

Issue No.13 · March 2022

Make → Shift



Get people talking with barter-based initiatives

Make→Shift is part of TrendWatching's Free Trend Updates. Each monthly issue examines one cross-industry movement no brand can afford to ignore, answering 'why now' and spotlighting the opportunities brands can act on today.

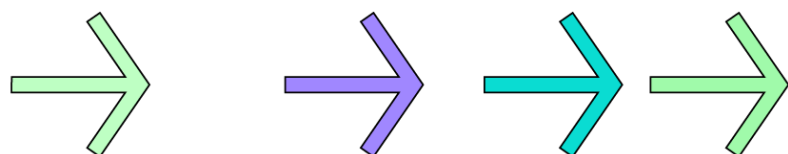
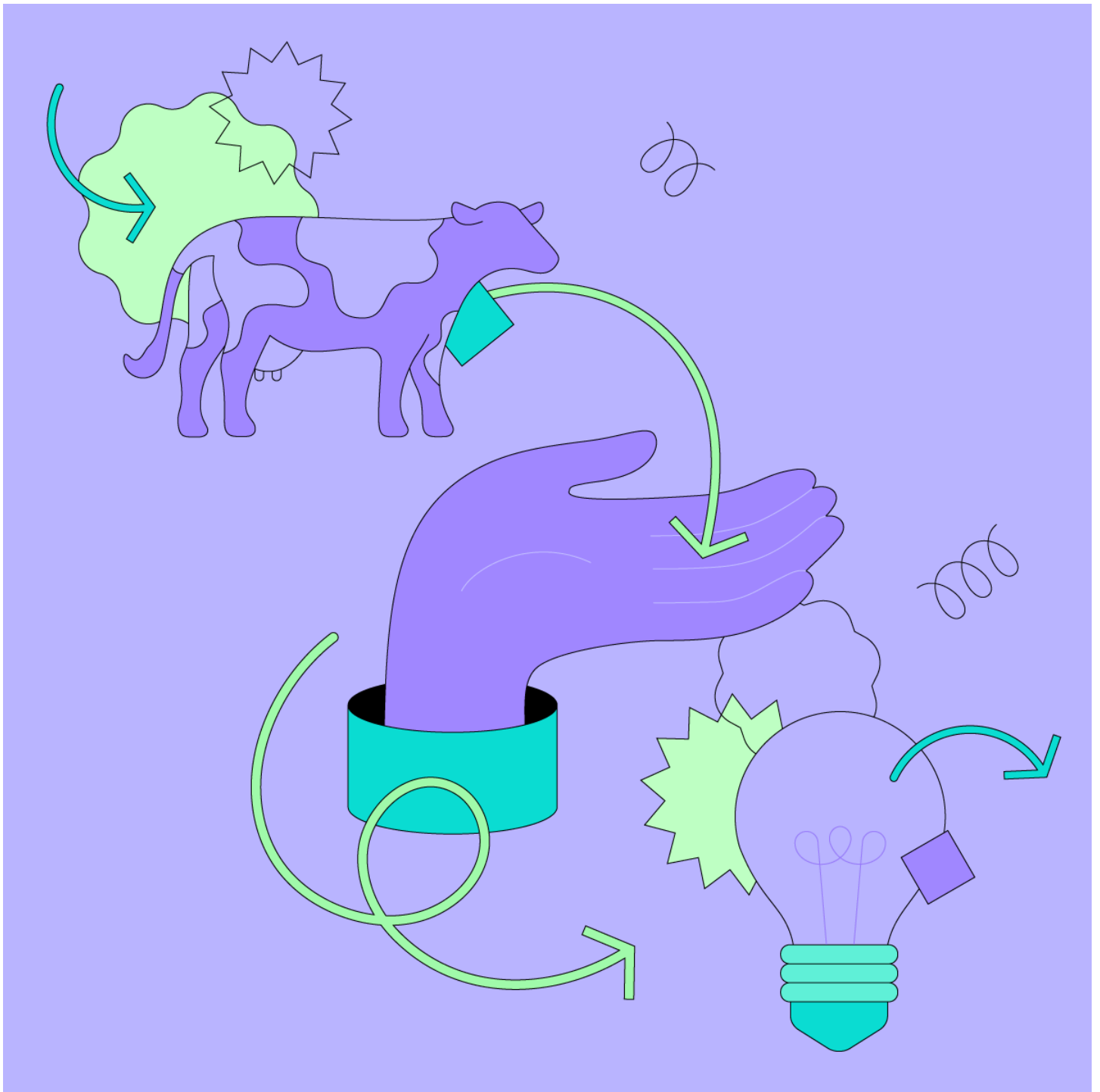
All in a six-minute read.

Pick your payment method: contactless, mobile, a Pilates class...

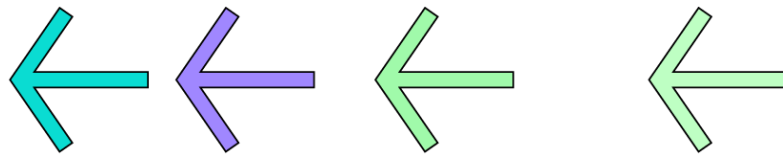
While the simple act of bartering – whether with livestock in the Middle Ages, or friendly favors as per Japan’s Time Bank system – is a concept as old as time, it hasn’t quite permeated late capitalist society... Yet. As C2C e-commerce platforms gain traction, consumers looking to adopt more purposed purchasing behaviors will start turning their assets into currency by trading both skills and stuff.

Prefer to listen instead?

Check out the audio version here →



WHY NOW?

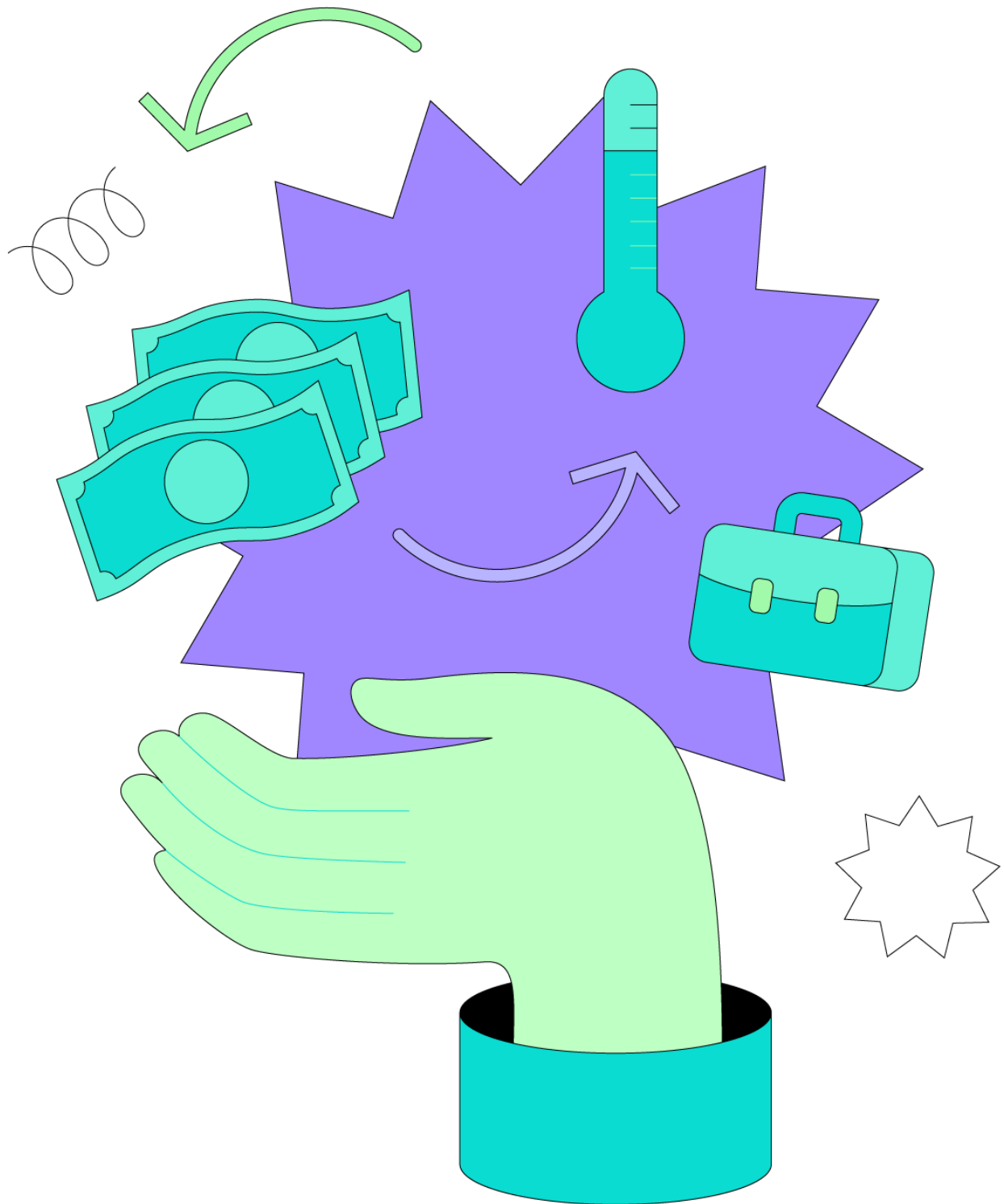


DAILY DISRUPTION

When the chips are down, people look inwards. In 2021, as the umpteenth wave of COVID-19 swept the globe, a third of global consumers agreed their local community had become more supportive. And while the pandemic seems to be nearing its end, environmental crises and geopolitical conflict continue to feed a sense of disruption – read: supply chain issues, power outages, labor shortages, and more. Which in turn strengthens that local-first mindset.

CAPITALIST FATIGUE

Amid the chaos, capitalist notions of ownership continue to be reconsidered – especially among younger consumers. We're seeing capitalist fatigue manifest in socialist-leaning subreddits, alternative approaches to work (think side-hustles or four-day weeks), and an interest in self-sufficient lifestyles. Not to mention the sharing economy which is estimated to rise in value from 14 bn in 2014 to 335 bn in 2025 – fertile conditions for SWAPPORTUNITIES to prosper.



THRIFTING TRIFECTA

This value shift includes a new appreciation for secondhand, spearheaded by a thriving fashion resale market which grew by 69% between 2019 and 2022. The appeal is three-fold: consumers want unique items their peers can't find elsewhere; they want eco kudos for shopping sustainably; and they want to save money. As more C2C e-commerce platforms emerge and taboos surrounding

secondhand decline, prepare for a thrifting boom – one with reverberations across industries.



UNREGULAR PIZZA

Pizza restaurant accepts homemade food as payment

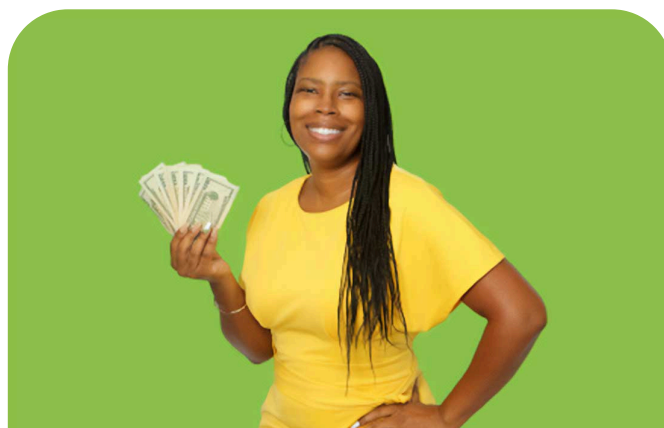
Gabriele Lamonaca started **Unregular Pizza** as an Instagram account mid-lockdown – inviting friends to proffer their homemade food for his Italian pie. As word (and pizza) spread, others started reaching out for a slice, and in June 2021 Lamonaca opened his first stand-alone restaurant in New York. While most people pay in cash, Unregular Pizza still engages in one barter a day – reserved for the most delicious-looking customer-made dish.



CONTACOMIGO

Skill-sharing platform helps alleviate the pandemic's impact

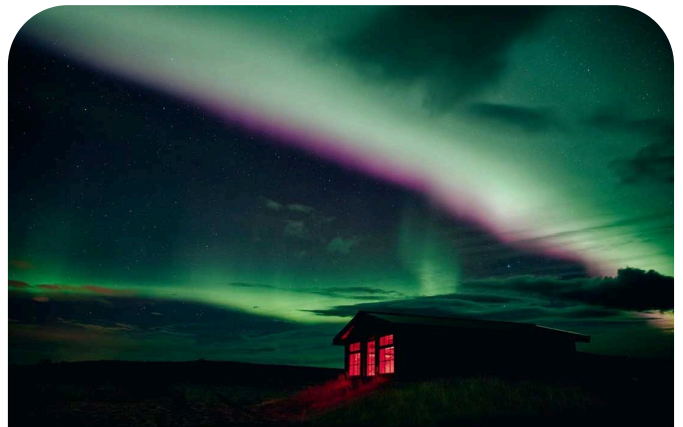
Having been made redundant mid-pandemic, in April 2021 a group of volunteers in Brazil came together to form the digital platform **Contacomigo**. Users can list their products or services – anything from professional consultations to Pilates classes – and seek out others with relevant skills or items, too. The founders of Contacomigo (which roughly translates as 'count on me') refer to the platform as a 'solidarity marketplace'.



BARTER BLACK

Bartering network removes funding obstacles for Black entrepreneurs

Did you know that Black entrepreneurs are more likely to seek, but less likely to receive, outside funding? In February 2022, **Barter Black** launched in the US – an exclusive, virtual community where Black entrepreneurs can exchange their goods or services through a simple bartering system. Business owners pick one of three subscription options, ranging from USD 49 to 99 per month, with each option offering different levels of access to the company's network.



YOUPLANT AMSTERDAM

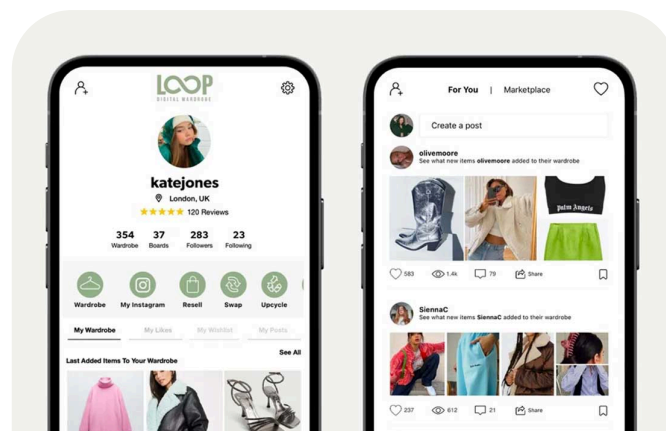
Plant swap party brings green-fingered citizens together

In November 2021, **Youplant Amsterdam** assembled the city's green-fingered plant lovers for a swap party. Consumers were invited to bring along their own cuttings or fully-grown plants and exchange them for new additions to their collections. The invitation came with a few instructions – each plant needed to be healthy, labeled, and well rooted (with the exception of succulents). With those criteria fulfilled, guests were free to enjoy the party.

HOTEL RANGA

Hotel offers free stay in exchange for northern lights photos

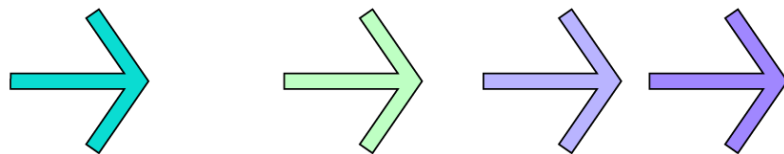
Rather than dip directly into its marketing budget, in August 2021 **Hotel Rangá** in Iceland announced it would be offering a complimentary stay for photographers willing to snap some website-ready shots of the hotel's impressive surroundings during the northern lights season. The chosen photographer received free return flights to Iceland, a month's accommodation at the hotel, and unlimited access to its observatory and hot tubs.



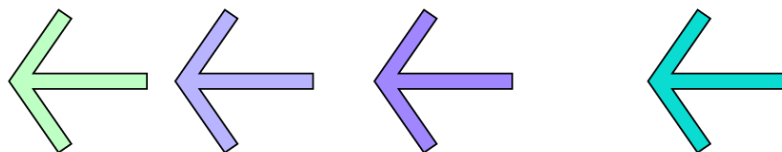
LOOP

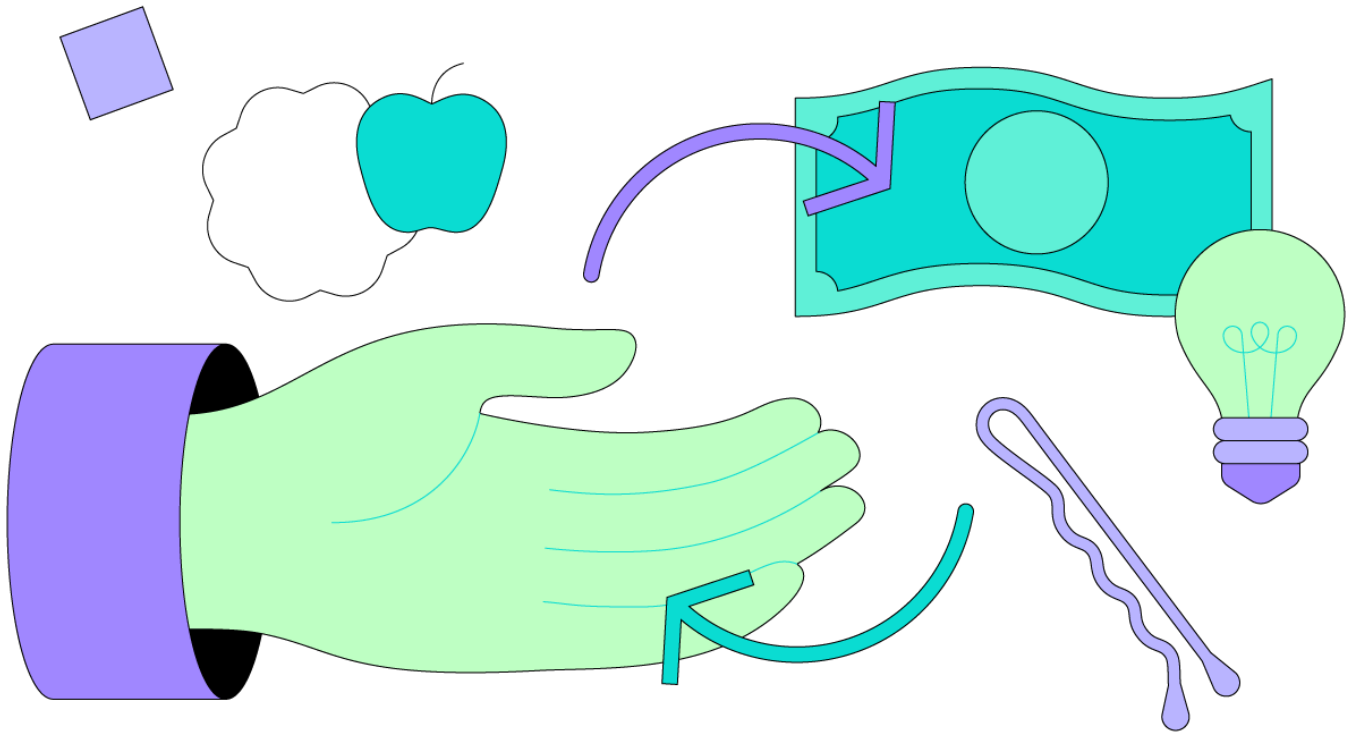
Fashion app helps consumers swap clothes with friends

LOOP Digital Wardrobe is on a mission to minimize fashion waste. First, app users 'digitize' their wardrobes by uploading photos of each garment. Then, they browse and request swaps from their friends' collections. Some retail partners also offer peer-to-peer upselling, allowing customers to trade branded items with fellow customers via the app. Launched in February 2022, the US-based company was created by the founder of sustainability solutions provider Yellow Octopus.



OPPORTUNITIES





BARTER BABY STEPS

Disclaimer: While TikTokers might be trading bobby pins for entire houses (and racking up five million followers in the process), we aren't suggesting you chuck your current business model out the window. Instead, consider how barter systems can co-exist alongside, or can add to, what you're already doing. That might mean phasing SWAPPORTUNITIES into your in-store experience – either fully, like Hyperburgers, or through dedicated bartering hours – or weave them into a marketing campaign that shows gen Z consumers your finger is firmly on the pulse.

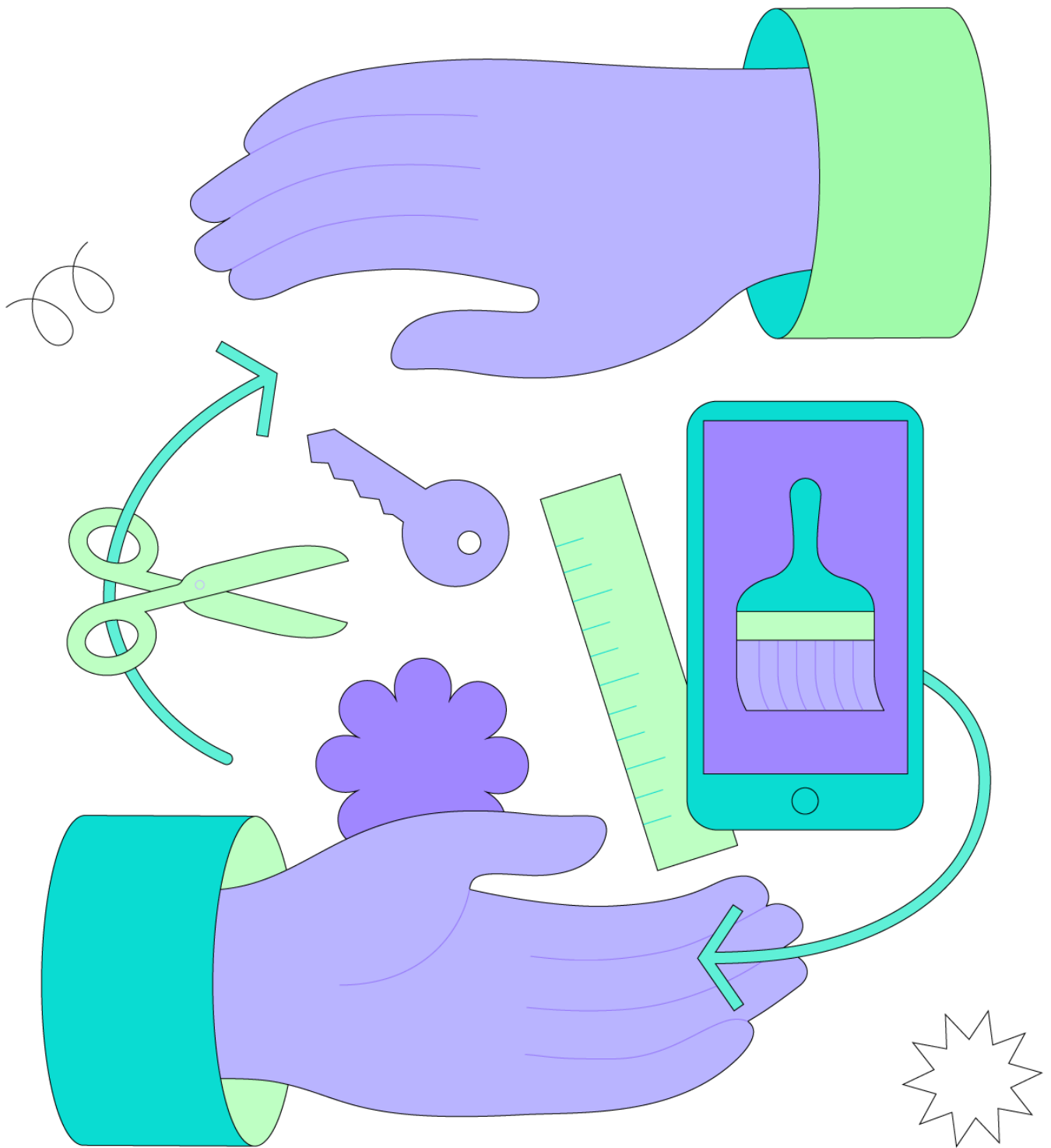
COMMUNITY CULTIVATORS

SWAPPORTUNITIES' greatest potential lies in community building. So, instead of manufacturing more stuff, can you create meaningful connections by launching a barter experience? Either invite budding hobbyists to trade their wares like at Youplant Amsterdam's swap party or set up a digital platform where loyal followers can get a preloved goodie from your brand's back catalog. The French fashion brand Camaïeu's yo-yo policy allows consumers to trade their worn

garments for a different size. Could you blend this concept with LOOP's business model and use tech to facilitate direct, C2C exchanges?

HIGH OF THE HUNT

Or take a more exclusive approach. In Unregular Pizza's early days, the barter system created scarcity, which contributed to the brand's notoriety. We know consumers enjoy products and services that are one-of-a-kind. The purchasing journey – the story surrounding an item's acquisition – is a more powerful indicator of value than price. Forget the endorphin rush of finding a rare, secondhand gem. Could you give consumers a status story they can share with friends by offering a collection of items that can only be acquired by bartering with personal skills or expertise?



Five ways to embrace SWAPPORTUNITIES today:

1. Scope out your brand's local swap scene: Download the Buy Nothing app and see which assets (and how frequently) consumers in your neighborhood are trading.
2. Wondering how SWAPPORTUNITIES intersects with virtual currencies?
TokenWARP increases the liquidity of digital tokens, opening up the possibility

for virtual bartering.

3. Before launching your consumer-facing initiative, why not try bartering your brand's untapped resources? [BarterPay](#) is a Canada-based platform which lets you do just that.
4. Develop a bartering experience of your own by using our [Consumer Trend Canvas](#), a one-page tool for turning inspiration into innovations.
5. Gauge the temperature of current anti-capitalist sentiments by tracking updates to the hugely popular [r/Anticonsumption subreddit](#) feed.

TREND BEHIND THE TREND

At TrendWatching, we track trends on various levels, from micro to macro, mega to meta. This big picture thinking allows us to spot how expectations transfer across industries, regions, demographics and more. SWAPPORTUNITIES sits under our POWER TO THE PEOPLE Mega-Trend, which is all about how consumers are losing trust in central authorities and seeking out new, decentralized systems that better suit their needs.

If you're curious to learn more about our trend framework? Take a look at [Amplify](#), our Trend Intelligence Platform.



The Make→Shifts you may have missed:

From "[ACCLIMATORS](#)" to "[IN-FLUENCERS](#)", our previous Make→Shift issues provide a cornucopia of purpose-driven insights, plus actions you can take on the trends that matter.

[Previous briefings](#)

And what's more...

- **Did someone say 4-day workweek?**

Companies across the globe are trialing or permanently implementing 4-day workweeks and employees are embracing the change. Head over to our sister publication [Business of Purpose](#) for tips on reducing hours and boosting your staff's wellbeing.

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2023 Trend Check

Discover the opportunities you're not running with, yet... but should.

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