Project: Rexall Strategy
Axis: Low community engagement & low digital leverage scenario
Scenario: Fractured Society

In 2022, technology and social media trends evolve. Desktop computers are used less. The falling prices of smartphones, tablets, and wearables are making these devices the dominant conduit of digital connectivity and information. People's habits are more mobile than ever before. Virtual and augmented reality have matured and incorporated health and wellness into video games. Users can hike Mount Everest or complete an obstacle course in the comfort of their backyard, a nostalgic nod to games like WiiSports' in the mid-2000s.

These trends have essentially eliminated the need for a public sphere. People can use VR goggles to attend protests and rallies, sit frontside at basketball games, or even go into work--many businesses have eliminated permanent office spaces, opting instead to meet virtually or rent out a space for a few hours.

The intersection between technology, entertainment, and health has confounded many businesses operating in these industries. Retail spaces want to implement virtual shopping; customers strap on their VR goggles and stroll the aisles for a new vacuum cleaner or food to be sent to their house. For those without goggles, Facebook 360 degree videos are a suitable replacement. Industries are converging. The retail, pharmaceutical, and food industries are now part of the tech sector, or at least trying, with varying degrees of reluctance and success. Businesses are struggling to create and maintain the proper infrastructure that supports such a digital experience. They need to allocate their resources to technical learning and implementation while still operating brick-and-mortar stores. Businesses with multiple locations has seen a steady decrease in attendance in the past 5 years due to people's increased tendency to shop online. This is a trend most common amongst the millennial generation, with some Gen Xer's adopting it with lukewarm enthusiasm. Most baby boomers have opted to shop traditionally, becoming many organizations' key demographic that still justifies a physical location considering they still hold a sizable chunk of disposable income.

The irony is that as technology becomes increasingly mobile and connected, their users do not. People are switching between 3+ screens a day and spending much more time indoors. Anything health related is first searched online and the results are heavily considered, with professional advice seldom sought. Other wearables such as FitBits utilize AI to offer medical advice, further diminishing medical professionals' impact. It doesn't help that many people think pharmaceutical companies are scamming them out of money and providing phony or poisonous remedies. Any and all remedies are ordered online through phones and tablets because many VR apps are still working toward simple and effective UI and UX. Ordering items is often not completed because users, especially youth, do not have the attention span to finish shopping. This issue has been partly remedied by holographic advertising, a method that uses bright colours, vivid motions, quick scene changes, and the element of surprise to capture people's attention. However, its novelty has been a fad; a viral hit with little indication that this will be the thing to draw people out from their houses considering its immobility. Besides, it is expensive to manufacture and operate.

Ultimately, organizations are having difficulties thriving in a complex media and technology environment, an environment for which they did not ask. It is stifling traditional notions of community. Community engagement is taking place in the real world less than ever before. Just as organizations master one digital medium, users jump to another. While the digital landscape is connected, their user base is fragmented. Organizations are trying to appeal to the general population while simultaneously trying to meet hyper-individualized needs. They are digitally taking one step forward and two steps back while customers are making leaps.

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