

IPG MEDIA LAB

SXSW 2015 Recap

March 2015

The Lab at SXSW 2015

Personalization and immersion rule the day

Every year, the IPG Media Lab attends SXSW in Austin, Texas, to meet up-and-coming startups and attend panels in order to monitor developing media trends.

This year, we noticed two key themes: personalization and immersion. By constantly carrying around a mobile phone, people are producing a near-constant stream of data and enabling digital interaction with the world around them. As a result, brands are able to create increasing customized and deeply personal experiences unique to the individual and setting. At the same time, these experiences are becoming more holistic and ultimately, immersive, blurring the line between the digital and physical realm.



Six Trends From SXSW 2015

1. Mobile Engagement Creates Moments of Delight
2. Digital Gets Personal
3. Augmented & Virtual Reality Opens Up New Spaces
4. Smartphones Revolutionize Purchases
5. Beacons Create Additive Experiences
6. Social And Messaging Apps Expand Capabilities

Mobile Engagement Creates Moments of Delight

TECHNOLOGY IMPACTS EMOTIONS

New platforms are bringing the regular world to life in surprising ways, turning everyday interactions into memorable experiences. For example, [Novalia](#) uses capacitive ink to allow people to touch, connect, and gather data from print objects, which are then relayed to and “played” on a mobile device. [SnowShoe](#), meanwhile, is a tactile QR code device that enables people to actually touch their phone directly to a stamp that will then provide a link. These physical interactions are unexpected, but add an element of fun to a typically digital experience.

Of course, engaging experiences don’t always require a tangible element: [OpiaTalk](#) engages peoples’ emotions by creating a sense of urgency behind purchasing, while [Button](#) uses deep links to facilitate connections between mobile applications, making the digital experience effortless. The key takeaway for brands is that they must put the consumer experience first and use technology as support.

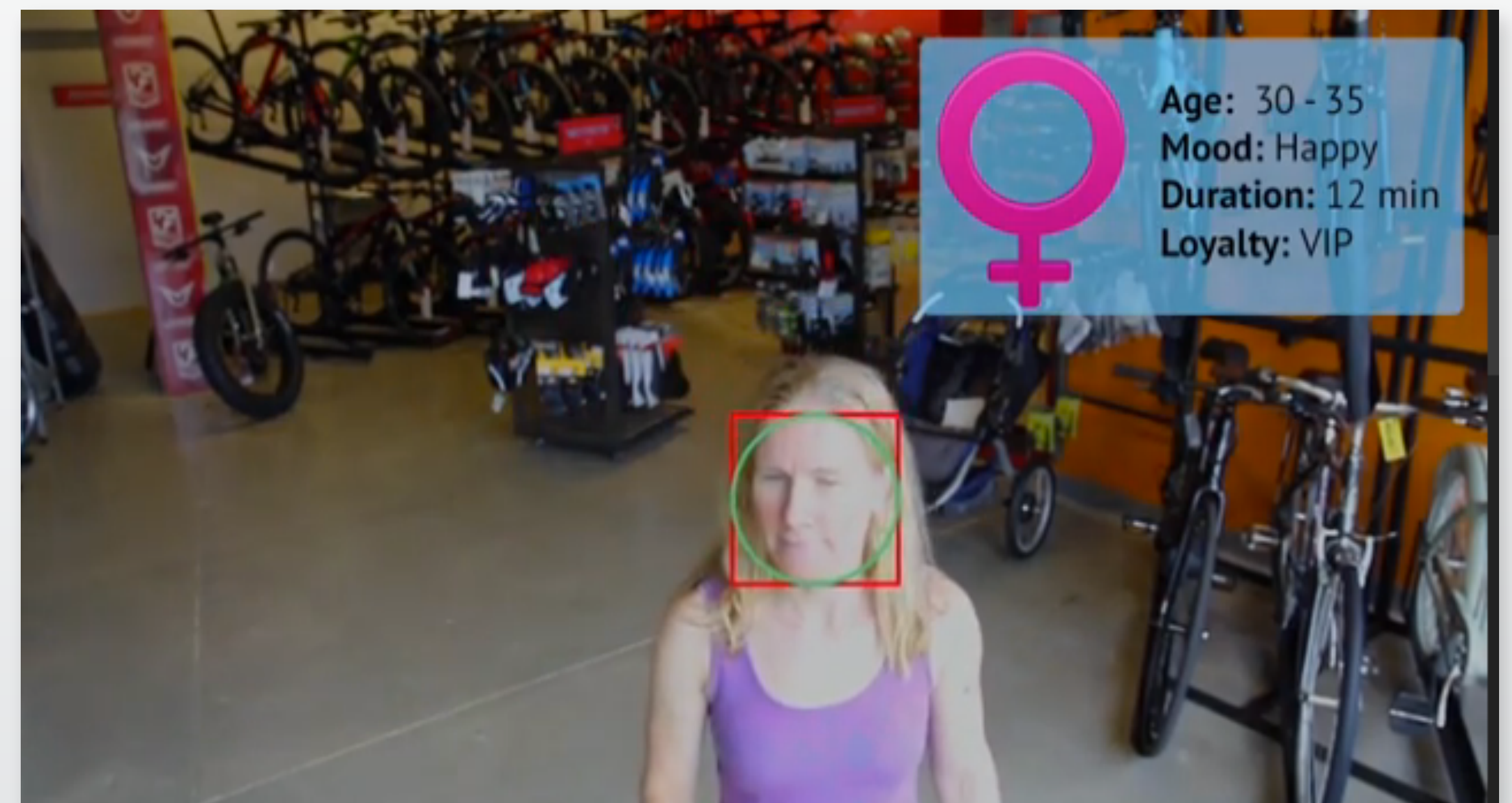


Digital Gets Personal

IDENTITY ENABLES PERSONALIZATION

With constant digital interaction just a swipe away, the challenge for brands isn't to create more, but rather better, content. As [Dustin Kirkland of Canonical](#) noted, as data trails and biometrics improve, it will be easier to identify whom the brand is targeting, leading to a more customized experience. [EyeQ](#) has already taken steps to do just that by sending personalized, hyperlocal messages to shoppers at the shelf.

With improved data collection and customization, however, come greater privacy concerns. Brands can ease consumer concerns by providing value in exchange for data. As Ryan Bonafacino, VP of Digital at Alex and Ani, noted [during a panel](#), supporting current clientele is more important than maximizing databases—even when the decision is a total opt-out.



Augmented & Virtual Reality Opens Up New Spaces

CONSUMERS EXPERIMENTING WITH THE NEW MEDIUM

Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) are making great strides in capturing audience attention and uniting physical and digital worlds. Lyteshot's [innovative AR platform](#), for example, can bring digital gaming into the real world, while also providing context for hyperlocal retail offers.

But it's not just brands who are interested in AR and VR; consumers are becoming more active as well. Video multi-channel network Machinima is attempting to [bridge the gap](#) between user-generated content and the new medium. Meanwhile, VR content networks like [LittlStar](#) and [Jaunt's](#) user-friendly tools and platforms are making VR more accessible to consumers.

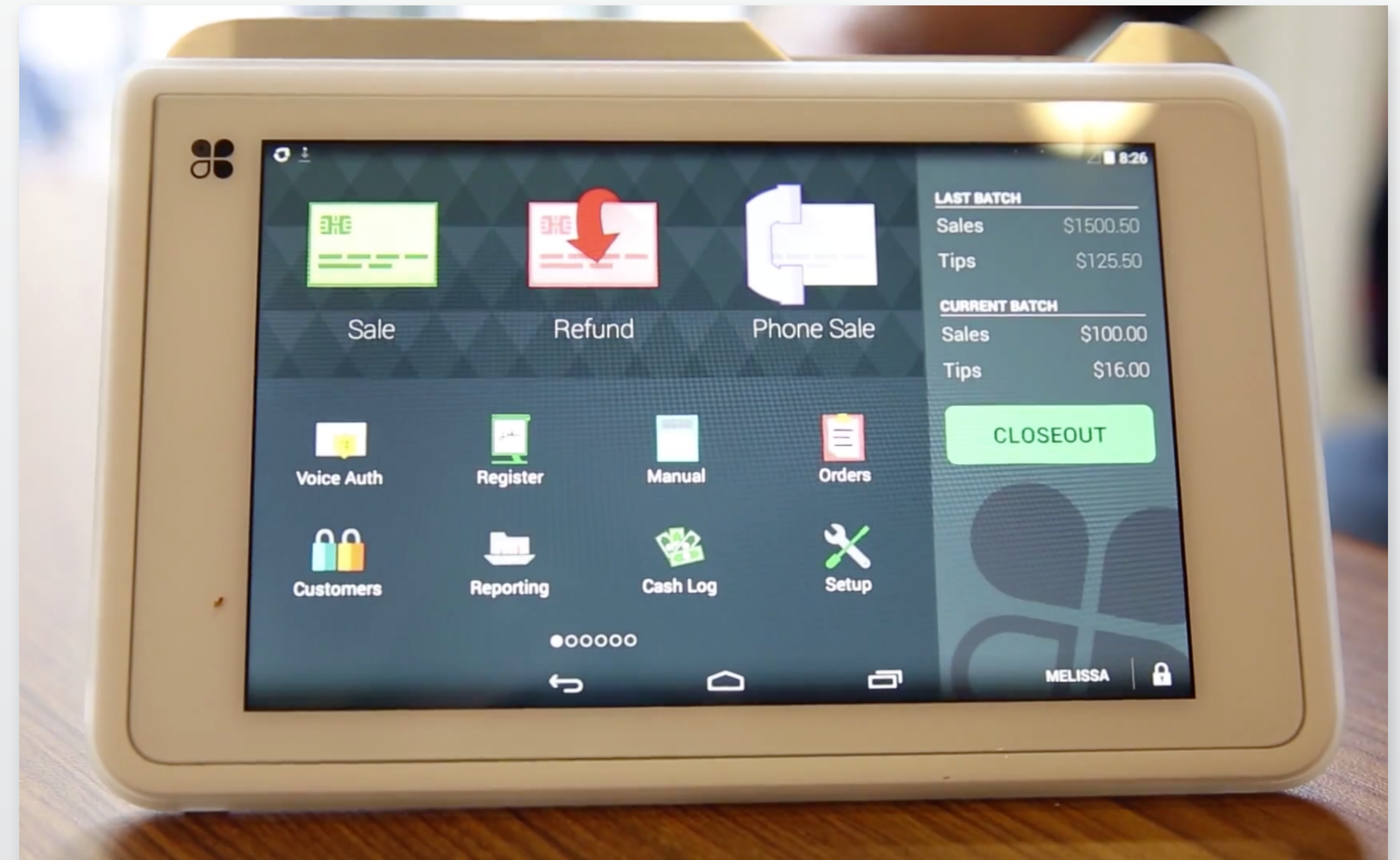


Smartphones Revolutionize Purchases

MOBILE IS CHANGING HOW WE HANDLE MONEY

Mobile is no longer just the new space for reaching the consumers, but rather, an active agent that is changing user behavior across banking, payment, and purchasing, enabling brands to improve attribution. For example, the virtual banking assistant by [Kasisto](#) uses voice and text commands to offer easy access to personal banking and ties resulting data to brand offers.

Point-of-sale technology continues to evolve as well. Payment solution provider [Clover](#) has developed mobile terminals to give sales associates the ability to move around a store to assist customers, while ride-sharing service [Lyft has integrated One Touch PayPal](#) into its interface to offer discounts on rides and deliver a seamless user experience. Mobile payments, brand offers, and loyalty programs will continue to integrate as more retailers and consumers get used to these new payment options.



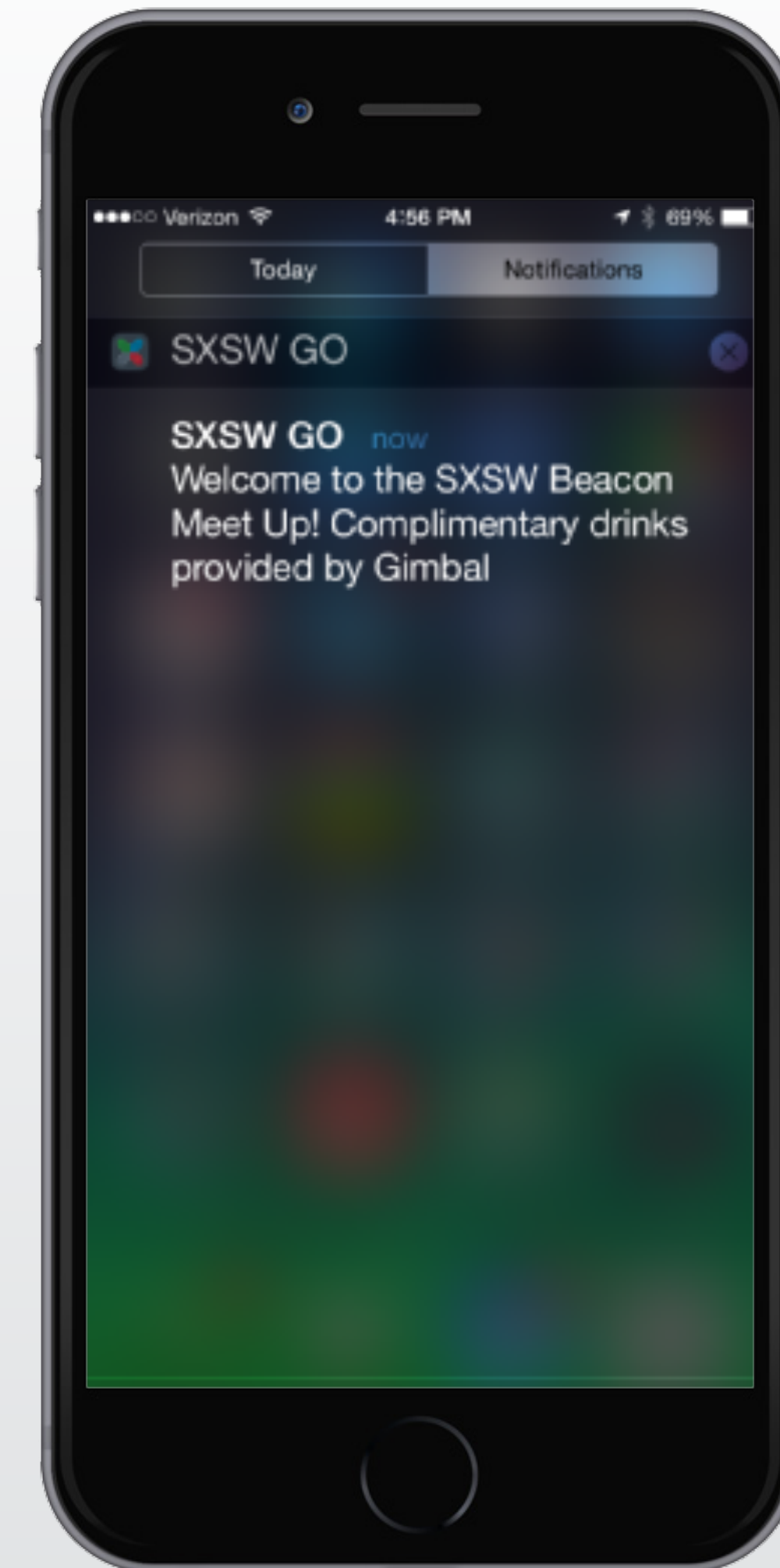
Beacons Create Additive Experiences

OFFER REWARDS FOR OPTING IN

From a technological perspective, one of the biggest changes at SXSW was the placement of over [1000 Gimbal beacons](#) in venues across downtown Austin. Users who opted in to the beacon experience on the SXSW Go app received location-specific information about each event as well as the opportunity to network with others online. Over [5 million beacon](#) impressions were recorded within the first four days of the event.

Brands were also able to connect with consumers through the beacon network: USA Networks created custom [beacon alerts](#) at various locations, [rewarding festival-goers](#) with free food and drinks courtesy of “Mr. Robot,” promoting the drama’s premiere.

The key to both of these experiences is the [value exchange](#) that occurs between users and brands. In other words, consumers must feel that they are receiving a benefit—whether information, social networking, or rewards—in exchange for providing their data.



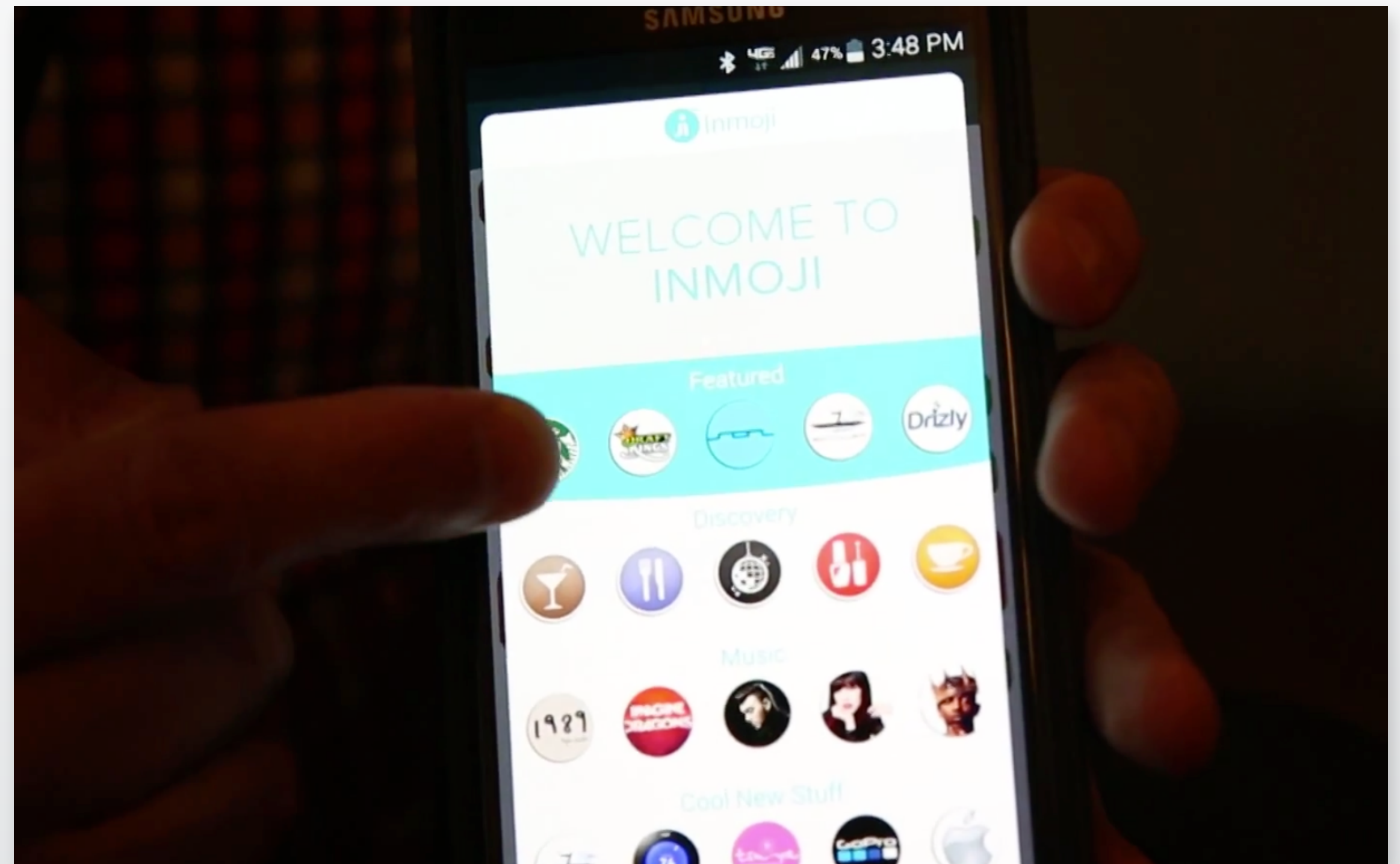
Social And Messaging Apps Expand Capabilities

NEW WAYS TO CONNECT WITH FRIENDS, CELEBRITIES, AND BRANDS

“FOMO” (Fear of Missing Out) is never higher than during SXSW, so it’s no surprise that social and messaging apps see it as a perfect proving ground to roll out new ways to connect. The breakout hit this year was undeniably [Meerkat](#), an app that allows users to stream live video in Twitter.

Brands also continue to experiment with ways to communicate with consumers on the one-to-one basis provided by messaging apps. [SNAPS](#), for instance, creates personalized emoji and keyboards, while sci-fi thriller Ex Machina teased [Tinder users](#) by matching them with Ava, a 25-year old bot who was also a character from the movie.

But messaging apps aren’t limited to pure content plays: [InMoji](#) has created emoji with “deep links,” giving users the ability to send songs, videos, games, and more with a simple image. Ultimately, users will be able to conduct commerce—finding nearby businesses, booking tables, ordering car services—without leaving the messaging conversation.



THANKS!

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