

50+ Radical Spatial Design Ideas to Build Your Brand Community

From large-scale worlds to intimate stakeholder meetings, from booth activations to brand sponsorships, use innovative spatial design to stand out from the competition & spark high-impact connections.

You can't force your customers to connect, but at your next brand experience, you CAN use thoughtful spatial design to lay the foundation for chance encounters. These connection points encourage collaboration & cross-pollination, making your event last long after you turn out the lights & load-out is over.

Here are more than 50 ideas you can employ at your next event:

#1 Surprise audiences with unique interactions.

Immerse your audiences in your brand story. Invite your customers & stakeholders to actively engage with your brand's key messages. Employ 360-degree screens to emulate movement or LED screens, mirrors & lights to design walkways & tunnels that plunge people into the action. Oracle Red Bull Racing used a simulator & screen to invite audiences to drive its 2022 Championship-winning RB18 race car. Use VR headsets & motion sensors like Samsung's immersive experience zone at the PyeongChang Winter Olympics, where attendees virtually competed. Create scenario menus where audiences choose their journey & encourage customer-created content.

Use the power of all five senses. Do you engage your audience's sense of smell, taste & touch? Pinterest's "Manifestival" at Cannes Lions offered audiences hair styling, real tattoos, tooth gems & unique menu options—all inspired by the platform's user trends. Moxy Hotels' ASMR activation by Marriott used relaxing scents, curious textures, captivating visuals, soothing sounds & tasty treats to demo their in-room experience. Use scentscapes to transport participants or design spatial audio to wrap customers in 360 degrees of sound—with or without headphones. Ambient noise can help you create areas that offer a break. Build furniture & installation pieces encouraging touch & interaction—like adding your story to a wall or physically moving objects that demonstrate your business solutions.

Help your audiences engage with your brand in new ways.

Take your activity or meet-up area outside, so audiences can interact with locals & the landscape. For "Transformers: Rise of the Beasts," Paramount Pictures used 3D technology to captivate global audiences with depth-defying anamorphic billboards & a BFI IMAX screen takeover in the UK. Install bikes that attendees pedal to charge their phones, or emulate "Star Trek's" Comic-Con activation by inviting customers into the driver's (or captain's) seat. Add a twist to a common activity like Google's "Pay with a Photo" food truck, where attendees exchanged in-app photos for snacks. Build a physical or virtual playground for audiences to get intimate with your brand.

#2 Engineer serendipity to ensure dynamic audience journeys.

Upgrade your programming with dynamic design. Amid the hustle of Web Summit, L'Oréal used lighted columns to block out sounds & invite audiences to pitch their amazing ideas. Take a nod from IMEX's SkyLab, where attendee conversations were literally elevated via chairs suspended 50 feet in the air. Set your breakout sessions on open stages & give attendees headsets to listen in. Map out spaces for behind-the-scenes tours or interactive scenarios with insightful debriefs. Invite your audiences to share takeaways in a high-traffic hallway. Show ideas in action: Design a sustainability plan-a-thon using reusable or recycled materials. Offer a life-size game like Jenga or Operation to encourage collaboration & fun. Use furniture & props to divide spaces & create different zones with different moods, such as bright colors & bold shapes for high-energy activities or LED strips & blue lights with space to explore tech.

How Spatial Design Can Connect Audiences to Your Brand

Brand experiences & events are no longer bound by four walls—or even the four edges of a computer screen. Push the boundaries of what your audience thinks is possible.

Create places to catch your breath & relax. Socializing can be tiring, especially for the estimated third of your audiences who are introverted. Give them space & time to process your event, increasing retention. At BottleRock in Napa, attendees can relax & sip in between bands' sets at sponsored pop-up wine bars—or enjoy mocktails & non-alcoholic vino. Design a library where audiences can read up on the latest industry trends or send an important email. Use headphones for individual guided meditation or yoga sessions. Create scented relaxation zones or quiet areas with napping pods. Use natural light, plants, cozy materials & neutral colors to encourage wellbeing.

#3 Design solutions that bridge the digital divide.

Thoughtfully integrate event & experience tech.

Brand experiences are no longer bound by four walls—or the edges of a computer screen. BMW & Tomorrowland tapped into AI to offer fans the opportunity to produce a personalized music track. Design virtual, interactive escape rooms or connect in-person & digital attendees with a VR portal into your event's reception or musical guest. Create a scenario or roundtable in the metaverse. Use an AR filter where audiences can interact with your product in real-time or embark on a scavenger hunt, no matter how they attend. Design interactive demos that give depth & dimension to your product, like HP's zero-gravity flight demonstrating their space printer. Use tech to complement audience behaviors & interaction styles, instead of competing with them.

Equip your digital attendees for a full-fledged experience.

Provide virtual attendees with the ingredients for a brand community experience. Museums including the London Natural History Museum, Smithsonian & Louvre use VR to create immersive experiences for at-home audiences. The L.A. Times Dinner Event Series partnered with Netflix's "Selena: The Series" for a night with famed chefs Susan Feniger & May Sue Milliken, where participants made shrimp campechana, chicken poblano enchiladas & sweet potato flan in their own kitchens. Offer your virtual stakeholders a drink from handpicked local vendors. Send attendees scents that transport them to your onsite location. Produce on-demand programming that your audiences actually want to consume on their schedules. Merge IRL & URL like Beautycon, which used a 360-degree "beautycam" & screens plastered with social media posts. Use scavenger hunts & gamified journeys to familiarize audiences with your event app or platform.

No matter your spatial design, put your audience at the center of your plans for your next brand experience or event. Tailoring your design to meet their current behaviors & needs extends stakeholder engagement long after your event ends, nurturing your brand community.

Connect with your audience through a high-impact brand experience.

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