends and their community. 83% actively participated in live events in the past year and 72%

said they were quite likely to increase their expenditure on experiences in the next one year. ([Eventbrite, 2016](#))

A web-based survey I conducted also show similar results when it comes to experiences versus commodities



3.1.2 The Millennial Traveller

Travel has suddenly ceased to be the elitist, getaway that it once was and has turned into an unparalleled necessity for the millennial generation. Low-cost airfares and reasonable shared-stay options, encourage all socioeconomic backgrounds to accept this new wave of travel. Sharing economic services like hostels and home-stays prove to quench the thirst for both affordability and authenticity, for these young travellers.

A report by *Boston Consulting Group* states that as millennials start to dominate the travel market by reaching their peak years of earning, spending and travelling, the industry ideologies and marketing strategies are rapidly changing to meet the needs of these urban adventurers. ([Barton, Haywood, Jhunjhunwala, Bhatia. 2013.](#))

During a brief interaction with *Brenda O'Connor*, a senior consultant with travel personalisation company Enchanting Travels, certain millennial travel habits became more clear. In her personal opinion, she states *“Hands-on activities, as well as meeting locals are often the most sought after experiences for guests. I feel that people only have a certain capability for download of historical facts and figures when exploring a new destination. Meeting people and/or using other senses (touch/smell etc) really enhances how a person will remember a trip. Sensory activating experiences, such as visiting a local market or enjoying a local cookery class are the best ways for guests to feel involved and make memories.”* ([Interview With Author, November 2018](#)).

Millennials are dominating business travel in a way which is changing the meaning of work from home, with their wandering, community-spirited behavioural patterns. A recent study by *Bookings.Com* has concluded that the lines between business and leisure travel are slowly blurring as most young professionals are inclining towards extended business trips to quench their thirst for authentic travel experiences. With the advancements in technology, work doesn't constrict employees to a certain place anymore. Moreover, millennials today are also opting for job titles and designations which will allow them the freedom to travel

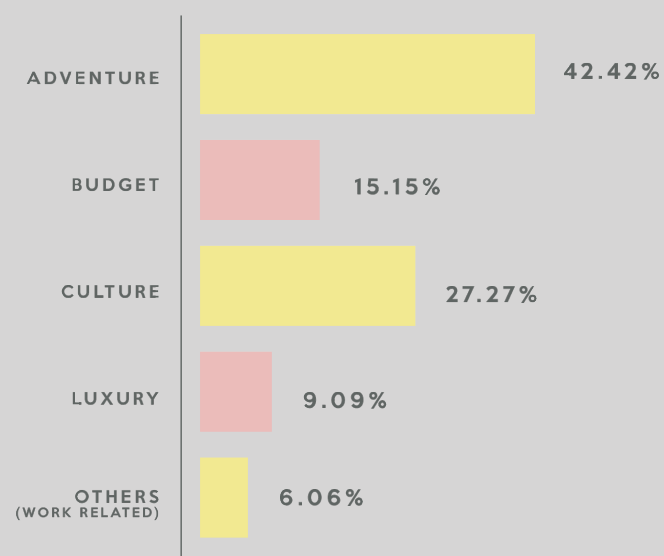
around without any inhibitions. The rise of co-working and co-living places like New York's *WeWork* and London's *Leman Locke Hotel* validates this shift in professional roles. (WGSN Report, 2016)

Roam is another similar initiative which was initially targeted towards niche, creative workers as a lifestyle solution. The co-living platform is built around a community where individuals can work, live and play in different locations of the world. The company describes itself as “A network of global co-living spaces that provide everything you need to feel at home and be productive the moment you arrive...Each Roam [site can] ...comfortably support a large, diverse community with plenty of gathering spaces for events, meetings and classes...” (Records, 2017).

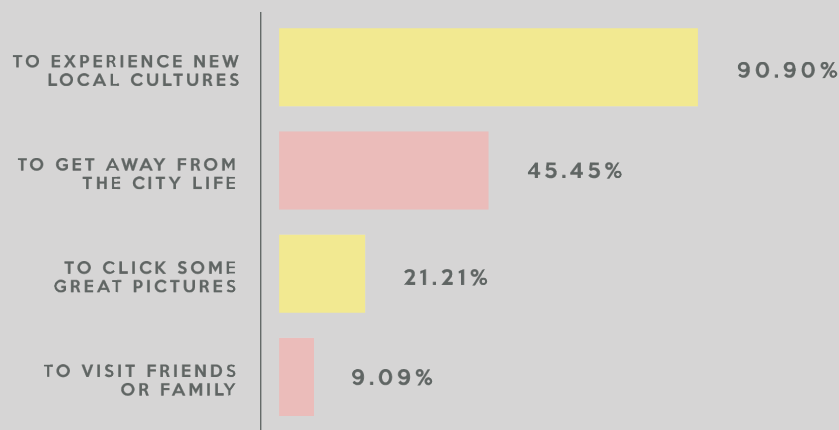
Solo travel is another word being heavily associated with the millennial generation. According to a *MMGY Global* survey conducted in 2015, 37% of the respondents were planning to take at least one overnight solo trip in the next six months. The demographic envisions these trips as opportunities for self-empowerment, independence and adventure which enables them to connect with other like-minded individuals from alternative worlds. The key takeaway here is building genuine, peer-to-peer relationships and a sense of community amongst strangers. *El Cosmico* and *X+Living* are examples of establishments build around the central idea of getting to know each other through fun social interactions and communal activities (Peltier, 2015).

A survey I conducted concludes that adventure travel and cultural stimulation is what the millennials are craving :

Q. AS AN INDIVIDUAL, WHAT KIND OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCES DO YOU LOOK FOR?



Q. WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS FOR YOU TO TRAVEL TO A CERTAIN DESTINATION?



As the generation “*fast-paces*” towards adventure travel, several reports and surveys show a steady increase in cultural and spiritual travel. As the 2016 WGSN report aptly refers to millennials as “*healthy hedonists*”, it justifies much of their experiential behaviour pattern. The ever-so-conscious twenty-somethings are paving the way for partying experiences combined spiritual learning instead of the traditional club-rave scene. Blending clean eating and yoga workshops with dance parties and plant-based hallucinogens, the demographic is known for being well radicals - both internally and externally. A confirmation of this theory can be found in the re-branding of Ibiza - the ultimate gap-year harbour. The recent past saw the party destination begin to lose its clientele on the basis of being too mainstream “*VIP club culture*” oriented. (WGSN Report, 2016)

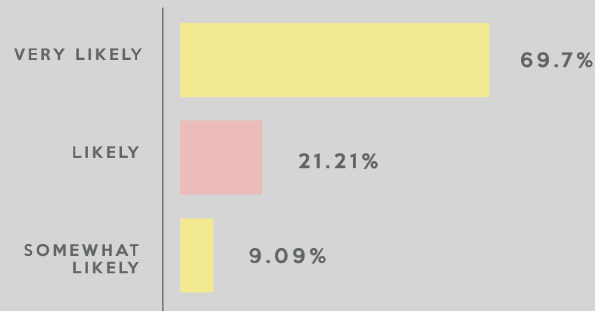
“Maintaining a connection to a deeper spirituality believed to emanate from the island is what motivates these events and those that attend them, whether it’s seeking transcendence through an ayahuasca ceremony, dancing to cosmic rhythms under the moon or celebrating the emotional surge of a sunset to the sound of rare groove.” (Coldwell, 2017)

A survey conducted by Topdeck shows that 86% of millennials travel to experience new cultures (Topdeck, 2016). They want to build a global network of friends to help them diversify their learning curve.

The primary idea is to keep things indigenous and authentic to truly understand the culture and lifestyle of a place and live like the locals. Art Webb, the president of travel marketing company BFC, says “We see Millennial travellers much more interested in the neatest little dive restaurant as opposed to a touristy place...They want things that are locally produced...not to go to a large branded chain restaurant.” (Trageser, 2016).

Charlie Marchant, a popular ethical travel blogger based in Brighton, states that “I rarely take trips as short as a week. I mostly travel for months at a time...To me, sustainability is about living and travelling in a way which is as low impact as possible....It’s about valuing the environment and doing what we can to protect it...supporting local communities and preserving culture and traditions.” (Interview With Author, November 2018)

**Q. HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO DIGITALLY RESEARCH A DESTINATION
AND MAKE BOOKINGS, BEFORE YOUR VISIT?**



An idea conceptualised in 1980s Italy, Slow Travel has suddenly become one of the frontrunners of the millennial travel experience. Owing to the highly connected, fast-paced lifestyles lived by the demographic, the thought of travel becomes a journey towards self-discovery and opening up towards new things. A counter view to the traditional Baby Boomer traveller, this particular concept urges you to take things slow by disconnecting from the world and putting emphasis on quality over quantity. With the freedom to do less, it gives travellers a chance to adapt to the new cultural dimensions they see and build genuine relationships with the locals. From a sustainability point of view, it also minimises carbon footprints and promotes ecotourism (Sorensen, 2017).

Documenting experiences is another primary agenda related to the millennial travel experience. The demographic is constantly searching for wild, extreme and innovative experiences to add to their “*Insta Adventures*”. As everyone becomes an avid traveller, much value is placed in unique adventures which haven’t been experienced by their peers yet. According to the walk through the Great Wall Of China, Clay Masks in the Red Sea and Northern Lights in Iceland - the more in extremity, the better the picture. The desire to remember and relive vacations is not a new idea, but instant sharing through social media has certainly aggravated this need. If bucket list travelling was a thing, this generation of jet-setters would definitely be acing it. Drone The World is an innovative company which allows cameramen to remotely shoot your travels and curate an aerial footage of your adventures (WGSN Report, 2016). To understand the inclination of millennials to use tech gadgets that fulfil their travel needs, I inquired with the respondents of my online survey. Below is are their viewpoints:

Additionally, the travel industry is being promptly taken over by tech solutions as millennials become more comfortable at communicating with gadgets and bots as opposed to sales agents and consultants while making travel bookings. From real-time maps to voice assistants - everything is coming together to make the millennial’s life easier (Carter, 2018). Ethan V. Diemen writes “*the number of persons being influenced by, and planning their travel experiences through digital technologies is changing in-line with global trends.*”

Another key trend that is ruling the millennial market is personalisation. With a saturated digital/online space, millennials are keen to personalise and curate their own version of things. As stated by a Google and Phocuswright report, 57% of travellers feel that companies and brands should tailor their information based on personal preferences and past behaviour. It further states that if a certain brand does personalise said information, 36% of millennial users are more likely to pay a premium for the services (Loo, 2017). Artificial Intelligence is a definite frontrunner in the travel industry with almost all digital platforms providing AI-based solutions. A simple reason behind it could be understanding that enormous quantity of data we

produce - flight bookings, hotel reservations, even those reviews of our favourite places. This data, in turn, allows AI algorithms to customise and personalise our online experience. Furthermore, *James Waters*, the global director of customer service at *Booking.Com*, goes on to say “*As we operate in an industry that is incredibly personal, emotional and complex, maintaining the right balance between genuine human interaction and efficient automation is something we’re always trying to fine-tune and optimise throughout every stage of the consumer journey...*” (Carter, 2018).

3.2 WHY GO CAPSULE

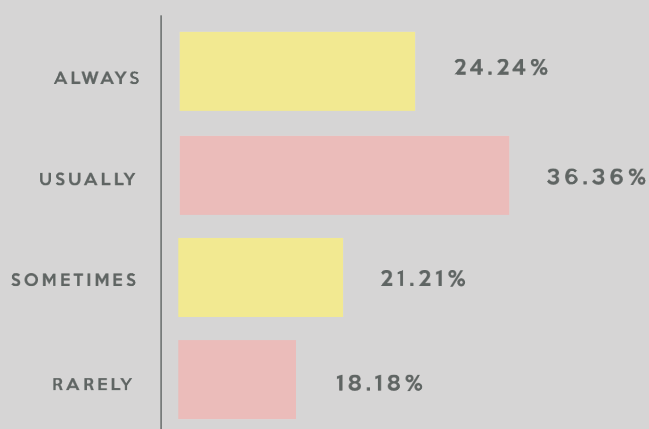
3.2.1 Capsule X Travel

To travel is to travel light, that is the ultimate trick to a fuss-free adventure. Travel capsule wardrobes are one of the key principles of light travel. The idea is to build a minimalist wardrobe of basic silhouettes in neutral hues which can be combined together to work for a variety of scenarios. To fit all the clothing in just a carry on is the primary goal. Not only does travel get expensive with every extra kilo on most low-cost airlines, but the so-called legacy airlines are also not too far behind. From Germany’s *Lufthansa* to the Dutch *KLM*, airlines are giving introducing new economy class features which offer cheaper fares at the expense of checked-in luggage, seat bookings and refund policies (Morris, 2018).

Virgin Atlantic has recently launched their new “*economy light*” scheme, with a carry-on baggage of 10 kilos, for their cheapest fare. An article by the Independent quotes the airline saying “*The new economy light ticket will always offer Virgin Atlantic’s lowest fare... making long haul travel affordable and accessible for millennials*” (Calder, 2018).

To evaluate how the ‘baggage limit’ has influenced decision making on luggage, the online survey respondents were asked about their travel packing habits:

Q. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PACK LESS TO AVOID EXTRA BAGGAGE?



Furthermore, when inquired the kind of challenges they face during travel packing, they were predominantly related to organising well to avoid 'overpacking':

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES (IF ANY) THAT YOU FACE WHILE
PACKING/ORGANISING FOR A TRIP?

It's hard to fit my stuff into suitcase/sometimes hard to predict what clothes will be useful for a trip

The restriction of the amount of clothes and especially shoes that one has to carry. Requires a lot of planning as regards to the outdoors as per occasion.

Bringing the necessary!! I overpack very often even if I define myself a pro traveler :)

Economy space for not paying luggage but have enough clothes

Weather in real time & having to decide my looks from before in order to avoid over-packing!

separating clothes for especific wheather without overpacking

Fashion and travel blogger, *Tiphaine Marie*, was excited when presented with the idea of a travel capsule. She went to say *"It's easier to have a prepared capsule while travelling...It makes things simpler when you know you don't have to worry about planning your outfits or overpacking!"* (Interview With Author, November 2018)

Furthermore, it can also get strenuous to carry too much around rest alone the delay that one faces with checked-in luggage. Simply put, it is easier to travel light for mostly three reasons - convenience, security and economy. Handling an enormous suitcase limits the scope of a vacation and decreases mobility. Moreover, the airline securities may not be the best supervision when it comes to checked-in baggage.

"Don't you wish you'd packed lighter so you could have taken the cheap public transportation to the hotel and saved yourself the hassle of pulling, lugging and carting 50 pounds of your most prized possessions around in a foreign country?" (Lynch, 2016)

In a conversation with *Kim Gerlach*, sustainable fashion and lifestyle blogger, she opened up about how the idea of a capsule wardrobe though is fascinating to her, she doesn't think it will really work with pre-packaged capsules - mentioning the term *"uniforms"* while referring to the idea. Gerlach says while the idea of a capsule can allow you to be immensely creative in terms of mixing and matching different pieces which go perfectly with each other, if those pieces are generic and cease to establish your personal style then the concept will fail to be adopted by the fashion enthusiasts. (Interview With Author, October 2018)

The concept of a capsule wardrobe isn't one without criticism as many claim it doesn't work for them. Noticeably, the word itself creates a certain mind block amongst consumers as they feel it might be intended to curb their personal style. More often than not, the term is associated with a pre-made collection of clothing and accessories offered by a single brand, which in turn is perceived as some kind of *"uniform"* to tell people what they should wear.

While interviewing *Maria Lee*, she mentioned the ‘*Wardrobe Science*’ she employs to plan her own personal capsule. She has published a part of the methodology to help others evaluate their wardrobe through data collection. Lee goes on to say “*My style is nuanced and so I don’t go for pre-packaged capsule wardrobe services because they’re not personalised to me. I also don’t want to look like someone else and enjoy slowly picking and adding pieces to my capsule wardrobe.*” (Interview With Author, October 2018).

As discussed earlier in this paper, millennials are all about personalisation - in their technologies and their wardrobes alike. Though the concept of a capsule wardrobe has been around for nearly 50 years now, one can argue that it never truly revolutionised the fashion industry as it was looked at more like a set of rigid, boring attires than a medium of self-expression. A conversation *Bhavya Chawla*, image consultant and personal stylist, confirms that personalisation in fashion is something that is impervious. When asked if she herself would ever use a personal capsule, she went on to say “*It will be great to have occasion wise capsules or capsule that can take you from one occasion to the other such as work to dressy, athleisure to casual etc. I would like to see how to style or transform a piece from one occasion to the other & then all the options of clothing/accessories available under each type of piece in a capsule.*” (Interview With Author, October 2018)

Here it’s also essential to point out, even though the limited wardrobe choices may not be the best choice for everyone’s daily routines when it comes to travel it can inspire some crucial packing choices. Gerlach seemed to have positive views when it came to a customisable travel capsule wardrobes, she elaborates “*It’s just an advantage. Cause when you travel you cannot have all of your wardrobe with you. You need to narrow it down to the must-haves and the items you can combine the best*” (Interview With Author, October 2018).

While planning a travel capsule it is imperative to go with utilitarian classic styles over flamboyant fads which challenging to blend together. Staying true to the core concept of capsules, the pieces should be carefully handpicked as per the lifestyle habits of the clients and comprise easy-going, versatile pieces. With the “*less is more*” ideology getting more airtime with each passing day, we see a steady rise in minimalist wardrobe supporters (Carver, 2014).

3.2.2 Capsule Wardrobe X Sustainability

When asked her what sustainability means to her personally, *Maria Lee* replied with a firm “...means practising habits that are practical for you and the environment” (Interview With Author, October 2018).

Subsequently, *Kim Gerlach* talks about having a certain “*identity crisis*” and literally “*questioning everything I buy*” which urged her to start the venture ‘*KimGoesEko*’. She narrates how her wardrobe was stripped down to a bare minimum over a long period of time before she finally decided on how she perceives her personal style, which was to help her invest in ethically produced quality products. Gerlach also goes on to talk about vintage shopping and second-hand clothing as prime pointers for sustainable fashion (Interview With Author, October 2018).

The fashion and garment manufacturing business the second most water-polluting industry, right next to the oil industry of course. As modern consumers become more and more socially aware and take to eco-friendly alternatives, it is time for the fashion industry to bring sustainability into the foreground (Sweeny, 2015).

According to a recent report released by *Vogue*, global conferences like the *Copenhagen Fashion Summit* have stood out as prominent sustainability-driven events. Looking at raising awareness amongst consumers by evaluating the negative impacts of the fashion industry, the summit is primarily about promoting ethical, responsible fashion as an alternative. Started almost 10 years ago by the leadership forum *Global Fashion Agenda*, the *Copenhagen Fashion Summit* has become centre for setting future agendas on critical environmental, social and ethical issues. Attended by top designers, influencers, innovators and industry leader, the event has become a benchmark as more and more individuals become conscious buyers. The 2018 agenda revolved around bridging the gap between sustainable production and multinational, big businesses (MacSweeney, 2018).

Moreover, consumers are rejecting the ideologies of hoarding fast-fashion and restricting themselves to finding durable, better-constructed options. They are interested in evaluating the “*True Cost*” of their clothes, as the popular 2015 *Netflix* documentary by *Andrew Morgan* has appropriately brought the concept into the front lines. In the documentary, Morgan shifts from a fashion film’s aesthetics of wide-eye escapism and general fabulousness to unravel a gruesome, global supply chain of fast fashion. He also goes on to say how directing and executing the movie has been such an eye-opener for him personally, “*because they have joined the dots between fashion, consumerism, capitalism and structural poverty and oppression, and will never shop in the same way again.*” (Siegle, 2015).

The documentary was probably a chain reaction to the abominable 2013 incident at *Rana Plaza*, Dhaka. An article by the *Guardian* describes how world watched in horror as 1,134 garment workers died in what is referred to as one of the worst “**mass industrial homicide**” of the recent past. It acted as a wake up call to the socially-conscious millennials, and thus started the struggle against fast fashion (Safi, Rushe, 2018).

With this the industry experienced a major fallout with their consumers, older sustainable initiatives like the *Clean Clothes Campaign* have started becoming mainstream and the consumerist mentality is steadily changing. There is a certain weight being put on buying quality over quantity, which automatically helps to prioritise our wardrobe needs and in turn urges us to buy less. *Fashion Revolution*, another sustainable campaign started after the *Rana Plaza* tragedy, comprises of socially-aware fashion activists (Mazzarella, 2018) who believe “*that the whole fashion industry needs a radical paradigm shift*”. Furthermore, the campaign’s manifesto also raises some serious concerns to the consumer, as they talk about a certain change in mindset that is required - “*We need to break our addiction to the need for speed and volume. We need to realise the true cost of our cheap bargains. Ultimately, we need to buy less, buy better and keep asking questions about the realities behind what we’re purchasing.*” (FashionRevolution.Org)

A recent report by the *Shelton Group*, a marketing company specialising in sustainability, found that over 90% of millennial consumers are more likely to buy products from a brand who they trust with certain social and environmental practices (Millennial Pulse Report, 2017). The demographic is more aware of the shortcomings associated with the textile and fashion industries, than their older counterparts like Baby

Boomers. They express concern when it comes to major pollutants and harmful substances, especially when they are present in the clothes they wear. Words like “eco-friendly” and “sustainable” are major crowd pullers when it comes to addressing millennial fashion choices (Hahn-Petersen, 2018).

According to another report by *Business Insider*, consumers are slowly moving towards classic, functional styles which are endangering the future of fast fashion brands like *H&M* and *Forever 21* (Hanbury, 2018). The current social and economic instability is pushing consumers to opt for clothes which feel “safe, durable and timeless”. The longevity and endurance of a product are what has become “the new black” for consumers, and more specifically - *the millennials* (Claveria, VisionCritical).

This is where the capsule wardrobe can prove to be a suitable solution, urging the client to buy less but buy smart.

Cladwell, a personal styling platform, recently launched the *10 Day Cladwell Challenge*. Targeted at fashion influencers but open to all who are willing to give it a shot, the challenge was about building a weekly capsule from your own, existing wardrobe. The primary idea came from the fact that all of us (some more than others) have a closet full of clothes but nothing to wear. *Cladwell* co-founder *Erin Flynn* states, “At *Cladwell*, our mission is simple. We want to create a clothing industry that’s good for people. So instead of selling clothes, we focus on the clothing you already own. Think of us as your stylish friend” (Cladwell Blog). *Project 333* is another such example of consumers moving towards the functionality of the capsule wardrobe. It is essentially a minimalist wardrobe experiment started by *Courtney Carver* of the blog ‘*Be More With Less*’, where one restricts their wardrobe to a mere 33 pieces for 3 whole months. It is aimed at building a clutter-free wardrobe, being more creative and promoting lower consumption (Nati, 2018).

During my conversation with *Bhavya Chawla*, she discussed her inclination towards a capsule but not being able to step out of the vicious circle of disposable clothing. However, she also believes now is the ideal time to really pay heed to our buying habits and make some necessary changes. When asked about how she feels towards capsules being the “wardrobe of the future”, she explains “our planet cannot take anymore of this and it’s high time we adopt sustainability in everything we do, including fashion. Our approach should be not only to buying natural fibre clothing that does no harm to the environment and can be recycled but also to opt for capsule wardrobes. Smaller number of good quality clothes that form the very basis of our capsules will help us in doing justice to all the pieces, making our wardrobe manageable and functional while meeting the requirements of all our occasions. With the ‘wardrobe of the future’ that is sustainable and compact capsules, we will be able to our bit for the environment & this is the only way!” (Interview With Author, October 2018)

The capsule attitude can prove to be the right attitude towards bringing about a social change in the world of fashion. The wardrobe primarily prioritises longevity and urges the consumer to minimise impulsive buying and plan each purchase vigilantly, to avoid regretful, spontaneous buys which always end up in one corner of the wardrobe - *unworn*.

4. UNDERSTANDING SUSTAINABLE LIFESTYLES

4.1 MORE THAN WHAT YOU BUY

Charlie Marchant believes that even while giving something back to the world in the smallest way, one can trigger a change in attitude amongst the people they are surrounded by. During her interview, she points out that *“Being sustainable isn’t about buying sustainable things, it’s about getting out of that trend of buy new things, electronics, clothes and moving away from feeling like you always need to have new things. If possible, it’s better to reuse, repair, upcycle, recycle, borrow, trade, find second hand before deciding to buy new.”* Being a green travel blogger, she opts for taking local cooking lessons instead of stepping into a swanky restaurant and practises a zero waste living schedule. (Interview With Author, November 2018)

Sustainability is a lifestyle choice, it does not necessarily need to be defined by the number of eco-friendly products stacked in our homes. It is primarily a lifestyle of consuming less, being mindful of our surroundings (social and environmental) and in turn leaving a smaller carbon imprint on the world. In an article by PolyesterTime, the author clarifies, *“An example? We walk out of a store with a little plastic bag containing something we purchased. At home, we fold and store the bag for reuse. Next occasion, we get ready to walk our dog and take the stored bag, because we have clean urban habits when it comes to our dog. Half an hour later, the reused plastic bag is properly disposed of in a litter bin on the sidewalk. The end.”* Arguably, it might not be the end for the plastic bag which will probably be decomposing in landfills for over a hundred years but complete sustainable living is still relatively a new thought. In a world where it’s still relatively difficult to be wholly sustainable, setting our standards right might be the key to finding a balance between our current lifestyles and radical sustainability (Rimanoczy, 2016).

Maria Lee recommends taking small steps toward sustainability by analysing your everyday activities, *“In my daily routine, more days than not, I bring my own water, lunch, and coffee to work. I bring my own grocery bags. I repair my clothes and shoes when they’re in disrepair. I’m thoughtful about what I buy and bring into my apartment. I sort my recycling and even tried compositing for a year!”*. When asked if she thinks sustainability can be more than what we buy, she promptly concluded *“Being sustainable is also how you think about and treat the items you bring into your home. When something breaks, do you repair it? If you know you’ll only need something once, do you borrow from a friend or neighbour instead of buying new? What do you do when something needs to be thrown away?”*.

4.2 SUSTAINABILITY AMONG FASHION BRANDS

With sustainability being the buzzword of the millennial economy, it isn’t surprising that the demographic is willing to pay a premium for “sustainable” fashion and lifestyle brands. Owing to this trend, it’s becoming excessively important for brands to catch up as otherwise they risk losing an enormous section of their business. A 2015 global survey by Nielsen, a data analysis company, explains that brands who have established a reputation for environmental and social safekeeping have a bigger opportunity to grow their market share and build loyalty amongst the “conscious” millennial. Grace Farraj, from Nielsen’s public

development and sustainability team, says “*Marketers need to connect messaging with the causes that matter most to consumers and that also align with their brand.*” (Nielsen Survey, 2015)

This sudden demand, while paving ways for new-age sustainable production, has also given rise to the concept of greenwashing. There is a sudden widespread of the term which can be associated with the ethical policies behind big fashion brands. An article in Medium appropriately describes greenwashing as “*a deceptive claim that your company’s products are ‘green’ or you minimise negative impact on nature when it’s not true.*” (Aperitas, 2017)

A vast majority of the problem lies primarily in the fast fashion industry, but due to current price points and availability, these are the brands which dominate high street. Budget clothing giant Primark, known especially for their low-cost collection, is the latest to join other fast fashion brands in the “*sustainability*” market. Their new sustainable line was started with women’s organic cotton pyjamas, priced at a mere £6. According to the brand’s management, “*the cotton used is sourced from female farmers in India participating in Primark’s new sustainable cotton programme, one which trains the women to use more sustainable farming methods.*” This has raised questions from sustainable brands in the organic cotton industry, as they fail to comprehend how a profit can be made producing ‘*Ethical and sustainable conscious clothes*’ at that price, without making certain compromises. Other related brands like H&M and Zara have also had controversial ‘*conscious collections*’, adding to the plight of sustainable fashion brands (McCormack, 2017).

On the bright side, there is much being done in luxury fashion with big brands taking up a more proactive role. The luxury group Kering, home to brands like Saint Laurent and Balenciaga, has launched an initiative called the *Environmental Profit & Loss* “*which makes the invisible impacts of business visible, quantifiable and comparable.*” It essentially puts a monetary value on environmental impacts caused by garment factories - from animal rearing to showroom deliveries (Interview With Author, October 2018). According to Michael Beutler, director of sustainability operations, “*It’s not just a tool. It’s also a mindset change. We engaged all our brands in developing the tool...the EP&L is the key cornerstone of our targets to reduce footprint.*” (Mehta, 2018)

Stella McCartney, probably one of the firsts to start the sustainable luxury culture, has launched her vegetarian line including vegan leather. Recently, in a collaboration with sportswear brand Adidas, the designer launched vegetarian versions of the iconic Stan Smith (Farra, 2018). Heritage-luxury brand Gucci joined the ‘*fur-free*’ race as they announced the discontinuation of real fur from their 2018 spring collection, as a start to their 10-year ‘*Culture of Purpose*’ plan for sustainability. Whereas Patagonia, a brand known for their sustainable outdoor clothing, has taken more of a socio-ethical side - staying close on election day, donating Black Friday proceeds to charity and regulating programmes to repair old clothing (Hargrove, 2018).

5. CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

5.1 INITIAL IDEA & BACKGROUND

The initial idea for this project emerged from a relatively personal concern. As an individual who suddenly moved to cold and wet London from the hot summers of east India, it became increasingly challenging to remodel an existing wardrobe to adapt to this adverse climate change. With this sudden realisation, the better part of my first month was spent frantically hunting for deals across Oxford Circus to construct a basic working wardrobe at the least, before university classes officially began. The result? A collection of hastily bought items which were neither worth money, the time or more importantly my peace of mind.

Thus when the framework of the *Fashion Media Laboratory* course unit urged students to investigate and address a certain gap in the industry, it wasn't long before the thought of an optimised travel wardrobe was conceived. With further research, it was concluded that given the current globetrotting rates, the travel wardrobe needed to be re-explored. As young appearance-conscious individuals who are constantly on-the-go, an organised travel wardrobe seemed to be the need of the hour - both at a personal and communal level.

This commenced an undeniable love affair with capsule concepts, which has only become more deeply-rooted with practical research and understanding it's future possibilities. The goal was to create an optimised wardrobe with limited pieces which will help the user blend in with the local style of their travel destination. As an introductory experiment, three dominant tourist cities were considered - London, Milan and Barcelona. The cities selected had a clear climatic difference, so that the versatility of the capsule wardrobe could be thoroughly assessed. Each city was also allotted accent pieces, which were primarily pop pieces added to an otherwise neutral wardrobe, combined in accordance with the city's quintessential signature styles.

The base capsule comprised of *12 core pieces*. These, along with the *4 accent pieces* per city, were styled to create different ensembles as a proof of concept. An indoor, art-directed photoshoot was envisioned and executed to create a visual representation of the concept. A total of *18 different looks* were documented and presented as a part of the final project outcome.

While researching the capsule concept, the idea of sustainability through capsules was thought-provoking. As a fashion enthusiast who believes in the functionality of separates, this seemed to be a fitting subject to delve into.

5.2 CONCEPT DESIGN

The final concept of *Capsule Culture* progressed to building a holistic travel platform through a combination of alternative wardrobes and lifestyle measures.

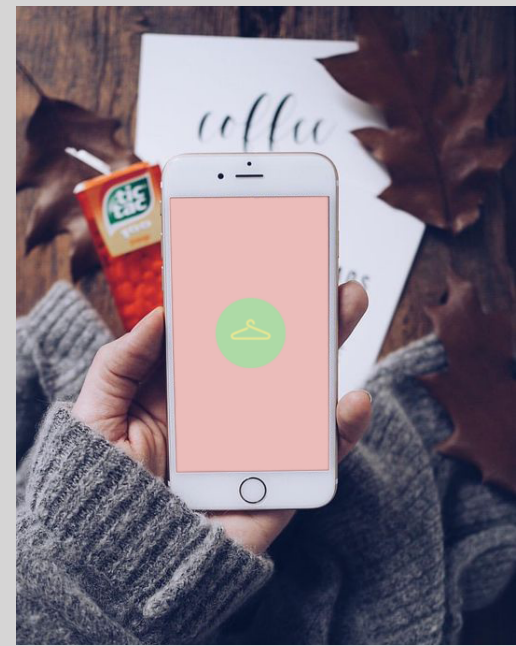
It will primarily be executed in the form of a mobile application as easy accessibility during travel has always been the top priority. As discussed earlier, millennials are a generation coming to age in the digital era which is why it is crucial to be able to communicate with the demographic in their own language. A 2016 survey conducted by the Nielsen group states “When looking at smartphone owners by age, penetration is highest among Millennials aged 18-24, 98% of whom own smartphones. Millennials aged 25-34 are right on their heels, with a 97% ownership rate, followed by Gen Xers aged 35-44 at 96%, making smartphones nearly ubiquitous among these generational segments.” (Nielsen, 2016)

A visual reference in the form of a prototype of the said application has been developed, as a proof of concept. There are two broad concepts make up the said prototype - *personalised capsule wardrobes* and *locally-curated travel experiences*. Below they are discussed in further details.

5.2.1 The Design Language

Keeping in line with the fundamental values of *Capsule Culture*, the visual design maintained is clean and minimalistic. Pop pastel hues are used to add a fresh and fun element to the otherwise straight-lined, decluttered layout.





- **Fonts:** Easy and minimal fonts have been chosen throughout to communicate a certain aesthetic. Modern, non-decorative Geometric and Neo-Grotesque Sans Serif fonts like *Pangram* and *Keep Calm* have been used to maintain the said visual language. Size and weight alterations have been applied to create various hierarchies (Arora, 2016).
- **Colour Palette:** A playful pastel mood is maintained all through. With the use of warm and cool colours combined, the goal was to maintain a harmonious balance between the complementary and analogous colour palettes with highlights of grey. Moreover, a 2018 colour trend report by 99Designs goes on to say that ‘pastels’ can be the new minimalist colour palette. It states “*When it comes to colour, we will see pushback in 2018 with a rise in modern pastel palettes—sandy Scandi pinks, mint and sage green tints, taupes and stormy blues will be replacing generic grey and breaking up the white surplus.*” (Cann, 2018)

5.2.2 Wardrobe Attributes

In this section, a detailed analysis of the wardrobe attributes will be conducted. A brief discussion of general capsule characteristics and personal styling guidelines will be administered, followed by a visual demonstration of the personalisation process.

Building A Capsule

The very first step for any individual to build a capsule is to thoroughly define their own personal style. The concept of owning limited items of clothing only works if those items are meticulously curated to fit the user’s personal style statement. A generalised capsule can restrict the user’s attempts of self-expression through the means of their dressing habits (Gaudette, 2016).

As *Kim Gerlach* appropriately puts it, “*Few brands do offer curated capsules but I personally love my clothes and wouldn’t want anyone to define what I should or shouldn’t wear. I would much rather evaluate*

my own style and buy pieces from different brands to build my very own capsule.” (Interview with author, October 2018)

Capsule wardrobe expert *Caroline Rector* suggests paring down one’s entire wardrobe to a bare minimum and using only those pieces during the initial days of “*going capsule*”, as an essential trial and error approach. This helps the user get accustomed to looking at their wardrobe in a new light and subsequently making informed decisions while investing in something new (*Unfancy blog, 2016*).

An article in *Business Insider* says that building a travel capsule can add further limitations. Practicality and versatility are the core ideas which build a perfectly balanced travel wardrobe. Together with a harmonised colour palette and easy to maintain fabrics, it can be a complete wardrobe solution to packing woes, if planned efficiently (*Elkins, 2016*).

Packsmith, a blog started by *Tortuga*, caters to individuals who ‘*love travel but hate packing*’. The packing-tips segment of their blog mentions 3 basic rules for building a thought through travel capsule. The fundamental rule is to consistently ‘*buy quality, not quantity*’. It is also vital to choose wrinkle-free, breathable fabrics which don’t require frequent maintenance like denim. Lastly, the colour scheme needs to fall in line with each other, for every item selected for the capsule. Planning around neutral basics with some seasonal accent hues can work impeccably well (*Gaudette, 2017*).

The book *Pack Stylishly Light* states another basic rule for optimising the travel capsule which is referred to as ‘*the rule of 3*’, which is ‘*wearing every piece you pack at least 3 times*’. It emphasises on thinking ahead and pre-planning of occasions and outfits (*Jimenez, 2015*).

Understanding Personal Styling

As discussed throughout the project, capsule wardrobes are at their best when personalised as per each unique user. Keeping in mind the nature of this project, the following were the key attributes considered:

- Personal Style Preferences - The most important factor while picking out clothing is to recognise the user’s own style statement, in terms of which personal style groups define their decision-making process. While a wide classification of style statements can be made, for *Capsule Culture* they have been broadly classified under four distinct groups, namely - Classic, Athleisure, Romantic & Hipster. These classifications have been made after evaluating and examining several different style terms, through a thorough study of the key concepts of fashion curation and styling.
- Body Type & Skin Colour - To optimise wardrobes, it is exceedingly important to understand the silhouettes, fabrics and colours which complements a certain user. The primary goal of such styling processes is to create a symmetrical proportion between the top and bottom halves of a user’s physique. This, in turn, assists in selecting ideal silhouettes and fabrics to balance out the user’s appearance. The project lists four body shapes - Apple, Pear, Hourglass & Inverted Triangle. Additionally, skin tone analysis helps in recommending a certain colour palette which is meant to complement the undertones of the user’s skin colour.

- Season - To curate a travel wardrobe, it is essential to think through seasonal dressing. The project lists the four main seasons - spring, summer, fall & winter. It helps to define the accents in the colour palette, recommend climate-appropriate fabrics and silhouettes. (Dingemans, 1999)

These attributes will be computed in the form of a personalisation quiz when any user logs in to the app for the very first time. These inputs will then be evaluated by different algorithms, linking each attribute to a clothing characteristic. All such responses will be recorded and calculated to build a *Base Wardrobe* for every unique user. This *Base Wardrobe* is essentially a core wardrobe of 15 odd capsule pieces for a particular user, which is curated based on the permutations and combinations of the personalisation quiz.

This *Base Wardrobe* remains constant for the user throughout all their travels. As every piece suggested in the base capsule is individually analysed as per the user's quiz inputs, it is believed that this could be the optimal capsule wardrobe for the user which doesn't require frequent changes or unnecessary purchasing of multiple items. The *Base Wardrobe* can be modified by retaking the personalisation quiz and replacing the user's attributional preferences. This would lead to the recalculation of the core pieces.

To build on the said *Base Wardrobe*, the app also recommends *Accent Pieces* in accordance with the travel destination selected. Every destination has unique features, not only in terms of climate and culture but also with relevance to the destination's general style. There are 5 *Accent Pieces* per destination and they work in two distinct ways. One, by adding some new, pop pieces to the basic 15 staples from the core wardrobe; second, by integrating popular, regional fashion items urging users to experiment with some local styles.

Here it's important to acknowledge that regional fashion does not translate into just traditional or religious styles, it speaks more towards specific adaptations of generalised, contemporary styles. An article in *Culture Trip* talks about London's 'love letter' to a certain side-stripe trousers trend, it goes on to say "*What is it about the side stripe that so fascinates and mesmerises London consumers? Perhaps it is the hint of a more rebellious streak, cutting through the drudgery of otherwise plain pieces or is the nod to sporting favourites. Regardless the result is the same: mass adoption...Usually paired with the Londoner's favourite style of shoe, the white trainer.*" (Doyle, 2017)

There is a certain essence of a destination's lifestyle that is reflected through the clothes that locals wear. Through the *Accent Pieces*, an attempt is made to capture that element for a wholesome, travel experience.

Each piece suggested in the capsule collection are mere representations of the recommended styles. An additional buying section is associated with each piece where limited choices are provided, in case the user wants to view purchase options. These purchase options are exclusive handpicked pieces which endorse ethically produced, superior quality products.

Furthermore, the app is also equipped with a *Style Guide* segment which acts as a visual handbook of rules to consider if the user prefers to conceptualise and calculate their own capsule wardrobe. This guide elaborates on the fashion 'do's and don'ts' for every unique user, in terms of top-wear, bottom-wear and colour palettes.

How It Works

As spoken of earlier, a visual pitch of the concept is represented in the form of a prototype to help understand how the final app might work. The said prototype is aimed at exploring a manually-curated wardrobe for a sample user profile, this is to help illustrate how the personalisation will eventually manifest.

However, to make *Capsule Culture* a viable platform on a mass scale (complete with instant personalisation and search results), manual curation might not suffice owing to the sheer quantity of users. Thus, a personalisation quiz established on automated algorithms is suggested, which can be trained by machine learning processes to calculate the *Base Wardrobe* and *Accent Pieces* for a specific user. A digital product inventory will essentially be the base of said algorithms, which can consist of manually tagged fashion pieces that can be readily mapped to different personalisation attributes. These interactions between the tags per item and the algorithms will eventually be employed to curate the capsules.

User profiles play key roles in *Capsule Culture*. To demonstrate how these profiles may work in terms of personalised capsules, a sample profile is assessed.

First, the four personal styling attributes are assessed. User has an '**Inverted Triangle**' body shape, with a '**Tan**' skin tone. Her style preferences lean towards the '**Athleisure**' side and she is looking to build her '**Autumn**' capsule wardrobe.

SELECT YOUR BODY SHAPE

Apple

Hourglass

Pear

Inverted Triangle

NEXT

DON'T KNOW YOUR BODY SHAPE? FIND OUT HERE

SELECT YOUR SKIN COLOUR

PALE

WHEAT

TAN

DARK

NEXT

PICK YOUR TRAVEL SEASON

Spring

Summer

Autumn

Winter

NEXT

YOUR STYLE IS MORE

CLASSIC

ATHLEISURE

ROMANTIC

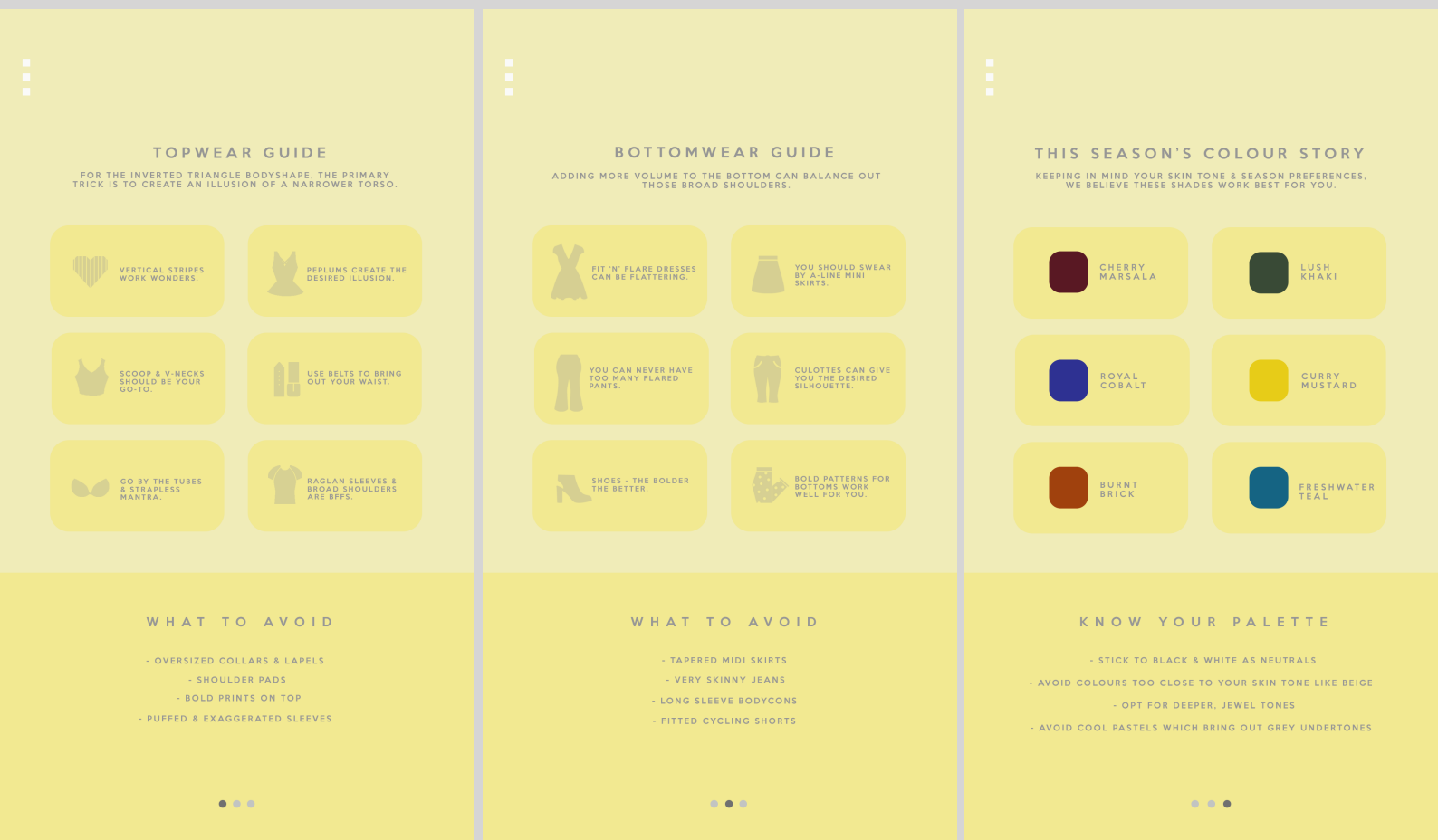
HIPSTER

NEXT



The user is greeted with a welcome noted to initiate a friendly, conversational tone. She is then given a brief context into what she can expect from her travel wardrobe.

A personalised *Style Guide* is suggested, which is to assist the user optimise her fashion decisions outside the recommendations provided by *Capsule Culture*.



Lastly, a 15 piece capsule wardrobe is curated, complete with styling prompts for each piece.

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE RELAXED MOM JEANS

THE VERY MUCH 'IN-TREND' MOM JEANS WILL DO COMPLETE JUSTICE TO YOUR ATHLETISSE VIBE. THE RELAXED FIT GIVES YOU THE MUCH NEEDED VOLUME AROUND YOUR HIPS, PLUS IT'S SUPER VERSATILE!

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE V-NECK WHITE TEE

SHIRTS, CLASSIC & TIMELESS - WHY DOES THE BASIC WHITE TEE TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR FIRST LOVE? THE ROUND NECK, ONCE A MISS & OUT FOR ITS TRENCH COLOUR, THE V-NECK, TRUST US IT DOES WONDER FOR YOUR BODY TYPE!

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE FIT 'N' FLARE LBD

FIT 'N' FLARE DRESSES SHOULD BE YOUR GO-TO MANTRA! THEY BRING OUT THE BEST FOR YOUR BODY TYPE. THE LITTLE BLACK DRESS IS A CAPSULE MUST-HAVE, MAKE THE MOST OF IT AND LABEL IT UP FOR YOUR DAY-TO-NIGHT LOOKS.

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE BUTTON-DOWN MINI

DITCH YOUR BASIC DENIM SKIRT AND GIVE THE SUEDS MINI A TERTIARY STYLE IT FOR THE DAY OR THE EVENING. IT CAN LOOK EQUALLY CHARMING WITH BOOTS OR SNEAKERS. IT IS ALSO EXCEPTIONALLY COMPLIMENTARY TO YOUR BODY TYPE.

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE VARSITY BOMBER

A BOMBER JACKET IS A TRANSITIONAL FALL PIECE YOU JUST CANNOT AVOID! IT'S THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN HEAVY WINTER WEAR & BREEZY SUMMER CLOTHING. PICK THE BEST VARSITY STYLE TO KEEP IN LINE OF YOUR ATHLETISSE WARDROBE.

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE QUINTESSENTIAL TRAINERS

THE ONE TREND THAT HAS JUST BEEN EVERYWHERE OF LATE! THE VERSATILITY OF WHITE SNEAKERS IS UNPARALLELED. IF YOU LIVE BY SPORTY ENSEMBLES, PICK SOMETHING WITH A COMPARATIVELY THICK SOLE TO GO THAT EXTRA MILE.

PURCHASE OPTIONS

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE SIDE-STRIPE TROUSERS

A TYPICAL ATHLETISSE TREND, THE SIDE-STRIPE PANTS CAN BE DRESSED UP WITH A SLURRY CROP OR KEPT TOTALLY 'CAY' WITH YOUR EVERYDAY TRAINERS. OPT FOR A HIGH-WAISTED FLARED OUT STYLE, WHICH WILL ONLY EMBRACE YOUR BEST FEATURES!

PURCHASE OPTIONS

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE REINVENTED BUM BAG

THE NEW FANNY PACK IS BACK & SO MUCH BETTER. IF YOU ASK US IT'S ADDS A CERTAIN FLAMBOYANCE TO YOUR OUTFIT AND KEEPS YOUR HANDS FREE WHILE YOU RUN AROUND THE CITY. WE RECOMMEND A DRESSY ONE FOR THOSE EVENING DRINKS.

PURCHASE OPTIONS

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE BELTED OVERCOAT

DEAN THE ATTENTION AWAY FROM YOUR SHOULDERS AND BUTTLE FOR A BUSTLE-OVERCOAT TO ENHANCE YOUR WAIST. CHOOSE A WARM, POP COLOUR TO BRING UP YOUR OTHERWISE MUTED CAPSULE.

PURCHASE OPTIONS

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE SHIMMERY CROP

ADDING JUST A BIT OF GLITTER TO YOUR EVENING ATTIRE. A BARE, SHIMMERY CROP IS EASY STYLE WITH MOST COLOURS. COOL, NECKLINES ARE WELL SUITED FOR YOUR BODY TYPE AND CERTAINLY ADDS A BIT OF THAT BULTRY APPEAL.

PURCHASE OPTIONS

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE OVERSIZED SWEAT-DRESS

EXTREMELY OUTFITLESS & IMMENSELY CHIC - THIS PIECE IS FOR THOSE DAYS YOU'RE FEELING A BIT TOO LAX. SHOW OFF THOSE LAZY LONG LEGS IN YOUR ATHLETISSE BEST COMBINATION. YOU JUST FOUND THE PERFECT FALL OUTFIT TO LIVE IN.

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE CLASSIC GOLDEN HOOPS

WE REFER TO THESE AS THE MINIMALIST'S ALL-ROUNDER EARRINGS. GIVEN YOUR ATHLETISSE STYLE, OVER-THE-TOP JEWELLERY MIGHT BE A BIG NO-NO. INSTEAD, PICK THIS SIMPLE GOLD PAIR TO INSTANTLY ACCENTUATE YOUR LOOK.

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE BASIC ANKLE BOOTIE

NO FALL WARDROBE IS COMPLETE WITHOUT THE IDEAL ANKLE BOOTIE. PICK A POLISHED BLACK ONE WITH BLOCK HEELS FOR THAT 'OH-LOST' VIBE!

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE ALL-PURPOSE BACKPACK

FIRST RULE OF TRAVEL - BULKY GADGETS ARE YOUR ENEMY. A CONTEMPORARY BACKPACK WILL ONLY ADD MORE VALUE TO YOUR CAPSULE. PICK ONE IN MUTES, NEUTRAL SHADES FOR VERSATILITY & MAKE SURE IT'S SPACIOUS ENOUGH FOR TRAVEL SUPPLIES.

OVERVIEWDETAILS



THE CLOSE FIT JUMPER

A COMPLETE FALL MUST, MUST HAVE! IT WORKS SO WELL FOR YOU AS IT CAN GIVE A HANDSOME EFFECT WHEN PAIRED WITH RELAXED FIT BOTTOMS. PICK A DARK JEWEL TONE TO COMPLIMENT YOUR SKINTONE AND THE SEASON.

PURCHASE OPTIONS

5.2.3 Travel Experiences

In this section, a detailed outline of the travel-related concepts will be discussed. The main features for travel solutions will be centred around understanding regional lifestyles through recommendations from locally-based curators.

Living Like A Local

Understanding local lifestyles and cultural backgrounds are essential to most millennial travellers, as they look for authenticity and diversity through their travels. Sampling local cuisines, revisiting a destination's history through unconventional adventures, immersing in indigenous music and art - are at the top of their 'experience list'. *Under30Travel* concludes, "*Millennial travellers aren't heading to Europe, Southeast Asia and South America to party anymore, Instead, their trips are all about authenticity...and cultural immersion is the best way to achieve that goal.*" (Mya, 2018)

Interacting with like-minded locals and taking an active part in their daily ventures is what satisfies the new age traveller's yearning for cultural encounters. The popular bed and breakfast platform *AirBnB* has initiated a unique '*Host An Experience*' segment which goes beyond just providing accommodation to travellers. These '*AirBnB Experiences*' are activities designed and led by local residents, which lets guests immerse themselves in a host's unique world by setting up adventures led by social interactions. During a talk on *Business Of Fashion's* '*Voices*', *AirBnB* co-founder *Joe Gebbia* introduces the concept as a program to '*give back to the local economy*' (Gebbia, 2018).

Capsule Culture aims to analyse such travel ideologies by curating authentic, local experiences to provide the user with an alternative and contemporary holiday plan. This can not only prove to be a meaningful experience to the user concerned but can also support local communities by lending more visibility and employment. These travel experiences are further segregated into three broad sections, namely - *Local Events*, *Local Adventures* & *Local Food*. To understand these three classifications better, the following indicators are considered as guidelines:

- Local Events - This section will be comprised of contemporary cultural events, festivals, parties, theatres/musicals, exhibitions, sales, art shows, workshops, etc.
- Local Adventures - These will revolve around local artists, musicians and designers. It will also have a comprehensive list of places that can be visited like alternative landmarks, galleries, installations, etc.
- Local Food - This will include must-try local vendors, restaurants, pubs, clubs, bars, food markets and weekly farmers market. It will also provide options for cooking workshops associated with the local cuisine.

The travel section will also include a '*City Rules*' section which will be a comprehensive guideline by locals to the "*do's and don'ts*" that build the urban culture of that particular destination.

Community Of Curators

Staying true to the idea of authenticity, the travel section will essentially be compiled by local curators. As local inhabitants of a place have more insight into the region's activities and interests, they are usually the best at recommendations.

The curators are carefully handpicked to build a certain '*millennial bespoke*' experience. As individuals, they are predominantly in their mid-twenties, to fall in line with the experiences the targeted millennial audience might be looking for. Since the curators belong to the same demographic as the primary user, the two are more likely to have complementary experiential preferences.

Capsule Culture aims to build a community of such influencers who can interact with the user on a personal level. Every curator will maintain a profile section that will allow the user to get a brief view into the curator's life, which will subsequently aid build an exclusive user-curator relationship.

An additional feature is available for users to '*meet and greet*' curators while visiting particular destinations. Through this, the curator plays the role of a local guide for fun interactions. A user can avail this feature by registering a request with the curator through their profiles.

Furthermore, a small section in the application prototype is dedicated to sustainability and travel news, to keep the user updated with the latest innovative ventures which can be implemented as lifestyle solutions. This is in collaboration with celebrated bloggers who are experts on travel packing and sustainable living.

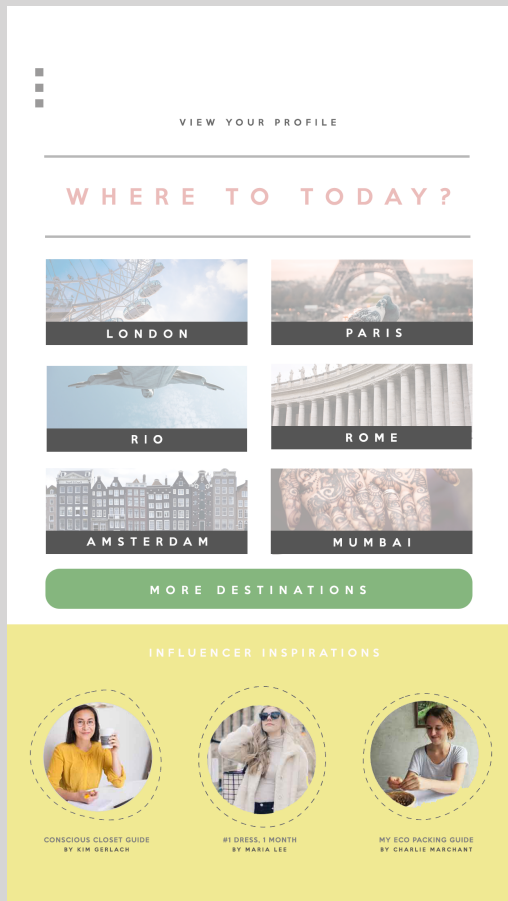
How It Works

The process begins with the user selecting a destination of choice. This leads to a destination page, complete with a '*City Rules*' section, '*Experiences*' section and the relevant '*Curator Profile*'.

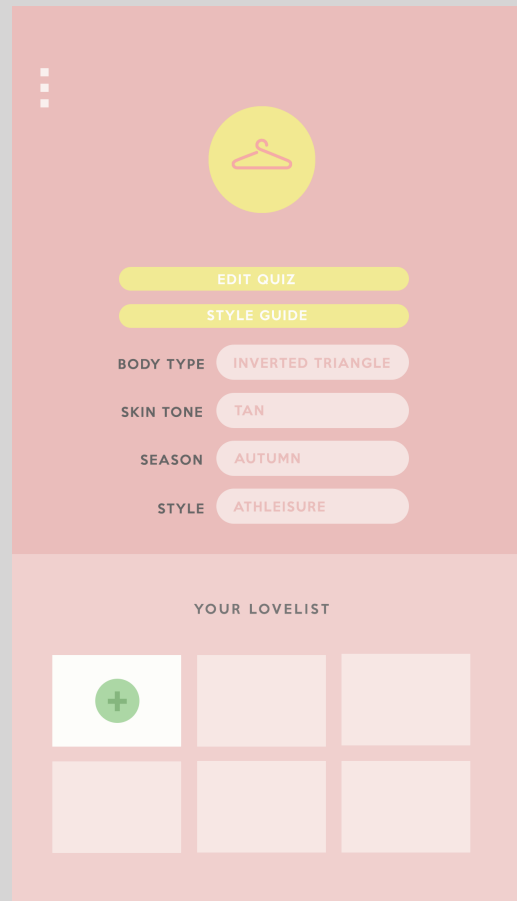
A visual representation of the combined workings listed in the travel section is included below. The landing page is called "*Home*", which will comprise of popular destinations with a "*More Destinations*" tab that allows the user to choose from a greater variety of options.

It also includes a section on "*Influencer Inspirations*", which is primarily an engagement feature for users to interact with.

Additionally a "*View Your Profile*" section is added, which allows users to build their own destination itineraries from the "experiences" listed for the same. It also comprises of an overview of their personal styling attributes at a glance and allows the user to retake the personalisation quiz as per requirement.

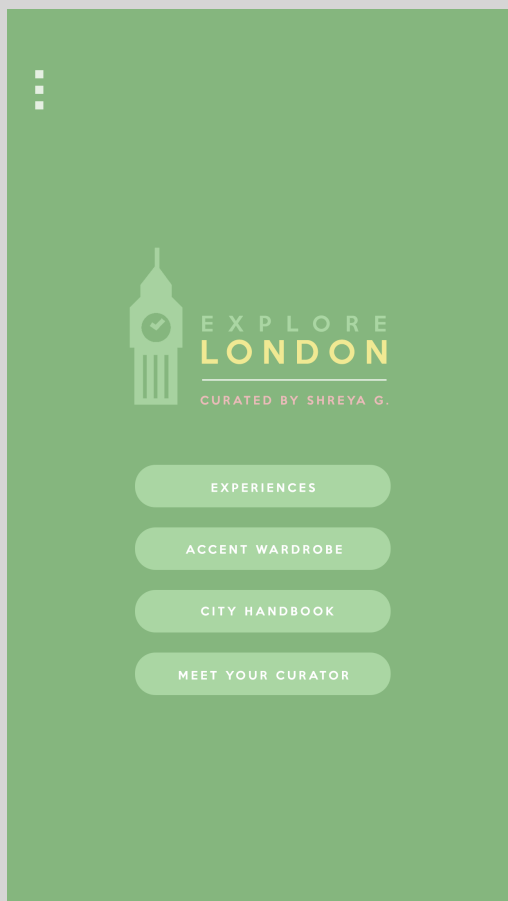


HOME PAGE



VIEW YOUR PROFILE

For the visual appearance of the prototype, a sample destination of 'London' is selected.



As a part of the destination experience, “*Accent Pieces*” are added to the existing *Base Wardrobe*. These pieces adhere to the personalisation attributes and the unique street style of the destination.

←

CROPPED SWEATER

<



>

AUTUMN IN LONDON BRINGS A NIP IN THE AIR, SO WE SUGGEST YOU BE PREPARED WITH SOME SMART LAYERS. OPT FOR WARM KNITS IN A CROPPED LENGTH FOR A LITTLE EDGE.

←

TEDDY COAT

<



>

A “FLUFFY” TEDDY COAT IS A LONDON MUST HAVE! IT’S PERFECT FOR DEALING WITH LONDON’S UNPREDICTABLE WEATHER & ALSO STAY IN LINE WITH THE CITY’S “CASUAL-CHIC” STATEMENT.

←

FULL SLEEVE WRAP TOP

<



>

WRAP TOPS WORK BEAUTIFULLY FOR YOUR BODY TYPE BY ENHANCING YOUR WAIST. THEY CAN ALSO BE THE PERFECT OPTION FOR CASUAL EVENINGS.

←

STATEMENT BEANIE

<



>

PACK IN A BEANIE THAT CAN TAKE YOU FROM DAY TO NIGHT. EXPERIMENT WITH A STATEMENT PIECES AND FORGET THOSE “BAD HAIR DAYS” AT HOME!

←

NEUTRAL WOOL SCARF

<



>

THROW ON A SCARF OVER T-SHIRTS & DRESSES FOR WINDY LONDON EVENINGS. SOFT, NEUTRAL SHADES ARE IDEAL AS THEY TEND TO BLEND WELL WITH ACROMATIC & POP HUES ALIKE.

The “Experience” section is listed with a list of ‘adventures’, ‘events’ and ‘food’.



NIGHT CYCLING

AVOID CROWDED STREETS IN THE DAY & HEAD OUT FOR A SLOW, RELAXING RIDE ALONG THE PICTURESQUE THAMES SOUTHBANK.



ART AT SAATCHI

A CONTEMPORARY & AVANT-GARDE ART GALLERY FOR MODERN ART LOVERS.



EEL PIE ISLAND

AN ODE TO THE 60S HIPPIE CULTURE, EEL PIE IS NESTLED IN THE MIDDLE OF THAMES. ALSO, A SAFE HAVEN FOR THE CLASSIC ROCK LOVER.



WALA'S STREETART

ARTIST CAMILLE WALALA HAS MADE EAST LONDON'S SHOREDITCH HER VERY OWN CANVAS. WALK AROUND THE AREA TO SPOT HER BRIGHT, GEOMETRIC ACCENTS.



EMIRATES CABLE CARS

THOUGH A CRUISE ON THE THAMES SOUNDS GOOD, AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE CITY FROM THE GREENWICH CABLE CARS DEFINITELY SOUNDS BETTER!



MAKING OF THE DRY GIN

LONDON'S MOST AWARDED DRY GIN BEEFEEATER HAS BEEN AROUND SINCE 1863. VISIT THE KENNEDY FACTORY FOR AN INTERACTIVE TOUR.



LATE AT TATE

THE FUN AT TATE TRULY STARTS AFTER-HOURS. STOP BY ON FRIDAYS FOR AN IMMERSIVE MIX OF SOUND & VISUALS, WITH SOME DRINKS OF COURSE!



WINTER WONDERLAND

A MONTH-LONG WINTER CARNIVAL HELD AT THE FAMOUS HYDE PARK. GET YOURSELF A SOME CANDY FLOSS AND UP ON THE FERUS WHEEL YOU GO!



THE OLD VIC THEATRE

A 200 YEAR OLD NON-PROFIT VICTORIAN THEATRE FOR OLD SCHOOL ENGLISH PLAYS.



WHITECHAPEL GALLERY

THE GALLERY IS CURRENTLY HOSTING INSTALLATIONS BY ARTISTS ELMOREEN & DRAGSET AS A PART OF THEIR "THIS IS NOW WE BITE OUT TONGUE" EXHIBIT



VEGAN FOOD FESTIVAL

QUAINT CHALET SHOPS, A COSY DOUBLE DECKER BUS AND A WARMING WINTER MENU FROM LONDON'S FAVOURITE VEGAN STREET FOOD TRADERS.



MULLED WINE

SANTA BABY! IS A CHRISTMAS POP UP INSIDE A 1950 STYLE LIVING ROOM, WHICH YOU JUST CANNOT MISS.



THE WATCH HOUSE

A LONDON-BASED CAFE WHICH SERVES A UNIQUE ROAST OF ASIAN, AFRICAN AND LATIN AMERICAN COFFEE BLENDS.



GOD'S OWN JUNKYARD

A YARD DECORATED WITH CHRIS BRACEY'S NEON ART COLLECTION RIGHT FROM THE 1960S, WHICH DOUBLES INTO A BESPOKE CAFE & BAR.



MERCATO METROPOLITANO

A MASSIVE FOOD MARKET WITH LIVE COUNTERS, PICNIC BENCHES & BEER ON TAP. EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT WORLD CUISINES WITH A LOCAL TOUCH.

ADVENTURES

EVENTS

FOOD

6. A PRACTICAL BUSINESS VENTURE

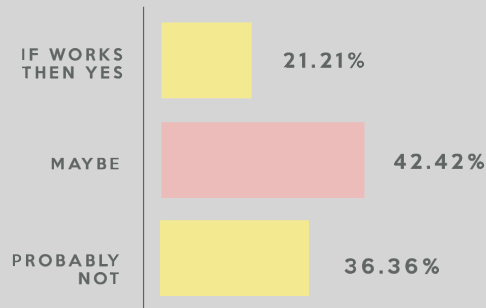
6.1 ANALYSING THE TARGET AUDIENCE

As the viability of the project is primarily based on audience behaviour and habits, it becomes crucial to recognise the niche audience it targets. The millennial experiential economy and personalisation affinity discussed in the introductory chapters evidently suggests a certain market for the features offered by *Capsule Culture*. However, this was concluded based on specific assumptions made in regards to the demographic's financial position and an exposure to contemporary, urban lifestyles. Additionally, millennial habits are also largely influenced by the type of economy they belong to, namely - emerging versus developed markets. A study conducted by the *Euromonitor* blog elaborates on such differences, they add that millennials from developing economies “are more concerned with the actual ownership of goods, in particular, if they are aspirational items. Whereas a Millennial in the West is less likely to spend their entire wages on an expensive tech product, emerging-market Millennials chase this status and are willing to save up significantly for purchases.” The study further goes on to say, “The sharing economy...has struggled to

take off in developing countries because consumers still do not trust each other entirely and do not yet have openness to digital peer-to-peer transactions.” [\(Gordon, Marceux, 2015\)](#)

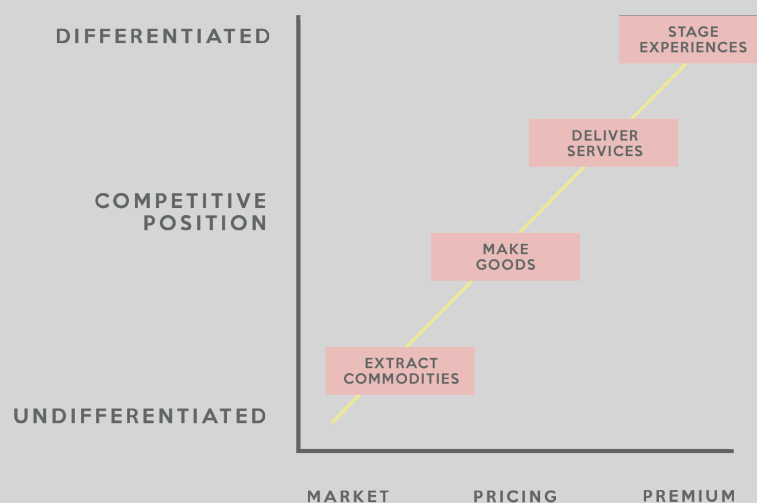
A survey poll recorded for *Capsule Culture*, which comprised of millennials from both developed and emerging economies, reflected audience attitudes towards paying a premium for a travel personalisation application.

WOULD YOU PAY A PREMIUM FOR PERSONALISED TRAVEL SERVICES?



A majority of the respondents had positive feedback towards the idea, however one-third of the group differed.

However, a *Harvard Business Review* report suggests that the marketing trend of ‘staging experiences’ increases when an excessive value is put on ‘experiences’ by current primary consumers. According to their theory (illustrated below) “the progression of economic value”, these ‘stage experiences’ often fall in line with premium platforms for early-adopting, niche consumers [\(Pine II, Gilmore, 1998\)](#).



Capsule Culture is a lifestyle solution aimed at individuals looking to invest in such experiences.

To identify the target audience, certain key characteristics are evaluated (Roque, 2018) :

- **Demographics** - Consumers between the age group of 18 to 34 are targeted as primary users with a certain curve influx towards urban Gen X creatives as well. Aimed at men and women both, Capsule Culture will focus on bringing fashion and travel enthusiasts together.
- **Location** - Consumers living in cities with easy accessibility to worldwide destinations are ideal. This increases the user's mobility and encourages further travel adventures.
- **Psychographics** - Consumer attitudes and behavioural patterns are measured. Users in creative fields with an understanding of ethical and social responsibilities largely comprise the target audience.

Based on the above criteria, 4 user personas are created for a detailed examination of the target audience lifestyles.



SHIVANI BIBHUTI

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

NEW DELHI, INDIA

AGE - 32YEARS

LOVES GOING TO THE THEATRE, LONG
DRIVES & RED WINE.



CLARA KOSCIELNIAK

FASHION BUYER & MERCHANDISER

PARIS, FRANCE

AGE - 27YEARS

LOVES VINTAGE SHOPPING, EXPLORING
MODERN ART & VEGAN FOOD.



MARIANA CHENIEUX

GRAPHIC DESIGNER & ILLUSTRATOR

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL

AGE - 22YEARS

LOVES JAZZ MUSIC, ITALIAN ROAST
COFFEE & OLD HITCHCOCK MOVIES.



LARA BRUYERE

ART STUDENT & FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER

LONDON, UK

AGE - 19YEARS

LOVES CRAFT BEERS, SUNNY DAYS IN THE
PARK & HER WHITE TRAINERS.

6.2 BUSINESS COLLABORATIONS & STRATEGIES

In order for *Capsule Culture* to be a viable business strategy, certain third-party collaborations are essential. These collaborations can be recognised partnerships with multiple brands or companies in the fashion and lifestyle sector. Given the bespoke strategy employed behind the concept of *Capsule Culture*, users will primarily be looking at a premium experience, which calls for collaborations with emerging, niche organisations which disregard mass production and generic content. This 'exchange of content' strategy can benefit both platforms in terms of visibility and exposure, but more importantly, it can assist in reaching out to the right consumer who believes in the key idea of sustainability and minimalist countercultures. Sharing customer bases and cross-selling across platforms which hold homogeneous visions can be favourable while building businesses (Coleman, 2017).

The 2016 *Apple X Nike* collaboration, which launched the first series of smartwatches optimised for running and athletics, is such an example of 'win-win' collaborations. It resulted in a modern yet sporty aesthetic, integrated with *Nike+ Run Club* application, smart run reminders and alerts on optimal weather conditions. All of this, when combined with Apple's seamless user-driven technology, urged two distinct consumer groups to pay attention (Klingelfuss, 2016).

Capsule Culture will be based on three definite channels of collaboration:

- **Collaborations with Fashion Brands** - These will be integral to building the personalised capsule wardrobe. Though the idea of the capsule is to provide basic style guidelines for consideration through a visual representation, a consequent 'purchase options' section is also added to the same.

This is implemented to redirect users to not only buy ethical items but also as a means of convenience for individuals looking to make direct purchases through Capsule Culture. While the 'purchase options' segment has limited styles from handpicked brands, it focuses majorly on the brands featured as a strategy to urge consumers in making informed purchase choices.

- **Collaborations with Experience Organisations** - This is essentially the activities listed under the travel section. As destination curators recommend events, exhibitions, landmarks, markets and other things to experience around their locality, a collaboration with said activity organisers and organisations become necessary for user convenience. Thus if a local artist is having an exhibit or a certain landmark suggested needs a ticket - it becomes increasingly important to have close liaisons with the organisers for redirecting users to web-links where they can make such reservations. The whole process works as a user accessibility approach while offering the organisers more online traffic and general exposure.
- **Collaborations with Like-Minded Influencers** - A relevantly small section of *Capsule Culture* is dedicated to sustainability news and other minimalist approaches. Integrated mainly to keep users well informed about the latest advancements such interest areas, this also acts as an external content section to keep the user engaged. For the same, influencers, bloggers and experts will be approached for partnerships.

6.3 COMPETITOR STUDY

The holistic approach taken by *Capsule Culture* towards travel lifestyles remains unchallenged in terms of competitors. However, the key concepts of the project - namely capsule wardrobes and sustainable travel, are not recent developments. Numerous institutions have evaluated these two ideas and built legitimised institutions based on the same. Two such competitors are studied and assessed to evaluate the potential of this project.

Cladwell X Unfancy

Personal styling application *Cladwell* collaborated with capsule wardrobe expert *Caroline Rector* of the 'Unfancy' fame, to build personalised capsule collections for individual users. Cladwell essentially has an extensive database of fashion items, from which each user is required to build a virtual wardrobe, which is essentially an identical representation of their existing wardrobe. Cladwell then, in collaboration with Rector, digitally curates multiple capsules based on several occasions. It also allows users to record their daily outfits on the app, by 'logging in' the outfit details, which in time helps users to discover what they prefer to wear on a daily basis ([Cladwell Webpage, accessed November 2018](#)).

In respect to the nature of this project, there are three clear differences between the above-mentioned services and *Capsule Culture*'s fundamental concepts. First, a contrasting approach has been taken towards personal styling - while Cladwell provides their services in terms of simplifying an existing wardrobe, *Capsule Culture* recommends at personal styling guidelines through evaluating the user's appearance, surroundings and preferred style statements. Secondly, it is beyond the scope of Cladwell's concepts to primarily look at ethical fashion. Here, a striking difference is established with *Capsule Culture*.

Though this project doesn't specifically look at '*sustainable brands*', it nonetheless only endorses brands with ethical and slow fashion collections. Lastly and most importantly, the capsule suggested by Cladwell and Caroline Rector is not exclusive to travel lifestyles, whereas, in the case of *Capsule Culture*, it is one of the integral factors considered in capsule planning.

AirBnB's 'Host An Experience'

AirBnB's experience feature is a carefully designed process which revolves around unconventional experiences hosted by locals, as a way to share their hobbies with individuals who have similar interests. Each individual '*experiences*' is primarily driven by the local '*host*', focusing on the idea of '*giving back to the local economy*'. The '*host*' has to register the '*experience*' they offer on the AirBnB website, following which customers can book these '*experiences*' based on the preview (AirBnB Website, November 2018).

In comparison to *Capsule Culture*, the AirBnB platform is more '*host*' centred. Similar to the '*curator*' concept employed in *Capsule Culture*, the '*host*' is a local native who builds experiences. The obvious distinction between the two platforms is thereby made apparent. AirBnB's '*hosts*' create experiences, while *Capsule Culture*'s '*curators*' curate such experiences to provide users with a wholesome combination of activities and lifestyle alternatives.

7. UNIQUE POTENTIALS

7.1 PERSONALISED CURATION

Consumers appreciate when brands acknowledge their individuality and create a one-on-one experience to tell a certain story. Each consumer ideally engages with brand experiences which speak to them at a personal level and is relevant to their individual needs. Over the years, personalisation has moved from a mere marketing strategy to a rewarding experience. In the current millennial '*experience economy*' where data and content are available in abundance, it has become critical to connect with consumers through personal relationships to ensure brand loyalty (Adobe Experience Cloud).

A research conducted by *American Express* to understand how business can better appeal to every millennial consumer found that the demographic is more likely to be brand-loyal and any of their predecessors. 62% of the group responded stating the inclination to wear a preferred brand, based on their lifestyle, brand aesthetics and popularity. However, the research also indicates certain challenges while invoking such loyalty among millennial consumers, due to their higher expectations of brands and interacting strategies. These '*new-age*' consumers often expect brands to build customised offers based on individual needs, which is a major aspect to drive these millennials who believe in building '*long-term relationships*' with their preferred brands. According to a *Digital Marketing Magazine* article, psychologists believe that customisation for millennials can evoke '*feelings of being understood by brands*' (Davis, 2016).

A 2017 survey conducted by *Deloitte* to understand millennial buying, states that the importance of personalisation and of experience as a product is unparalleled. Respondents were strategically asked if they would willingly pay a premium for a personalised product or experience, more than half of them responded positively in regions like the US, UK and Europe. This number falls down to about 34% in lesser 'mature markets' like China, though a massive 38% of such Chinese consumers say that they 'might' pay the premium after evaluating the value of personalisation in a particular scenario (*Deloitte UK, 2017*).

7.2 SERVICE DESIGN & ETHICAL LIFESTYLES

Kim Gerlach uninhibitedly states "Sustainability is common sense for the intellectual. It is our duty to humankind." (*Interview With Author, October 2018*)

A *Forbes* article says that there is a steady rise in consumers willing to invest in products and services which come from socially and environmentally committed companies. According to their survey, this rise in ethical consumers has increased from 55% in 2015 to 72% in 2016. "Millennials prefer businesses that maintain a focus on sustainability and environmental responsibility. Anything less is increasingly becoming a deal-breaker." As these young consumers define themselves as "woke", generational values are rapidly evolving and painting a more sustainable, optimistic global future. (*Landrum, 2017*)

With this sudden rise of the ethical consumer, many are conflating the demands for such value-driven services as 'youthful idealism'. Numerous organisations might be taking a more sustainable stance with the sole purpose of appealing to this rising generation, but the current digital era has most definitely handed more power to the consumer. Instantly available digital content across global barriers has created empowered consumers who see through facades of shallow ad campaigns. Co-ordinated social media activities also instigate change among organisations due to "accelerated and amplified grassroot consumer movements" (*Forrester, 2018*).

Through targeting such personalised, ethical lifestyle solutions, *Capsule Culture* aims to be the next big social movement, which gradually becomes the natural way of living for this ethically aware generation.

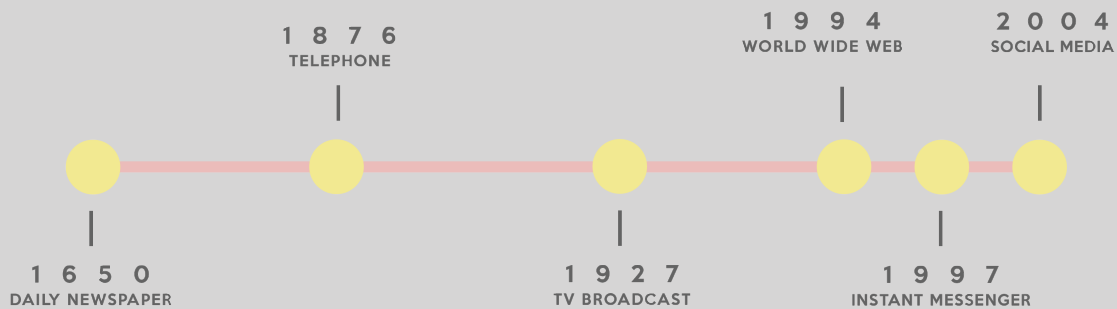
8. LOOKING INTO FUTURE SCOPES

As a project, *Capsule Culture* is envisioned as an alternative lifestyle which introduces an innovative evolution among young consumers today. It aims to be an unique counterculture, which is not restricted to any particular digital medium. By observing and assessing current generational trends and associated practises, this project intends to explore the viability of it's core concepts in relevance to the *spirit of the times*.

To evaluate the future scope of these core concepts, emerging tech solutions and progressive lifestyles are analysed.

8.1 ZEITGEIST & IMMERSIVE TECH

The last 20 years have experienced technological advancement at an exponential rate ([Zenka on TED, 2016](#))



As the Industrial Age paved way for the late 20th century's Information Age, lifestyles changed rapidly for Baby Boomers, Gen X and early Millennials. Advancing from gathering '*data*' to applying this data to build '*information*', the better part of the 21st century has moulded the whole idea of technology, as we know it. However, younger Millennials and Gen Z natives will predominantly evolve into what is currently being referred to as the '*Experience Age*'. An ideal example would be the concept behind *Snapchat*'s ephemeral messages which '*self-destruct*' in 24 hours. An article by *Techcrunch* evaluates the reasons behind such strategies and concludes that "*the result is that the profile is no longer the centre of the social universe. In the Experience Age you are not a profile. You are simply you.*" ([Wadhera, 2016](#))

The earlier chapters discuss the millennial experience economy and how the young consumer's behaviour has shifted from purchasing commodities to valuing experiences. These experiences are facilitated by current technological advances. Furthermore, millennials are also united through their '*love of tech*'. According to a 2011 study by *McCann Worldgroup*, a massive 80% of 16 to 30 year olds sleep with their mobile phones, of which 53% are more likely to '*sacrifice their sense of smell over their tech*'. With the current year being 2018 and gadgets just multiplying in number, one can only imagine where that number might have reached at present ([Rogers, 2018](#)).

A poll conducted by *Adobe Analytics* in the US concludes that more than 32% the population owns a '*smart speaker*' and an additional 28% aim to make the said purchase before the end of 2018. This makes for over half the population investing in current innovative tech trends ([Abramovich, 2018](#)). Smart speaker owners report their usage of voice assistants is up to 76% currently, which justifies how technological solutions are taking over the market ([Kastrenakes, 2018](#)).

Devices like the *Amazon Echo*, *Google Home* and *Apple Homepod* are all examples of smart speakers using voice assistant to execute an array of operational tasks ([Hippold, 2018](#)). These are primarily artificial

intelligence driven '*virtual personal assistants*', which '*learn from you and understands you over time*'. *Ranjit Atwal*, an analyst who is employed by research giant *Gartner*, suggests that the commercialisation of such technologies are putting more emphasis on '*the experience than the hardware*'. This could be reviewed as a shift in the consumer mindset from the era of handheld smartphones to more immersive experiences ([Lomas, 2017](#)).

Computers have been programmed to mimic human behaviour for decades now - from an aeroplane's autopilot mode to the current iPhone's facial recognition feature. While machine learning has been associated with technology since the beginning of these digital times, the emergence of artificial intelligence (A.I.) has given rise to yet another subset, which the experts term as '*deep learning*'. Simply put, deep learning is established through employing interconnected layers of algorithms called neural networks, which are trained to process massive amounts of data which "*have fuelled the current leap forward in the ability of computers to carry out tasks like speech recognition and computer vision.*" ([Heath, 2018](#))

Today, the fundamental concepts machine learning through A.I. is engaged in almost all digital platforms - from *Gmail* sorting out spam emails and suggesting '*smart replies*' to *Tesla's* '*autopilot*' cars which seem to have reinvented '*smart driving*'. A.I. has suddenly become an '*everyday thing*' ([Pasillas, 2017](#)).

Digital centralisation is another term frequenting the technology market. With the introduction of smart phones, tablets, televisions and a dozen other '*smart appliances*', consumers are looking for the convenience of centralisation to manage these gadgets at a holistic level ([DeMers, 2017](#)).

As smart mirrors , fitness collars for dogs, rectal thermometers and the likes are being connected to the internet, a relatively new concept of the '*Internet Of Things*' (IoT) has been introduced to mainstream lifestyles. '*Connected machines*' are revolutionising the way consumers live their everyday life. *Matthew Evans*, the IoT head at *TechUK*, explains "*the Internet of Things is made up of devices - from simple sensors to smartphones and wearables - connected together...(to) gather information, analyse it and create an action.*" Simply put, IoT is fundamentally about devices which '*talk*' to each other across different networks to create a '*much more connected world*' ([Burgess, 2018](#)).

A 2014 *Nielsen* report on millennials and technology found that more than 74% of the respondents believe that technology makes their lives easier, while 60% reported the such new technologies tend to bring them closer to their friends and family. As millennials aim to create '*happy memories*' through experiences, it is only understandable why they are embracing innovative, immersive technologies ([Rogers, 2018](#)).

In the year 2016, *The New York Times* made headlines for sending out *Google Cardboard* headsets to their print customers. The aim was to allow readers a glimpse into the '*virtual reality*' world. Virtual reality is an alternate reality that can be experienced by specifically designed digital headsets, which reshapes the user's '*real*' environment. A 2015 article by *PCWorld* explains the concept in relevance to popular culture - "*If we go the pie-in-the-sky route, virtual reality's akin to Star Trek's Holodeck or the Matrix—a.k.a. a completely virtual environment that you can nevertheless walk around in and interact with. In the modern era? Well, we're not quite to the point of transforming energy into matter at will. Current virtual reality technology is more like strapping a screen to your face.*" ([Dingman, 2015](#))

Since then virtual reality (VR) has come a long way. What initially started as an equipment for computer-based immersive games, is now being referred to as an '*empathy machine*'. VR essentially engages the user's brain to alter their '*senses*' by projecting a different '*reality*'.

"In addition to appealing to our sense of sight and hearing, our sense of movement, balance and body awareness is also affected. All these sensory clues heighten the emotional link with the experience. As a consequence, the memory of the experience is also heightened." (Rogers, S. 2018. Why Millennials Need VR)

United Nations used such VR technologies to "*create humanitarian empathy*" in their 2016 campaign directed at sustainable development agendas. Launched at that year's *World Humanitarian Summit* in Istanbul, this VR experience helped the organisers tell a more immersive story. Gabo Arora, creative director at *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Action Campaign*, explains "*Virtual reality is the ability to really take part in a story that usually you're only a passive spectator on. And it's giving you the possibility to walk in another person's shoes...people come out of it feeling enlightened and often moved, and often ready to take action.*" (UN News, 2016)

While VR aims to create intrusive simulated reality scenarios, the parallel concept of '*augmented reality*' (AR) represents a powerful opportunity to enhance daily life. In contrast to external VR headsets, AR doesn't require dedicated equipments as it utilises devices that consumers already own (Chapman, 2018). A *Wearable* report describes AR as, "*technology that augments your world by layering graphs and images and video on top of it.*" Primarily a computing platform, AR could potentially change the way consumers interact with computers, "*Mostly because our computers wouldn't be stationary items we sit in front of anymore, they'd be the entire world.*" (Sumra, 2018)

In the last few years, smart glasses have been cropping up in every news coverage. *Google Glass*, *Snapchat's Spectacles* and *Intel's Vaunt* have been driving the concept of wearable technology. While the functionality of these remain diverse, the fundamental idea of '*enhanced reality*' remains the same - they are essentially a '*hands-free*' computer screen projected directly on the user's line of sight. These glasses also come with an '*altruistic side*' where companies aim to facilitate a better quality of life for the visually impaired individuals through said technology (Stevens, 2018).

Vuzix is an organisation which has been working primarily on such smart glasses for the last 20 years, focused on bringing such technology to mainstream operations through their light-weight design and contemporary frames. Enterprise consumers are using Vuzix's glasses to read QR codes, get read time updates and process digital information. The new *Vuzix Blade*, launched in the first half of 2018, comes well equipped with *Amazon Echo's* voice assistant *Alexa*, creates a seamless digital experience to aid the user's everyday activities (Statt, 2018).

Magic Leap, is an American start up which claims to be revolutionising immersive technologies with its '*mixed reality*' approach. An article by *Business Insider* says that the company has already raised over \$2 billion in funding from *Google*, *Alibaba* and *Qualcomm*. Tech experts predict this could be the '*next big thing*' in the gaming industry. Unlike most AR smart glasses which project onto a surface, the *Magic Leap* technology alternately projects directly onto the user's retina through a '*dynamic digital lightfield*'. With a

futuristic headset, a clip on mini computer and a controller, *"Magic Leap intends to bring your online life into your real life"* (Gilbert, 2018).

8.2 UNDERSTANDING FUTURE LIFESTYLE

Edgar Dale, an American educator from the mid 1900s, published a strategic model to represent the concreteness of various audiovisual mediums called the '*Cone of Experience*'. He stated after human brain only retains 10% of what we read and 20% of what we hear, after two weeks. However, when we '*experience*' something first hand, our brains retain 90% of those memories (Janoska, 2017).

8.2.1 Enhanced Reality

According to Rony Abovitz, the founder of *Magic Leap*, *"Today our world feels divided...it feels broken."* At *Magic Leap*'s 2018 inaugural developers conference *L.E.A.P. Con*, Abovitz pitched certain '*utopian*' concepts which will act as guidelines for the company's future development plans. He suggests spatial computing as an emerging new medium which can be constructed *"to avoid the problems with trolling, abuse, and lack of representation that plague other media, from the web to television"*. He goes on to add *"spatial computing can be a safe haven and a creative space to include all who respect each other, all who want to build new worlds."* '*MagicVerse*', the mixed reality virtual world users step into while interacting with the *Magic Leap* headset, is currently a single-use application. However, Abovitz discusses how '*MagicVerse*' has the potential to include *"vast, city-scale projects where different virtual layers could offer a number of different experiences atop a single, real-world location."* (Bishop, 2018)

Microsoft's HoloLens is another such venture which which taps into the potentials of mixed reality. As the name suggests, it primarily allows its users to *"overlay holograms from virtual worlds on top of regular old reality."* Much like *Magic Leap*, it essentially projects a feeling of being present within a virtual environment (Colagrossi, 2018). However, the latter surpasses *Magic Leap* in terms of the practicality offered by such mixed reality surrounding. *HoloLens* also lets users built 3D objects by '*air tapping*' on it's virtual display and is more '*enterprise driven*' than an utopian idea (Warren, 2018).

Such intersection between virtual and real worlds constructs a whole new immersive platform to be explored. Innovative tech companies are excessively focused on looking '*beyond the screen*', where user interfaces will evolve from flat pieces of glass to 3D spaces which allows unrestricted movements and interactions. Mixed reality has already started displaying mainstream social impacts through the likes games like '*Pokemon Go*', where *"millions of people would walk miles per day around their cities to capture digital monsters. Thus, an entirely new type of location-specific storytelling and entertainment will become possible in our daily lives."* (Park, 2016)

8.2.2 The Future Of A.I.

Artificial intelligence remains a controversial subject as experts proclaim that in another 25-30 years it can become '*smarter*' than humankind itself. *Tesla*, a frontrunner in smart cars which operate on A.I.

driven solutions, have released semi-automated cars which can change lanes, ‘download’ updates and be ‘summoned’ out of a parking spots (Hogan, 2017). The founder, *Elon Musk*, also suggested that by the end of 2020 the company will launch a set of complete ‘driverless’ vehicles (Vanderbilt, 2018).

Presently, most machines involve artificial intelligence to make consumer interactions more convenient. A 2018 *BBC* article suggests, “*the machines we use on a daily basis are getting smarter, meaning that AI is no longer a futuristic technology but is increasingly integrated into every realm of our lives.*” From suggesting online purchase recommendations to smartphones equipped with virtual assistants, “*AI is touching our lives far more than many of us realise.*” (Gray, 2018)

A.I. also has the potential to be more than a mere technology driven assistant. *Replika* is an iOS app, driven by A.I chatbots, which learns from the user’s “*moods and mannerisms...preferences and patterns of speech*” in order to become their ‘digital friend’. The app was initially developed by *Eugenie Kuyda*, as a way to memorialise her friend who had died in an accident recently. “*The chatbot synthesised thousands of messaging conversations until eventually, it could reply in a way that sounded convincingly like Kuyda’s companion. Kuyda describes the bot as part of her grieving process in dealing with her friend’s passing, a way to say goodbye.*” With a beta version released in early 2017, the app has certainly generated a loyal following as users refer to the A.I. bot as “*a digital pen pal*” (Pardes, 2017)

8.2.3 Sustainability X Smart Living

The current ‘*Environmental Profit & Loss*’ developed by luxury fashion label *Kering* is a massive initiative towards sustainable lifestyles. The methodology has been published on their public platform to inform companies and consumers alike of the environmental impacts across fashion production chains and encourage large-scale adoption. As current consumer ethics increase at a rapid rate, it becomes excessively important for industries to incorporate sustainable attitudes along with total transparency. (Kauffman, 2015)

Oroeco is an app which track’s a user’s personal carbon footprint. *Ian Monroe*, CEO of the app says it can help users “*quantify your own footprint - based on your spending habits*”. Users can also compare individual carbon impacts with virtual communities through logging in with *Facebook*. An article in *Grist* goes on to say that “*Monroe wants to motivate users to...go ahead and feel green — with envy, that is.*” (Larson, 2015)

Another US-based mobile app called *GoodGuide* is a direct guide to environmental shopping. The app allows users to scan products with barcodes and then subsequently goes on to give rankings based on “*health, environment and societal impact*”. (Thorpe, 2016)

Smart clothing is another emerging trend which can bring sustainability through technology. French fashion and tech company *Spinali* has been designing connected clothing in recent years. Their UV protect swimsuit collection is “*equipped with a removable medallion-style waterproof sensor that aims to stop you staying too long in the sun.*” Then through the use of the associated mobile app, a skin type preference is entered to help control excessive exposure to sunlight. (Sawh, 2018)

The ‘Commuter Jacket’ is a recent venture by Levi’s and Google, which lets the user control “*smart controls with specific motions*”. The iconic denim jacket is woven with “*Jacquard Thread and a snag tag*”, which lets the wearer operate “*smart functions*” like audio control, directions and screening calls through specific motions. (Leighton, 2018)

8.2.4 Human Enhancements

Technological advancements are allowing artificial human enhancements that were just myths before. Prosthetic “*add-ons*” and improvements will not be restricted to the just the disabled, it will “*move further into the realm of the possible and everyday. Bits of exoskeleton hanging by the front door for Marty to put on as he goes into the street to make him a little bit faster, better coordinated, stronger.*”

Technology has moved from keyboard to touch-pads to speech recognition, now experts predict that “*the next logical progression is mind-controlled technology*” (Kastanis, 2016). Among current developments, there have been breakthroughs in mind-controlled prosthetics and wireless brain transmitters for paralysed patients. *BrainGate* is a collaborative organisation by researchers at *Brown University* and a Utah company named *Blackrock Microsystems*. After a decade of trial and error, the company has launched their “*wireless device that can be attached to a person’s skull and transmit via radio thought commands collected from a brain implant.*” (Regalado, 2015). *BrainGate* also carried out an experiment among amputees, where they built custom sockets of sensors to operate a prosthetic limb with a controlled command from the brain. An article by *The New York Times* sums it up as “*a robotic arm that has 26 joints, can curl up to 45 pounds and is controlled with a person’s mind just like a regular arm.*” (Canepari, 2015)

Smart contact lenses by Google and Samsung are the “*the part-scary, part-exciting future tech that will bring augmented reality to the fore.*” In association with a Swiss drug company *Novartis*, Google has launched their smart lenses that are targeted primarily towards diabetic patients. These detect the blood glucose level in the wearer’s tears to help them contain their symptoms. Whereas, *Samsung’s* is working towards another type which focuses on augmented reality. Cameras, motion sensors and transmitters will be employed to “*overlay information on the physical world*” (Edwards, 2016).

8.3 A PROGRESSIVE TIMELINE

Through evaluating current sustainability trends combined with an extensive assessment of future lifestyles, a progressive timeline is constructed in pursuance of future potentials concerning this project.

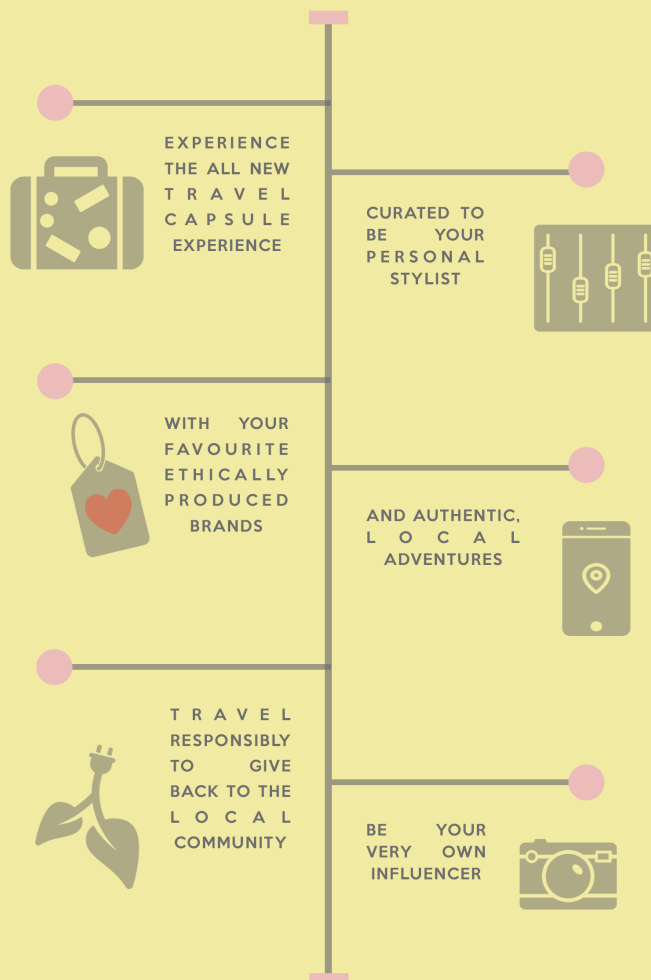
The timeline is divided in three consecutive sections, namely 2018, 2023 and 2028 respectively. By the use of a concise ‘*elevator pitch*’ infographic concept, the features and functionalities of the platform are determined at said stages.

2018 CHARACTERISTICS

- A new perspective to *Travel Lifestyles*
- *Personalised* Wardrobe Curation,
- Sustainable, *Local Experiences*

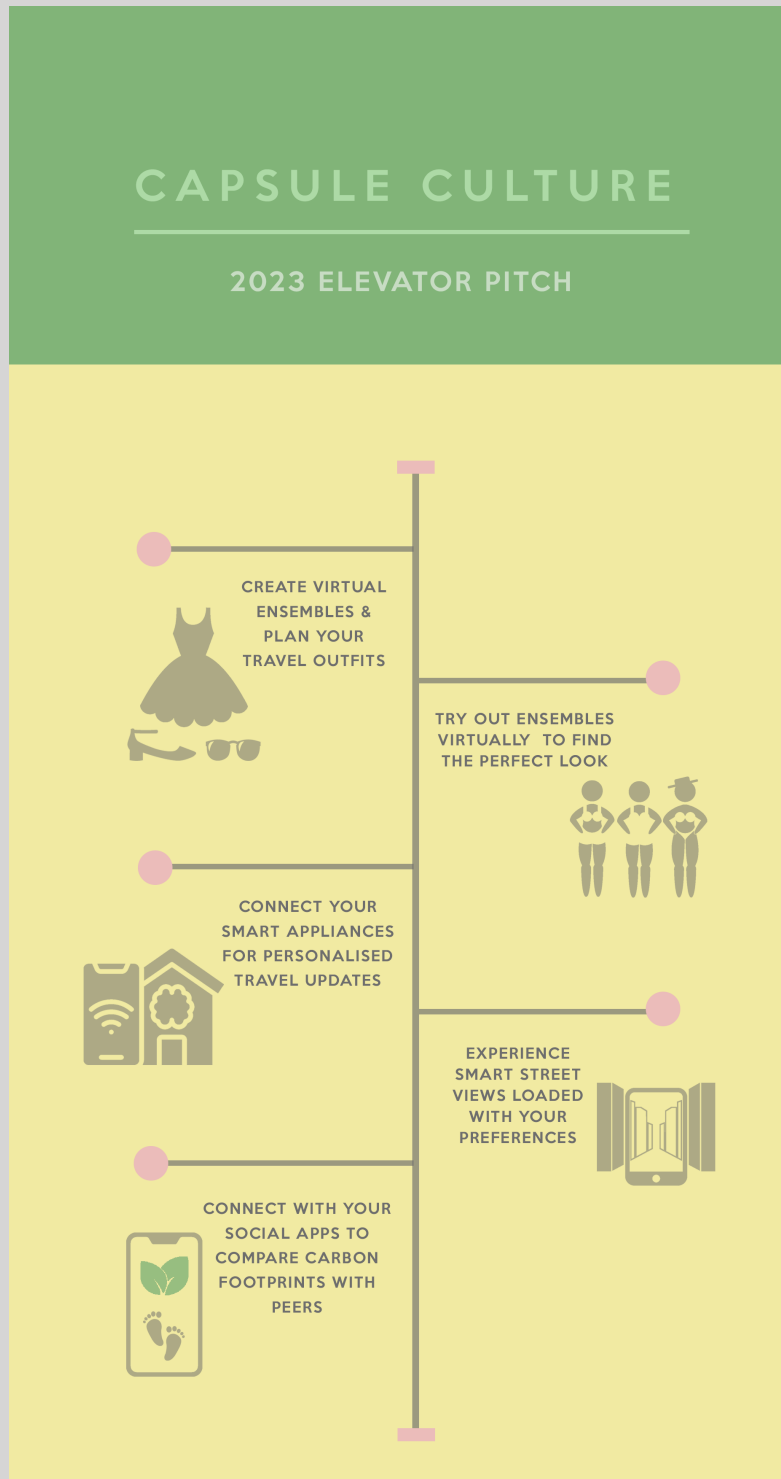
CAPSULE CULTURE

2018 ELEVATOR PITCH



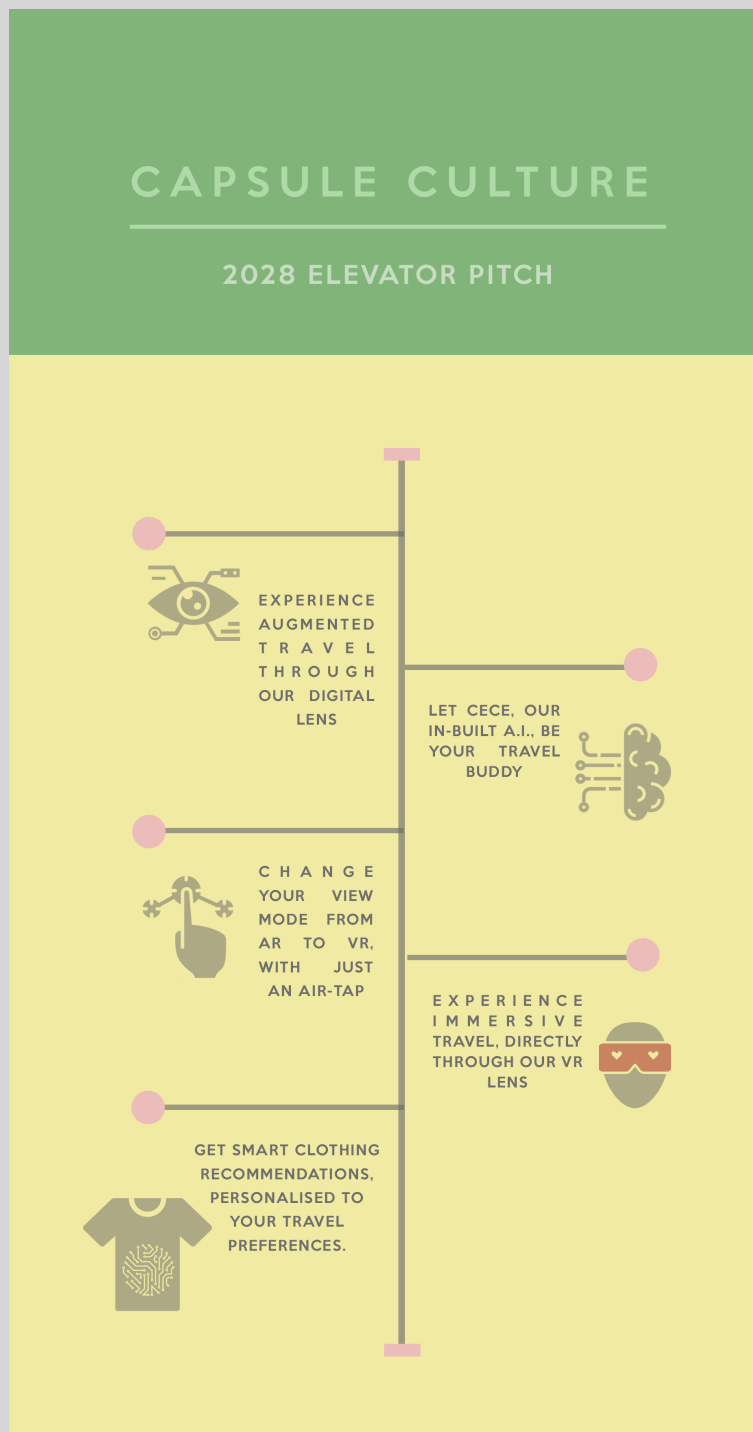
2023 CHARACTERISTICS

- Virtual Avatars assist in creating personal “Looks” with the capsule pieces, before a user travels.
- The “Internet Of Things” allow smart appliances to interconnect and share data, which helps personalising travel experiences according to user lifestyles.
- Augmented reality enables “Smart Street View”, complete with interactive directions and local suggestions.
- An incentive is introduced to reduce the user’s “Carbon Footprint” through comparing the same with peers online



2028 CHARACTERISTICS

- Hand free technology will pay way for smart lenses with integrated augmented reality for an enhanced visual experience.
- “CeCe” (short for Capsule Culture) will act as an in-built A.I. system, which assists the user during travels without having to access multiple online platforms for different requirements.
- An option to change the view for the smart lenses will be available and a user will be able to choose between AR and VR modes. Users can experience immersive travel through VR mode.
- Smart clothing will be personalised to fit the users travel requirements in terms of destination, climate, outdoor activities, etc.



9. CONCLUSION

Through a comprehensive study of present consumer habits and future lifestyle trends, this project focused on curating a holistic travel platform which evolves with time and technological advancements. The project successfully manages to bridge the gap between current travel trends and sustainable alternative to these, by evaluating the core concepts of sustainability and related lifestyles.

In conclusion, there were three fundamental takeaways from this projects:

- **Inching towards sustainability** - Discarding a wardrobe full of fast fashion as a method to condemn consumerism is not being sustainable. As the project explores the concept of sustainability being '*more than what we buy*', it is imperative to look at sustainability with a holistic approach. Similarly, developing a sustainable lifestyle overnight can be an impractical ambition. To encourage mass adoption of such measures, the message should be introduced through uncomplicated, elementary basics of everyday life.
- **Sustainable lifestyles will prosper with the help of digital personalisation** - Current '*conscious consumer*' base their decisions on experiential empathy. The presence of digital media has created a diverse range of interests amongst consumers. Companies, brands and organisations should ideally focus on defining specific characteristics of their target audience, which enables them to personalise experiences which can hold higher emotional value with their consumers.
- **Capsules can be "The Wardrobe of the Future"** - A limited but optimised wardrobe will be the future of every '*conscious consumer*' as mass production and impulsive purchase habits are being condemned heavily. The focus will remain on classic quality pieces that can be combined to curate a range of versatile ensembles. The future is minimalistic.
- **Ethical design for technology** - A focus group was held during the course of this project to understand the current generation's viewpoint towards intrusive technologies like A.I. and IoT. The group comprised of early adopting millennials, all studying different disciplines of art and design. Surprisingly, more than half the group raised concerns related to data privacy during these digital times. As identity thefts, cyber hacking and data surveillance reaches an all time peak, it is essential to evaluate the ethical parameters of technology.

10. PRACTICAL OUTCOMES

MOBILE APP

EXPLORE PROTOTYPE

<https://invis.io/JKPCIRK4QCR>

HOW IT WORKS SCREENCAST VIDEO

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xZ2J8TLkxXAosDnJaz87uZGTW_I0G_iq/view?usp=sharing

WEBSITE

<https://bardhanshinjini.wixsite.com/mysite-3>

ONLINE LEARNING JOURNAL

<https://shinjinibardhan.weebly.com>

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12. APPENDIX

12.1 PARTICIPATION CONSENT FORM



Participant Consent Form

Project title: Capsule Culture

You are being invited to take part in an academic research activity with a student of London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London. This activity is part of an ongoing research for a masters project under the course MA Fashion Media Production.

Before you decide to take part, it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. This means that by participating in this activity you are ensuring that my design solutions/ concepts are rooted in real world evidence and reflect perspectives of real people.

Thank you in advance for your contribution to this project and for providing a valuable learning opportunity for myself & the project.

Before agreeing to participate and signing this consent form, please read through the consent items and let the researchers know if anything is unclear or if you would like more information.

- I understand that I have given my consent to be interviewed by students of London College of Fashion, UAL for research contributing to "Capsule Culture".
 - I understand that my data from this interview will be anonymised and will not be shared with any third parties or solicited for marketing purposes in any shape or form.
 - I give my consent for students to take photographic images and record audio during this interview and understand that these assets may be used only by the students to communicate their research findings from this project.
 - I understand that I have given approval for my opinions to be included in the project outputs. Although most of these opinions will be anonymous, the student may use certain quotes from the interview under my name with prior permission.
 - What is going to happen and why it is being done has been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions.
 - Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the activity at any time without disadvantage to myself and without having to give any reason.
 - I understand that in the event of withdrawing my consent to the study, all data including images, recorded audio and written notes will be deleted and/or destroyed and will not be a part of the study from that point forward.
 - I hereby fully and freely consent to participation in the study, which has been fully explained to me.
-

12.2 INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

12.2.1 Interview with Bhavya Chawla

- 1. With your experience in the personal styling industry, how forthcoming do you think women are in terms of using a personal styling app?**

From the historical era to now, we have seen that women, as always, want to look good and they do their best to enhance & evolve their looks with time. If the personal styling app looks promising, they will definitely use it. Education is the key here. You, as an app should educate them on how it will work in enhancing their style.

- 2. Considering the said digital platform will be targeted at a niche, premium audience, do you think there might be any specific features they are looking for?**

They are sure to expect a one-stop solution for Fashion. From wardrobe essentials to trending statement pieces, they would appreciate a curated lot. Besides, they will want features such as styling tips, ask a stylist, personal shopper, image consulting, wardrobe consulting, occasion based looks, other fashion happenings news, red carpet & street style events, who wore what, get the look etc.

- 3. As someone falling the target audience herself, would you consider using such a service yourself? If yes, are there any features/options/statistics you would expect to see on such a platform?**

Yes, for sure. There is always room for improvement. I would love to see features mentioned above. Besides, it will be great to have occasion wise capsules or capsule that can take you from one occasion to the other such as work to dressy, athleisure to casual etc. I would like to see how to style or transform a piece from one occasion to the other & then all the options of clothing/accessories available under each type of piece in a capsule. For example, all the black skirts, all the white shirts, all the skinny jeans etc under. This will give me the flexibility to buy the most appropriate piece as per me, my personal style & my requirement (not there in my wardrobe).

- 4. Can you kindly give me a brief insight into your thoughts about the sustainable fashion movement and capsule wardrobes as the 'wardrobe of the future'?**

Many fashion companies end up dumping huge amounts of unsold merchandise and we, as individuals hoard our wardrobes, which encourages these companies to manufacture even bigger numbers. These are the reasons why our planet cannot take anymore of this and it's high time, we adopt sustainability in everything we do, including Fashion. Our approach should be not only to buying natural fibre clothing that does no harm to the environment and can be recycled, but also to opt for capsule wardrobes. Smaller number of good quality clothes that form the very basis of our capsules will help us in doing justice to all the pieces, making our wardrobe manageable and functional, while meeting the requirements of all our occasions. With the 'wardrobe of the future' that is sustainable and compact capsules, we will be able to our bit for the environment & this is the only way!

- 5. We live in a world where everyone is a creative curator and a style expert. Where do you think the future of professional stylists and personal shopper (human or technology) will lead to given the current uprising of 'creators'?**

Haha, good question...A Life coach helps in enhancing the quality of our lives, even though we all know how to lead our lives. Similarly, a Style expert, with her expertise in the domain, assists an individual escalate their style statement with a scientific and artistic approach in a shorter span of time, so there will always a need for professional stylists & personal shoppers.

6. Coming to the technical bit, I have listed certain attributes to be considered for the said personal capsule wardrobe. Is there a procedure/framework/rules you can recommend for mapping the personalised feed?

For personalizing the feed, one has to take into account an individual's:

1. lifestyle factors - place of stay, industry of work, position, occasions in her life, climate
2. Style preferences - subtle vs dramatic, classic vs trendy etc
3. body shape, problem areas, height, scale
4. skin tone, eye color, hair color
5. price range and other regular attributes

7. Lastly, as a future proposal, the said app will necessary display the capsule wardrobe in an augmented reality interface where the users can build avatars to mix and match the pieces visually to try out various looks. Do you think that could noticeably increase the app's USP or can end up being an irrelevant additional feature (given the clientele)?

It will add value only if the avatar closely resembles the individual's face and body shape in detail. So far, whichever company has created avatars, they have not projected the face well. Besides, the body (using measurement inputs) that gets created is far too smooth and does not resemble the body flaws well enough. Hence, it hasn't been successful and has been irrelevant.

12.2.2 Interview with Maria Lee

Much has been said on fashion sustainability in the last few years. As a professional working in the centre of it all, what does sustainability mean to you personally?

Sustainability means practicing habits that are practical for you and the environment.

Knowing all that you know about the current nature of consumerism, how do you integrate and implement such sustainable ideologies in your daily routine?

In my daily routine, more days than not, I bring my own water, lunch, and coffee to work. I bring my own grocery bags. I repair my clothes and shoes when they're in disrepair. I'm thoughtful about what I buy and bring into my apartment. I sort my recycling. I tried composting for a year, but it's difficult - my neighborhood has a weekly pickup but it's during the day when I'm at work and my other option is to transport my food scraps on the subway to another neighborhood on the weekend.

When I was in elementary school, our school had a campaign and a play about recycling and being environmentally friendly in our daily lives, but when I grew up I realized you have to work intentionally to be sustainable, at least in the United States.

Our governments and corporations make the rules. They're the ones deciding which products are legal, how waste is disposed of and treated, what standards are permissible for imported goods. I don't disagree that we all have to "do our part" but the "go green" marketing campaigns put too much responsibility on the consumer rather than those who have the power to create big change. If you ask people from where I grew up about recycling, sorting trash, bringing their own bags, many of them will laugh. We all want to be environmentally friendly, but the structure to make it happen doesn't exist in a practical sense for most of us so it doesn't seem like a priority and therefore not a problem.

Do you think sustainability can be more than just what we are buying?

Of course. Being sustainable is also how you think about and treat the items you bring into your home. When something breaks, do you repair it? If you know you'll only need something once, do you borrow from a friend or neighbor instead of buying new? What do you do when something needs to be thrown away?

The cost of sustainable fashion is relatively much higher. Having said that, it raises an important question - Is sustainable fashion only for the rich? What would be your comments on the same?

The sustainable fashion we see today is marketed toward the rich. There's no question that designers in the sustainable fashion space have higher costs. Textiles that are more environmentally friendly and fair pay to laborers is just more expensive. I talked with one sustainably focused fashion brand who told me they specifically target the 1% because they're the ones they believe are in a position to change the industry. It's not fair to blame people for shopping at fast fashion brands when there aren't affordable alternatives. Everyone deserves to love what they wear and feel confident in their clothes. Guilt-tripping people into shopping at thrift stores if they can't afford new clothes from ethical fashion brands isn't helpful, because most of those people don't have the luxury of time to sift through racks of mostly unusable clothing. It's better to teach people how to find their style and change their shopping behaviors, so they don't feel compelled to shop out of boredom or need due to a lack of wardrobe planning.

"You don't have to BUY sustainable to BE sustainable." Do you agree or disagree? Kindly share your thoughts.

Yes. To be sustainable is to first have a sustainable mindset. If you figure out what your standards and ethics are for consumable items, it makes it much easier to be conscious of what you buy and how you care for it.

How do you feel about capsule wardrobes? Given that sustainability is a lifestyle choice, do you think capsule wardrobes can be the 'wardrobe of the future'?

Capsule wardrobes are for everyone. They've become popular the last few years and shown rather one-dimensionally that I think they can put people off if they're not properly understood. Capsule wardrobes are simply an efficient wardrobe built with 3 guidelines:

- Defined personal style that fits to your lifestyle
- Dedicated to quality
- Limited in size

You can read more on a blog post I did about capsule wardrobes.

From your website, I gathered that you have been maintaining a capsule for over many years now. How many pieces do you usually have in your personal capsule? Do the majority of the pieces vary in accordance to changing seasons?

I don't officially change my wardrobe for the seasons, meaning all of my clothes are still in my closet, but I rearrange them based on priority. I used to switch my wardrobe out and keep out-of-season clothes under my bed but I found that there were many days when the weather suddenly changed and I needed a piece I already put away or I'd forget about the clothes entirely halfway through the season. In total, I typically have between 80-90 pieces in my wardrobe including clothing, outerwear, accessories, and shoes. You can actually see a breakdown of everything here.

This is the first I've seen of science being the driving factor to plan a wardrobe. Can you tell me a little about how the idea was envisioned and the methodology behind it?

I started Wardrobe Science because I wanted to tell the story of my wardrobe through data. I've been documenting my wardrobe for almost 10 years through photos, but working as an analyst in New York, I realized what a powerful medium data could be for storytelling. I was inspired to start this project after reading an article by Torrence Boone from Google, that tracked fashion trends by Google searches. Read his article [here](#). I started by building a detailed inventory of my entire wardrobe including the name of the piece, its color, material, where it was made, how much it cost, when I bought it, why I bought it, when I repaired it, how much that cost, and so on. I then created a simple form that I connected with my inventory which I complete everyday, just clicking on the pieces I wore. Finally, every three months, I complete an analysis of each piece still active in my wardrobe. With this data I've started to build interactive visualizations and dashboards to learn more about the efficiency of my wardrobe, my habits, and find other insights. I almost have a full year (I started the daily tracking January 1, 2018) of 'what I wore' data which I'll use to tell stories through infographics, videos, dashboards or whatever medium I can to help demystify what happens to a real person's wardrobe in a year and to inspire conversation about the sustainable fashion industry.

As an individual who believes in the core concept of sustainability, how likely would you be to experiment with a versatile travel capsule wardrobe?

My style is nuanced and so I don't go for pre-packaged capsule wardrobe services because they're not personalized to me. I also don't want to look like someone else and enjoy slowly picking and adding pieces to my capsule wardrobe. I'm intrigued by the idea of a local, location specific wardrobe service of some sort. MOMA had an amazing exhibit earlier this year called "Items: Is Fashion Modern?" which showcased some of the most significant and transformation fashion pieces throughout history across cultures. I love learning about clothing pieces from different parts of the world like their history and significance because fashion seems to be becoming increasingly homogenous.

When packing for a vacation, do you build your looks as you go or do you have a specific plan set of outfits in mind when you pack certain items?

I typically have a specific plan set of outfits when I pack for vacation. I like to take pictures of the outfits planned because it makes it easier to pack and get dressed while I'm away from home.

As a millennial influencer, what kind of experiences do you look for when you travel? Kindly give me a brief insight your travel habits and lifestyle.

I love visiting people's homes and seeing how they live. My favorite vacations are when I'm sitting at the kitchen table with people and hearing their stories. Most of my time-off is spent visiting friends and family and have included staying:

- On a working farm in northern Indiana being woken up by the sound of a horse and buggy
- At a traditional hanok hidden away amongst enormous buildings in Seoul
- On top of a mountain on the Georgia/Tennessee border sitting in rocking chairs on a wrap-around porch

12.2.2 Interview with Tiphaine Marie

- **Much has been said on fashion sustainability in the last few years. As a professional working in the centre of it all, what does sustainability mean to you personally?**

I feel like it is the most crucial aspect of contemporary fashion - it has become more important than ever to look after the planet and take responsibility for our impactful shopping habits by shifting towards a more ethical (both socially and environmentally) fashion industry.

- **Knowing all that you know about the current nature of consumerism, how do you integrate and implement such sustainable ideologies in your daily routine?**

I try to shop less, more consciously, always keeping in mind the impact of the piece I am buying. And then obviously trying to recycle as much as possible, avoiding single use plastic and making sure the way I eat has a low impact on the planet as well.

- **The cost of sustainable fashion is relatively much higher. Having said that, it raises an important question - Is sustainable fashion only for the rich? What would be your comments on the same?**

I think that because of the cheapness of fast fashion, our generation has lost touch with the real value of things. And while I know sustainable fashion is not accessible to everyone, I think many people use the financial aspect as an excuse when in fact, if they just bought less, better quality pieces they could definitely afford sustainable brands.

- **"You don't have to BUY sustainable to BE sustainable." Do you agree or disagree? Kindly share your thoughts.**

Agree! There's so much more to sustainability than our buying habits. It's all about the way you live, the global impact of your lifestyle.

- **As you travel quite a lot, can you give me a brief idea of the main challenges you face while packing/organising for a trip?**

The main challenge is often to make everything fit into my suitcase! As much as I would like to be, I am unfortunately not a light traveller and often overpack. I need to learn to bring less things with me, especially for short trips!

- **When packing for a vacation, do you build your looks as you go or do you have a specific plan set of outfits in mind when you pack certain items?**

If I'm going on vacation then I'm definitely very laid back and improvise with my looks, but if I'm travelling for work I usually plan my outfits in advance.

- **In your personal opinion, do you think capsule wardrobes could work for people? Given that sustainability is a lifestyle choice, do you think capsule wardrobes can be the 'wardrobe of the future'?**

Definitely! I think there's a continuum between capsule wardrobes and our current, often exploding wardrobes - and I believe we should all tend towards capsule-ish wardrobes which only contain items we truly love and plan on wearing multiple times.

- **As an individual who believes in the core concept of sustainability, how likely would you be to experiment with a versatile travel capsule wardrobe? Do you think this could prove to be an impervious step towards optimizing travel experiences as a whole?**

Very likely! I love the idea as it combines practicality and a sustainable approach to fashion. It's easier to have a prepared capsule while travelling...It makes things simpler when you know you don't have to worry about planning your outfits or overpacking

12.2.4 Interview with Brenda O'Connor

- **As an individual who specialises in personalising travel experiences, how would you explain the process of curating these experiences to ensure that your guests are completely satisfied?**

In order to understand what makes a guest tick, it's important to have a telephone conversation. It's the absolute best way to understand the psyche of the guest and to gauge the pulse of the guest and his/her travel companions. Email works fine, but a chat on the phone is best. That way you can try to engage the guest by relaying personal travel experiences, which hopefully encourages them to open up conversation. Probing questions, including "what are the top 3 experiences" that they would love to include in their trip, really help to know how to customize the experience to their personal tastes. Of-course this only works if the guest is open to engaging in conversation. It might take one or two attempts to get to this stage - but it's my aim to achieve this on our first call.

- **How would you explain the process of scouting for experiences and destinations to find the best possible ones and guarantee a high level of service?**

That process is achieved by our Product Management team. Once they have sourced a DMC to liaise with, they discover what experiences can be offered in a particular destination. Travel Consultants request specific activities, according to guests' preferences. Yearly test trips allow us as Travel Consultants to try out activities and test these ourselves. This is the best way to be able to describe activities and experiences to guests - having first hand information - so it's straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak!

- **On your website, I discovered that the company employs local guides. How important do you think a human connect is for an authentic experience?**

Absolutely vital! The human element can never be replaced. While audio guides and apps are a great way for discovering a new destination, there is nothing like hearing stories and tales from a local, to make a destination really come alive! This is mentioned so many times in our guests' feedback. In fact, I often read that "xxx guide or chauffeur has become a friend and we are keeping in touch" Local chauffeurs and guides know the inside story and can help guests discover little known or 'off the beaten path' locations, restaurants and sites. Another element that is a familiar story to read from our guests' feedback is that a local guide has introduced the guests to his family or friends, whilst in his local town. This human connection creates an unforgettable experience - and really brings alive a new destination. This quite often happens by chance. However, as a Travel Consultant I get frequent requests to "interact with locals" as part of their "top 3" wish-list experiences. This is another way for our Product Management team to develop new experiences. Developing "experiential activities" with that human element - to create lasting travel memories.

- **Given all the trips and tours you've arranged for different guests, do you feel that travellers today follow any specific/special trend in terms of the experiences they are looking for?**

So, what I've written in the answer above rings true for this question as well. Hands-on activities, as well as meeting locals are often the most sought after experiences for guests. I feel that people only have a certain capability for download of historical facts and figures when exploring a new destination. Meeting people and/or using other sense (touch/smell etc) really enhances how a person will remember a trip. Sensory activating experiences, such as visiting a local market or enjoying a local cookery class are the best ways for guests to feel involved and make memories.

- **Do you feel there is suddenly a shift in the kind of experiences your clientele is looking for now, as opposed to say five years ago?**
 Yes, nowadays guests want to be more interactive....Not just listening to historical facts and taking pictures.... Engaging with locals and being hands-on is a more often than not request these days.
- **Can you help me understand the specific demographics or user groups who opt for such premium, personalised experiences?**
 The most common demographic for ET trips is late middle aged to retired professionals.
- **Sustainability has become the need of the hour - from fashion to travel. Having said that, as a travel professional, what are your thoughts on slow travel and sustainable travel lifestyles?**
 Personally, I like the idea of slow travel, including "stay-cations". To me, the concept evokes thoughts of quality time, whether that's in your own country or in a new one. Personally I love designing an itinerary for a guest who says, we want to go to xxxxx, but we don't want to rush around, fitting in as much as possible. Working with guests who see their own time as valuable, with the need for a slow pace is very refreshing.... I have worked with one particular guest over the last 6 years and designed maybe 4 or 5 India trips for her. Her method of knowing and learning about India in-depth is a fantastic way to approach travel. As for sustainable travel lifestyles - this is a philosophy for the brave! I, myself have gone maybe half-way on this, by moving from my home country to India. I now have a possible way to experience more of India and south east Asia with a smaller carbon footprint than if I tried to do it from Ireland. I don't think I'm brave enough to have a completely sustainable travel lifestyle though!
- **Are there any separate measures taken by travel companies/you as a step towards sustainable travel initiatives?**
 I'm aware of some specific islands in Thailand being closed off to tourists in order to allow regrowth of coral that has died.... ET are providing refillable water bottles in our vehicles in Sri Lanka & Thailand
- **Lastly, is there any awareness of such sustainability concepts amongst your clientele?**
 Yes, in fact the water bottle idea was a suggestion from a guest, at the same time that we were rolling out the concept in 2 destinations. Occasionally we get requests from guests to stay in eco-lodges. However as yet sustainability concepts are not the highest priority of guests, that I have noticed to date.

12.2.5 Interview with Charlie Marchant

- **Sustainability has become the need of the hour - from fashion to travel. Having said that, as a company, what are your thoughts on slow travel and sustainable travel lifestyles?**

To me, sustainability is about living and travelling in a way which is as low impact as possible. It's about valuing the environment and doing what we can to protect it, which means conserving our natural resources, being wary of pollution, protecting wildlife and local habitats, supporting local communities and preserving culture and traditions.

- **"You don't have to BUY sustainable to BE sustainable." Do you agree or disagree? Kindly share your thoughts.**

I agree and disagree here. Being sustainable isn't about buying things, it's about getting out of that trend of buy new things, electronics, clothes and moving away from feeling like you always need to have new things. If possible, it's better to reuse, repair, upcycle, recycle, borrow, trade, find second hand before deciding to buy new. But if you are buying new then I think it's better to buy sustainable.

- **Is there a clear difference between sustainable travel and green travel? If so, can you kindly give me a few examples to help me understand better.**

They interlink with each other. For me green refers specifically to environment and waste. Whereas sustainable more broadly includes people, culture, traditions, and commercial travel.

- **How do you usually pack for a week long trip? What the factors you consider while packing individual items?**

I rarely take trips as short as a week. I mostly travel for months at a time. I pack a 30L backpack and never carry more than what fits in here. This is usually a week's worth of clothes, one pair of shoes, a few snacks and zero waste toiletries and my laptop.

12.2.6 Interview with Kim Gerlach

Questionnaire

- Much has been said on fashion sustainability in the last few years. As a professional working in the centre of it all, what does sustainability mean to you personally?
- Knowing all that you know about the current nature of consumerism, how do you integrate and implement such sustainable ideologies in your daily routine?
- Do you think sustainability can be more than just what we are buying?
- The cost of sustainable fashion is relatively much higher. Having said that, it raises an important question - Is sustainable fashion only for the rich? What would be your comments on the same?
- "You don't have to BUY sustainable to BE sustainable." Do you agree or disagree? Kindly share your thoughts.
- How do you feel about capsule wardrobes? Given that sustainability is a lifestyle choice, do you think capsule wardrobes can be the 'wardrobe of the future'?
- As an individual who believes in the core concept of sustainability, how likely would you be to experiment with a versatile travel capsule wardrobe?
- When packing for a vacation, do you build your looks as you go or do you have a specific plan set of outfits in mind when you pack certain items?
- As a millennial influencer, what kind of experiences do you look for when you travel? Kindly give me a brief insight your travel habits and lifestyle.
Lastly, would you consider using such a service/app yourself? If yes, are there any features/options/statistics you would expect to see on such a platform?

Full interview available here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mS23aUAm0H_nzI4ANxcTp0Y470w7ZbCQ/view?usp=sharing

12.3 FOCUS GROUP

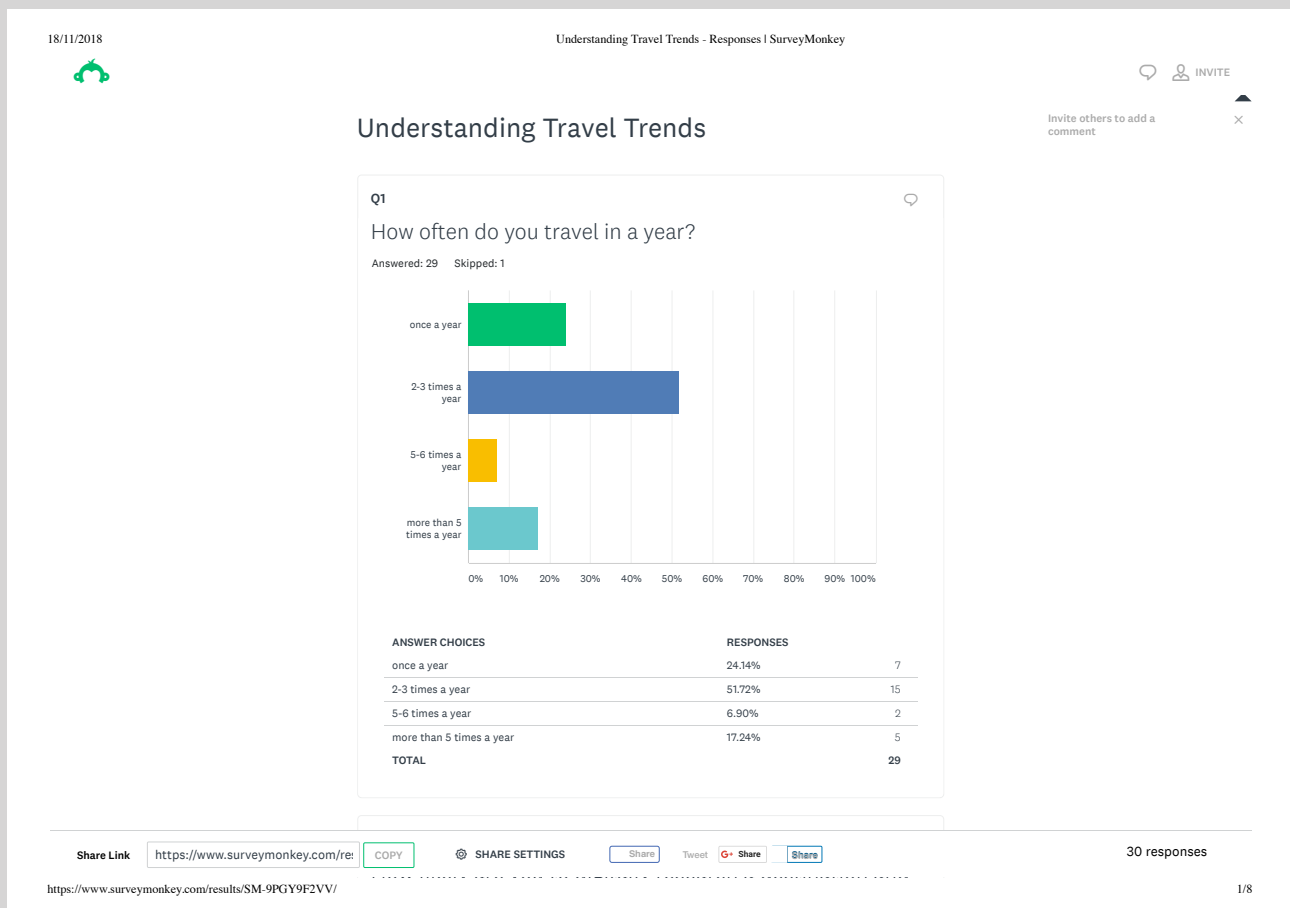
List of Participants:

1. Mariana Chenieux, 20. Camberwell College of Arts, BA Fashion Illustration.
2. Sejuti Das, 29. London College Of Communication, PG Diploma Photography.
3. Michele Cipollone, 24. London College Of Communication, MA Service Design.
4. Gregory Murphy, 19. Central Saint Martins, BA Fashion Journalism.
5. Mateus Machado, 27. London College Of Communication, MA Interaction Design.
6. Ah-he Jung, 26. London College Of Fashion, MA Fashion Design Management.

Full conversation available here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lhvu39PR2WSArWLIfqktG_O7C1UoxTU/view?usp=sharing

12.4 SURVEY RESULTS FOR “UNDERSTANDING TRAVEL TRENDS”



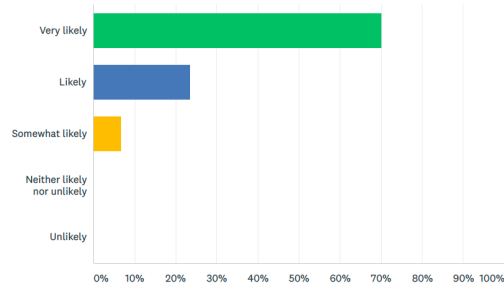
18/11/2018

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INVITE

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

Very likely	70.00%	21
Likely	23.33%	7
Somewhat likely	6.67%	2
Neither likely nor unlikely	0.00%	0
Unlikely	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

Q3

As an individual, what kind of travel experiences do you look for?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0


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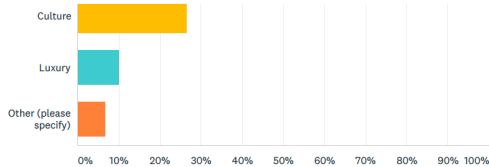
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18/11/2018

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INVITE



ANSWER CHOICES

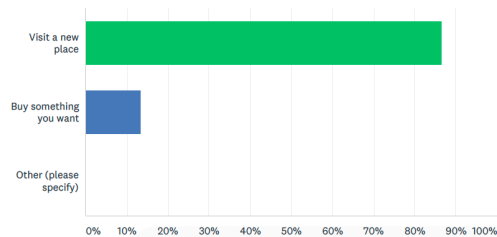
RESPONSES

Adventure	40.00%	12
Budget	16.67%	5
Culture	26.67%	8
Luxury	10.00%	3
Other (please specify)	6.67%	2
TOTAL		30

Q4

Given a choice, would you rather visit a new place or splurge on a long-desired commodity?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0


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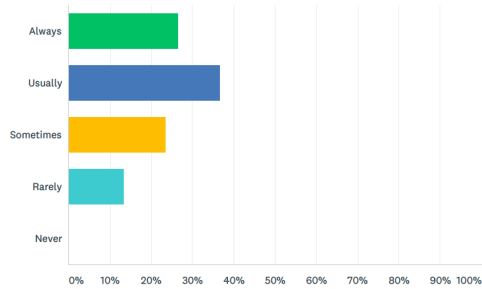
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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Visit a new place	86.67%	26
Buy something you want	13.33%	4
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

Q5

How often do you pack less to avoid extra baggage?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Always	26.67%	8
Usually	36.67%	11
Sometimes	23.33%	7
Rarely	13.33%	4
Never	0.00%	0
TOTAL		30

Q6

What are the challenges (if any) that you face while packing/organising for a trip?

Answered: 26 Skipped: 4

None	11/18/2018 11:05 AM
Packing	11/18/2018 10:45 AM
I am lazy, so packing is never my favourite part.	11/18/2018 10:07 AM
None	11/18/2018 8:58 AM

Q7

While travelling, are you more likely to walk into a global franchise like Starbucks or visit the local coffee shop down the road?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0

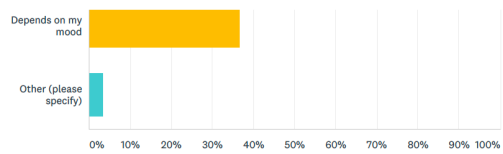


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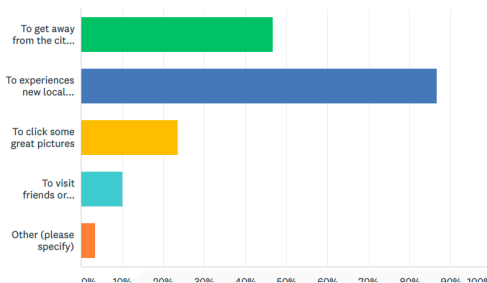


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Starbucks always	6.67% 2
Local coffee shop sounds cool	53.33% 16
Depends on my mood	36.67% 11
Other (please specify)	3.33% 1
TOTAL	30

Q8

What are the main reasons for you to travel to a certain destination?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0


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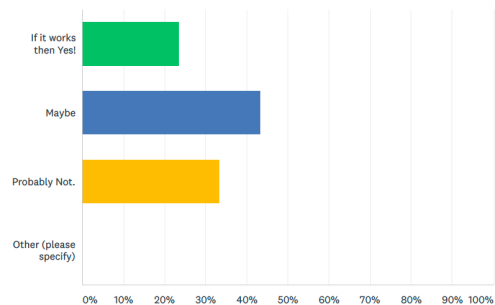
INVITE

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
To get away from the city life	46.67% 14
To experience new local cultures	86.67% 26
To click some great pictures	23.33% 7
To visit friends or family	10.00% 3
Other (please specify)	3.33% 1
Total Respondents: 30	

Q9

Would you pay a premium for personalised travel services?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
If it works then Yes!	23.33% 7
Maybe	43.33% 13
Probably Not.	33.33% 10
Other (please specify)	0.00% 0

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-9PGY9F2VV/>

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