

# MUSEUM *of* BRANDS

A Museum Of Everything. For Everyone.

SAYALI DONGRE

MA DESIGN INNOVATION  
& BRAND MANAGEMENT

# Enhancing the Museum Experience at the Museum of Brands

Brand Stories: Then & Now –  
Engaging Young Audiences







# Museum of Brands

The Museum of Brands is a specialist cultural institution located in **Notting Hill, London**, which explores the history of consumer culture through branding, packaging, and advertising.

Established in **2005**, the museum houses a unique collection of over **12,000 original items** that span more than 150 years of British consumer life (Museum of Brands, 2023a).

Unlike conventional museums that focus on fine art, archaeology, or political history, the Museum of Brands offers a “**social history through stuff**”, documenting the objects that shaped everyday experiences and memories (Mason and McCarthy, 2018).

The centrepiece of the museum is the **Time Tunnel**, a chronological display of goods that takes visitors on a journey from the Victorian era to the present day. This installation is not presented as isolated artefacts, but as an **evolving timeline of design, commerce, and culture**.

By walking through the Time Tunnel, visitors experience the ways in which **packaging design, advertising narratives, and consumer products mirror wider social, political, and technological changes** (Hancock, 2015).



The collection includes **packaging for food, confectionery, toiletries, and household goods, alongside toys, magazines, and promotional posters**. These items illustrate not only design evolution but also collective memory. As Curator Robert Opie has suggested, brands are more than commercial tools—they are “**cultural signposts**” that help individuals recall childhoods, family rituals, and changing lifestyles (Opie, 2002, p. 11). For example, visitors often recall emotional connections when encountering familiar items such as cereal boxes, Cadbury chocolate tins, or toys from their youth (BBC News, 2016).

The museum’s significance lies in its dual purpose. **For families and casual visitors, it offers nostalgia and entertainment; for researchers, designers, and students, it provides a rich archive for analysing branding, marketing, and consumer behaviour** (Mason and McCarthy, 2018). This duality, playful discovery and serious research, distinguishes the Museum of Brands from larger institutions and secures its place as an under-acknowledged yet vital player in the UK’s cultural sector.





# Robert Opie:

## The Man Who Never Threw Anything Away

The Museum of Brands was founded by Robert Opie, a British consumer historian who began **collecting packaging in 1963 at the age of sixteen**, when he saved a packet of Munchies rather than eating it (Museum of Brands, 2023b). Over the next five decades, Opie amassed more than **half a million items**, from Victorian tins and posters to contemporary fast-moving goods.

His conviction was that **packaging and advertising are not disposable**, but vital records of the “**everyday lives of ordinary people**” (Opie, 2002, p. 8). By treating commercial ephemera as cultural history, Opie challenged traditional museum hierarchies that privilege fine art or antiquities (Hancock, 2015).

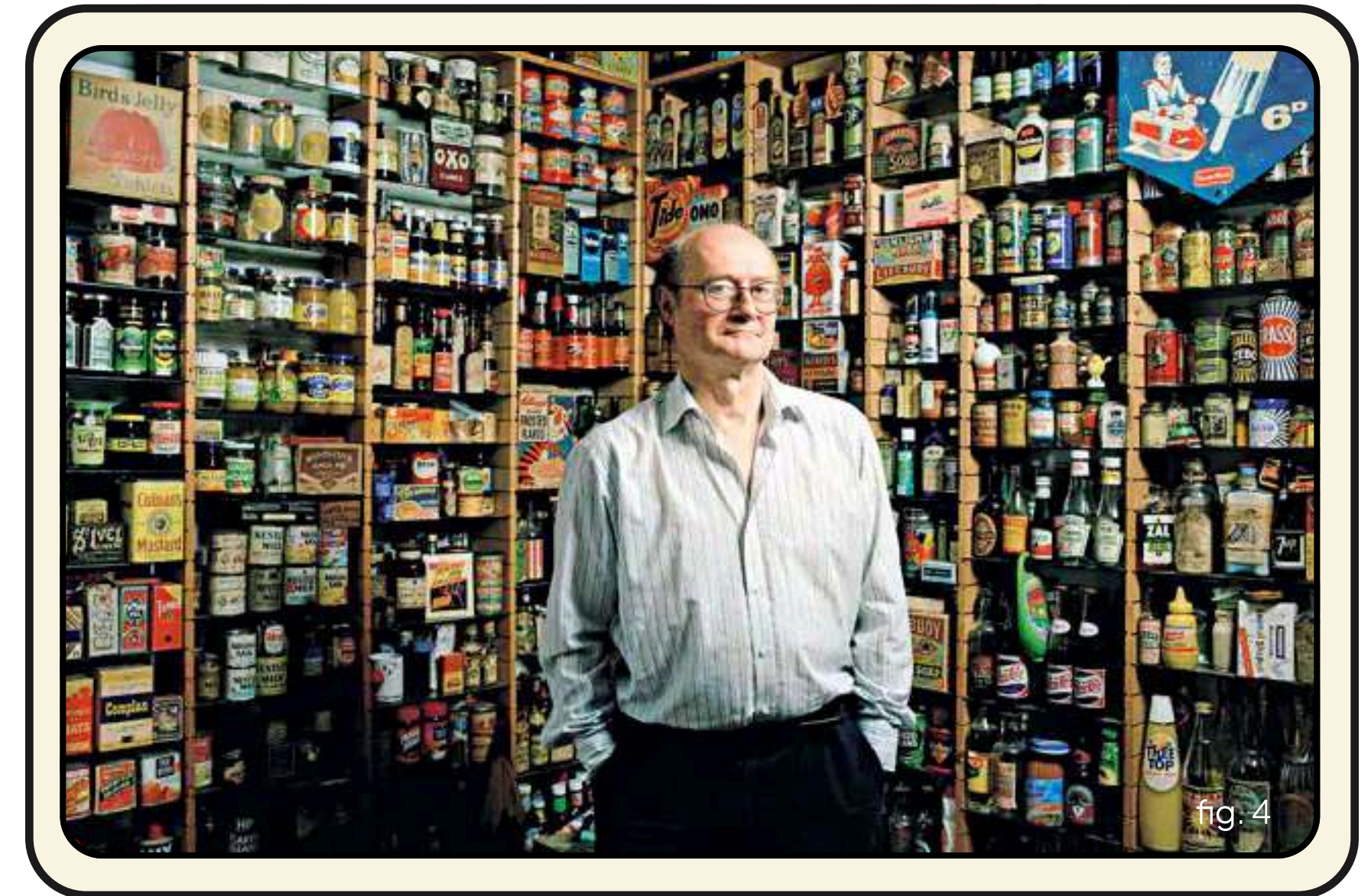


fig. 4

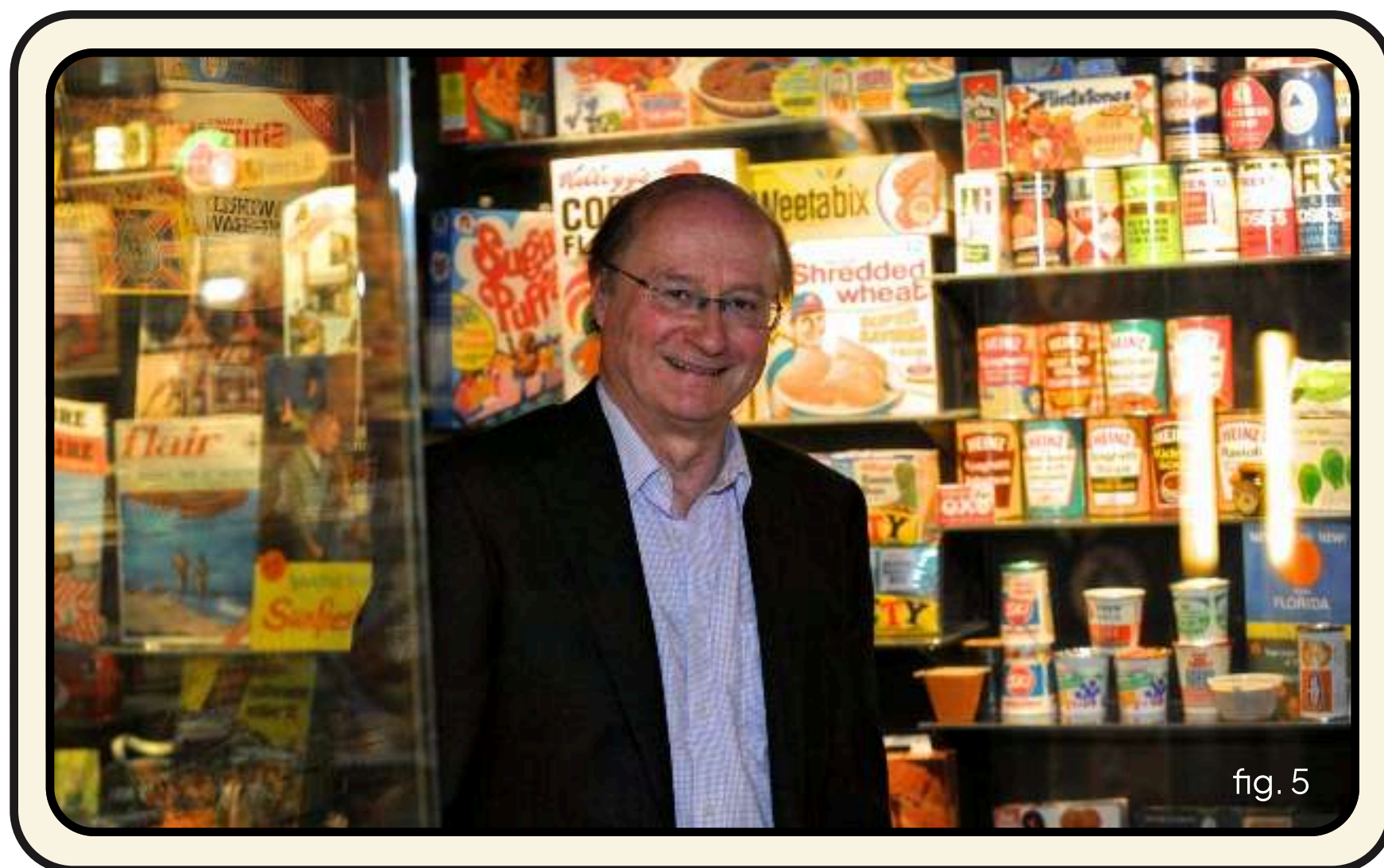


fig. 5

Opie first showcased his collection in **1984 at the Museum of Advertising and Packaging** in Gloucester before relocating to London to reach wider audiences (Opie, 2002). His philosophy continues to shape the ethos of the Museum of Brands: the institution does not simply archive objects for their design merit but presents them as **part of personal and collective narratives**.

As Opie noted in a BBC interview, the museum is “**not about brands as corporations, but about how brands intersect with people’s lives and memories**” (BBC News, 2016). His curatorial vision therefore established the Museum of Brands not as a business museum, but as a cultural time capsule, reminding visitors that products are tied to stories, emotions, and identities.



# “A Museum of People, Not Products”

## What the Museum Really Stands For

The Museum of Brands acts as a time capsule of everyday life, preserving consumer culture and showing **how packaging reflects wider historical and social change** (Museum of Brands, 2023a). At its heart, the museum invites visitors to re-experience the past through familiar objects—cereal boxes, toys, confectionery—that **trigger nostalgia and personal recollection** (Museum of Brands, 2023b).

This emphasis on memory and emotion makes the museum distinctive. Rather than focusing on elite culture, it “**democratises history**” by curating everyday objects that shaped people’s routines (Hancock, 2015). The collection also serves an **educational role, supporting research in marketing, design, and media studies, while exhibitions address contemporary issues such as eco-packaging and sustainability** (Mason and McCarthy, 2018; Museum of Brands, 2023c).

In short, the Museum of Brands stands for **memory, culture, and creativity**. It is not a conventional history museum, but a museum of everyday life, offering nostalgic immersion and critical reflection, though its value is not always recognised by younger audiences unfamiliar with its scope (Black, 2012).

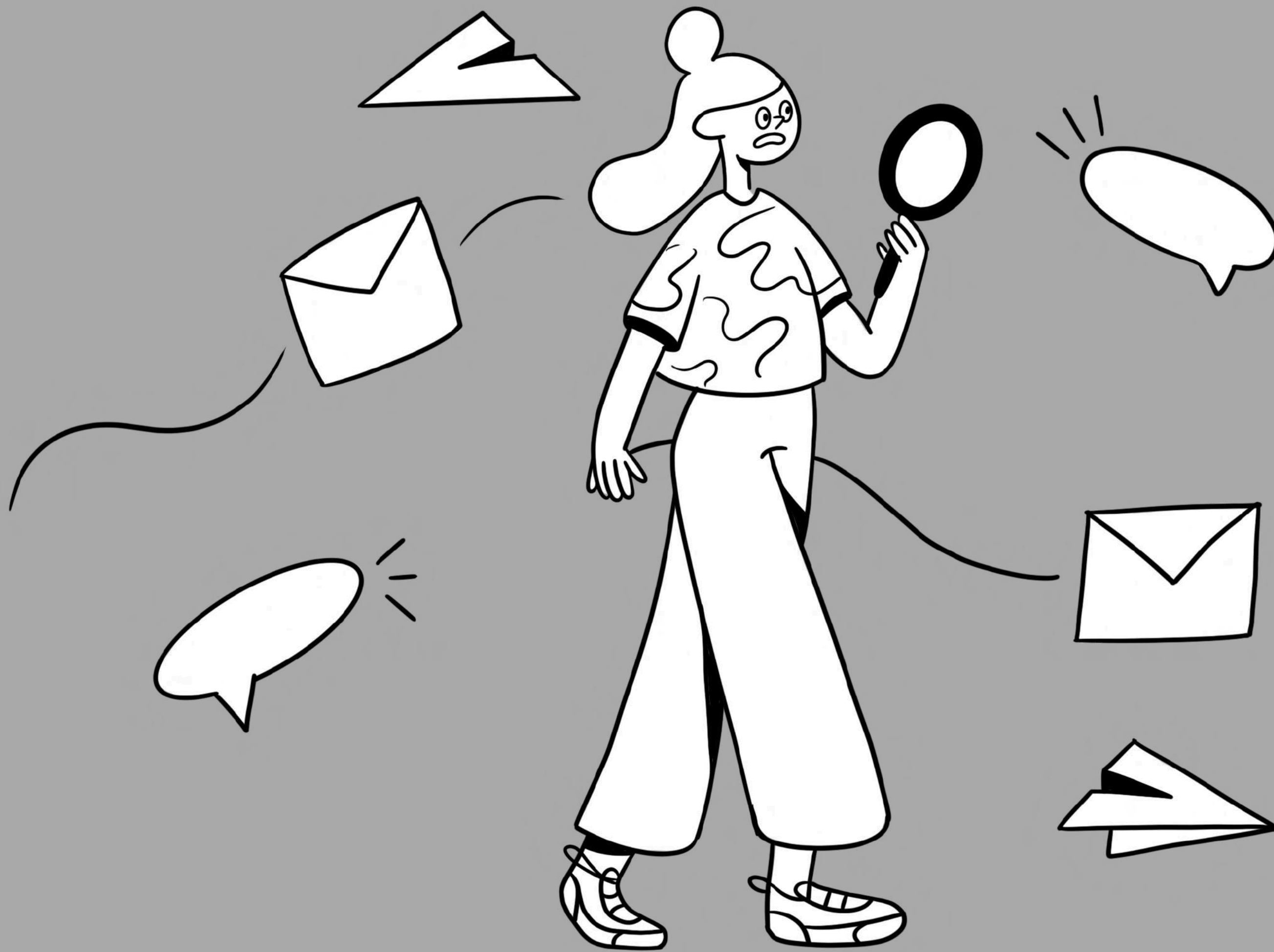


fig. 6



fig. 7





# Research Journey

## Primary Research

“On the Ground: Echoes of Nostalgia”

## Secondary Research

“Zooming Out: The Bigger Picture”

Primary Research

**Internship-based observations at the Museum**

1

**Conversations and informal interviews with museum visitors**

2

**Personal reflections as both insider (intern) and outsider (young visitor)**

3

**Audience interaction and data gathering during the Great Road Festival (June 2025)**

4

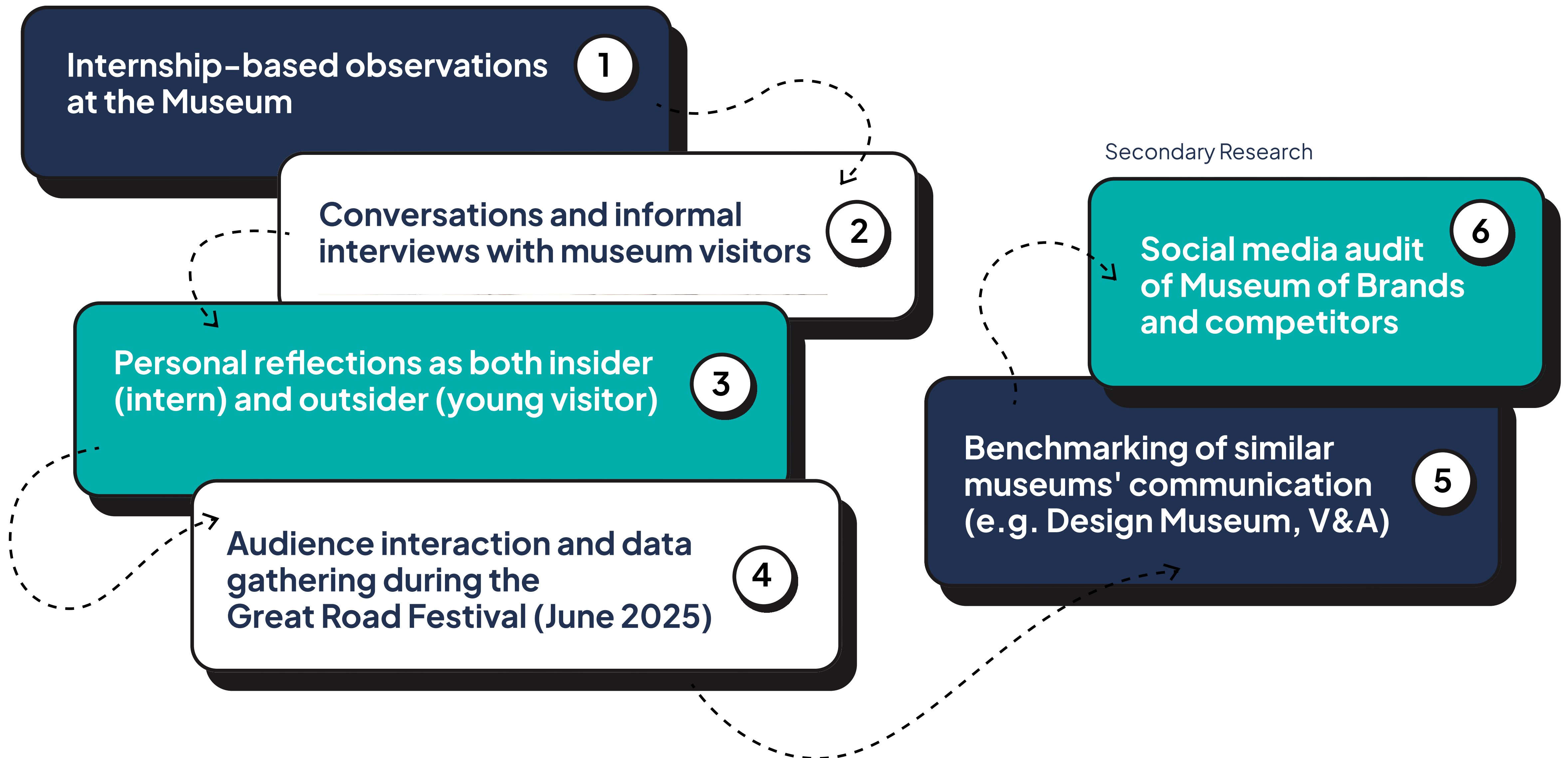
Secondary Research

**Social media audit of Museum of Brands and competitors**

6

**Benchmarking of similar museums' communication (e.g. Design Museum, V&A)**

5



## Primary Research

# Internship-based observations at the Museum



During my internship at the Museum of Brands, I gained first-hand insight into its **day-to-day operations, visitor demographics, and institutional challenges**. Daily visitor numbers were relatively modest compared with major London museums such as the Victoria & Albert Museum or the Design Museum (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport [DCMS], 2022). The demographic skew was clear: the majority of visitors were **families with children, older tourists, and school or college groups**. Independent young adults (aged 18–35) were notably underrepresented.

Visitor motivations also appeared segmented. Many families were drawn to the museum for its **garden café and affordable entry**, while **researchers and design students were more interested in the packaging archive**. The Time Tunnel consistently elicited strong emotional reactions—visitors often commented on the **nostalgia evoked by seeing products from their youth**. However, these moments of joy contrasted with the museum’s **relatively low public visibility**.

The museum **lacked a strong street presence**, with limited signage and almost no footfall from spontaneous passers-by. This aligns with broader studies of small cultural institutions, which suggest that **limited branding and weak location awareness are barriers to attracting diverse audiences** (Kotler and Kotler, 2018). My observations confirmed that while the museum excels at creating meaningful experiences once visitors enter, it **struggles to attract those unfamiliar with it**, especially younger Londoners who tend to discover cultural venues through social media or peer recommendations rather than word of mouth.

## Demographic Skew

- Majority of daily visitors were above the age of 30.
- Main groups included parents, older tourists, and organised school/college groups.
- Visits were often purposeful (educational, nostalgic, or family outings).
- Younger audiences were less represented, shaping the overall visitor profile.



## Visitor Reactions

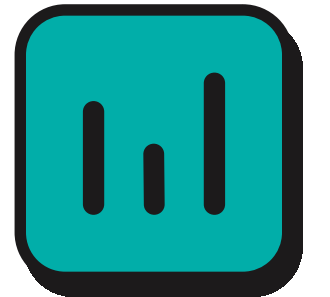
- Overall reactions were overwhelmingly positive.
- Visitors strongly appreciated the nostalgic elements, recognising packaging, adverts, and products from their past.
- Interactive features and the packaging archive were key highlights.
- Exhibitions sparked intergenerational conversations and shared memories.

## Young Adults (18–35)

- Only a small proportion of daily visitors belonged to this age group.
- Young adults often visited independently, usually for academic research or casual use of the café and garden.
- Indicates limited engagement of younger generations with the core exhibitions.



# Core Insights



Cultural Nostalgia as the  
Museum's Strongest Asset

Creative Inspiration for  
Niche Audiences

Emotional Value  
Enhances  
Visitor Experience

The Disconnect Between  
Identity and Perception

Branding and  
Positioning  
Weaknesses



It has Storytelling  
Environment

Limited Appeal to Younger,  
Experience-Seeking Audiences



Primary Research

## Conversations and Informal Interviews with Visitors

To supplement observational data, I conducted informal interviews with over **twenty visitors**. The majority of responses revealed **surprise and delight**, particularly at the personal resonance of the exhibits.

These comments highlight the museum's ability to trigger **emotional nostalgia and cross-generational connection**. According to Davis (1979), nostalgia functions as a powerful social emotion that **links individuals to shared cultural pasts**.

In this sense, the Museum of Brands acts as both an **archive and an emotional experience economy** (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). However, interviews also exposed **confusion about the museum's identity**. Several visitors admitted they had not heard of it until finding it by chance on Google or through tour guides.

Others mentioned the **name was misleading**. These findings resonate with Hooper-Greenhill's (2000) argument that museums must carefully manage their public image and interpretive strategies to align with audience expectations.



## Voices of Surprise and Delight

"The name made me think it would be corporate, not fun."

"I wish more people knew about this place."

"I've lived in London for years and never knew this existed."

"It brought back so many childhood memories"

"The word 'brands' feels cold, but inside it's actually really warm and nostalgic."

"It was fun explaining to my son what TV was like before Netflix!"

"We just Googled 'weird museums in London' and found this!".

"My kids loved comparing what I ate as a child with what they eat now."

"Seeing the old chocolate wrappers reminded me of my school lunchbox."

"It's fun, but name makes it sound like a business seminar."

"I felt like I was walking through my grandmother's kitchen cupboard."

"It's smaller than the big London museums, but that makes it manageable and friendly."

"It's much more colourful and interactive than I expected."

"The toys section made me laugh, I had that exact board game as a kid!"

"I didn't realise a museum could feel so personal."

"I thought it would be dry and academic, but it was actually really fun."

"I can't believe this isn't advertised more, it's such a hidden gem."

"I can't believe this isn't advertised more, it's such a hidden gem."

"I felt like I was walking through my grandmother's kitchen cupboard."

"I didn't expect it to be so emotional, I saw my dad's favourite biscuits!"

# Core Insights

Word of mouth and chance  
discovery dominate

Surprise at  
emotional impact



Cross-  
generational  
appeal

Confusion about the  
museum's identity

The experience  
exceeds expectations



Visitors want more  
people to know  
about it

Nostalgia is the strongest  
emotional trigger

# Personal Reflections as Insider and Outsider

Reflecting on the Museum of Brands through both the lens of an insider (intern) and an outsider (young visitor) offered me a rare, dual perspective on its challenges and opportunities.

As an insider, I experienced the museum's strengths up close. I observed how carefully the collection is curated and how passionately the staff approach their work. I also saw first-hand how visitors reacted inside the Time Tunnel: **laughter at forgotten toys, surprise at packaging they hadn't seen in decades, and conversations sparked by shared memories.** These moments proved that the museum has an extraordinary ability to generate nostalgia and emotional connection. From this perspective, the Museum of Brands felt like a cultural treasure waiting to be discovered.

However, as an outsider, the experience looked very different. Before my internship, I had limited awareness of the museum's existence, despite being part of its target demographic. **Online, its presence seemed minimal and static** compared with other London museums. On platforms like Instagram and TikTok, where my peers often discover places to visit, the museum was almost invisible. This absence meant that even though the content inside was relevant and engaging, **the museum risked feeling disconnected from youth culture.**

This contrast echoes Falk and Dierking's (2016) contextual model of learning, which highlights three overlapping contexts: **personal, sociocultural, and physical.** The Museum of Brands succeeds in the **personal (nostalgia, identity) and physical (immersive exhibitions)** contexts **but falls short in the sociocultural context, connecting with communities, trends, and digital networks that matter to young audiences.**



# Core Insights

Nostalgia and memory  
are powerful strengths

The gap is in  
communication,  
not content

Digital silence  
limits youth reach

Strong personal and physical  
experience, weak sociocultural  
connection

Rich experience inside, weak  
image outside

Sociocultural  
connection is  
missing

Confusion about  
identity persists





Primary Research

# Audience Interactions and Data Gathering During the Great Road Festival



The Great Road Festival (June 2025) is an annual cultural celebration in London that brings together music, art, food, and community activities. Designed to **highlight creativity and everyday culture**, it attracts a **wide cross-section of audiences including locals, families, and especially young adults**. Its vibrant, diverse environment provided me with an ideal opportunity to conduct field research for my dissertation, allowing me to speak with people who fit within the age range I was particularly interested in exploring for the Museum of Brands.

As part of the festival's events team, I engaged directly with over fifty attendees. While my role centred on supporting the event, I also used this platform to conduct informal **conversations that offered valuable insights into levels of awareness and perception of the Museum of Brands**.

This reinforced the idea that there is a communication gap between what the museum actually is, a nostalgic, emotional time capsule of everyday life, and how it is perceived externally. As McLean (1997) argues, **museums must communicate clearly in order to overcome barriers of unfamiliarity and irrelevance**. Despite the museum's rich offering, its identity is not well recognised or understood by its intended audiences.

From a research standpoint, the festival was invaluable to my dissertation. By engaging with a young, diverse festival audience outside the museum space, I was able to **validate and strengthen earlier findings from visitor interviews and internship-based observations**. These interactions confirmed that the core issue is not the museum's content but its **lack of visibility and misaligned messaging**. The festival therefore became an important extension of my primary research, helping me to test perceptions in a wider social context and strengthening the argument that the Museum of Brands must reposition itself for younger demographics.



## My Role and Experience

As part of the Festival Team, I contributed to the planning and arrangement of activities. This included setting up spaces, coordinating with other organisations, and representing the Museum of Brands in conversations with attendees. My role went beyond logistical support; I also engaged directly with over 100 visitors, introducing them to the museums and asking about their perceptions. This dual position, both behind-the-scenes and front-facing, gave me a rare perspective on how museums strategically present themselves to the public and how audiences interpret them.

A striking observation from my experience was that the Museum of Brands was not present alongside the larger cultural institutions. While organisations like the V&A and the Science Museum had prominent stalls and installations, the Museum of Brands was absent from this collective showcase. This absence not only reduced its visibility but also reinforced its position as a lesser-known museum outside mainstream cultural circuits. Speaking to visitors about this absence provided further insights into audience perceptions.





# Visitor Perceptions

Through informal interviews, I encountered three recurring themes:

## 1. Unfamiliarity and Surprise

Most visitors had never heard of the Museum of Brands before. Initial reactions were often:

I didn't know something like this existed.

Museum of what?

Is it about how to create logos or branding?

## 2. Misunderstanding of Focus

Several people assumed it was a professional or business-focused institution. This demonstrates how the museum's name and positioning create misconceptions that deter a younger, casual audience.

Sounds like a business seminar.

## 3. Curiosity Mixed with Uncertainty

Some attendees showed genuine curiosity but were unsure of what to expect. While intrigued, they lacked clarity about the museum's cultural and emotional offering.

So is it like ads, or packaging, or design history?



fig. 11



fig. 12

# Core Insights

Operational Learning: How  
Museums Compete for Attention

Uncertainty  
About the  
Experience



Weak Connection with  
Younger Audiences

Absence Reinforced  
Marginalisation

Low Awareness of the  
Museum of Brands

Key Identity  
Gap

Misinterpretation of the  
Museum's Identity



## Secondary Research

# Social Media Audit of the Museum of Brands

In today's cultural landscape, a museum's visibility is often determined as much by its digital footprint as by its physical presence. Social media functions as both a **discovery tool and a branding platform**, particularly for younger demographics such as Gen Z and Millennials, who increasingly rely on Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to decide on leisure activities (Pew Research Center, 2022).

A social media audit of the Museum of Brands revealed several limitations in its current strategy. On Instagram, the museum maintains a modest following, but posts are **relatively infrequent and primarily feature exhibition updates** or photographs of packaging displays (Museum of Brands, 2023a).

Content often **lacks the interactivity, storytelling, and trend-driven aesthetics** that resonate with younger audiences. For example, competitor institutions such as the Design Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum use Instagram not only to advertise exhibitions but also to participate in **viral trends, share behind-the-scenes content, and collaborate with influencers** (Design Museum, 2023; V&A, 2023).





TikTok, a platform central to Gen Z’s cultural consumption, is almost absent from the Museum of Brands’ strategy. While museums such as the Science Museum Group and the Natural History Museum have embraced TikTok by producing short, engaging videos, often aligned with trending sounds or memes, the Museum of Brands has **not yet tapped into this mode of digital storytelling** (Smith, 2023). This absence represents a missed opportunity, particularly given the museum’s potential to **create nostalgic, quirky, and visually engaging content** that fits seamlessly with TikTok’s ethos.

The lack of digital storytelling also limits word-of-mouth amplification. Research by Russo et al. (2008) shows that museums that leverage social media effectively create communities of participation, where visitors extend the museum experience into digital spaces. In contrast, the Museum of Brands’ online presence feels more like a static brochure than a dynamic cultural conversation.

Overall, the audit highlights that the museum’s digital weakness compounds its visibility problem. While the in-person experience is highly praised by visitors, the absence of compelling online narratives restricts awareness, especially among digital-native audiences who might otherwise engage.



museumofbrands

Following

Message

+8

...

2,338 posts

11.9K followers

874 following

Museum Of Brands

Museum

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Followed by ameliakclarkk, studentartpass, and saarvani.i.suryavanshi

PRIDE

Pride

GARDEN

Garden

#MUSEUMS UNLOCKED

MuseumsUn...

EVENTS

Events

MEMORIES

Memories



fig. 13



# Core Insights

Missed opportunity for  
community-building

Static, brochure-  
like content

Weak visual  
storytelling

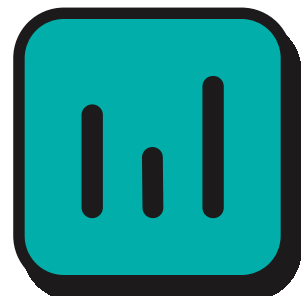


No clear brand voice

Limited presence on  
youth platforms

Lack of trend participation

Infrequent  
posting  
schedule



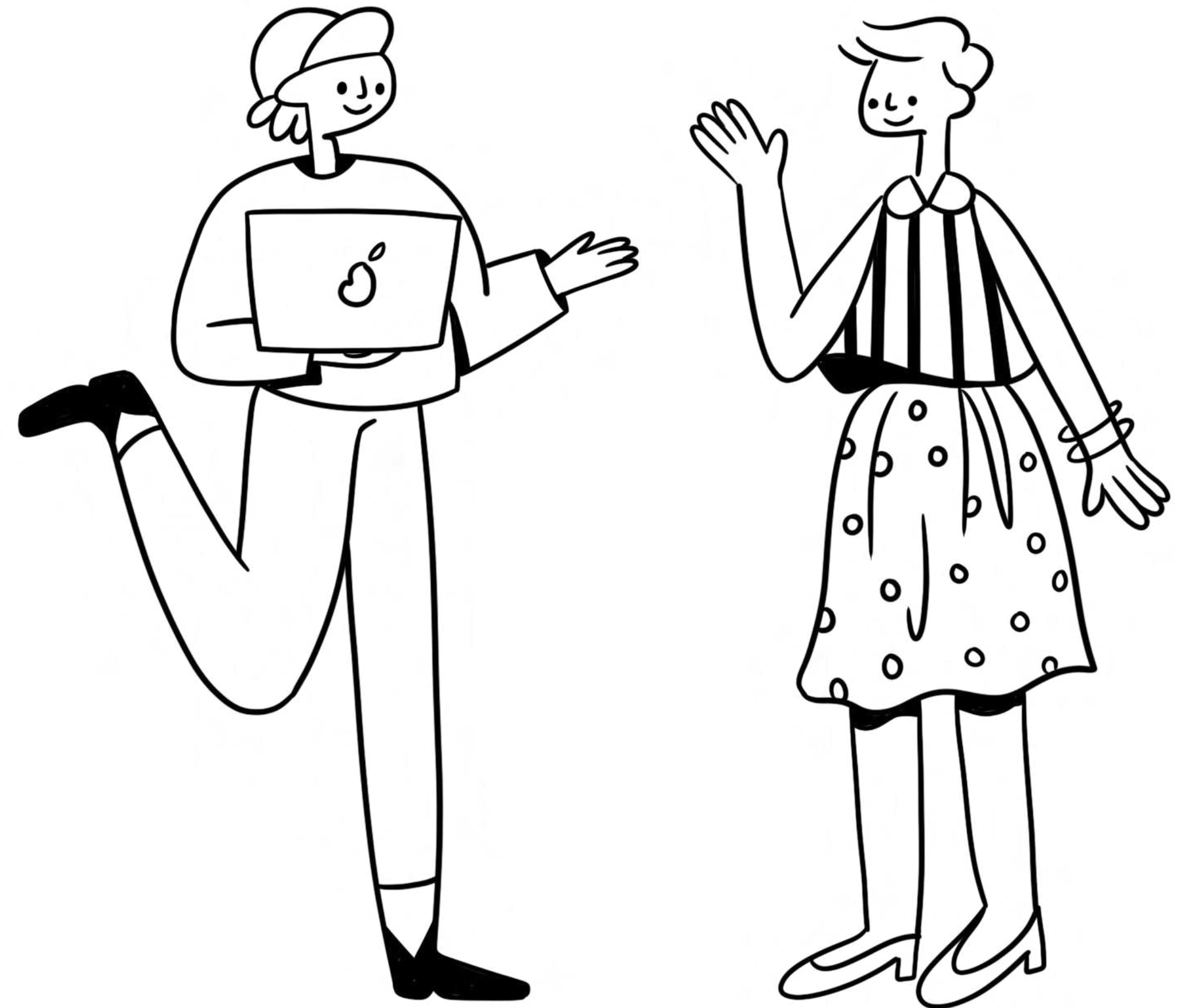
Secondary Research

## Benchmarking of Similar Museums

Benchmarking against comparable institutions reveals how peer museums successfully attract younger audiences through **branding, interactivity, and digital innovation.**

The Design Museum, for instance, has consistently positioned itself as relevant to **contemporary culture by hosting exhibitions on fashion, digital design, and youth-oriented themes** (Design Museum, 2023). Its social media platforms **highlight not only exhibitions but also design memes, student projects, and collaborations with high-profile brands such as Adidas and Sony.** This strategy demonstrates the value of cultural hybridity, where **museums merge high culture with popular and commercial forms to remain relevant** (Janes and Sandell, 2019).

The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) provides another instructive comparison. **The V&A has expanded its youth reach through pop culture collaborations, notably exhibitions on David Bowie, Balenciaga, and video game design.**





These projects **generate substantial press coverage and social media traction**, positioning the museum as both authoritative and trendy (V&A, 2023). By adopting a strategy of cultural inclusivity, the V&A appeals not only to traditional museum-goers but also to younger visitors motivated by fashion, music, and digital culture.

Outside of the UK, experiential museums such as the Museum of Ice Cream (New York, Singapore) or 29Rooms (USA) **demonstrate how interactivity and “Instagrammability” can drive enormous footfall among younger demographics**. These institutions **rely heavily on visual spectacle, immersive installations, and shareable moments to create a sense of FOMO** (fear of missing out) that compels attendance (Tisdall, 2020). While the Museum of Brands cannot replicate their scale, these models suggest opportunities to leverage nostalgia and playfulness as experiential hooks.

Benchmarking therefore confirms that the Museum of Brands’ challenge is not its content but its communication and positioning. Competing institutions succeed by making themselves visible through bold, playful, and youth-oriented strategies, approaches that the Museum of Brands has yet to fully embrace.



fig. 14

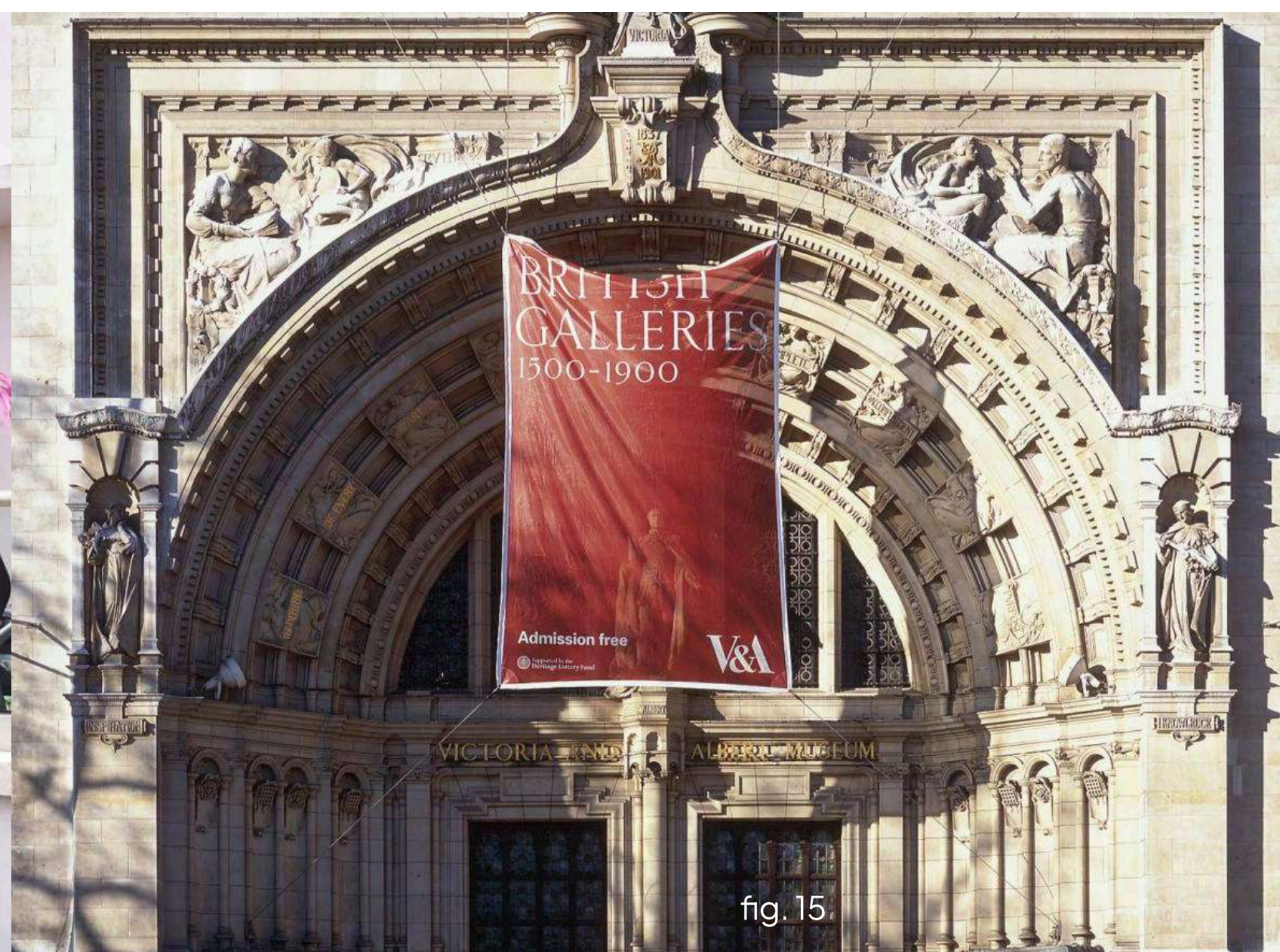


fig. 15



fig. 16



# Core Insights

Cultural  
relevance is  
key

Pop culture collaborations  
drive engagement

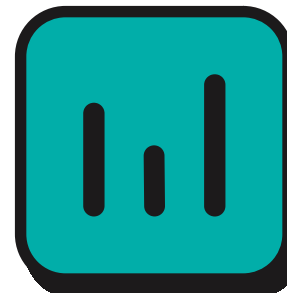


Strong influencer partnerships  
amplify reach

Consistency  
builds trust

Digital-first  
storytelling matters

Blending education with  
entertainment is effective



Immersive and  
experiential design works





# “The Disconnect Between Museum and Audience”

## What’s Getting in the Way?

The combined findings from both primary and secondary research point to a consistent set of issues: the Museum of Brands offers a unique and emotionally engaging experience once visitors enter, but suffers from weak visibility, misperceptions, and lack of resonance with younger audiences.

## Perception Gap



- One of the clearest problems is the mismatch between what the museum is and what audiences think it is. Informal interviews with visitors and festival attendees revealed widespread confusion about the museum's purpose.
- Many assumed it to be about corporate branding or marketing theory, with comments such as: "So is it about ads? Or just logos?" These findings demonstrate that the museum's current name and brand identity fail to communicate its true offering: a nostalgic, emotional journey through consumer culture (McLean, 1997).
- This perception gap is reinforced by the museum's limited digital storytelling. Unlike competitors such as the Design Museum or the V&A, which clearly articulate their identities through bold digital campaigns, the Museum of Brands' online presence feels more static and ambiguous (Design Museum, 2023; V&A, 2023). The result is that potential audiences, especially Gen Z and Millennials, lack clarity on why the museum is relevant to them.

## Visibility and Awareness



- Another problem is low visibility, both physically and digitally. Observations during the internship highlighted weak street presence, with minimal signage and reliance on word of mouth or accidental discovery via Google searches.
- This is consistent with literature suggesting that smaller cultural institutions struggle to compete with larger museums unless they actively differentiate themselves and invest in outreach (Kotler and Kotler, 2018).
- Digitally, the museum has yet to harness platforms such as TikTok or Instagram to create viral or shareable content. Given that younger audiences increasingly rely on social media to discover cultural activities (Pew Research Center, 2022), the lack of presence on these platforms significantly reduces the museum's visibility.

## Audience Disconnect



- Perhaps the most significant issue is the disconnect between the museum's content (rich, nostalgic, emotionally engaging) and its audience reach.
- The primary research confirmed that once people visit, they find the experience rewarding, often describing it as unexpectedly emotional. However, as one visitor noted: "I wish more people knew about this place."
- This highlights a missed opportunity: the museum has a product that resonates deeply but fails to effectively connect it to its desired demographic (Falk and Dierking, 2016).

## Validation of Findings



- The consistency across different research methods—internship observations, interviews, festival interactions, and social media benchmarking, validates these problems as systemic rather than incidental.
- The lack of young adult visitors is not due to disinterest in nostalgia or branding but to failures in communication, identity, and outreach.
- This conclusion aligns with broader research in museum studies, which argues that younger audiences engage with institutions that frame themselves as experiences, stories, and cultural playgrounds, rather than static repositories of information (Black, 2012; Pine and Gilmore, 1999).
- Without repositioning itself in this way, the Museum of Brands risks being perceived as irrelevant to new generations, despite having the very content that could appeal to them most.





# Problem Statement

The Museum of Brands is currently **constrained by a mismatch between its unique cultural offering and its public perception**. To thrive in an increasingly competitive and digital cultural landscape, it must be **rebranded and repositioned as a place of memory, creativity, and culture that resonates with younger, experience-seeking audiences**.

## **Low footfall from young adults:**

Demographic observations and visitor data reveal that most daily visitors are families, older tourists, or organised school groups. Independent young adults rarely visit, despite being a key demographic for London's cultural sector.

## **Weak digital engagement:**

The museum's limited presence on platforms such as TikTok and Instagram reduces its visibility within youth-driven cultural discovery spaces.

## **Underutilised emotional and visual potential:**

The nostalgic resonance of the collection, objects that evoke childhood memories, cultural identity, and shared experiences, is not fully exploited in the museum's current branding or outreach.

## **Missed opportunities for word-of-mouth and social sharing:**

Visitors who do discover the museum often describe it as surprisingly emotional and engaging. However, without strong digital storytelling, this positive feedback does not translate into broader awareness.



## “Learning from the Competition”

In order to understand how the Museum of Brands might reposition itself for younger audiences, it is useful to examine how comparable institutions engage similar demographics. Competitor analysis reveals that success lies not only in the quality of collections but in the ability to communicate cultural relevance, create shareable experiences, and establish a digital presence.



## The Design Museum (London)



- The Design Museum has consistently positioned itself as a hub for contemporary creativity, appealing to both professionals and young audiences.
- Its exhibitions frequently intersect with popular culture, such as the Sneakers Unboxed exhibition in 2021, which examined sneaker culture as both design innovation and lifestyle identity (Design Museum, 2023a).
- By showcasing objects familiar to young visitors, the museum creates an accessible entry point into design discourse.
- On social media, the Design Museum maintains an active Instagram presence, often posting behind-the-scenes content, user-generated imagery, and collaborations with creative influencers (Design Museum, 2023b).
- Its use of design memes and trend-driven posts demonstrates a willingness to adopt youthful digital vernacular rather than relying on formal institutional language. This ensures it remains relevant within a fast-changing digital landscape.



fig. 17



fig. 18



fig. 19



## The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A, London)



- The V&A has achieved strong youth engagement by incorporating popular culture into its curatorial strategy. Landmark exhibitions such as David Bowie Is, Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion, and Videogames: Design/Play/Disrupt illustrate a deliberate effort to blend high culture with subcultures and everyday creative practices (V&A, 2023a).
- These exhibitions generate extensive media coverage and digital engagement, positioning the V&A as both authoritative and inclusive.
- The V&A also actively cultivates a digital-first identity. Its TikTok presence features playful behind-the-scenes videos, interactive challenges, and short-form storytelling, which resonate with younger audiences accustomed to bite-sized cultural content (Smith, 2023).
- This approach creates a perception of the V&A not only as a traditional museum but also as a dynamic participant in contemporary cultural conversations.



fig. 20



fig. 21



fig. 22



## The Museum of Ice Cream (International)



- Beyond the UK, experiential spaces such as the Museum of Ice Cream (MOIC) illustrate the power of immersive, Instagrammable environments in driving footfall.
- MOIC does not hold historic collections but instead designs colourful, sensory installations that encourage playful interaction and social sharing (Tisdall, 2020).
- Its success lies in its ability to merge leisure, spectacle, and social media visibility. While the Museum of Brands has a fundamentally different mission, the MOIC example highlights the importance of designing experiences with digital amplification in mind.



fig. 23



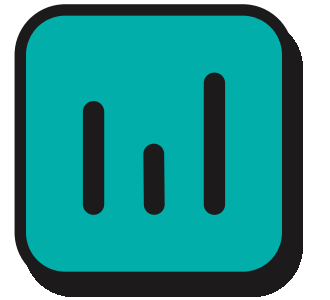
fig. 24



fig. 25



# Key Lessons for the Museum of Brands



## Cultural Relevance

Successful institutions align exhibitions with youth interests, whether in fashion, music, gaming, or everyday culture.

## Experiential Design

Institutions like MOIC demonstrate the power of shareable, playful installations in driving youth engagement through FOMO (fear of missing out).

## Digital-First Strategy

Competitors invest in strong TikTok/Instagram storytelling, ensuring visibility in the spaces where young audiences already spend time.



# Target Audience

Gen Z (18–25)

Millennials  
(25–35)

Educators &  
Designers

Creators





Each of these segments has distinct needs and motivations, **but all can be unified under a repositioning strategy that frames the museum as a museum of everyday life and memory rather than an abstract “museum of branding.”** By appealing simultaneously to nostalgia (Gen Z, Millennials), digital amplification (Creators), and educational value (Educators & Designers), the museum can expand its audience base and strengthen its cultural relevance.

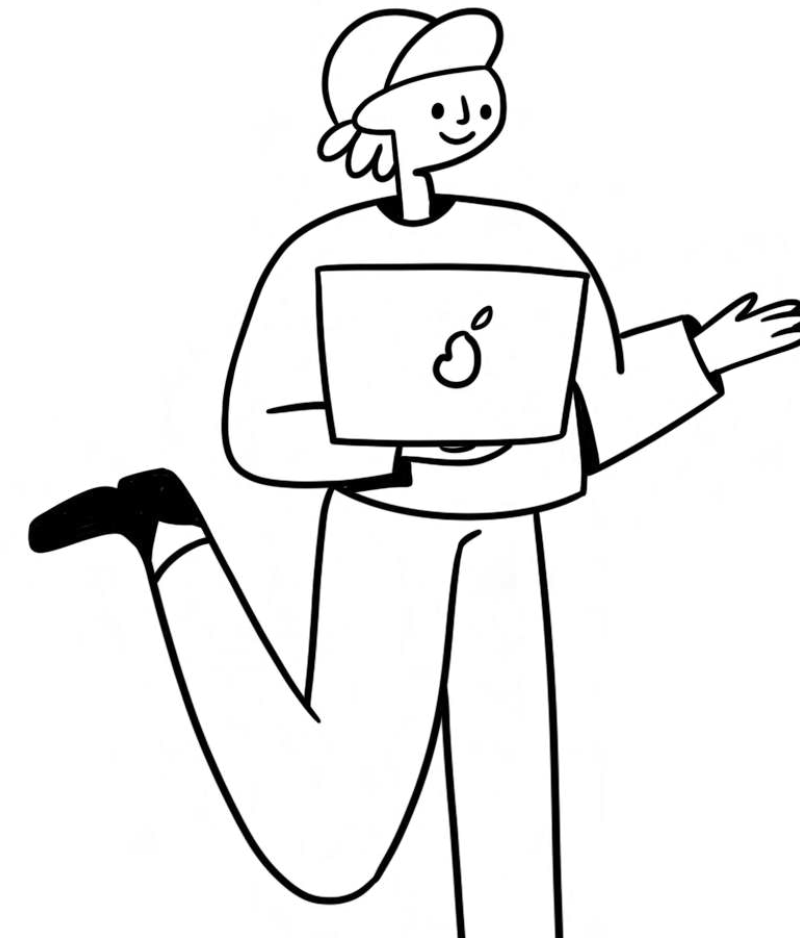
Segment	Description	Why they care
Gen Z (18–25)	Students, young tourists, content creators	For nostalgia, aesthetics, fun
Millennials (25–35)	Young professionals, creatives, brand nerds	Curious about design + memory
Creators	Influencers, podcasters, artists	Content goldmine + quirky space
Educators & Designers	Teachers, lecturers, graphic designers	Use it for case studies & learning





## Gen Z (18–25)

Digital natives who **prefer immersive and shareable experiences** (Pew Research Center, 2022). They're drawn to the **museum's retro-nostalgic appeal and Instagrammable displays**, and respond well to campaigns that create FOMO (Tisdall, 2020).



## Creators

Influencers, podcasters, YouTubers, and artists looking for **unique backdrops and content** (Abidin, 2016). The museum's quirky archive is a content goldmine, and their posts can amplify reach through authentic, peer-driven endorsements.



## Millennials (25–35)

This group grew up with the 1980s–2000s objects featured in the Time Tunnel, giving them **strong personal connections**. For them, the museum offers both **cultural nostalgia and professional inspiration in design and branding** (Holbrook and Schindler, 2003).



## Educators & Designers

A secondary but important audience: teachers, lecturers, and professionals who **use the museum for case studies, analysis, and inspiration**. Their engagement supports the museum's educational mission.





## “From Findings to Insights”

The research process, combining internship observations, visitor interviews, festival interactions, and benchmarking analysis, has revealed a set of recurring insights about the Museum of Brands. These insights form the foundation for developing key messages that can reposition the museum in ways that resonate with younger audiences.



# Core Insights

## The experience is stronger than the perception.

- Visitors consistently describe the museum as **surprisingly emotional, fun, and memorable**.
- Yet, the institution's external identity fails to capture this strength.
- As one visitor remarked, "I wish more people knew about this place." The discrepancy between internal experience and external communication is the most significant challenge to address.

## Nostalgia is a universal connector.

- Across different demographics, visitors responded emotionally to objects that reminded them of childhood, family, or cultural identity.
- Davis (1979) **highlights nostalgia as a "social emotion" that enables cross-generational bonding.**
- The Museum of Brands is uniquely positioned to harness this nostalgia as both a marketing and interpretive tool.

## Confusion about identity is a barrier.

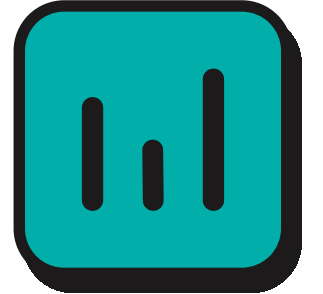
- Many prospective audiences assume the museum focuses on corporate branding or marketing theory, rather than consumer culture and memory.
- This misperception reduces relevance, particularly for Gen Z and Millennials, who are motivated by experience and storytelling rather than business-oriented narratives (Pine and Gilmore, 1999).

## Digital absence equals cultural invisibility.

- Younger audiences increasingly discover cultural venues through TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube (Pew Research Center, 2022).
- The museum's limited digital presence means it is absent from the very platforms where cultural curiosity is sparked. Without a digital-first strategy, the museum risks being invisible to its desired demographic.



# Key Messages for Repositioning



## **“Not a museum of branding. A museum of you.”**

This message directly counters misconceptions about the museum’s scope. It reframes the institution as a museum of memory and identity, where brands are understood not as corporate logos but as cultural artefacts connected to people’s lives.

## **“Where branding meets emotion.”**

This message positions the museum as a space where cultural history intersects with personal memory. It reflects the visitor insight that people recall the moments (e.g., birthday cakes, school snacks) rather than the corporate brand itself.

## **“It’s your life, in museum.”**

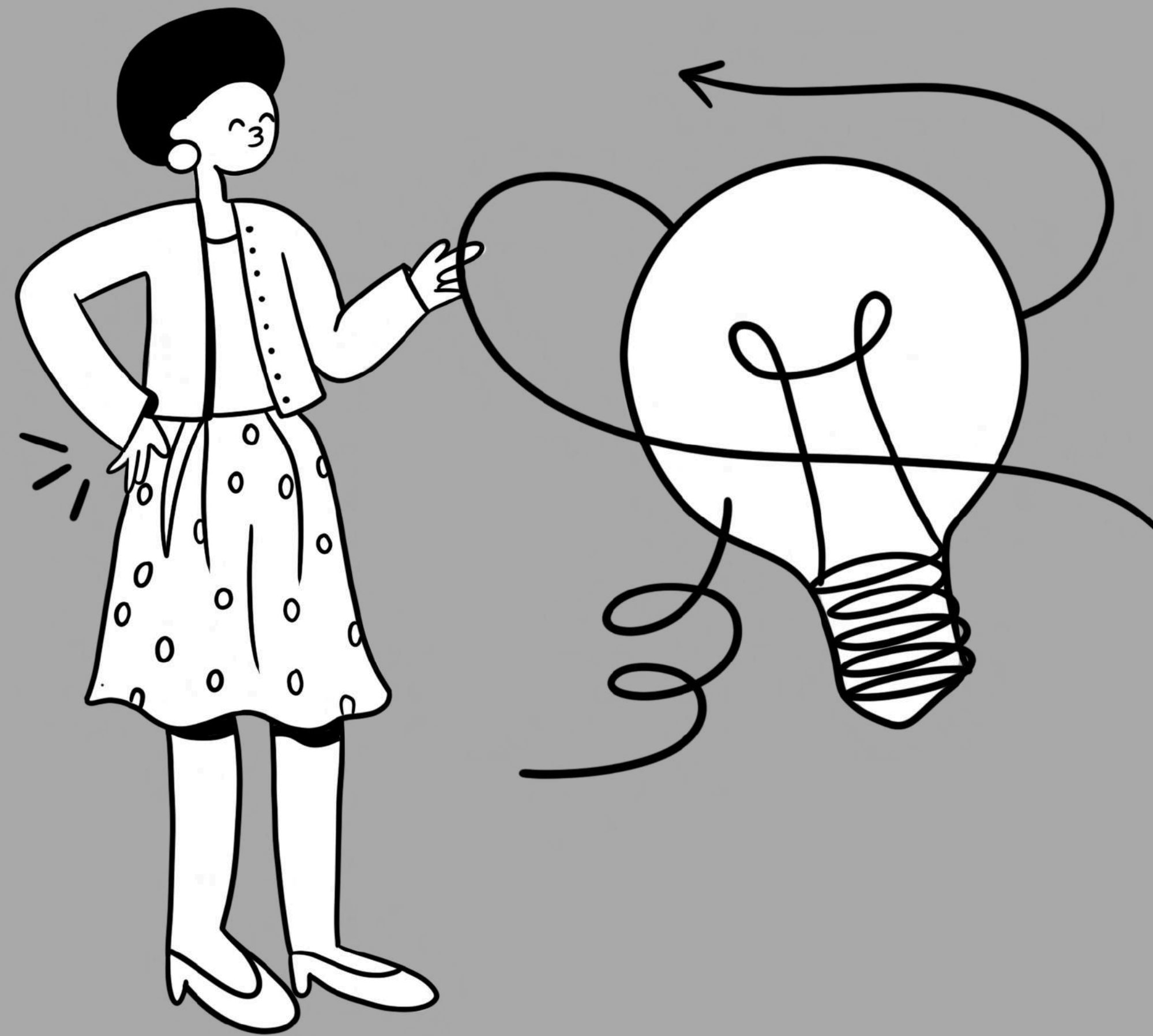
By highlighting packaging as a lens for understanding culture, this message translates a potentially niche focus into something universally relatable. It conveys accessibility and immediacy, making the museum feel relevant to everyday experiences.



## **“Not art. Not history. Just life.”**

This message distinguishes the museum from traditional cultural institutions by emphasising its focus on everyday artefacts. It suggests that the museum is playful, approachable, and democratic, breaking down perceptions of elitism often associated with museums (Black, 2012).





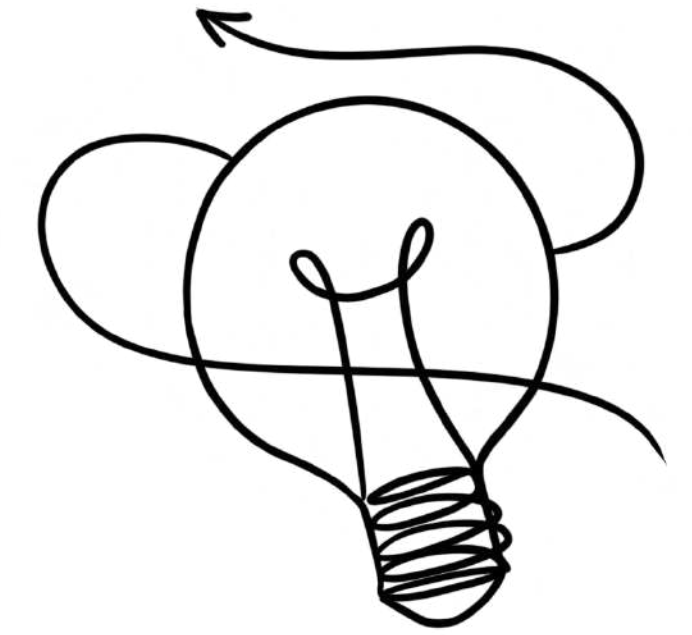
## “Strategy with a Story”

The key messages collectively shift the narrative from “a museum about brands” to “**a museum about people.**” They emphasise experience over theory, emotion over information, and identity over abstraction. **This repositioning directly aligns with the expectations of younger audiences,** who seek cultural spaces that feel relevant, participatory, and personally meaningful (Falk, 2009).

By anchoring campaigns around these messages, the Museum of Brands can transform its biggest challenge, “misperception” into its greatest strength: a museum that tells the story of everyday life through the brands we all know and remember.



# Goals and Objectives



## Primary Goal

The overarching aim of this campaign is to reposition the Museum of Brands as a museum of people, not products. By doing so, the museum can overcome its current perception gap, where it is misunderstood as corporate or irrelevant, and instead be recognised as a time capsule of everyday life that resonates across generations.

## Objectives

### 1. Boost Awareness Among Young Audiences (18–35)

- Why: Research shows that Gen Z and Millennials rarely know the museum exists, despite being the demographic most likely to engage with nostalgic, immersive experiences.

### 2. Drive Social Media Engagement and Growth (+30% in three months)

- Why: Visibility today is tied to digital presence. Without an active and playful online voice, the museum remains invisible to digital natives.

### 3. Increase Student and Youth Attendance by 25% within a Year

- Why: Students and young professionals are both an untapped audience and potential long-term advocates. Their visits generate word-of-mouth buzz and position the museum as part of youth culture.

### 4. Collaborate with Creators and Influencers (5+ partnerships)

- Why: Creators act as cultural translators, showing audiences why a space is worth their time. A single authentic TikTok or vlog can reach thousands more effectively than traditional advertising.

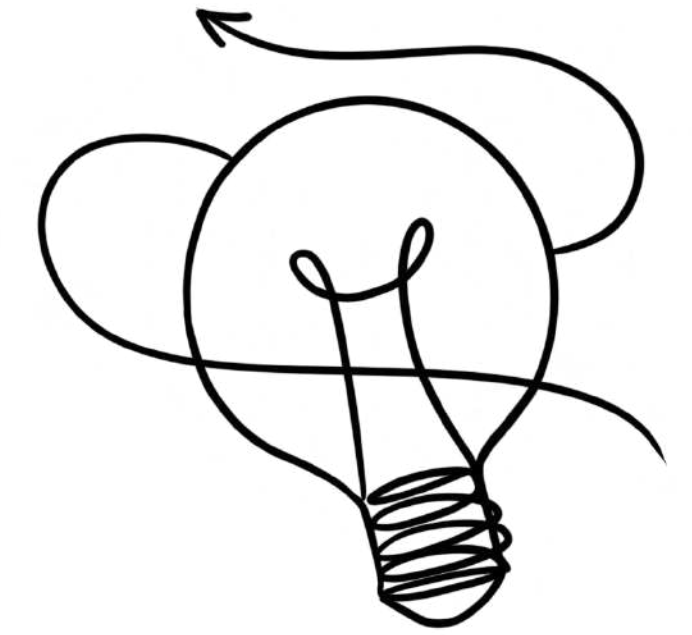
### 5. Reframe the Museum as an “Instagrammable” Cultural Spot

- Why: Benchmarks such as the Design Museum and the Museum of Ice Cream prove that being photogenic and playful drives footfall among young audiences.

These objectives align with Kotler and Kotler’s (2018) framework for museum marketing, which emphasises mission-driven strategies that balance audience growth, relevance, and sustainability.



# “A Museum of Everything. For Everyone.”



## Strategy

This strategy reframes the museum from a focus on logos and packaging as objects to people’s lived experiences and identities. It positions the museum as a space of memory, creativity, and shared culture. The campaign will be delivered through a multi-channel approach, combining digital-first storytelling with offline activations. The strategy emphasises three pillars:

1. **Nostalgia as a Hook** – leveraging personal and cultural memory to attract audiences.
2. **Digital Storytelling** – ensuring visibility across TikTok, Instagram, and influencer networks.
3. **Experiential Visibility** – bringing the museum to the city through posters, OOH campaigns, and documentary storytelling.

## Creative Concepts and Campaign Names

Several campaign name options were developed, reflecting different tonal approaches:

- **Museum of You** – highlights the personal and identity-based narrative.
- **Made You Look!** – playful, bold, and attention-grabbing.
- **Objects of Us** – poetic, emphasising collective memory.
- **Everyday Museum** – accessible, framing it as part of daily life.

For validation, informal feedback gathered during the Great Road Festival and internship indicated that messages emphasising personal memory and shared culture resonated most strongly. Campaign lines such as “Because every brand is part of your story” or “One museum. Infinite memories” were perceived as inviting and relatable.



# Strategy

Position the Museum of Brands as a living archive of everyday life, blending nostalgia with interactive, digital-first experiences. The strategy rests on four pillars: Awareness, Relevance, Digital Engagement and Experiential value.

## Tactics and Execution

### 1. Digital and Social Media

- Launch short-form video campaigns on TikTok and Instagram Reels with formats such as “Things Only 90s Kids Remember” or “Guess the Snack Challenge.”
- Collaborate with micro-influencers and student creators to produce authentic, peer-driven content from inside the museum.
- Curate Spotify playlists tied to decades (e.g., “Sounds of the 90s Time Tunnel”), extending nostalgic experiences into digital spaces.

### 2. Posters and Out-of-Home (OOH) Campaigns

- Guerrilla-style posters in Tube stations, coffee shops, and campuses featuring familiar everyday products with captions such as: “Life before netflix” or “This snack survived three generations.”
- Use minimalist design and bold typography to spark curiosity and FOMO.

### 3. Documentary

- A 5–10 minute film showcasing the museum through audience reactions, visitor interviews, and curator insights.
- Narrative arc: “Not about history. About you.”
- The documentary becomes the centrepiece of the campaign, shared online, on the museum website, and across socials.

### 4. In-Museum Enhancements

- Highlight Instagrammable moments with clear signage (e.g., “Take your #BrandBack shot here”).
- Incorporate interactive installations such as AR filters that allow visitors to “step into” different decades.

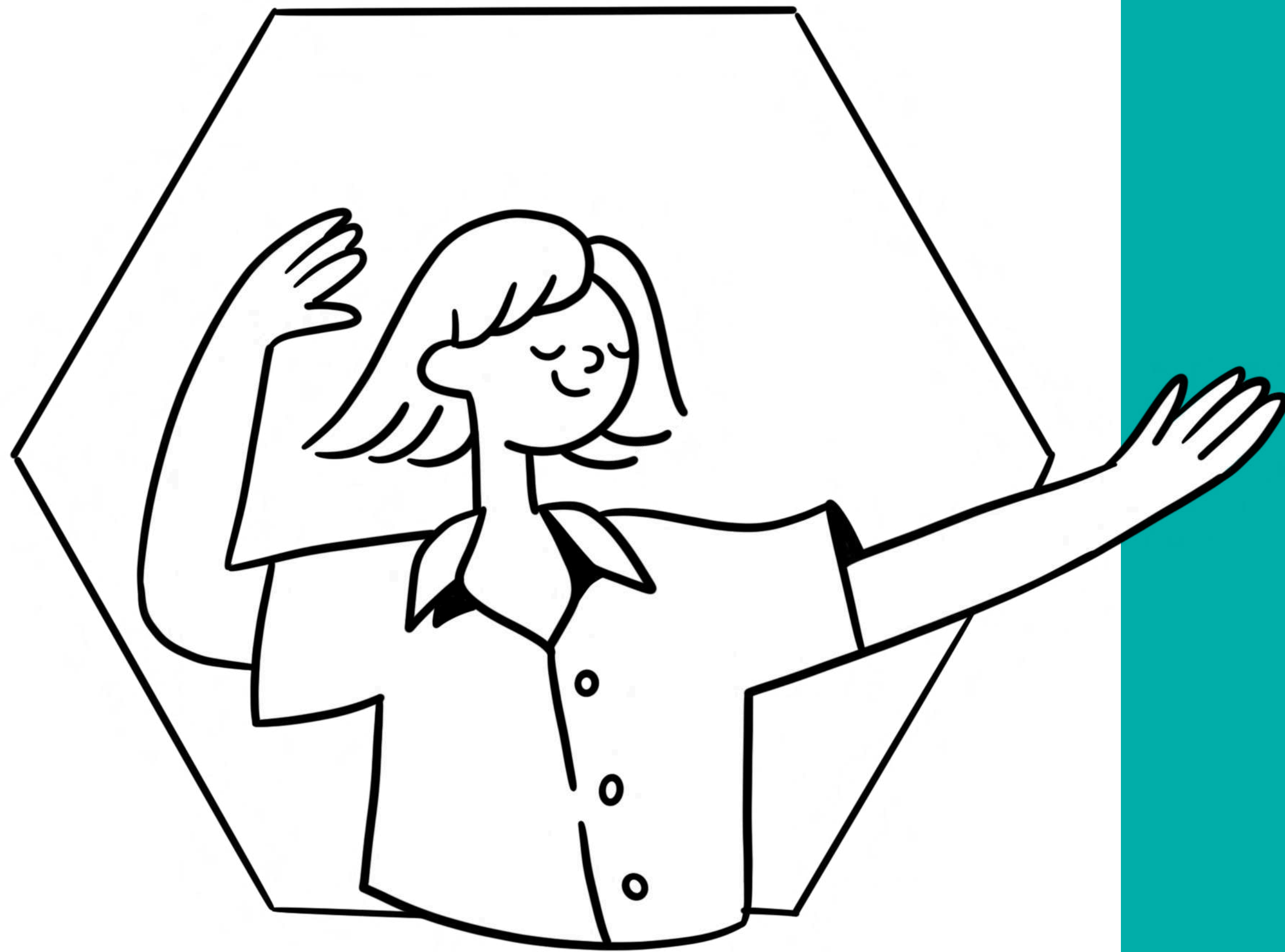
## Validation of Strategy

The proposed approach directly responds to validated problems:

- **Awareness:** Posters and OOH campaigns overcome weak street presence.
- **Relevance:** Nostalgia-led messaging creates emotional connections beyond brands and packaging.
- **Digital Engagement:** Social-first content and influencer partnerships address limited youth visibility.
- **Experiential Value:** Enhancements and documentaries foster FOMO and encourage social sharing.

This aligns with experiential marketing literature, which stresses emotional engagement and participatory storytelling in attracting younger demographics (Pine and Gilmore, 1999; Black, 2012). By merging nostalgic memory with digital-native communication, the Museum of Brands can reposition itself as a museum for everyone—not just a collection of objects, but a cultural space reflecting everyday lives across generations.





## Posters and Out-of-Home (OOH) Campaign

The posters created for this campaign capture the essence of the Museum of Brands: familiar objects that trigger memory, paired with copywriting that reframes the ordinary as extraordinary. Each design positions the museum not as a corporate space, but as a “museum of your memories.”



## Strategic Objectives

### 1. Make the Invisible Visible

- The Museum of Brands has limited street presence. Posters extend its visibility into public, everyday environments such as Tube stations, cafés, vending machines, campuses.
- By appearing in high-dwell spaces, the campaign interrupts routines and compels audiences to re-examine familiar items in a new light.

### 2. Leverage Nostalgia as a Hook

- Taglines such as “You had it. But forgot it.” or “You’ve seen it. But never noticed it.” connect directly to visitors’ emotions.
- They spark recognition and curiosity, reminding people that the objects they overlook are tied to childhood, family, and cultural moments.

### 3. Bridge Online and Offline Engagement

- Posters are designed to be social-media friendly, with bold typography and striking objects that encourage photographing and sharing.
- QR codes and hashtags (#BrandMeBack, #MuseumOfYourMemories) invite audiences to connect with the museum digitally, transforming OOH into multi-platform storytelling.

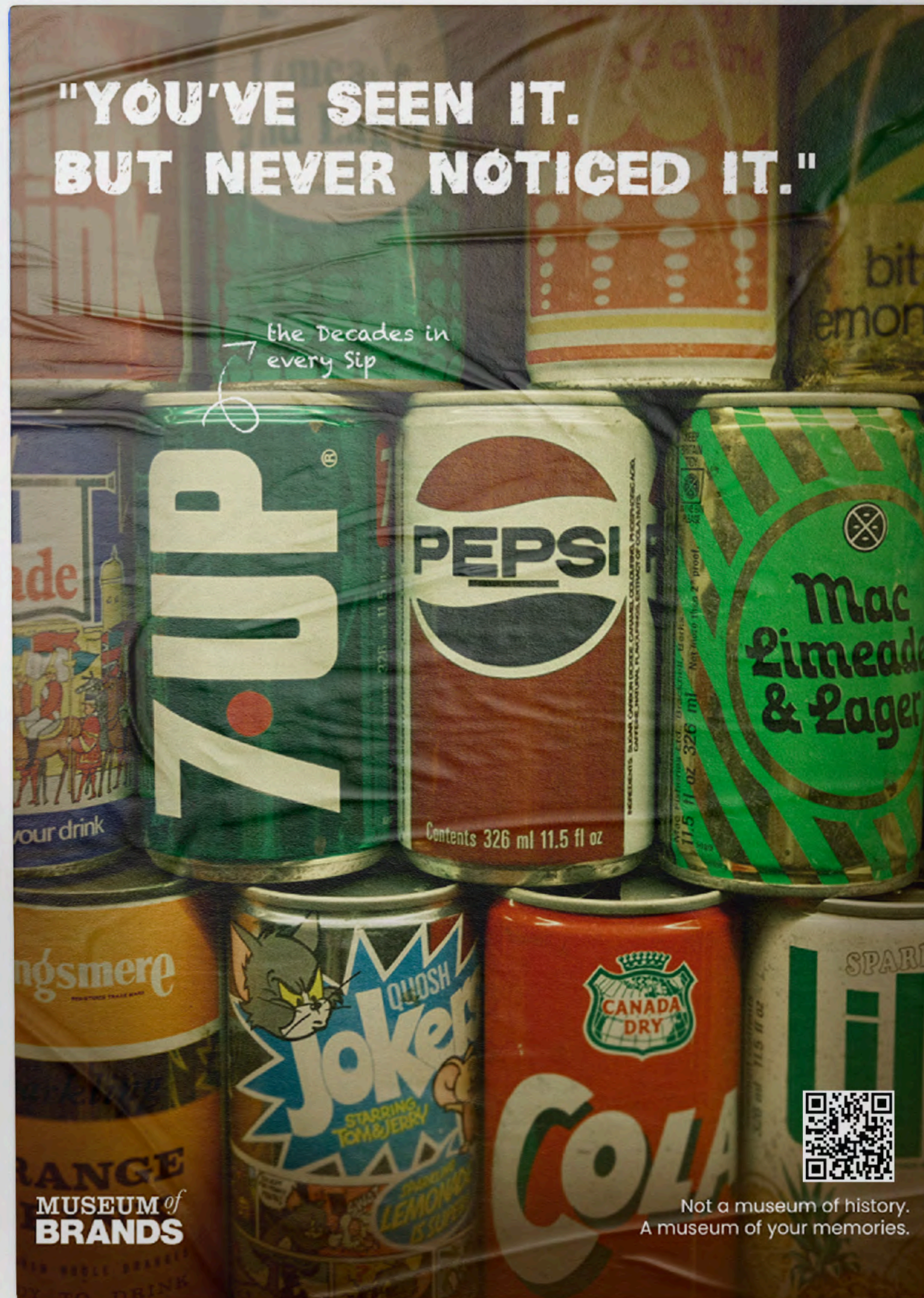
## Creative Approach

**1. Headline Copy:** Short, playful lines that use surprise and nostalgia. They mimic the style of social media captions—direct, witty, and instantly relatable.

**2. Visuals:** Simple product-focused photography (cameras, cans, packaging) emphasises familiarity. Nostalgic filters and retro tones give the posters a lo-fi aesthetic that resonates with Gen Z’s taste for vintage visuals.

**3. Call-to-Action:** “Not a museum of history. A museum of your memories.” This reinforces the reframing of the museum as personal and emotional, not corporate or abstract.







"YOU'VE SEEN IT.  
BUT NEVER NOTICED IT."



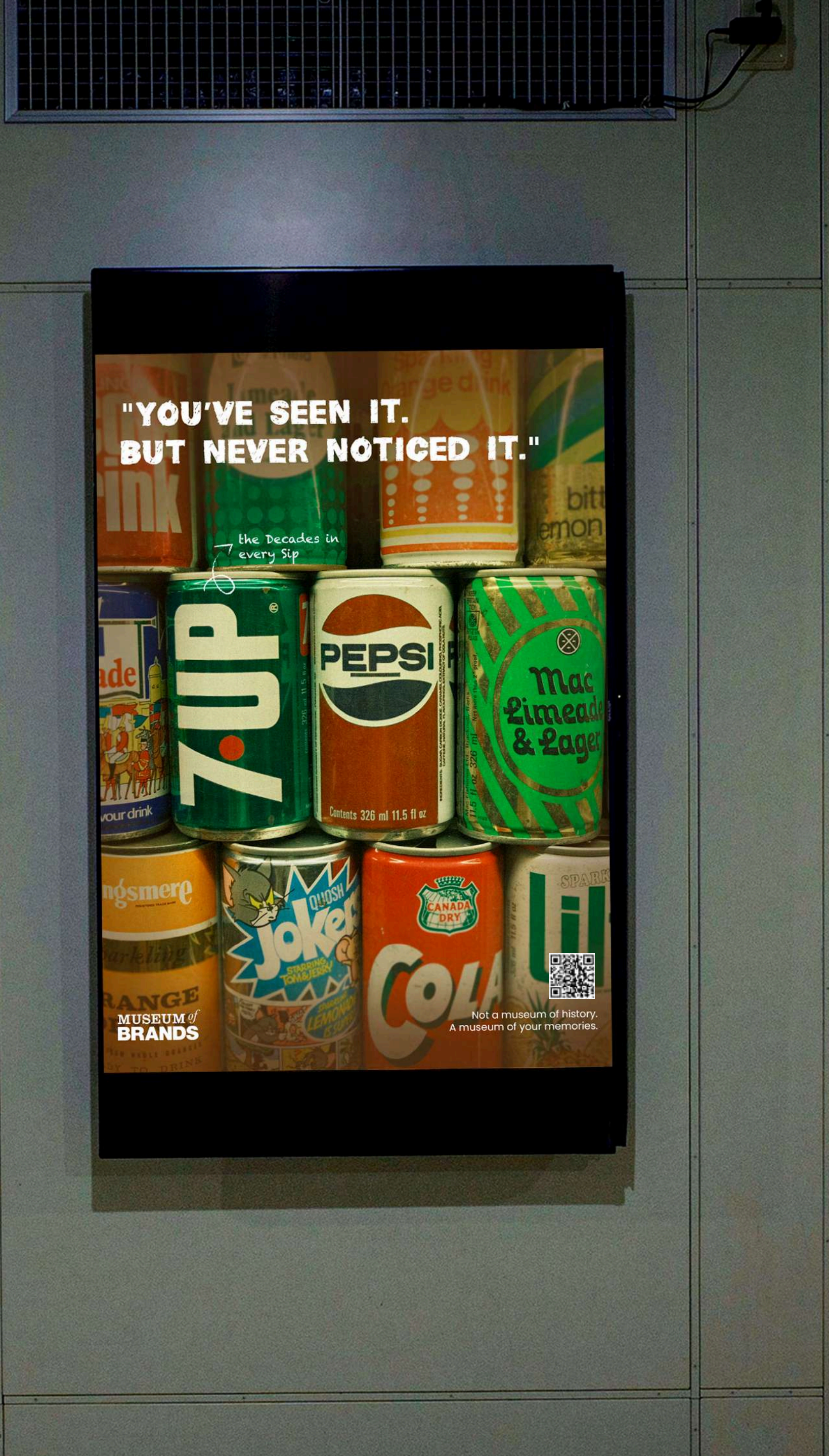
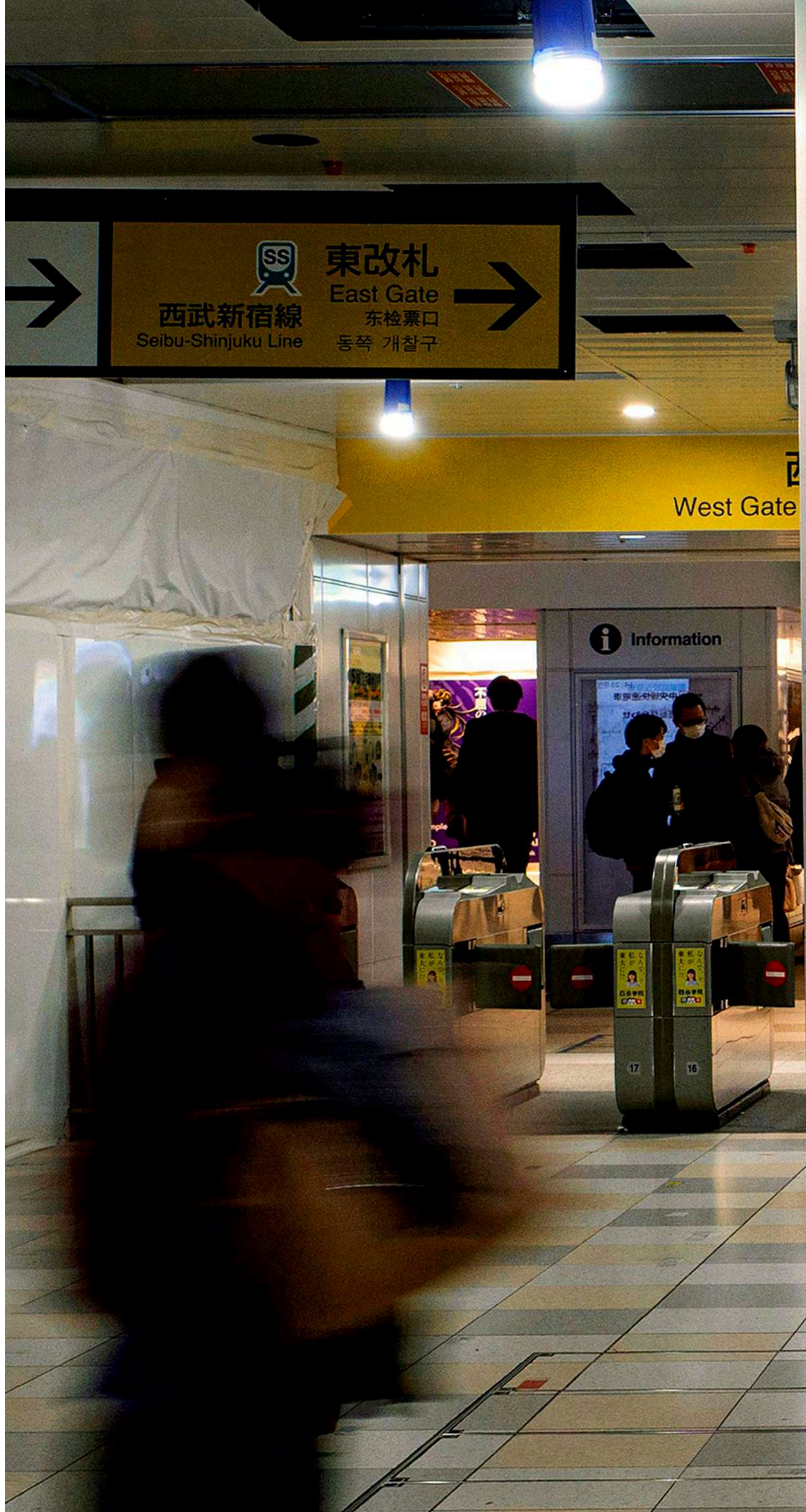
the juice that poured  
through generations.



MUSEUM of  
BRANDS

Not a museum of history.  
A museum of your memories.













"THE OGs OF EVERYDAY LIFE."

MUSEUM of  
BRANDS



the juice that poured  
through generations.

Surf  
BOILS SPOTLESS

"YOU HAD IT.  
BUT FORGOT IT."

MUSEUM of  
BRANDS



Captured Across  
Generations.

KODAK  
Brownie i27  
CAMERA





**"YOU HAD IT.  
BUT FORGOT IT."**

**MUSEUM of  
BRANDS**

Captured Across  
Generations.



**"THE OGs OF EVERYDAY LIFE."**

**MUSEUM of BRANDS**

the juice that poured through generations.

**Surf**  
BOILS SPOTLESS  
SPOTLESS WHITE!



## Why it works

1. **Everyday nostalgia in everyday spaces** – Seeing familiar objects like a Kodak camera, a cereal box, or a soda can framed as cultural icons in public places makes people pause. For younger audiences, this creates a sense of recognition mixed with curiosity: “I know this brand, but why is it on a poster?”
2. **Playful copywriting** – Headlines such as “You had it. But forgot it” or “Seen a million times. Never like this” reflect the meme-like, witty tone of internet culture. This makes the posters feel closer to social media captions than traditional advertising, immediately relatable to Gen Z and Millennials.
3. **Nostalgia as a hook** – The designs spark memories of childhood for Millennials and early Gen Z, while also tapping into Gen Z’s fascination with retro aesthetics. Nostalgia works across both groups, either as memory or as style.
4. **Creating FOMO in real life** – Posters in high-traffic areas (like Tube stations or campuses) transform ordinary spaces into mini cultural encounters. For younger audiences who often seek “Instagrammable” or shareable experiences, the posters themselves become part of the experience.
5. **Bridging offline and online** – Each poster acts as a gateway to digital content through hashtags and QR codes. This ensures that physical visibility translates into online engagement, making the campaign multi-platform.

## Theoretical Framing

This OOH strategy draws on guerrilla marketing principles, which succeed by reframing everyday environments into spaces of surprise and cultural reflection (Ay et al., 2010). It also aligns with Barthes’ (1972) theory of semiotics, where ordinary objects (juice cans, cameras, snacks) become cultural signifiers carrying layers of memory and identity.



# Execution Process

## 1. Concept Development

- Select iconic, recognisable products from the museum's collection (e.g., retro Pepsi cans, Polaroid cameras, old sweets).
- Pair them with short, witty taglines that evoke memory while sparking curiosity.
- Keep visuals minimalistic so the product and headline dominate.

## 2. Design & Production

- Create core design templates:
- Single Object Focus (e.g., a juice can with "You had it. But forgot it").
- Playful Cultural Reference (e.g., Walkman + floppy disk = "The OG influencer starter pack").
- Ensure bold typography and strong colour palettes that stand out in busy environments.

## 3. Placement Strategy

- Transport hubs: Tube stations, bus stops, and train platforms — high-dwell time spaces where audiences stop and look.
- University campuses: Posters in student unions, libraries, and common spaces to directly reach Gen Z.
- Cafés & lifestyle spaces: Independent coffee shops and co-working spaces popular with creatives and Millennials.
- Street culture hotspots: Locations like Shoreditch, Camden, and Southbank, associated with youth culture and social sharing.

## 4. Integration with Digital

- Add QR codes leading to the museum's website or campaign landing page.
- Include hashtags (#BrandMeBack, #MuseumOfMemories) to encourage user-generated posts.
- Track engagement through social mentions and QR code scans.

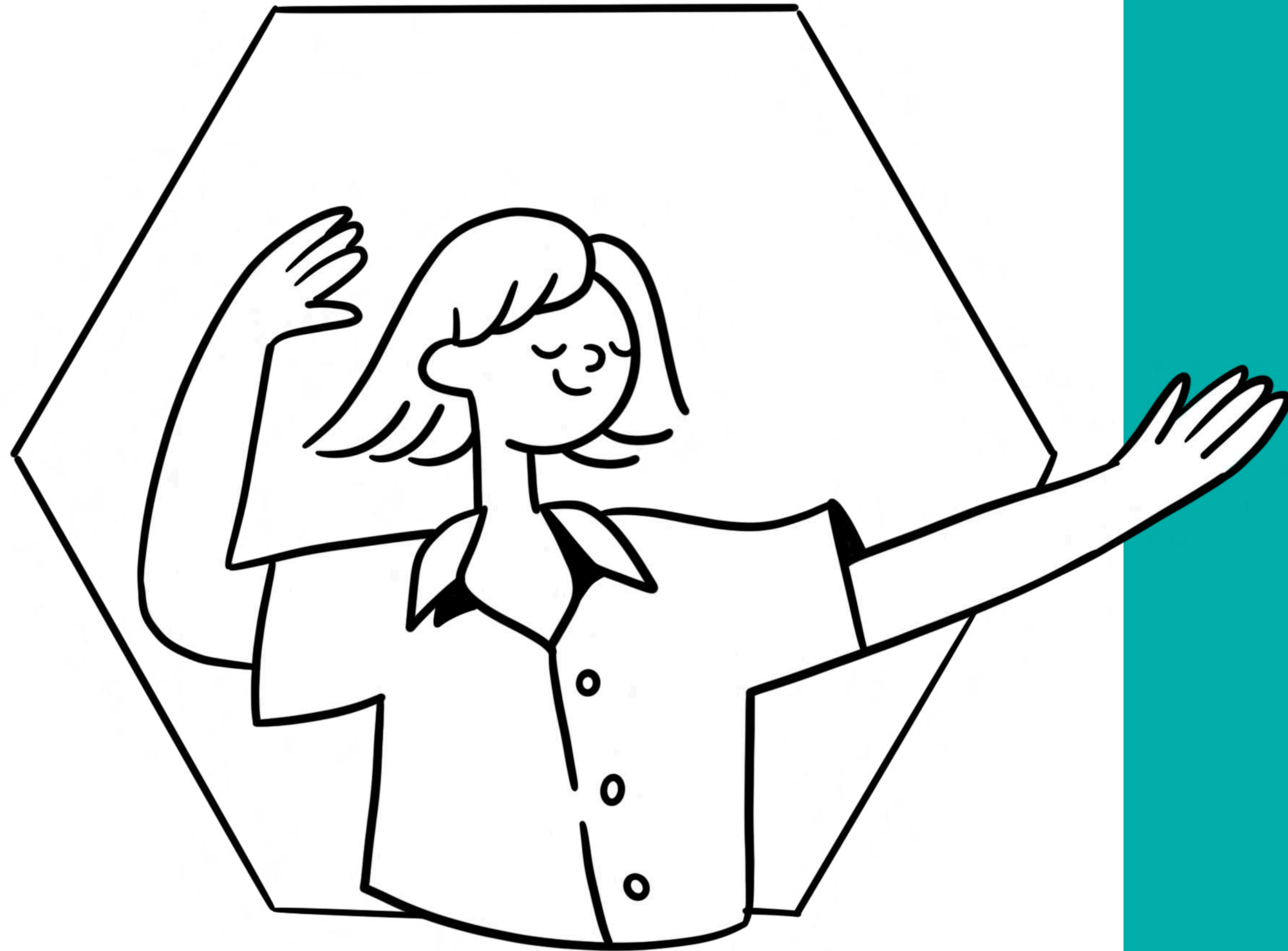
## 5. Rollout Phases

- Phase 1 (Awareness): Launch posters across London with broad placements in Tube stations and high-traffic areas.
- Phase 2 (Engagement): Focus on campuses and cafés, pairing physical posters with digital challenges (e.g., post your favourite retro snack).
- Phase 3 (Sustainability): Rotate designs quarterly to feature different nostalgic objects, keeping the campaign fresh.

## 6. Measurement

- Track increases in web traffic and social media engagement via QR/hashtag use.
- Survey visitors at the museum to ask how they first heard about it.
- Compare youth attendance numbers before and after rollout.





# Social Media Strategy

The social media approach for the Museum of Brands is designed to make the museum visible, shareable, and culturally relevant to younger audiences. By blending nostalgia with digital trends, the strategy repositions the museum as a place not about “branding theory,” but about the everyday memories everyone shares.



# Strategic Objectives

## 1. Drive Awareness Through Relatability

- Use nostalgic references from the 90s and 2000s that directly connect with Gen Z and Millennials.
- Leverage hashtags like #IfYouKnowYouKnow and #BrandMeBack to build a participatory online community.
- Example: Toy-inspired posts (“If you know, you know!”) spark instant recognition and create FOMO.

## 2. Collaborate with Creators

- Partner with micro-influencers, student bloggers, TikTok creators, and nostalgic meme pages.
- Invite them to do museum takeovers or film “90s/2000s throwback” reels inside the Time Tunnel.
- Their authentic voices make the museum feel approachable and fun, rather than corporate.

## 3. Engage Student Communities

- Collaborate with design schools, universities, and student unions.
- Offer challenges like “Design Your Own Nostalgic Packaging” with winners featured on the museum’s social channels.
- Student discounts + content collaborations encourage peer-to-peer promotion.

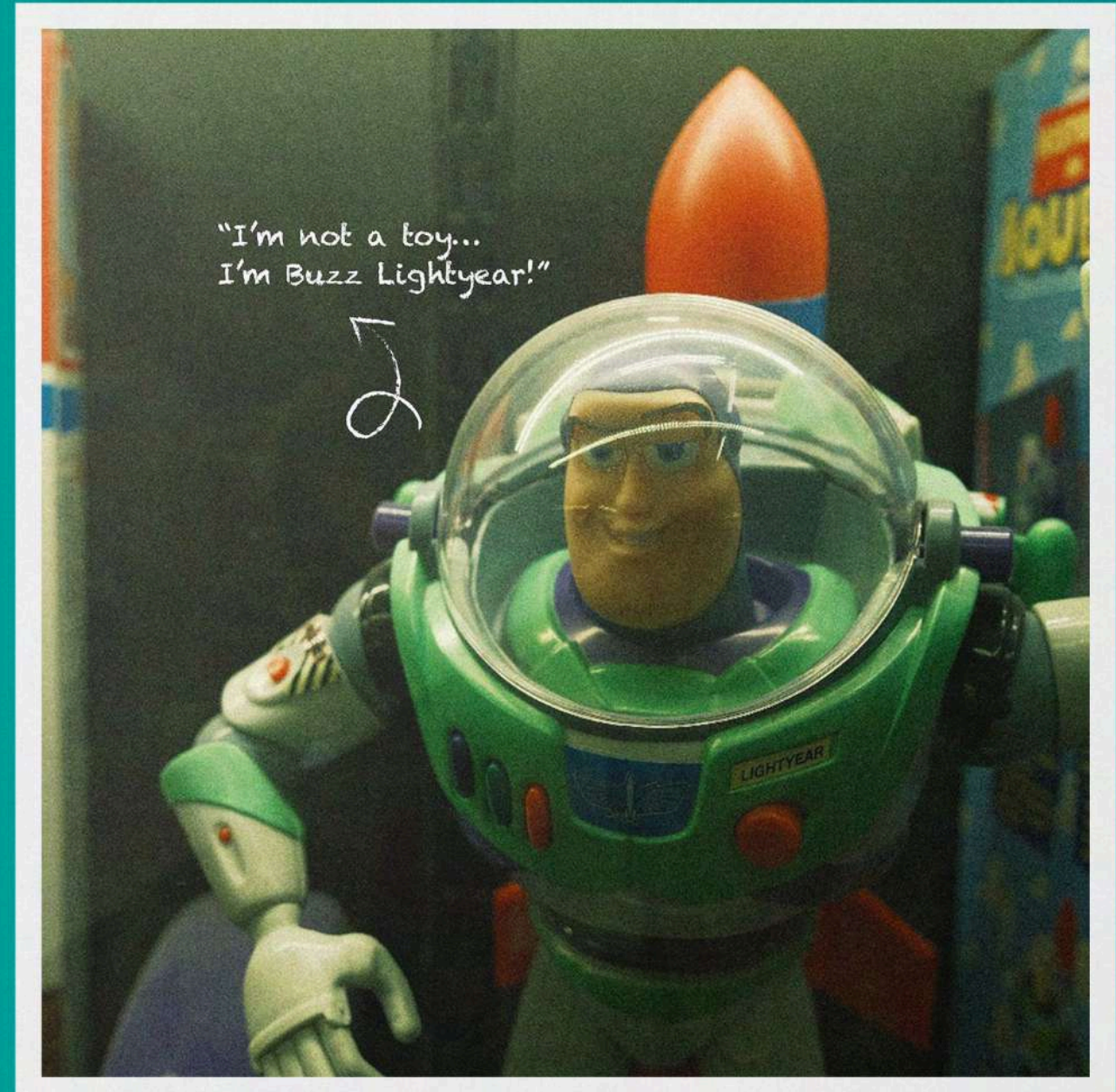
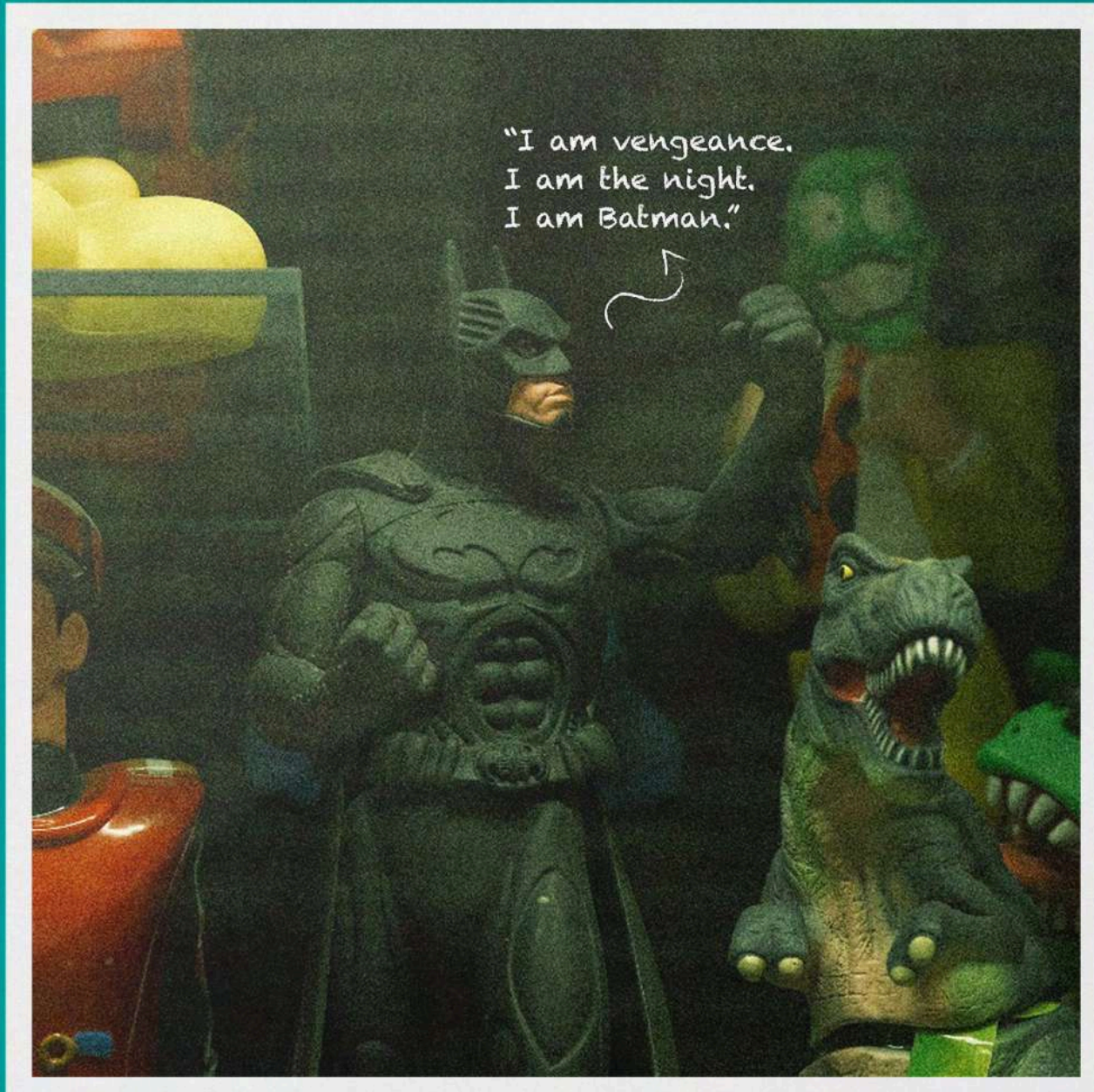
## 4. Tap Into Pop Culture Crossovers

- Partner with brands or events with nostalgic appeal (e.g., cereal pop-ups, retro gaming nights, vinyl record stores).
- Cross-promotions amplify the museum’s presence in youth cultural spaces.

# Creative Approach

- 1. Static Posts:** Short, playful lines that use surprise and nostalgia. They mimic the style of social media captions—direct, witty, and instantly relatable. Image-led posts with captions like “If you know, you know” play into internet culture and inside-joke humour. Focus on objects that millennials and Gen Z recognise instantly (toys, snacks, gadgets).
- 2. Reels:** Short-form video content capturing the museum experience. Use trending sounds and quick edits to showcase The Time Tunnel as a nostalgic “scroll in real life.” Formats: “Things Only 90s Kids Remember,” “Decade in 15 Seconds,” or behind-the-scenes looks at quirky packaging.
- 3. Student-Created Content:** Feature design students making mini-docs, illustrations, or memes about the collection.
- 4. Co-Curated Playlists:** Spotify collabs where influencers or students share decade playlists (“Sounds of the 90s Time Tunnel”).





# if you know you know!  
90s and 2000s kids take over



## Why it works

- **Authenticity:** Young people trust peer voices more than institutional messaging.
- **Cultural Relevance:** Collaborations keep the museum visible in the same spaces as fashion drops, gaming content, and meme culture.
- **Participation:** Students and creators feel like co-owners of the campaign, not just audiences.
- **Amplification:** One post from a creator with 10k engaged followers is more effective than a generic ad.

## Execution Process

### 1. Content Planning

- Develop a three-month content calendar mixing static posts, reels, interactive stories, and influencer collaborations.
- Align content with cultural hooks such as seasonal events (Back to School nostalgia posts in September, Christmas ads through the decades in December).

### 2. Asset Creation

- Design posts using bold, nostalgic visuals drawn from the collection (cereal boxes, toys, adverts).
- Shoot short-form reels showcasing the museum's Time Tunnel and visitor reactions.
- Collaborate with student creators to co-design templates and memes.

### 3. Influencer Outreach

- Partner with 5–10 micro-influencers in London (design students, cultural bloggers, nostalgic meme pages).
- Invite them to visit the museum, film their experience, and share authentic reviews on TikTok and Instagram.

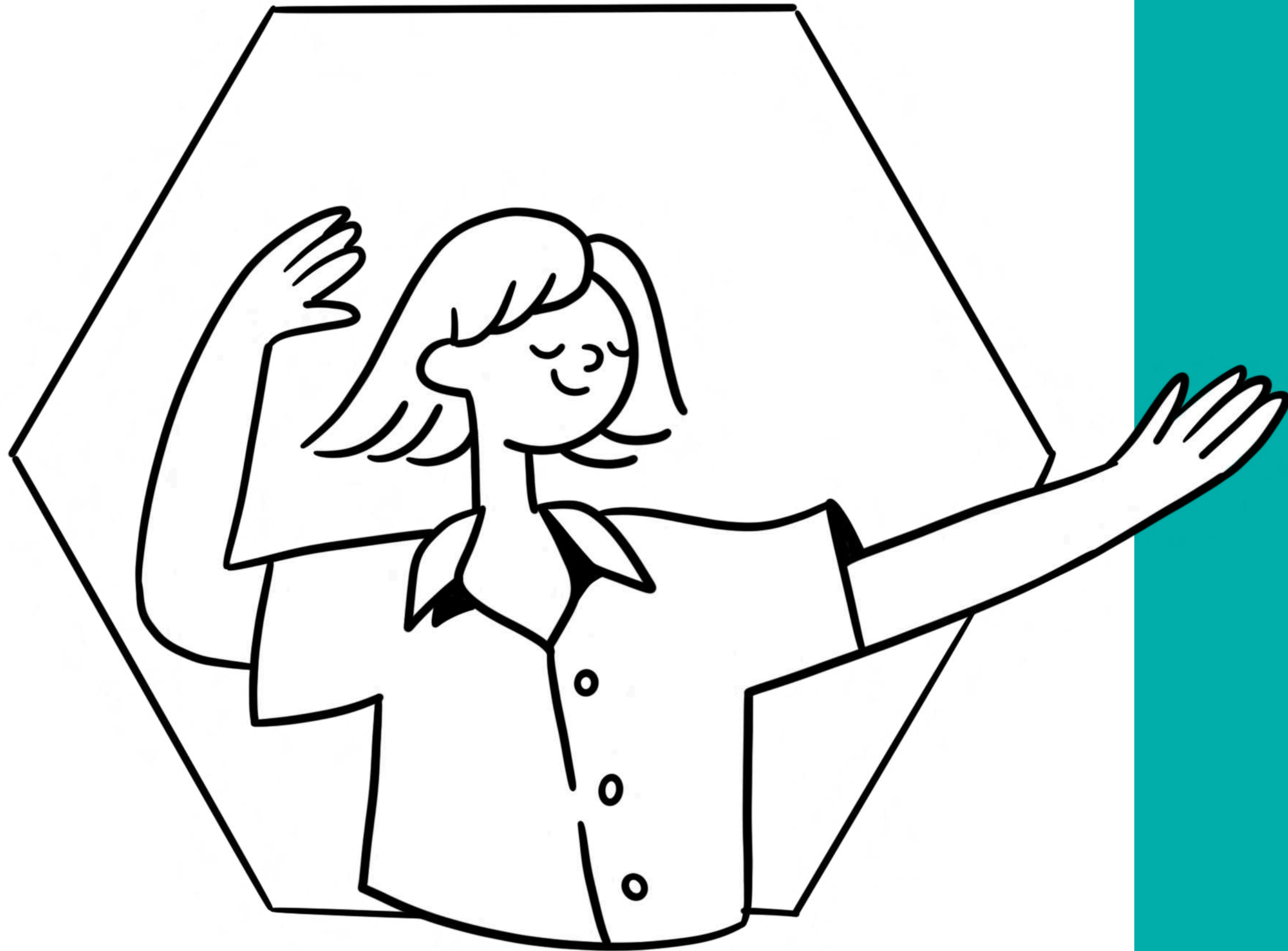
### 4. Posting & Engagement

- Schedule 3–4 posts per week, balancing reach (Reels, trending hashtags) with engagement (polls, quizzes, challenges).
- Engage actively in comments and repost visitor content to build a sense of community.

### 5. Measurement & Adaptation

- Track KPIs: follower growth, engagement rate, click-throughs to website, and mentions of the museum in tagged posts.
- Review performance monthly and adapt content types according to what gains the most traction.





# Documentary Strategy

The documentary was conceived as a storytelling tool to reposition the Museum of Brands. While posters and social media create intrigue, the documentary serves as a deeper narrative piece that explains what the museum truly is: a cultural time capsule that evokes memory, nostalgia, and identity.



## The Need for the Documentary

In the digital-first cultural landscape, storytelling is as important as collections. Short-form documentaries offer museums a medium to convey not just what they hold, but why it matters. As Barbash and Taylor (1997) argue, documentary film enables cultural institutions to frame objects within narratives that are emotionally compelling and socially relevant. Unlike static exhibitions or posters, film provides multisensory immersion, combining sound, visuals, and narrative voice to communicate identity.

For the Museum of Brands, a documentary is particularly relevant because it addresses the core perception gap: people often misunderstand the museum as corporate or academic, rather than as a cultural time capsule of everyday life. A documentary can clarify this by showing real people connecting with objects, positioning the museum as playful, nostalgic, and emotionally resonant.

Documentary films also have proven value in museum marketing. Studies show that audiences increasingly consume museum content online through video formats, which extend the museum's reach beyond physical visitors (Parry, 2007). Institutions such as the V&A and MoMA have successfully used short films and YouTube mini-docs to build global visibility, appealing especially to younger audiences accustomed to digital video as a primary information channel (Smith, 2023).

## Message and Creative Intent

The message of the documentary was framed around the idea that the Museum of Brands is “not about products, but about people.” Every object in the collection is a vessel of memory, whether a sweet wrapper, a cereal box, or a toy. This reflects Davis' (1979) idea of nostalgia as a social emotion that binds personal memory with cultural history. By showing visitor reactions across generations, the film communicates that the museum is a place where everyone can recognise a piece of their own life.

Including staff interviews provided interpretive authority, reinforcing that packaging and advertising are not trivial, but vital cultural records (Hancock, 2015). The blend of aesthetics, reactions, and insider voices aimed to position the museum as both playful and serious: a time capsule of design, memory, and identity.



## My Role and Creative Management

The documentary was entirely student-led and independently produced, which reflected the grassroots ethos of the project. As creative director, I oversaw every stage:

1. Convincing and securing permission from the museum.
2. Storyboarding and narrative development, ensuring the flow moved from objects → people → memory.
3. Team Assembly:
  - Parth (DoP/Cinematographer)
  - Sushrut (Assistant DoP)
  - Abhinav (Co-editor with Parth)
  - Rajat, Alvita, Khushi, Hargun, Mihir, Proud (actors/participants, to ensure authentic, natural reactions and full time supporters).
4. Creative Direction on Shoot: guiding camera framing, directing reactions, and ensuring interviews complemented visuals.
5. Post-production input: shaping the film with editors to maintain narrative clarity and emotional consistency.

This reflects what Barbash and Taylor (1997) describe as cross-cultural documentary practice, where the filmmaker acts not just as observer but as mediator and curator of voices.

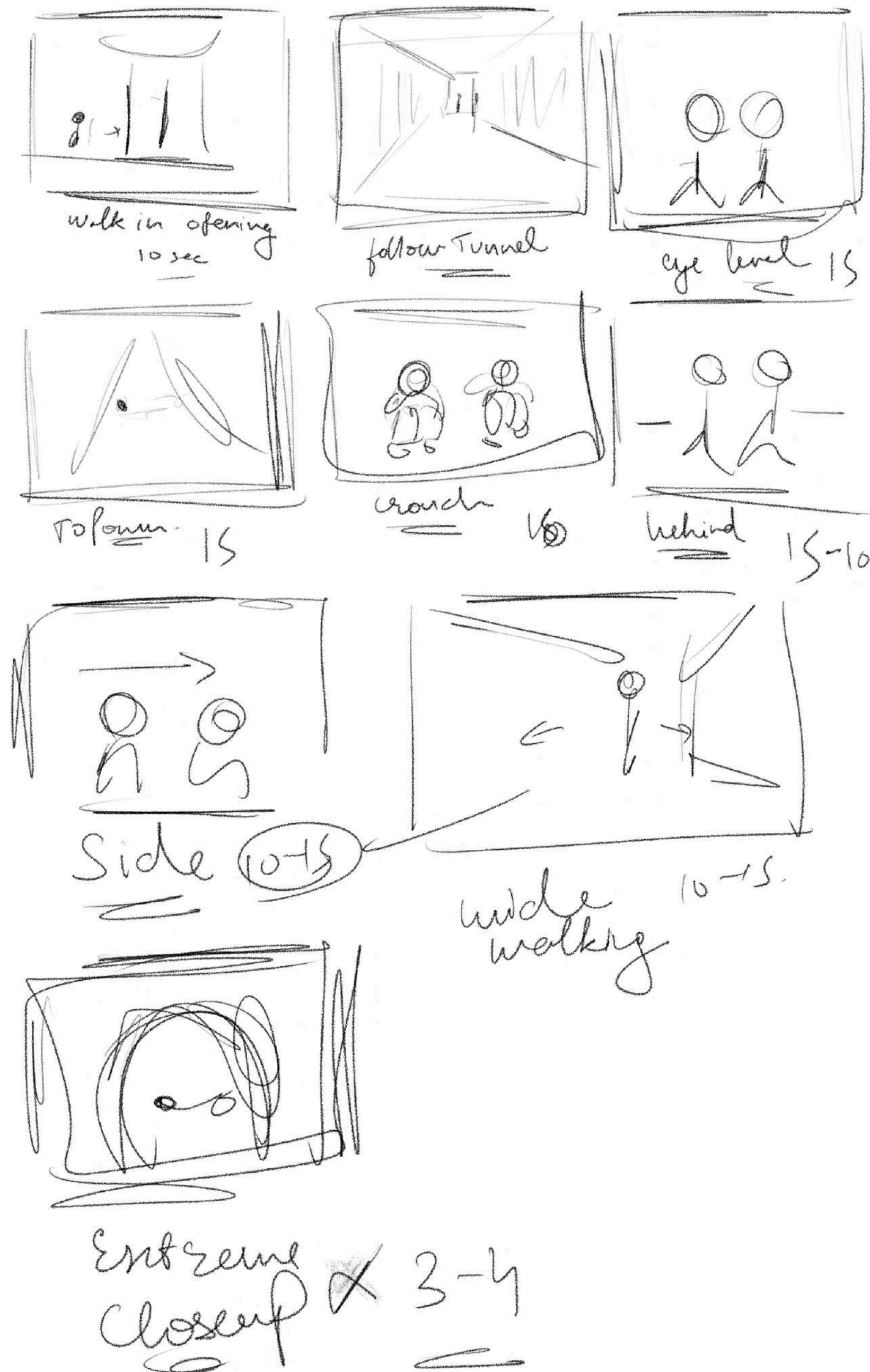


fig. 34



fig. 36





## Storyboard Draft

### Scene 1: Opening

- Exterior of museum, establishing shots.
- Overlay text: "This is not a museum of history. It's a museum of your memories."

### Scene 2: Entering the Museum

- Wide shots of the Time Tunnel, colourful packaging.
- First visitor impressions.

### Scene 3: Visitor Reactions

- Young people smiling, pointing, laughing.
- Older visitors reminiscing.
- Quotes: "I remember this from my childhood!"

### Scene 4: Object Close-Ups

- Toys, snacks, drinks, vintage ads.
- Cutaways to visitors reacting.

### Scene 5: Staff Interviews

- Curators/staff explaining cultural significance.
- Reinforce message: "It's not about logos. It's about life."

### Scene 6: Intergenerational Connection

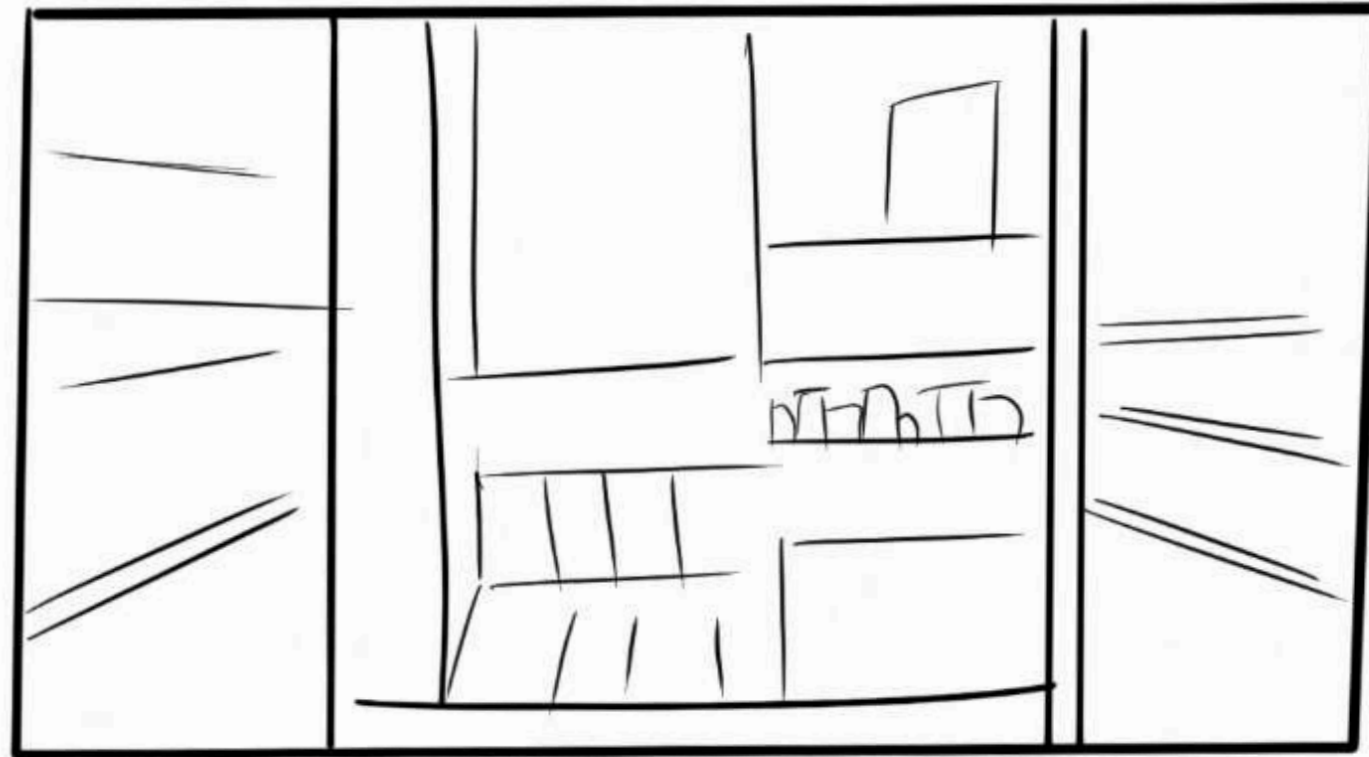
- Families together in the Time Tunnel.
- Parents explaining brands to children.

### Scene 7: Call to Action

- Visitors filming reels, selfies, writing in the guest book.
- Closing line: "Come find your story on the shelf."



Opening shot of museum displays



Close-up of visitor reactions



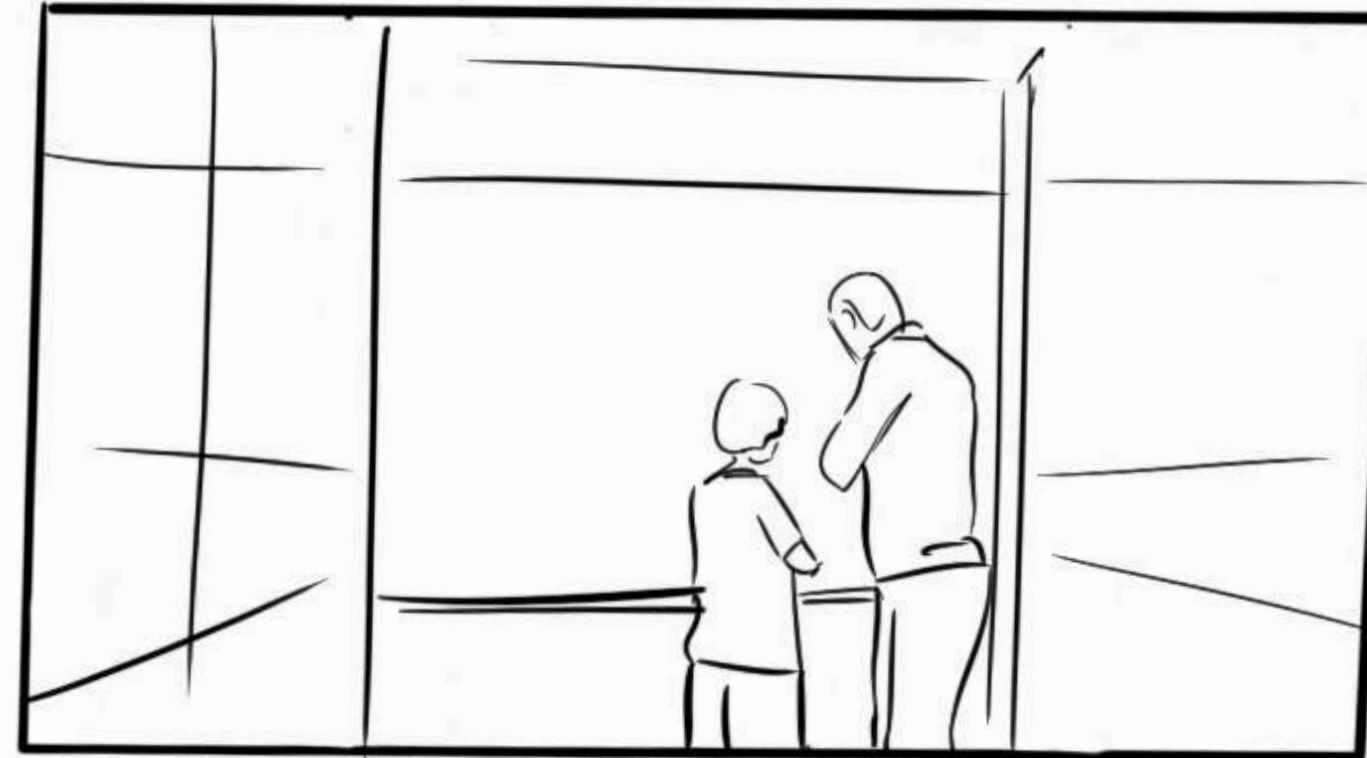
Candid moment of visitors discussing an object.



Group interaction



Visitors entering



Interview segment



Museum café scene



Wide shot of visitors walking through the Time Tunnel



Closing shot of visitors walking away





# Execution and Aesthetic Choices

Unlike experimental lo-fi approaches, this documentary avoided VHS filters and retro overlays, instead keeping the visuals clean, cinematic, and timeless. This choice reflects current youth preferences for authenticity over artificiality (Smith, 2023). The decision to let visitor reactions and museum aesthetics speak for themselves created a sense of honesty and emotional immediacy.

- **Cinematography:** handheld close-ups for intimacy, wide shots for atmosphere.
- **Editing:** narrative flow prioritised human connection over stylisation.
- **Sound Design:** ambient sounds of the museum (laughter, chatter, footsteps) layered with subtle music to preserve realism.

# Why the Documentary Matters Strategically

1. **Reframing Identity:** Corrects misconceptions by showing the museum is about memories, not corporate branding.
2. **Emotional Resonance:** Visitor reactions demonstrate the museum’s power to spark nostalgia across generations.
3. **Digital Amplification:** Full film (3–5 mins) for YouTube/website, cut-downs for TikTok and Instagram.
4. **Youth Relevance:** A documentary format aligns with Gen Z/Millennial media consumption habits—video, authenticity, and detail (Pew Research Center, 2022).
5. **Global Reach:** Positions the museum for audiences beyond London, making it visible to international digital publics.

# Distribution

**Instagram Reels/TikTok:** 30–60 second cutdowns of the full documentary.  
**YouTube Shorts:** condensed narrative for wide reach.  
**Museum website:** full 3–5 min film embedded as the “About Us” video.  
**Influencer tie-ins:** content creators invited to share their reactions during filming.

# Impact Measurement

1. View counts, shares, and engagement rates on digital platforms.
2. Visitor survey questions: “Did you discover the museum through the documentary/social media clips?”
3. Tracking website traffic spikes post-launch.



## Documentary Video

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MZG6RQMwZWMN4\\_j2oNR3nLrEPzjltZ96/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1MZG6RQMwZWMN4_j2oNR3nLrEPzjltZ96/view?usp=share_link)

## Behind the Scenes Video

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aRR3hTvGOWa6VYQ6STHmbGwdG-XhCEn0/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1aRR3hTvGOWa6VYQ6STHmbGwdG-XhCEn0/view?usp=share_link)

## Social media links

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ycLJxhbxqsdsZoU0-Y06uAz9eAqtoCxq?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1ycLJxhbxqsdsZoU0-Y06uAz9eAqtoCxq?usp=share_link)

## “Those Who Made It Possible”

My Crew, My People – Parth, Rajat, Sushrut, Alvita, Khushi, Proud, Hargun



# “Those Who Made It Possible” My Crew, My People



Parth



Rajat



Sayali



Khushi



Sushrut



Alvita



Proud



Hargun



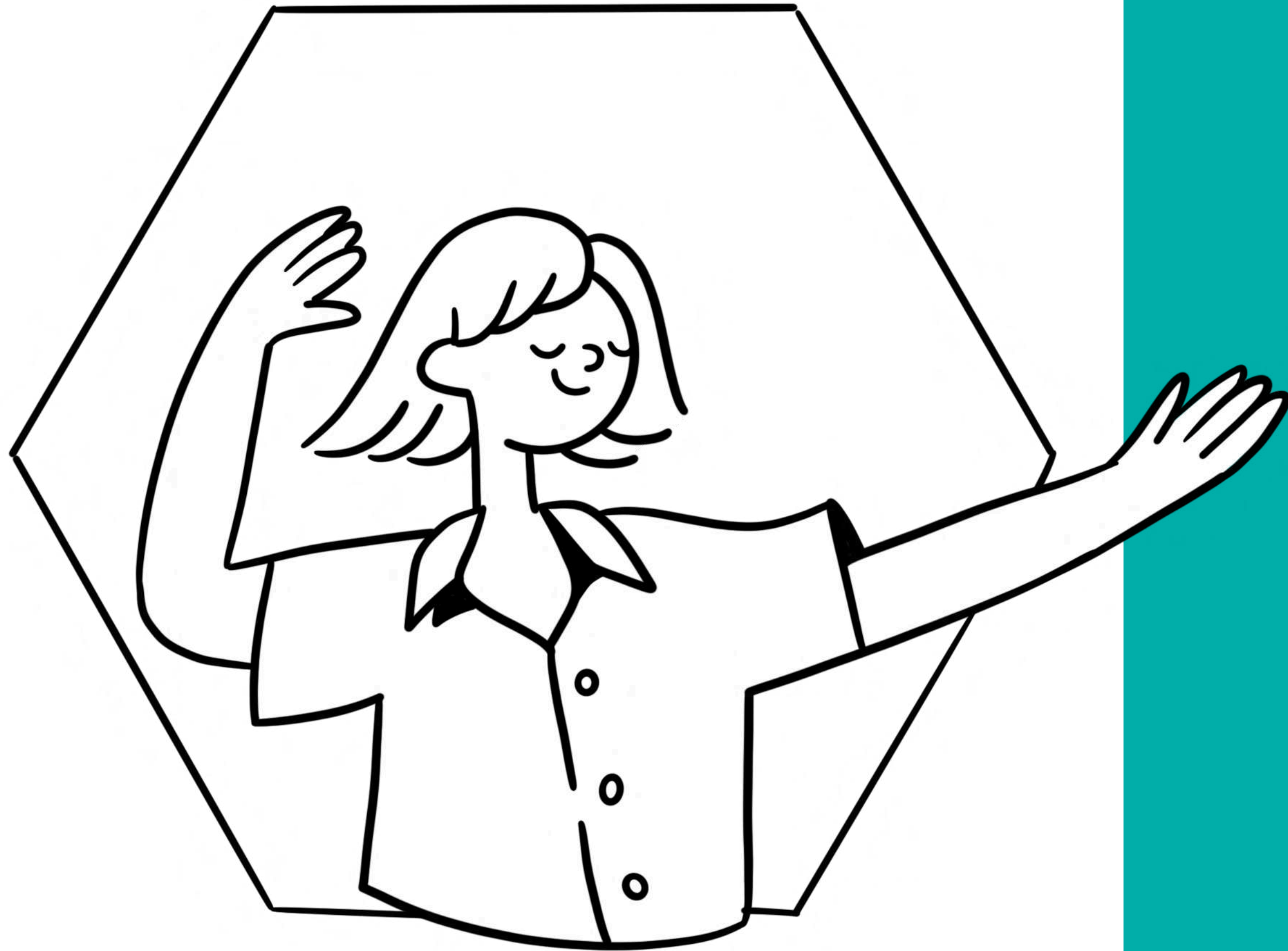
Mihir





BEHIND THE SCENES





## Vending Machine Strategy: “A Taste of Memory”



## Concept: “A Taste of Memory”

A branded vending machine, placed in high-footfall areas (universities, shopping centres, stations), dispenses everyday products wrapped in retro packaging from different decades. Each item is linked back to the Museum of Brands, sparking nostalgia and curiosity while physically bringing the museum’s collection into public space.

## Objectives

- Awareness: Make the museum visible beyond its location by placing its collection “in the wild.”
- Relevance: Connect with audiences through playful, everyday interactions.
- Engagement: Encourage people to interact, share photos, and tag the campaign on social media.

## Execution

1. Vending Machine Activation
  - Machine stocked with everyday snacks, drinks, and household items rewrapped in replicas of historic packaging.
  - Branding: bold Museum of Brands logo + tagline “You’ve seen it before...”.
  - Each product comes with a QR code linking to stories, archives, and tickets.
2. Social Media Tie-in
  - Hashtag campaign: #BrandBackMachine or #TasteOfMemory.
  - Users share what decade they “pulled” from the machine.
  - TikTok/Instagram challenges like “Guess the Year” based on packaging.
3. Poster + Guerrilla Support
  - Posters teasing: “A vending machine from the past has landed...”
  - Designs mimic old-school adverts, with copy such as “Pop. Fizz. Memory.”
4. In-Museum Extension
  - A permanent or pop-up version of the vending machine inside the museum, dispensing postcards, stickers, or souvenir items.
  - Acts as an Instagrammable installation for visitors.



## Validation of Strategy

### 1. Awareness

- The museum suffers from low street-level visibility at its current location.
- Placing branded vending machines in high-traffic public spaces (universities, shopping centres, transport hubs) creates a physical extension of the museum in the city.
- By distributing familiar products in retro packaging, the museum reaches audiences who may never encounter its advertising or physical site otherwise.

### 2. Relevance

- Old packaging taps into personal nostalgia, reminding people of their own lived experiences rather than abstract history.
- Everyday products (like Coke, Pepsi, Cadbury, or Walkers crisps) are immediately relatable, they blur the line between the ordinary and the cultural, positioning the museum as part of people's lives, not just a display of objects.

### 3. Digital Engagement

- The vending machine becomes an inherently shareable installation — a “ready-made Instagram/TikTok moment.”
- A hashtag campaign (e.g., #BrandBackMachine or #TasteOfMemory) encourages users to share photos and videos of what product/decade they “got.”
- This leverages user-generated content as free promotion, boosting visibility among younger, digital-native demographics.

### 4. Experiential Value

- Marketing literature emphasises that experiences, not just products, drive audience connection (Pine & Gilmore, 1999).
- The vending machine provides a playful, interactive encounter that transforms brand heritage into a lived experience.
- The addition of QR codes on products extends the interaction into storytelling: each scan can reveal more about the object's history, linking back to the museum and encouraging visits.







# Plan of Action

The Museum of Brands requires a phased and integrated implementation plan to ensure that the proposed campaign strategy delivers measurable results. This plan balances short-term wins (increased visibility, digital engagement) with long-term objectives (repositioning the museum as a cultural hub for younger audiences).



## Phase 1: Preparation (Months 1–2)

**Objectives:** Develop core creative assets, align staff, and set up digital infrastructure.

- Content Creation: Produce mini-documentary, poster designs, and initial social media templates.
- Platform Setup: Launch TikTok account, optimise Instagram grid for new campaign aesthetics, and establish hashtags (#BrandMeBack, #MuseumOfEverydayLife).
- Staff Training: Run digital storytelling workshops for staff, ensuring consistency in tone and messaging.
- Partnership Outreach: Begin conversations with micro-influencers, design schools, and local cultural partners.

## Phase 2: Launch (Months 3–5)

**Objectives:** Build awareness, spark curiosity, and drive digital traction.

- Digital Campaign Kick-off: Release teaser clips of the documentary as Instagram Reels/TikToks.
- OOH Activation: Roll out guerrilla posters in Tube stations, coffee shops, and campuses.
- Influencer Takeovers: Collaborate with 3–5 micro-creators to post authentic experiences from the museum.
- Spotify Playlists: Release decade-specific playlists to extend nostalgic branding beyond the physical space.
- Evaluation Checkpoint: Track KPIs (engagement, footfall, website traffic) and adjust tactics as needed.

## Phase 3: Expansion (Months 6–12)

**Objectives:** Scale engagement, deepen partnerships, and integrate campaign into long-term branding.

- Documentary Release: Publish the full 3–5 minute film on YouTube and the museum website.
- Community Collaboration: Partner with design schools for student projects based on the museum's archive (increasing relevance for educators).
- Interactive Installations: Introduce AR filters in-gallery and signage pointing to Instagrammable “moments.”
- Influencer Network Growth: Expand collaborations to podcasters and niche cultural content creators.
- Monitoring & Feedback: Collect visitor survey data and compare year-on-year attendance among 18–35 demographics.



## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

To measure success, the following metrics will be tracked across phases:

- Digital Engagement: 30% increase in followers across Instagram and TikTok; engagement rates above 8%.
- Audience Demographics: 25% increase in visitors aged 18–35 within one year.
- Website Traffic: 20% increase in unique visits driven by campaign content.
- Partnerships: At least five collaborations with influencers or educators in the first year.
- Brand Perception: Survey results indicating improved clarity of the museum's identity (e.g., fewer misconceptions about “corporate branding”).

## Resource Allocation

Budget Considerations:

- Social media production and influencer partnerships: ~40%
- Poster/OOH printing and placements: ~30%
- Documentary production and editing: ~20%
- Staff training and contingency: ~10%

Human Resources: Marketing staff supported by interns and freelance creatives for video editing, graphic design, and campaign copywriting.

## Sustainability and Long-Term Outlook

This plan not only addresses short-term visibility but also embeds a digital-first mindset into the museum's long-term strategy. By consistently producing nostalgic, shareable, and playful content, the Museum of Brands can maintain relevance and continue to attract new audiences. As Kotler and Kotler (2018) emphasise, successful museum marketing requires a mission-driven approach, where communication strategies are sustainable and integrated into institutional culture.



# “Five Months, Countless Stories: My Time at the Museum”

Spending five months at the Museum of Brands has been one of the most rewarding and transformative experiences of my academic journey. When I first began my internship, I expected to gain research material and an understanding of how a museum operates, but what I found was much more: a space of inspiration, creativity, and community.

Working closely with the staff gave me an inside view of the dedication and passion that sustains a small but powerful cultural institution. I learned how much thought goes into curating exhibitions, supporting visitors, and maintaining the collection, and I began to see the museum as more than an archive, it is a living, breathing space shaped daily by the people who visit and the team who run it.

One of the most enjoyable parts of my time there was talking to visitors. Many of them shared their own memories triggered by the objects in the collection, stories of their childhood sweets, toys they grew up with, or brands that reminded them of their parents and grandparents. These conversations often went beyond casual remarks; they were heartfelt reflections on people's lives.

Listening to their stories helped me realise how deeply the museum resonates across generations, and it reinforced my belief that it is not simply about packaging or advertising, but about people and their lived experiences.

On a professional level, I developed skills in audience observation, research methods, and curatorial communication, all of which informed my dissertation. I also discovered how important it is for museums to adapt to younger audiences and to bridge the gap between digital culture and physical heritage. These insights became the backbone of my campaign strategies.

On a personal level, I had a wonderful time with the team. Whether it was helping with events, welcoming visitors, or simply sharing conversations in the café and office, the experience felt less like work and more like being part of a family. The staff were generous with their knowledge and encouraging of my ideas, which gave me the confidence to pursue creative approaches like the documentary project.

Another highlight of my time was sketching people during quieter museum hours. These drawings became a personal way of recording not just the physical presence of visitors but also their moods, gestures, and interactions. In a sense, they were visual notes that complemented my written observations, helping me capture the human side of the museum.

Looking back, these five months were not just about academic growth but also about joy, play, and memory-making. Just as the museum celebrates the everyday objects that connect us, my time there reminded me that research can be deeply human, full of creativity, and above all, fun.







# Conclusion

The Museum of Brands holds extraordinary cultural value: it is a time capsule of everyday life, where objects once dismissed as disposable are revealed as powerful carriers of memory, identity, and emotion. Yet, as my research and observations have shown, the museum suffers from a perception gap. For many, it is misunderstood, overlooked, or unknown, especially among younger audiences who are increasingly shaping cultural consumption.

Through five months of primary and secondary research, visitor interviews, audience observation, and benchmarking against other cultural institutions, I was able to identify the roots of this challenge. The museum's strength lies not only in its vast collection, but in the nostalgic connections it evokes. Its weakness, however, is its limited visibility and its misalignment with youth-driven digital culture.

The campaign proposals I developed, the poster and OOH campaign, the social media strategy, and the documentary, all work towards the same goal: repositioning the Museum of Brands as a museum of people, not products. Each element draws on the museum's strongest assets (emotional resonance, relatability, intergenerational appeal) and translates them into formats that reach and engage younger audiences.

The poster campaign interrupts the everyday with curiosity and recognition: "You've seen it. But never noticed it." The social media strategy makes the museum relevant in the fast-moving worlds of Instagram and TikTok, where identity and nostalgia thrive. The documentary offers depth, telling the story of the museum through its aesthetics, its staff, and the authentic reactions of visitors. Together, these elements form a holistic strategy that bridges the gap between perception and reality.

On a personal level, this dissertation has been more than an academic exercise. Working at the Museum of Brands gave me the privilege of listening to visitor stories, sketching their presence, and being part of a team committed to preserving cultural memory. It has shown me that museums are not static archives, but living spaces where objects and people continually interact.

In conclusion, the Museum of Brands has the potential to become not only a hidden gem, but a cultural landmark for younger generations, a place where nostalgia meets creativity, and where everyday objects tell extraordinary stories. By embracing a people-first narrative and adopting strategies that resonate with today's digital audiences, the museum can transform itself from overlooked to unmissable.

"Not a museum of history. A museum of your memories."



# Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to everyone who has supported me throughout the journey of this dissertation. First and foremost, I am especially thankful to Mark, my supervisor, for his constant guidance, encouragement, and patience. He not only helped me at every stage of this process but was also the person who first introduced me to the Museum of Brands, which became the foundation of this project.

I am also very grateful to the Museum of Brands team, especially Becky, Brian, and Ellie, for their warmth, support, and encouragement throughout my internship. They generously shared their knowledge, gave me space to explore my ideas, and even helped facilitate the documentary project. Their kindness and collaboration made my time at the museum both insightful and enjoyable.

This project would not have been possible without Parth, who was the heart of the documentary. As the main cinematographer and DoP, he brought my creative vision to life with incredible dedication, skill, and passion. I am equally grateful to Sushrut, who supported us as Assistant DoP and was an integral part of the production process. Together, they made the film what it is.

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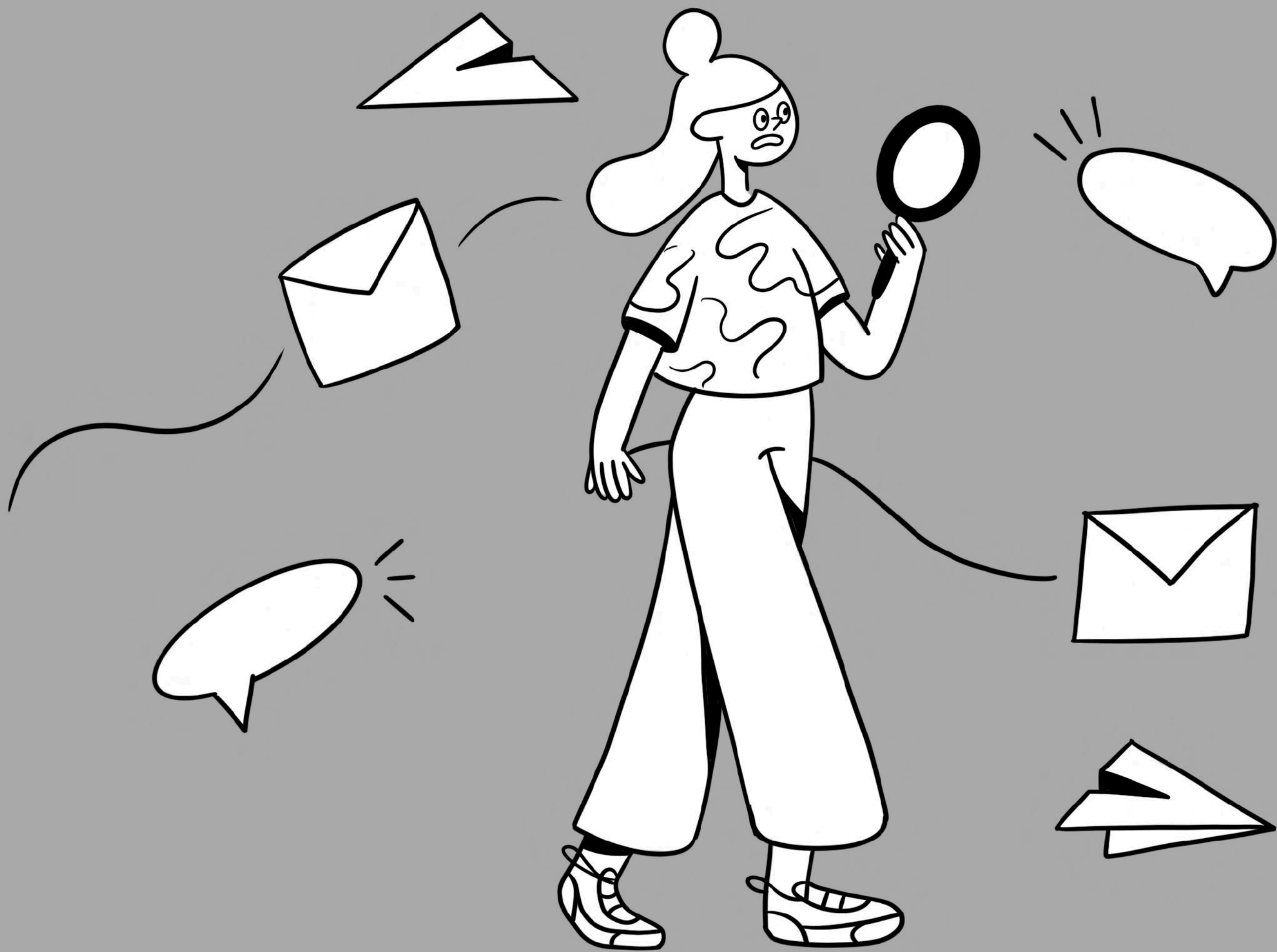
A big thanks to Alvita, Hargun, Mihir, and Proud, who were there during the documentary shoot and helped with everything from planning to execution. Their presence and effort made the process smoother and much more enjoyable.

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Finally, I would like to thank my family and parents, whose unconditional love, belief, and support have carried me through this entire journey. Their encouragement gave me the strength to keep pushing forward, and this work is as much theirs as it is mine.

This dissertation has been as much about collaboration and shared effort as it has been about my individual research, and I feel incredibly lucky to have had such a supportive circle around me.





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# Thank You !

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