

# Bold Experiences and Playful Adventure



Doritos launches Cool Ranch Zero Gravity Minis, taking chip innovation to space.

Breaking free from monotony, **consumers are craving bold experiences that spark curiosity** and awaken their senses through **daring and unexpected elements with a playful touch of nostalgia** that bring joy and excitement to their routines.

Consumers want their choices to feel like an adventure, relying on products and experiences to make ordinary moments extraordinary. This is where creativity thrives, encouraging brands to **push boundaries with daring concepts that surprise and delight**. Here, products and experiences tap into the desire for individuality, excitement, and carefree fun.



General Mills launches a bold cereal blending Totino's Pizza Rolls' savory flavor with Cinnamon Toast Crunch squares.

## Pas-sio-no-mics™

/paSH(ə)nəmiks/  
noun

1. the study of how individuals allocate their resources—time, money, and attention—toward their passions, and the economic impact of those choices.

Passionomics: Cultural passions drive economies! Taylor Swift's Eras Tour boosted nearby restaurant spending by 68% daily.

## Product Opportunities for Brands

We identified three directions within this consumer trend that can inspire brands to connect to their consumers.

### Bold Adventures

Products that stimulate the senses, like a powder that morphs into a gel, packaging that lights up when opened, or a dessert that alternates between freezing cold and warming.

### Playful Nostalgia With A Twist

Products that evoke playful memories with a modern edge, like keepsake packaging or flavors inspired by childhood treats with unexpected pairings.

### Curiosity Creations

Items that surprise and thrill with a touch of intrigue, from curiously odd but delicious drinks to packaging that reveals hidden layers, turning use into an adventure.

Pat McGrath's Skin Fetish: Glass 001 Mask transforms from liquid to solid, delivering a glass-like, luminous finish.



Wonder Bread launched a nostalgic line of snack cakes, bringing childhood favorites into the modern snack market.



LA JOSIES, CHICAGO: Inspired by Al Pastor tacos street food, the Trompibueno, with tequila fat-washed in al pastor pork and spiced pineapple verita, proves curious, odd creations can be irresistibly delicious.



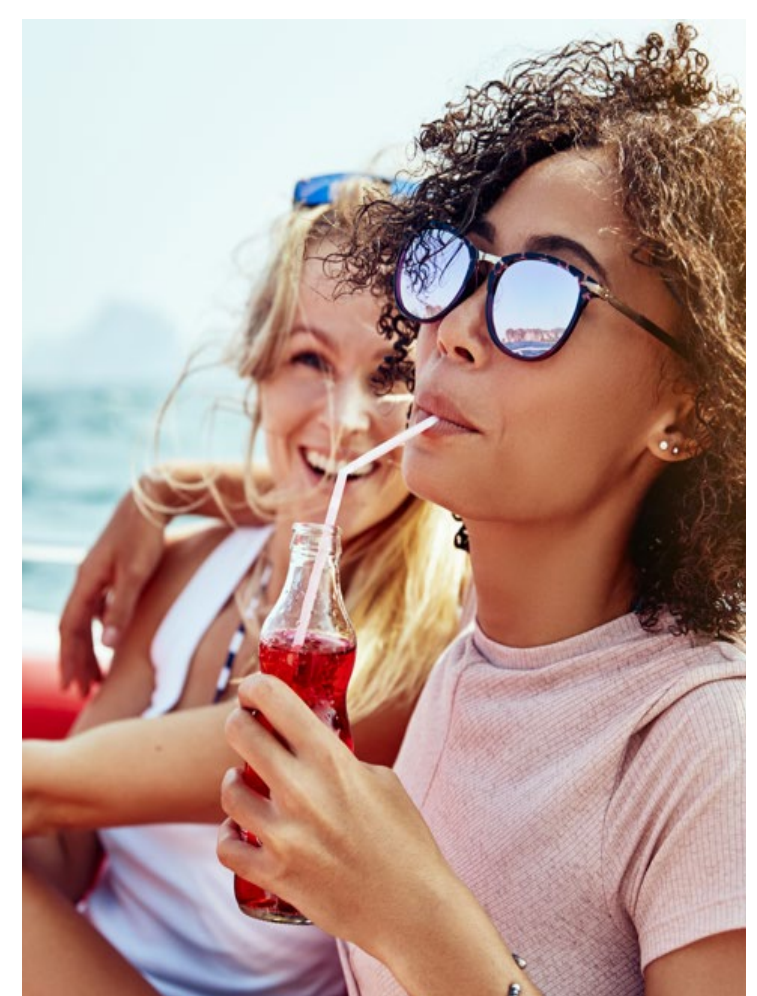
## What can we do?

Curion works with you to ensure that your bold, playful innovations resonate with consumers.

Our testing evaluates how consumers engage with products, even as they transform and create memorable experiences.

Through consumer insights, we uncover how products align with the desire for joy, spontaneity, and curiosity.

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# The Rise of Wellness and Cyclical Living



58% of U.S. consumers place a premium on experiences that emphasize real human interactions.



MID-DAY SQUARES™

UNCENSORED.

Mid-Day Squares fosters community and authenticity through raw storytelling and unfiltered social media content, transforming their journey into a relatable reality show that connects with their consumer base.

In a fast-moving, unpredictable world, **consumers are searching for calm and stability.** They feel disconnected and overwhelmed by the noise of modern life. This trend reflects a desire to **embrace rituals that bring order, mindfulness, and meaning.**

Rooted in reconnecting with what feels intentional, consumers are drawn to **products that adapt to their environment and experiences that welcome connection and belonging.** By aligning offerings with the rhythms of life and creating opportunities for shared moments, brands can provide a sanctuary for simplicity, mindfulness, and authenticity in a way that feels meaningful and restorative.



Sulwhasoo

PACKAGING: Sulwhasoo's limited-edition serum, inspired by a snake's rebirth, symbolizes shedding skin for new beginnings.

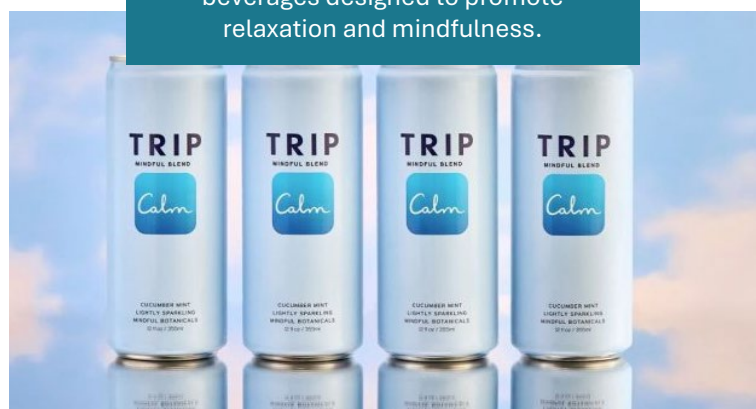
## Product Opportunities for Brands

We identified three directions within this consumer trend that can inspire brands to connect to their consumers.

### Rituals

Products that enhance daily routines with intention, using curated kits, clean ingredients, and wellness tools to support balance and mindfulness.

A collaboration between TRIP Drinks and the Calm app, offering botanical beverages designed to promote relaxation and mindfulness.



### Cyclical Flow

Climate-responsive skincare, products inspired by local harvests, or foods designed to align with natural energy cycles.

Nightfood Nighttime Ice Cream: Sleep-friendly ice cream with ingredients that promote relaxation and support natural rhythms.



### Community Sync

Co-designed artisanal products, group-oriented wellness tools, or products that bring people together through shared experiences.

Cécred Hair Care, launched by Beyoncé, features products inspired by global hair rituals and supports community growth with grants for cosmetology students and stylists.



## What can we do?

Curion provides the tools and expertise to ensure your innovations resonate with consumers' values and needs.

We validate how your product engages consumers, ensuring it aligns with their expectations for grounding and intentional experiences.

Our consumer insights reveal how products fit into daily routines, reflect cyclical needs, and foster connections.

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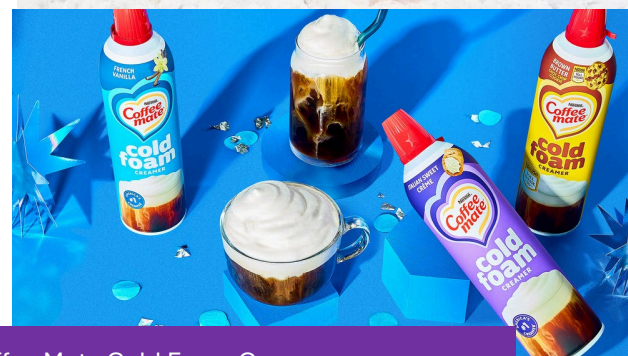
# Pivoting with Purpose



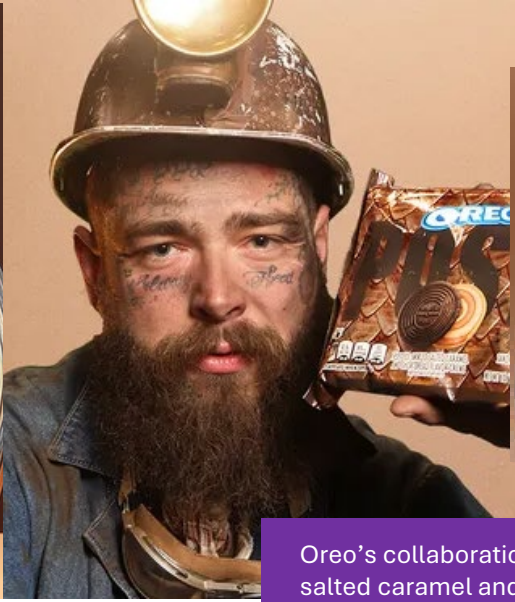
Slice, the '80s soda brand, returned in 2025 as a fizzy functional drink with added prebiotics, probiotics, and postbiotics for gut health.



Not every path forward is a straight line. **Today's consumers crave journeys that twist, pivot, and surprise.** Brands must reimagine the familiar, blending unexpected elements to spark curiosity and explore new markets.



Coffee Mate Cold Foam Creamer was launched in January 2025, a frothy creamer that floats on cold drinks.



Oreo's collaboration with Post Malone features cookies with swirled salted caramel and shortbread creme, sandwiched between chocolate and golden cookies, and engraved with nine unique Post Malone-inspired designs like a guitar pick and vinyl.

Consumers get bored with predictability but still value thoughtful products and practicality. They're drawn to **products that challenge assumptions without alienating.** Creativity meets intention, whether it's a hybrid product that blends categories, a fresh spin on a familiar concept, or an adaptable feature that evolves with their needs.

## Product Opportunities for Brands

We identified three directions within this consumer trend that can inspire brands to connect to their consumers.

### Category Alchemy

Explore new markets with products that blend into other categories, like beauty-meets-edible skincare, tech with lifestyle features, or LTO collabs.

Super Bowl 2025: Popeyes teamed up with Don Julio Tequila to launch limited-edition items like the Concha Chicken Sandwich and Spicy Strawberry Hibiscus Mocktail with tequila-inspired flavors.



### Adaptive Functionality

Adjust elements that offer versatility, like modular furniture, multi-purpose apparel, on-the-go packaging, or lighting that evolves with mood or time.

Launched in January 2025, Velveeta's Vel2Go is a single-serve cheese packets that adapted to fit to Millennials and Gen Z consumers who enjoy enhancing meals on the go.



### Unexpected Surprises

Elevate offerings with surprising details like flavor mashups, reimagined packaging, or textures that feel fresh while remaining approachable.

Released in December 2024, Ritz Bits Spicy Queso is a new flavor that adds a spicy twist to the classic Ritz Bits, leveling up their classic with a new twist.



## What can we do?

Curion helps brands bring thoughtful innovation to life by exploring, developing, and validating new ideas through consumer testing and insights.

We evaluate how small, intentional changes resonate, ensuring they capture attention and deliver value.

From assessing hybrid product designs to uncovering new audience opportunities, our research guides brands in making creative moves that expand their reach.

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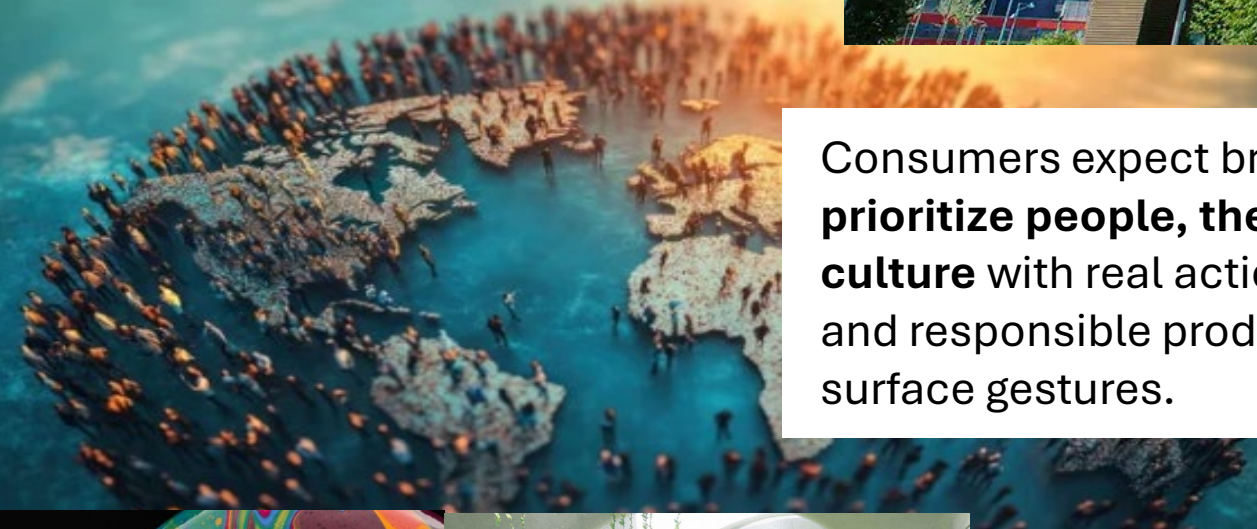
# A New Era of Empathy and Responsibility

Bosco Verticale (Vertical Forest), Milan, Italy



The Hidden Brain episode "Wellness 2.0: When It's All Too Much" shows the duality of despair and beauty to build resilience, connection, and motivation.

HIDDEN BRAIN



Consumers expect brands to **prioritize people, the planet, and culture** with real action, transparency, and responsible products, not just surface gestures.



NEW Fashion Transparency Index: Puma ranked most transparent in social and environmental disclosure.



Pinterest's Terra Futura: In 2025, Boomers and Gen X will drive sustainable living with a sci-fi twist of recyclable fashion, self-sufficient gardens, and community spaces.



Patagonia Provisions x Deschutes Brewery Kernza Golden Brew uses Kernza, a perennial grain that promotes sustainable agriculture, connecting consumers to single source local ingredients.

Today's consumers are overwhelmed by waste, disconnected from the origins of the products they use, and wary of performative sustainability. They seek **simplicity, authenticity, and craftsmanship in products, designed to last and tell a story of care and responsibility.** Brands are challenged to go beyond what's expected and prove that they're committed to making a lasting impact.

## Product Opportunities for Brands

We identified three directions within this consumer trend that can inspire brands to connect to their consumers.

### Crafted Longevity

High-quality products built to last, such as alternative sourcing, refillable beauty products, or artisanal items crafted with durable, sustainable materials.

### Purposeful Simplicity

Minimalist designs that emphasize functionality, transparency, and elegance, like single-ingredient skincare, clean-label food, or products that simplify daily rituals.

### Sourced Thoughtfulness

Items that turn overlooked materials into value, like luxury goods made from repurposed material, or products with rich origin stories tied to ethical sourcing and cultural significance.

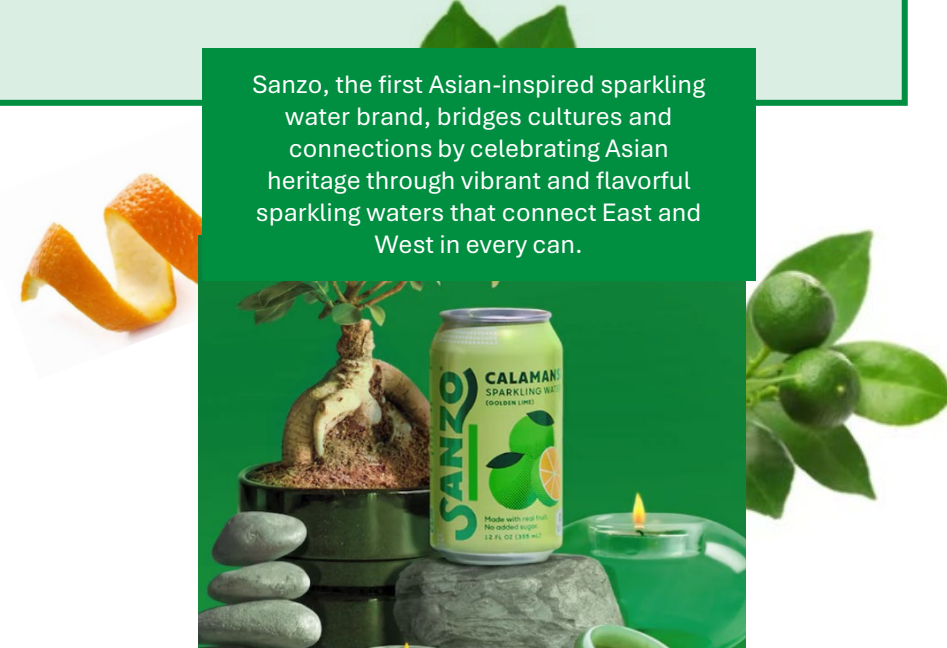
Revo Foods, in partnership with Mycorena, launched 3D-printed plant-based salmon fillets made from sustainable mycoprotein.



The Humanist's Herban Wisdom Facial Oil reflects the brand's commitment to inclusivity and wellness with accessible, braille-adorned packaging and a focus on holistic skin health.



Sanzo, the first Asian-inspired sparkling water brand, bridges cultures and connections by celebrating Asian heritage through vibrant and flavorful sparkling waters that connect East and West in every can.



## What can we do?

Curion gives brands the confidence to demonstrate genuine empathy and responsibility through actionable insights and consumer testing.

We evaluate how products resonate emotionally, whether through sustainable design, craftsmanship, or simplicity.

Our testing ensures that all product details and experiences align with consumer expectations for quality and care. Through behavioral analysis, we help brands understand how consumers perceive their efforts, whether it's transparency in sourcing or the emotional impact of a product's story.

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# The Fusion of AI, Technology, and Futuristic Living

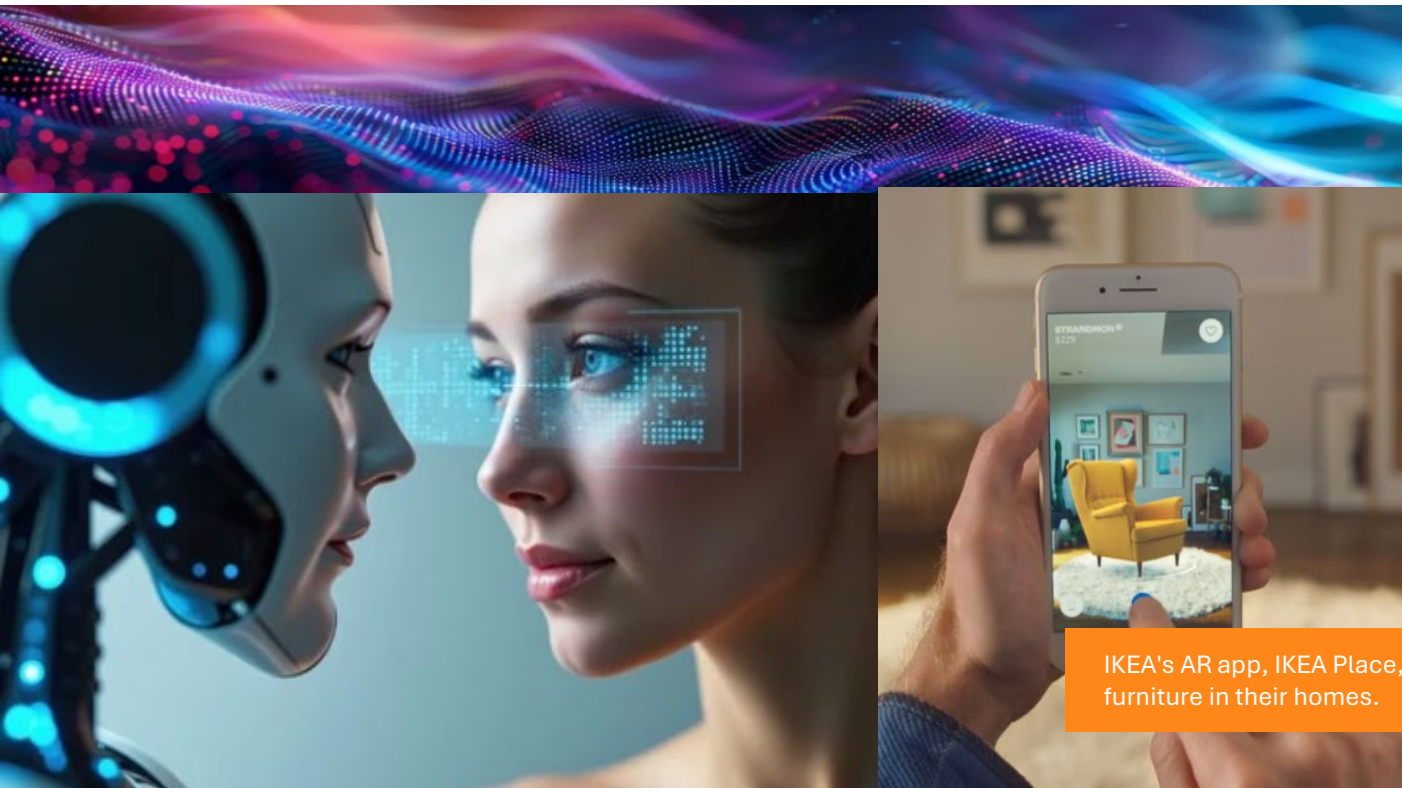


Budweiser's 'Circle of Dreams' at Tomorrowland Brazil 2024 transformed festivalgoers' dreams into digital art, displayed on stage.

The future is here, and it's deeply personal. **New technology knows you, creating seamless, intuitive experiences that feel alive, intimate, and uniquely yours.** This trend merges cutting-edge innovation with a human touch, where AI and groundbreaking ideas redefine what's possible.



The Stargate Project, a \$500 billion initiative to build state-of-the-art AI infrastructure, solidifies U.S. leadership in AI innovation as the technology transforms every industry.



IKEA's AR app, IKEA Place, enabled customers to virtually place furniture in their homes.

**Consumers are captivated by progress but cautious about its impact.** They're overwhelmed by flashy tech that feels impersonal, mistrustful of how their data is used, and wary of innovation that prioritizes novelty over value. Brands are challenged to offer solutions that **simplify, adapt, and resonate emotionally**, turning what once seemed futuristic into something tangible and deeply meaningful.



The video game, Life is Strange: True Colors focuses on empathy as a superpower, allowing players to feel and influence emotions.

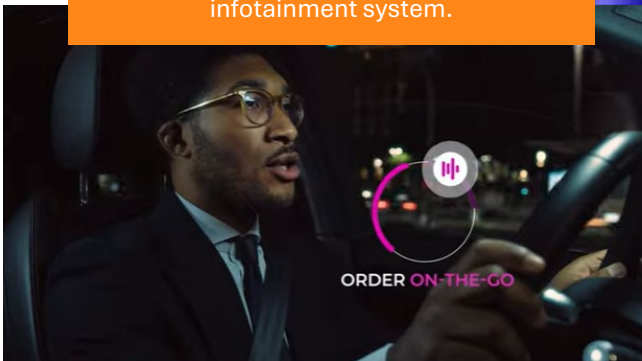
## Product Opportunities for Brands

We identified three directions within this consumer trend that can inspire brands to connect to their consumers.

### Smarter AI

Develop adaptive technologies that anticipate needs, like AI-driven tools that adjust in real time to user preferences, making every experience feel personal and intuitive.

SoundHound's In-Vehicle Voice Commerce Platform enables drivers and passengers to place restaurant takeout orders through the car's infotainment system.



### Idea Technology

Introduce products that take shape from the user, like self-healing materials, AR-enhanced items that blend the physical and digital, or multi-sensory tools that surprise and delight with every use.

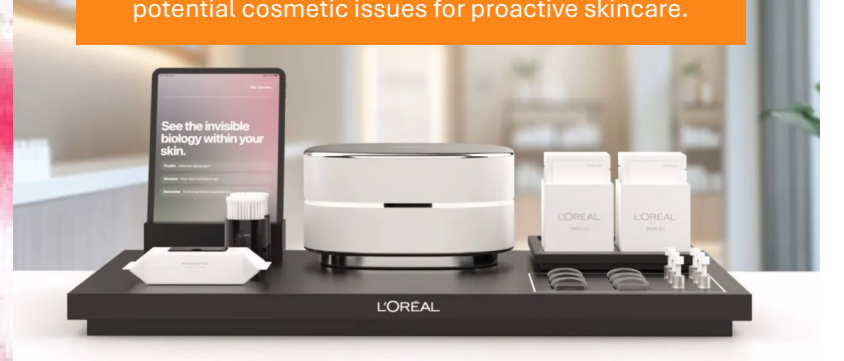
Ice Breakers Flavor Shifters Gum provides a unique double-flavor experience that changes as you chew.



### Sourced Thoughtfulness

Items that turn overlooked materials into value, like luxury goods made from repurposed material, or products with rich origin stories tied to ethical sourcing and cultural significance.

L'Oréal's Cell BioPrint, announced at CES 2025, is a device using advanced "lab-on-a-chip" technology to provide personalized skin analysis, predicting skin aging, ingredient responsiveness, and potential cosmetic issues for proactive skincare.



## What can we do?

Curion helps brands harness the power of cutting-edge technology with consumer-centered insights (from real humans) that drive meaningful innovation.

We work with brands to learn how products integrate seamlessly into users' lives, offering experiences that are both intuitive and emotionally engaging.

Our behavioral research uncovers how consumers interact with AI-driven and adaptive technologies, while our market analysis identifies opportunities to align new innovation with evolving preferences.

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