

Top Five Digital & Technological Trends Orchestras Need to Know

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AUBREY BERGAUER: All right, let's get this party started. I think we're good, right?

DREW FORD: Yeah.

AUBREY: Okay, welcome everybody. You are the crowd who made it at eight a.m. on Friday morning, like bravo. If I haven't met you before, my name is Aubrey Bergauer, and a lot of people know me from when I was executive director of the California Symphony. I left that role in 2019 to make a broader impact beyond one organization. I talk a lot about changing the narrative. But now, this year I'm saying the narrative is changing. We have seen, and you all know this, so much change in the last two years. Trends of all kinds accelerating around us. Here we are, gathering again, and this is good news for our industry, that the narrative is changing, that the conversations are not the same as they were just a few years ago.

So I will introduce our panel in a moment, but I will just say I am so excited about the people we get to hear from today. As you know, this session is the top five tech trends orchestras need to know. And I wanted to start with this quote from McKinsey, because it says not just that the narrative is changing but that it's changing quickly. McKinsey's digital insights report says that in the next decade we will experience more technological progress than the last 100 years combined.

That's what McKinsey projects. And this matters, because advancing technology always spurs economic growth. We know this, we've seen this play out every time there's been a period of rapid technological advancement. Economic growth is good for us, it's good for our orchestras, it's good for our consumer facing business. So we're going to learn about these trends today. So I want to talk a little just about the methodology, how did we select these trends that we're talk-ing to you about today.

We looked at every kind of article we could find by tech writers, journalists, bloggers, and looked at all their tech trends, what were they saying are the leading trends every industry needs to be paying attention to. And from that, there were five that really not just were in everybody's list, but really seemed directly connected to our work in classical music. And then at the end we will have a bonus round where we're going to share some more trends, sort of rapid fire, that are adjacent to our work I would say. So preview of things to come.

And then, for each of these trends, like I said, I will introduce our guests in a moment, but we're going to do this sort of mini-TED Talk style. So each of them have a different trend in which they are true subject matter experts, and so eight to ten minutes, they'll give their little mini-TED Talk, and then we'll move on. To read it down, our panel, and I will give a more thorough introduction before they do their TED Talk. But I want to introduce Drew Ford, Jennifer Rosen-feld is on the screen, Jerry Silver — I'm so sorry. Jennifer Chang. All right, this is our panel. We're going to have a lightning round at the end with Rick Talaske, but I'm getting ahead of myself.

So for now, please just help me welcome this group of really wonderful experts. Yeah, thank you. So I also want to thank our session sponsor. Talaske has been a real partner in preparing this session, you
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all need to know that. And I want to start with a story, and that is we were pre-paring for this session, and I was on a call with Rick Talaske and Henry Fogel, and Henry told this story of when he was leading the Chicago Symphony, and they were attending a concert in Salzburg. And at the time, he was trying to push forward the renovation in the hall in Chicago, and was not totally getting buy-in from the board.

So Henry shares, they go to Salzburg, suddenly in that concert hall the board members said, “Oh my gosh, I hear the difference.” Suddenly, green light for the hall renovation, he was able to move forward. And the point in the story he was saying is that just because the board members couldn’t necessarily articulate what they were hearing, they knew it, they felt it. And then, at this point in the conversation Rick jumps in, and he says, “This is true for trends in technology too. Even if we can’t articulate what we’re seeing in the world around us, we know something’s happening, we know there’s change.”

And my favorite part of his response to this, he said, “But education is the solution. It was the solution for those board members learning about acoustics and these things that they didn’t have a background in, and it’s the solution for us here.” So that is the point of our panel today. I’m so glad we have a sponsor that understands that, believes that, and said let’s come here to learn. And so that’s what we’re going to do today.

The last thing I want to say is none of this is to say you must buy into these trends, you must embrace all of these trends. This truly is information sharing, and that way we are informed leaders in our organizations to go back and know what to do with this information. So with that, let’s hit it. One more point of administrata, questions. We have a very limited time for ques-tions, so here’s how we’re going to do it. Pull out your phone, laptop, whatever, go to — oh great, Jennifer’s picture is covering

the website you're supposed to go to. Slido.com, S-L-I-D-O, Slido.com. And then it's going to prompt you to enter — I can't — oh gosh, you guys, moving — using my mouse right now is not an option, I don't even know how to explain to you what this — this is very — for the — welcome to the panel on tech trends.

MALE VOICE: That's why we're here.

AUBREY: I know. Also here to learn. Anyways, Slido.com. It's going to prompt you to put — oh yes! That is technology. Jennifer, you're the best, thank you. Oh my gosh. It's going to prompt you for a code, put in Five Trends, and what you can — let's see if this will work. Okay, it'll look like that. And then you can type in your question. Then it will populate. These are your — these are the questions we're seeing. And then, this is the part, even if you don't have a question, this is why I want to use Slido. You get to vote.

So if you see a question somewhere as you're scrolling that you're like, no, I want that one, upvote it please, because that's what's going to happen when it's question time. I'm going to see, okay, what — according to the room, what are the top burning questions you have. That's what we'll then go through in the question time that we have. And then as it upvotes, you'll see it like move to the top of the list. So Slido.com. Five Trends is the code. All right, for real now, let's hit it.

Trend number one is the creator economy. And Drew Alexander Ford is amazing in every way. He's a professional violist, went to a school called Juilliard, you may have heard of it. He has been called the future of our field by Sphinx president, Afa Dworkin, and he's performed with some little known acts like Adele, Mac Miller, John Legend. And played on Hollywood sound-tracks, Lovecraft Country, any fans? Bunch of others. So with that, Drew also has a gazillion, that's an actual number, a gazillion
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followers on Instagram. He has the Faking Notes podcast. Also does a lot in the web crypto space, but that's a whole other topic, we'll get to it. All to say, Drew is a musician who is just crushing it in this space of the creator economy. So Drew, I turn it over to you. Tell us what we need to know.

DREW: Thank you so much, Aubrey. She was actually a guest on our podcast, Faking Notes podcast, and it was one of our most over indexed positive reviewed podcast episodes. So you've definitely got to listen to what Aubrey's saying. She knows exactly what she's talking about. So essentially, the way I began to understand what the creator economy was, it started back in 2013, I went to a conference in Columbus, Ohio. There's a keynote speaker named Gary Vanderchuck. Does anybody know Gary V? Yeah, we've got some Gary V fans in here. Yeah, well I saw him spoke in 2013. At the time, I was a junior in my undergraduate studies. A junior who didn't know how he was going to make money when he graduated.

I was like, I'm going to be broke, aren't I? I need to learn some new things. So at this keynote speech, Gary Vanderchuck just said — he said a lot of different things, but the one thing he said that stuck with me was like — was this. He said, "If you post on Facebook, talking about the ham sandwich you had for lunch today, you're a media company." And I was like, what? What? But that one idea changed everything for me personally in the way that I mentally model how I navigate through the Web2 space, the social media space.

Now, the creator economy is essentially all of the different players that interact through Web2. So for instance, you are a participant if you have an account on — with Meta, whether it's Fa-cebook, whether it's WhatsApp, whether it's Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn. You are an active participant in the creator economy. Most people are just on the consumer side of this economy. They consume the content that is created.

However, businesses over the past — pretty much the past decade, especially since, you know, Instagram was acquired by Facebook and started using and implementing ad capabilities, everybody is now a part of this creator economy in that businesses are now using your data that they aggregate to target specific ads to you. And so if you are a business, and you want to index this particular part of the — part of your user base, you can use these tools now. You're now part of this economy. The one thing that is crazy to me personally is that we're not being paid for our data, right? Even though this is a valuable resource.

So most — we're all participants, but the one thing that I wanted to really hammer home today is that you want to be a producer in the creator economy. And what I mean by that is producing content. Who's heard the phrase, content is king? Yeah, that's a good one, right? But what does it really mean? The way I like to think about it is, and the reason why I'm so incredibly bullish on, even today, creating a whole media strategy utilizing Web2, utilizing Instagram or a platform that you want, is I think about it like having a plot of virtual real estate.

Every single content post that you create lives on the internet forever. Let me say that again. Every content you make lives on the internet forever. So if it doesn't get the 100,000, million views that you wanted, that doesn't matter. Somebody's going to find it. It's always going to be there. And if it is good content, it will always have value. It will be like a productive plot of land, giving you a harvest every single year. Especially if you learn how to repurpose your content that you create, make it relevant to current events. It's really powerful.

So I just wanted to hammer that home, that it's important to become a producer in the creator economy, not just a consumer. Because unfortunately, Meta's not trying to give you any stacks for

your data. Until we figure that out, we lobby our congress, be like, no, our data is valuable, let's get some money, it's not going to happen.

Next, the power of influencers. I wanted to speak quickly about this as well. As I said before, businesses are interested in targeting consumers, specifically using the data. However, the one thing that is starting to come to light is the power of influencers. Influencer marketing is a trend that is going to continue to increase. And as somebody who actually participates in that economy, I can say that it's a very fascinating endeavor.

What influencers do is they create content, they're building their big plots of farmland on the internet. And by doing so, they're building audiences that they have rapport with, that care about their perspectives, that go to them to learn things, they go to them for their opinions. And companies see the value in these audiences. So with strategic partnerships, companies will give influencers money to talk about a service. Or they will give them a product to talk about a service.

Now, how many organizations, orchestral organizations have implemented a — here, have implemented an influencer campaign? That's amazing. It's not as many as I would have hoped to see, but could any of you like quickly shout out how did it go? Was it great?

MALE VOICE: Super great.

DREW: Super great. Super great. And can I ask, in what way in your experience was it great?

MALE VOICE: I'm a really old person. If we added your ages together, we'd almost get to mine. As an old person, I had access to far, far more individuals your age than I would have ever had without that campaign.

DREW: Amazing. So it bridged a gap, a demographic gap that can be traditionally difficult to —

MALE VOICE: Well, one look at me and you know it's a big gap.

DREW: Appreciate it, thank you. I mean, that's definitely one of the values, right? And in addition to that, it's whatever audience that that creator has cultivated becomes your audience as a business.

Yes Carrie?

CARRIE: I want to say one thing I love about influence in marketing too is the influence. Then you can have all this amazing content these creators [UNINTEL] and you can repurpose that content to personalize your marketing efforts. [UNINTEL] to target a certain person or demographic using that image. As we all know, we'll go to something if we see something similar that is doing [UNINTEL] interesting. So I think there's a lot of — the content layer of that as well.

DREW: Exactly. Thank you Carrie for highlighting. That was actually my next point. Democratization. No, it's great. User generated content. Leveraging content that your audience — your aspect of the creator economy, like as a creator in an orchestra, if you have a page and you have patrons who are growing — sorry, patrons who are going to your concerts and are generating content, you can leverage that for more content on the internet to then build your marketing campaigns around, which is very valuable.

So there's — the creator economy is going multiple layers deep at this point, where it's allowing companies and brands to have connections, deeper connections, with their audiences. And I feel like I'm going a little over time, so I'm going to speed it up here. There are also tools online that make it easier for you than ever. You don't have to be a graphic designer, you don't have to learn Adobe Premiere or Adobe Spark, or any of these — or Lightroom. You can just go to Canva, and make wonderful content, posts that look beautiful, that tie your brand together.

Now, it's never been easier to have a YouTube channel and start putting up content. Helpful content, content that engages audiences, that educates them on the offerings that you have. And it's now a lower barrier of entry. But I just want to let you know, when you lower the barrier of entry, you have more competition. So it's important, and I was saying this in a talk yesterday for marketing, to have a specific, niche conversation that you add to the total culture. Because if you're saying the same things everybody's saying, you're not going to index very well.

And then, this matters to artists because now, personally I can speak to this, if you're an artist in the creator economy and you can't afford a manager, you don't have a manager that wants to work for you, you can be your own manager. You can build your audience. And then at some point, you don't have to ask permission to go and perform somewhere. You literally can come with your hoard of 50,000 people, and be like, yo, what's good, you want some money? And so it really changes the dynamic of the industry in general, where creators who build audiences now have power and leverage to create and forge their own careers.

Another thing, organizations who build big audiences can then collaborate with businesses to share your audience with the offerings of a business, and that is incredibly valuable too. And just think

about it as partnerships on steroids. You know, if you want to do a collaboration with Coca-Cola, you know, and you've got a big audience, you've got 100,000 people with your orchestra, you can have free Coke at your concerts. The possibilities are endless.

And finally, I'll just end it around here. Okay, so what makes strong content. I get asked this all the time. And as we said at the beginning, content is king in the creator economy. Strong content tells a story that relates an idea that people may not be familiar with. And luckily, like we have that. A lot of classical musical still — it doesn't resonate with traditional — or audiences on the mainstream. So we have a huge opportunity. How do you relate the beauty of our offerings, something people don't understand, to something they do understand.

Content that does that. Content that tells stories, that help people look at it, and see, oh, that's me too. If you're able to create that feeling in people, you're going to have strong content. And strong content is fertile ground in the virtual real estate of social media. And I definitely urge you to learn more about how to create content that sticks, that resonates, and helps people feel like they're seen.

AUBREY: Thank you, Drew.

DREW: Yeah, thank you.

AUBREY: As you can see, I don't know why the Zoom call dropped. I don't know where our Westin tech staff is, but I need some help, because we need to get our Zoom back up and running.

Meanwhile, I think what I'm going to do is — because our next speaker was Jennifer, who was on the Zoom. So while we get that up and running, let me just skip on here.

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

AUBREY: Okay, we can try that. Quit, quit Zoom.

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

AUBREY: I don't know why it's — I don't know, we were on the Zoom, and it dropped, and now the link's not working.

FEMALE VOICE: It looks like there's no internet.

AUBREY: I am on the internet, yeah.

FEMALE VOICE: I think the internet went down.

AUBREY: Maybe — is that what it is? The internet go down?

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

DREW: Can I get your access code?

AUBREY: Oh my —

DREW: It kicked you off. It was like, uh-uh, not today.

AUBREY: Oh my gosh. What is it, Orch Conference?

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

AUBREY: Oh okay. Oh my gosh.

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

AUBREY: What did I do? Oh, Conf, not Conference?

FEMALE VOICE: Right.

AUBREY: Oh my gosh, you guys. I'm dying. I'm dying inside right now.

DREW: Hey, teamwork makes the dream work.

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

AUBREY: I know, this is real — this is real slick here. Okay, let's see if we can get this going again.

DREW: Ah, there we go.

AUBREY: Launch meeting. Okay, okay, okay, okay.

DREW: Let's do it.

AUBREY: Join without video. We don't need that. Okay, oh my gosh.

DREW: She's here, yay. Thank you.

AUBREY: All right, Jennifer, will you say something and we can see if we can hear you?

JENNIFER ROSENFELD: Hello, testing.

AUBREY: Yay. Okay, we are back in business. Oh my gosh, I — you guys. Oh dear. Okay, so share that. Let me get this Powerpoint going again. Okay. Okay, what I need though is my Zoom not to be up there. Okay, it's all right. I am so happy now to introduce you all, Jennifer Rosen-feld, who has been so patiently waiting to do this. Jennifer is just a true smartie. Stanford gradu-ate, has worked in classical music for years as an entrepreneur and a coach for musicians who are trying to be more entrepreneurial in what they do in their work.

She has been an advocate for new financial models in the performing arts, centered on education, in order to enhance profitability. Who would like to enhance profitability? Yes, good answer. So, her clients include musicians from the LA Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, other leading groups, some jazz organizations, Broadway performers, and she's also done with organizations about how to monetize education, and has great success stories she's going to share about this trend of online education, and how this — if you look at the trend line of this economy and industry, I mean, it's just totally off the charts and growing, growing, growing. So with that, please welcome Jennifer Rosenfeld.

JENNIFER: Thank you so much for having me, Aubrey. And thank you all for your patience. I hope I can make it worth your while for dealing with all the technology here. So as Aubrey mentioned, I've been a coach and sort of business mentor for musicians. I've done this for a long time. And most of my work is with individuals, so what that has meant is I'm looking at how do I solve sort of the puzzle of an artist's life. And I see that as sort of the balance of these three key resources. There's time, money, and creative energy. And — uh oh, are we okay?

AUBREY: No, keep going, keep going.

JENNIFER: Okay. So it's sort of this question of, like what I've seen is that so many of my clients have been in a situation where either they're not making enough money to support their life, or they're making a fine amount of money, but they are burning the candle on both ends, they're super overworked, and there's rarely time or energy to do the projects that really matter to them. So I've spent a lot of time just trying to figure out how can we get this balance to be better.

And in some ways I've used my own life as an example, because in addition to the ways that I've made money coaching and helping artists and having my own businesses, I also have my own creative pursuits that are really important to me, and are something that require a lot of time, energy, and also money. So I've thought a lot about, how do I design my life so that I can put what I care about at the center. And I remember it was so weird how all of this went down, but in 2019, I started talking about this with my clients, that you know, I'm concerned that getting all of your income from performance based activities has some risks to it, because it is — you know, it requires you to be on the road or to be performing all the time, which is very exerting on the body, and energy consuming.

It's also, we're sort of at the whims of when someone else will pay, and how much they'll pay. So I had no idea of course that, you know, a global pandemic would put all of this to the test for our entire field around the precariousness of performance based income, which I would argue also has its challenges for organizations. So the last few years have really been this fascinating laboratory, where I've had a lot of people coming to me and saying, "I'm kind of out of other options, I need to find another way to make money. I'm all ears." Which was sort of never something that I had before when everybody was so busy performing.

So I've been really passionate about online education for a long time. I've been curious about it as a business model for myself and my businesses, but also I've been a consumer of it in many different forms. And you know, online education can mean so many different things. It can mean watching a video on YouTube for free, it can mean paying someone tens of thousands of dollars, as I have done, to learn from them remotely. And sometimes it's not remote as well, like I've been part of programs where I've paid a lot of money and some of the program is delivered online, and then sometimes there are brief in person encounters that span a few days. And it makes the in-person component really, really satisfying.

But part of what I think is so important about the online education trend for our field is the fact that most of the consumers of it are adults. And this is something that Aubrey and I have talked about a lot. One of my gripes about what I see from a lot of arts nonprofits is that while education is so highly valued, it is — the resources that most nonprofits put towards education are geared towards young children, which is very valid. I mean, obviously kids should 100% be exposed to an arts education.

But as a 35 year old, I've definitely felt like, well what about me? Does that mean that it's too late for me, or that I'm done with that, or that because I finished all of my formal schooling that now I just get to be an audience member? So in my own life, I've sort of done a lot of pursuits to find the education that I've needed, and what's been so wonderful working with my clients is seeing how they have opened up incredible education opportunities, mostly for adults, for people I would say late twenties to folks in their sixties and beyond, who are hungry to keep learning.

And some of those people are on a professional path or already working professionals in the world of music or the arts. And others make their money in other ways but are extremely dedicated. Now, this trend that I've observed is confirmed by the statistics around the growth of the online education space, which I can't remember the numbers offhand, maybe Aubrey does. But this is a multi-hundred billion dollar industry that is rapidly growing, and certainly has been accelerated by COVID.

So there was that. Now, I want to sort of make the pitch to you for why I think that education is the best way for our field to make money. And this is something that I talk about all the time with my clients, and I feel really strongly about it. So here are the things that education has going for it in terms of why it's a great financial model for our industry. So certainly there's the greater online education trends that confirm all of this. Next is the fact that our field highly values education.

If you think about any of your organizations, how much schooling went in to the entire person-nel that makes it possible for you to do what you do. In classical music, this is a tradition based field that is passed down through teachers over generations. So it's something that we value, we care about, and we know it's something that people pay for. They pay for it from a young age, whether it's, you know, lessons, whether then it becomes higher education, instruments, festi-vals. It's a field that, as we know, is very expensive, but people pay for education and they will pay a lot for it.

Another benefit of education, specifically online education, is that it's a high profit margin item. Now, this is sort of the opposite of the bread and butter of an arts nonprofit, where, as you know, putting on a live production is sort of at a negative profit margin. This is why the non-profit model is the way it is, in order to subsidize the very important work that you do onstage. And I'll speak about that in a bit.

And then, let's see, other things. Oh yes, as I said, adults are a prime target audience for online education, and are hungry for experiences where they can be deeply involved. And another great benefit is that, without a doubt, this increases consumer engagement and desire to partici-pate in other ways. So I just think there are a whole host of benefits when it comes to online ed-ucation. Now — oh, one sort of misconception is around this idea of accessibility.

So, a great benefit of online education, as I'm sure we would all think first, is that it tends to be very accessible. Anyone can access it geographically, which is fantastic, this is a huge benefit to so many people that the internet makes it possible for me to study with my amazing piano teacher in Philadelphia. And you know, that's just incredible, how that can work. But a lot of people assume if we're doing online education, that means we need to make it really low priced.

And I was going to say I have nothing against that, but the truth is I kind of do, because it often — when we're starting at — from a low cost model as the driving value, it often further perpetuates this cycle of us committing ourselves to a lot of work that we're not able to support financially. And again, when I work with individuals who are essentially bootstrapped entrepreneurs, as I have been my entire career, we don't have the luxury of not — of a financial model that is going to take many, many years to work.

We need it to work as soon as possible. So it really brings this question of our profit margin into play. And a lot of what I have specialized in in my — sort of the way that I've worked with clients, is helping them move into significantly higher price points. So I'll just give an example. One of my clients is Nathan Cole, he is the first associate concert master of the LA Philharmonic. We've been working together for a long time, and kind of like, as Drew was talking about with the creator economy, Nathan has been making videos on YouTube for over 10 years, teaching people different excerpts on the violin and stuff like that.

And it got to a point where his online presence had created a lot of demand for people to want to study with him. But he was sort of running out of hours when it came to offering private lessons, even though he was charging top dollar for them. So, we spoke about how could he maybe re-envision, redesign this whole process of taking on a student. So for him, in the very first program I helped him design, this was in 2019, he went from charging \$200 an hour to \$5,000 for a six month training program for violinists, which had a mix of different formats of delivery, from pre-recorded content, to group classes, to individual lessons but only once a month. And he enrolled 20 people in that, which made him \$100,000.

Now, since then he's done a lot more things. In fact, he's actually in the middle of getting ready to announce his summer program. If you go to SummerBach.com, you can see that he has over 1,200 violinists all over the world, all ages, all levels, learning from him for free this week, and then he'll announce his summer program next week. In the past, when he's done a summer program like the Violympics the last two years, in 2020 he had over — I think close to 400 people enroll paying roughly \$800 for the summer.

So this can really add up to some serious money. And what I think is so amazing about it is that, again, these are — I think his average student is like in their forties to sixties. These are people of all different professions, all different levels when it comes to the violin. But they've been seeking for a way to engage, to find community, and to do serious deep work on their instrument. So the final case study I want to talk about very briefly is with an arts organization, Beth Morrison Projects. You may be familiar, it's a New York based, small nonprofit that has become one of the leading producers of new works in the sort of new opera space.

So I was on the board of BMP in 2020, is when I joined, and when the pandemic happened and they lost all of their touring engagements, I said to them, "You know, if you'll let me, I'd love to help you create an educational program. Because you have this incredible expertise in producing, which is so needed, but also so desired amongst people in the arts." So many people want to be able to produce their own work. And I also know, because Beth had told me many times, she said, "There aren't enough producers. I can only do so much, but our industry needs so much more of this." And it took her over a decade to figure out how to do what she did.

So I helped them create a program called the Producer Academy. I think they charged about \$3,000 for it. And a few board members subsidized a few spots, but they enrolled a class of I think 30 people,

most of the people who paid on their own. They made about \$80,000 that summer, which covered their payroll for a few months. And everyone loved the program. But here's the most amazing part. As a result of that, I think it was the Mellon Foundation has given them a grant of \$500,000 to support this program as well as I think a full time sort of producer fellow for the next two or three years.

So I just think that's so incredible, and I love how Beth said to me what meant so much to her about this program was that it enabled her to finally have a way to enact an important part of her mission. And the fact that it was able to help their bottom line, you know, was all the better. So I'm probably out of time now, but that's what I wanted to share with you about online education. In some ways, I confess I am not really a technologist, I don't really know about the future of where things are going, but I care about this field, and I care about us being able to do it in a sustainable way. And that means getting our financial models in order so that we are earning back time as we are earning more money. Because that's one of the things that I think we all really need in this field.

AUBREY: Thank you, Jennifer. All right, we're going to keep moving along here. Reminder, submit your questions, Slido.com. You can see it now. Five Trends. Upvote any questions you want answered. And trend number three, I'm going to very briefly talk about streaming as a strategy. Some of these tech writers don't even include streaming in their list, to be honest. And that's not because it's not a trend or not trendy, it's because streaming is so expected now to be part of a brand's engagement strategy. Part of the strategy. That doesn't mean we need to stream everything, it's just the opposite in fact.

So right on the heels of what Jennifer Rosenfeld was just saying, that online education is a viable, profitable financial model, one person, instructor, streaming to however many people pay to watch that. As we know, streaming a performance is completely different. It's the opposite model. Putting

80, 90 people on stage, especially unionized musicians, production costs, all of that, is not profitable for us. And what I want to briefly say in terms of this streaming as a broader strategy is that what we have seen in classical music sometimes is an inverted version of this strategy.

So I want to point that out. What I mean by that is some organizations, because it has been so cost prohibitive to do these streams, say, well, we want to charge for it, we want our money back, right? And I get asked this question all the time by organizations, how do we monetize our streaming content? And it's just the opposite. So what I'm trying to say is somebody who buys a performance stream from an organization is the most engaged. It's the top of that pyra-mid of loyalty, engagement, so much so that they want to buy our streams.

Now, this is different than the streaming companies, and here's why. You take a company like Netflix or Hulu or whoever, they're literally spending for every dollar we spend on our subscrip-tion each month, a billion dollars for us to receive content in return. We can't charge because we're not on that same level, that's not the level of production and value we're providing. So, what happens though, and this is very interesting, of all those streaming giants, Netflix is the only one that that is part of their core mission, streaming part of their core mission.

All of the others are — like Amazon, for example, Disney, for example, Apple, they're stream-ing because they want to drive loyalty toward their analog, in-person products. Disney wants you to come to the parks or go to the theaters. Amazon definitely wants you to be an Amazon Prime member. That is why they're using streaming, to enhance value, enhance engagement, enhance loyalty in that way. So for us, we need to flip the pyramid, is what I'm saying, flip the strategy. We need to stream not to make money, but as an engagement tool.

That doesn't mean we stream everything. Like I said, that means maybe we pick a few performances a year, stream the overture, something like that. And the idea is that people then want more, and want to come buy that in-person analog product. So that's what I want to say on streaming as a strategy. It's part of a broader trend happening around us. So for the sake of time, let's move on. NFTs and blockchain technology. We're going to hear from Jennifer Chang now. Jennifer is the former CEO of PlayForm, which is a no-code AI platform for artists.

That was a lot of words. What that means is they use artificial intelligence for people who don't know how to code, okay? That's like most of us, maybe all of us, right? So what's also interesting, her business partner there, as an aside, was responsible for the team that completed the Bee-thoven 10 with AI, if anybody remembers seeing — yes, I'm seeing like a lot of ah-has right now.

So just in addition to all of that, she has a master's in arts management, an MBA from USC. Prior to PlayForm, Jennifer had roles at Apple, Disney, a whole bunch of other super cool companies. So she — I first heard her speak on NFTs and the intersection with arts, and got in touch with her immediately and said, "I want you to come here and do this here." So with that, Jennifer, I'm going to turn it over to you.

JENNIFER CHANG: Awesome. All right, so — yeah, so as — thank you for the introduction. Let me just make sure I'm going the right way. As Aubrey mentioned, I am the former CEO of a company called PlayForm that is in AI art. And AI art particularly is a popular category around NFTs. And so we got into the NFT, you know, kind of market, or scene really early as of 2020. You know, over the last year or so, this has just been a very hot topic, especially among the creative industries.

And I'm sure a lot of you guys are just kind of wondering what all of this even is. And so today I'm going to just kind of go through blockchain, NFTs, what they are, and how they are impact-ing the creative industries. But just to get kind of a sense of where everyone is at in regards to their awareness of this new technology, how many of you guys have heard of cryptocurrency?

DREW: Let's go.

JENNIFER C: How many of you have cryptocurrency? All right, now hack their wallets. I'm just kidding.

DREW: Give me your [UNINTEL].

JENNIFER C: How many of you have heard of NFTs? And how many of you have purchased or created an NFT? We've got some in the room, pretty cool. All right, and then what about the metaverse? How many of you guys have heard of the metaverse? How many of you guys actual-ly know what it is? All right, cool.

AUBREY: This is very honest, thank you. Yeah, a lot of that is honest.

JENNIFER C: So it sounds like we have a lot of awareness in this room, but you know, not nec-essarily everyone's jumping in yet. And you know, that's pretty indicative of the overall market, and where we are in regards to the tech adoption here with crypto and NFTs. But just to kind of break down what we're talking about here. So the technology we're talking about is called blockchain, and blockchain is a way of storing information and data in a distributed, decentral-ized system.

So it means that no one's kind of there pushing the buttons, all of it is being done auto magical-ly, autonomously, with code. In regards to blockchain technology, there's two primary applica-tions just broadly speaking, that we're usually talking about. The first is cryptocurrency. Cryp-tocurrency is what they call a fungible token. What that means is one bitcoin is the same as an-other bitcoin. The entire market activity is determining what is the price of each of our bitcoin, but that price is set across whether I have one bitcoin and you have another bitcoin, both our bitcoin is worth the same amount.

So when we're talking about cryptocurrency, you know, some of the — kind of the cryptos that you might have heard of, things like Bitcoin, Ethereum, Solana, you know, those are cryptocur-rencies. The other application of blockchain technology is around NFTs, or non-fungible tokens. So what non-fungible means is kind of like art. One Picasso is not the same price as another Pi-casso. They're both part of the collection that is Picasso, but each of them have a different value because each of them have different attributes and are unique.

And so when we're talking about non-fungible tokens, we're talking about tokens that each one is unique versus cryptocurrency, where all of them are the same. So when we're talking about NFTs, non-fungible tokens, we're talking about projects like the Bored Ape Yacht Club, Crypto Punks, Beeple who sold an artwork called 500 Days early, and kind of really started the big kind of hype cycle around NFTs.

So the key reason we are talking about NFTs particularly in this room is the difference between a fungible token and a non-fungible token is essentially creativity, right? What makes these things more unique than others. So what NFTs have really done is they have taken this technol-ogy, this

blockchain technology, from the world of financiers, and Wall Street types, and really pushed it into this new creative realm. And that's why it's really important that we talk about this tech trend today.

So some of the key features of NFTs, you know, there's a bunch of different things kind of going on in this space, but some of the things that you should be aware of is, one, it's a trust-less transaction system. So what that means is you don't need a third party to be involved. So you know, typically when you buy a house, there's the buyer and the seller, but there's an escrow agent in between to make sure that the house is being transferred to the new owner, and that the money is being given to the seller.

In blockchain, none of that is necessary because the transactions can happen directly through the trust that is built into the code and the system. How this is done is things like general ledgers, where all of the transactions are being verified and collectively stored in a general ledger that anyone can access through the network. And so this allows for us to be able to direct transactions without having a third party intermediary, and it's very disruptive in how you start thinking about transactions.

The second piece of NFTs is the smart contract. So smart contracts are essentially that, they're autonomous, intelligent contracts. So you can program code that can do things like, every time this NFT changes hands, give the original creator 10% of the sales price. You know, that's something a computer can do automatically, can be programmed to continuously do, and be trusted to continuously do without interference.

And then the third thing I want to emphasize is the utility of the ownership. So when you own an NFT, you own that NFT. This trusted system, this blockchain, has basically said you own that, and everyone else in the network is being told that you own that. Which provides the ability for you to unlock some

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type of utility. You know, by utility we mean something that gives value back to the actual owner. And so, you know, I think a lot of times the utility in NFTs is not really being considered as much, but today I'm going to kind of go through a few different types of creative applications that really bring out new aspects of utility, particularly in the creative industries.

So I'm going to start with a few projects — sorry, I went the wrong way again. I'm going to start by talking about a few different projects out there. So within the NFT space, the language project is used most often when we're talking about a business or, you know, some kind of tool or whatever that's being put out there. So this particular project is called Stoner Cats. And you know, I think this is a really great example of how NFTs are presenting a new way to fund creative projects.

So if you have this Stoner Cat, it's one of about 10,000 NFTs that were issued by the Stoner Cats project prior to the development of the actual project. So if you have one of these, it will allow you to go to a website where you are the only person — only owners would be able to see an animated TV series that was created by Hollywood heavy hitters such as Seth McFarland, Ashton Kutcher, and Mila Kunis. There's only about 10,000 of these NFTs out there, so only 10,000 people can basically watch this show at any given time.

But they were able to raise \$8.5 million from the sales of these NFTs and produce a 10-episode season one. And the way it would work is, you know, you buy one of these NFTs. You know, it might cost like a thousand or two thousand dollars, depending on the price of E. And after you're done watching the show, you can actually sell it back into the marketplace so somebody else can watch the show. Or, I can send it to one of my friends, so that then they can go and watch the show. So it — unlike Netflix where you're paying a subscription, in this case you're paying for a license, which you can sell and swap. But it creates another way of funding creative projects.

I'm sure if you've heard anything about NFTs, you've seen these pictures of these apes. They tend to be everywhere. So these apes are called the Bored Ape Yacht Club, and they are one of the kind of most interesting phenomena that have happened within NFTs. There is 10,000 of these ape cartoons that were created by a company called Yuga Labs, and they were distributed as NFTs, and now they are worth, you know, anywhere from — they're usually in the hundreds of thousands depending on what the price of E is. I believe right now it's at around \$150,000.

They're often pointed to when people say that NFTs are just hype and fad. But actually I think there's a lack of awareness of the utility of having a Bored Ape Yacht Club, and that is that it's presenting this new way of distributing creative value to who is creating that project. So you know, as I mentioned, the Bored Ape Yacht Club, 10,000 ape NFTs. But this one in particular is ape number 1,798. Also known as Jenkins the Valet.

So this particular NFT was illustrated by Yuga Labs and sold, and eventually found its way to another team of creators called Tally Labs. Tally Labs decided to take ape number 1,798 and give him a name. They called him Jenkins the Valet. Jenkins is the valet at the Bored Ape Yacht Club, and he tells you about what's going on, who's coming and going, and he tells stories, and he has this whole kind of rich backstory that has really unfolded through social media.

The really interesting thing that has happened as a result of this is he — the Jenkins team has been able to spinoff their own NFT project that raised \$1.5 million to write a crowdsourced book with the NFT owners. They've also been signed by CAA. So now you have this situation where one team has created the actual ape illustration, another team is adding to the value of this particular NFT by also giving this illustration a backstory and a character.

And so the interesting thing here is that with the Bored Ape Yacht Club, they pass through the IP so that whoever owns that ape is able to have those commercial rights. And so it's a new way of — you know, like a lot of people point to this as building Marvel from the ground up versus top down, right? You give the characters out to the people, and then people can develop the stories based on the character that they have. And ultimately, all of these characters live within the Bored Ape Yacht Club.

And then the third application that I'm going to talk about is how NFTs unlock new ways for creative collaboration. So this artwork is one of the early artworks of an AI called Botto. The Botto project is one in which, you know, all people, like a community of people can come together and basically help train an AI by paying for tokens, and the AI is trained to create an artwork that is based on all the inputs, and kind of decisions made by that crowd. Then the artwork is sold as an NFT, and then those proceeds go back to the community that helps create it.

So this is a way in which you're not only just seeing, you know, the community come together to fund a project, or people kind of working on — you know, but actually working together to create something that they can then collectively sell. So this is another way that, you know, NFTs and blockchain are really kind of changing the way we think about the creative industries. And you know, also another interesting project I thought I would point out.

So in conclusion, the — you know, these are just some of the trends and interesting ideas that are coming out of this new market. That being said, things are still really early. At its peak month, there was about 100,000 active wallets that participated in NFTs on the Ethereum blockchain. So we're talking about very low number of people in regards to adoption still. There's still a lot of challenges

ahead in regards to the technology and how we apply it. And finding new ideas around how to apply this technology.

But that being said, it's introducing a lot of really interesting new ideas around how we creatively collaborate and fund, and you know, just build these communities as well. And so I think it's definitely a tech trend that all of you guys should be watching as people in the creative industry. The other great thing that's happened is that, you know, the early adopters of this industry have come together and formed a really vibrant community, you know, that we refer to as the NFT industry, or the NFT community. And within this community, we have our own little code language. And one of the things we love to say is WAGMI, which means we're all going to make it. And I just wanted to share that with you. We're all going to make it. Thank you.

AUBREY: Thank you Jennifer. All right, we've got one more big trend we want to share with you. And I just want to say a note on time. Since we started a little late, we're going to go a little late. So probably 9:20, 9:25 is when we'll wrap up here. But I really want us to spend some time on the future of work. We have with us Geri Silver, who is a creative manager at LinkedIn. Also over product strategy on the creator team there. And she talks a lot in her work about the creator economy, which we heard from Drew about, but also the future of work.

And what is interesting, not only are we going to get to see some LinkedIn data today, so of course massive dataset across all kinds of industries, but also what I love about Geri is she comes from the arts in a former life. So she spent many years in the theater world, in ticketing world. She was the senior director of partnership strategy for TodayTix. Anybody with a theater history is like, oh my god, TodayTix I know. So she is just bringing this intersection of knowledge about the performing arts and this trend of the future of work. So please, Geri, tell us what you've got.

GERI SILVER: All right. Hey everyone. Well, I think that intro was pretty great, and really speaks to why I'm so thrilled to be here. I definitely feel like I knew I would be in good company today. We may have even crossed paths at previous conferences like Tessitura. So if I'm familiar, that's probably why. But today, I am sharing data on behalf of LinkedIn. And many of you have probably heard of LinkedIn, it's a pretty big destination, whether you are listing out your professional experience or sharing content about your professional lives, searching for a job, hiring for a job. All of that happens on LinkedIn.

And just to give a big picture numbers, there are 830 million member profiles on LinkedIn around the world. Over 208 million are US based job employees, and over 58 million companies have a company page on LinkedIn. So we have a team called the economic graph, and they use some of the data from the site to say, let's let the world in on these trends that we're seeing. We see a lot of movement from job seekers getting hired, to employers making -- growing their teams. So what can other employers and people with jobs learn from that? And that's a bit of what I'm going to be sharing today.

So honing in on that data. I'm going to focus on three trends. One is the trend around remote work and what we're seeing today in 2022. Two is the great reshuffle, which some have called the great resignation, but we don't, because we think there's more to it than that. And three is what employees are prioritizing these days when it comes to choosing or staying at a job. And first, I want to acknowledge that, you know, arts jobs and the arts industry is unique in so many ways.

So if some of these trends and data feels like this would never work for me, or it doesn't resonate, that's probably true. Like it's very valid. I'm not here sharing a playbook of what's right and what's

wrong. It's very much not a one size fits all world of work right now. But I think the beauty in that is that every industry is redefining what a workplace means to them right now. Every industry is having these conversations. Every individual company is as well. So in a perfect world, I present this data hoping that it will be interesting food for thought as you envision the present and future state of your organization as a place to work.

So the first trend is around remote work. So the data is definitely telling us that the world of remote work is changed forever. It was not a 2020 thing, it was not a 2021 thing. And some way that I'll illustrate that is with a pop quiz, and we're going to have one of these for each of the trends. So in 2019, only one in 67 paid jobs in the US offered a remote work option. And I'm curious how the people in this room would guess that statistic has changed. So raise your hand if you think now, one in every six jobs offers remote work. And now one in fifteen. And one in thirty.

So it seems most people think it's either one in six and one in fifteen. It is one in six. And that doesn't mean fully remote, but it does mean that in the job listing, they offer some sort of remote flexibility. And there are some numbers that back up why they might be moving in this direction. So they actually get two and a half times more job applications if you list a remote option alongside your job listing. And also, employees tend to like it. 87% of employees say that they prefer to stay remote at least half the time if given the option.

So the second trend is about this great reshuffle. Lots of talk of people leaving jobs, picking new jobs, hopping around. What do we actually see with the data there? So pop quiz time. How much has job changing increased from 2020 to the end of 2021? So raise your hand if you think that job changing has increased by 52%, more than half. And now 15%. And 37%. Wow, you guys did your research, it is 37%. That's how much job changing has increased in 2021 compared to 2022.

As an arts veteran, this was surprising to me because I thought of 2020 as a year of so much upheaval, which we didn't really choose for ourselves. But what I think this illustrates is that often — you know, it took until 2021 for a lot of people with jobs to say, okay but what do I want? You know, maybe I was able to keep my job throughout the pandemic, maybe I wasn't. But also, what do I want for myself? So in 2021, we saw a lot of people making changes.

And then some interesting stats to color that is that not all job changes mean leaving your employer behind. Promotions were also up in 2021 compared to 2020. They were up 9%. And obviously a great way to recognize and reward an employee who has stuck around and done great work. And also it's not — you know, job hopping would be too flippant of a term to talk about what's happening now. Because people are more choosy than they've ever been about where they go. So on average, a person views double the amount of jobs per application in 2022, compared to 2019. So it's not an issue of, you know, spraying and praying with your resume. People are really doing their research and trying to find what the right fit is.

So the last trend we're going to talk about is that workers feel more empowered to demand more from work, and that is this question of what are employees prioritizing. So pop quiz. In a survey for job seekers, what was the most important priority for them when choosing the right workplace? Raise your hand if you think it's compensation. Raise your hand if it's work-life balance. Raise your hand if it's colleagues and culture. So overwhelmingly, raised hands for work-life balance. That's correct.

63% of professionals listed work-life balance as their top priority when choosing a job. So some additional numbers here. Employees report being much more satisfied, two and a half plus times more when they also report being satisfied with the flexibility offered by their company from a timing

and location perspective. And companies are catching on to this, because we're seeing an 83% increase in mentions of flexibility in job posts now compared to 2019. I think that's another kind of interesting, meaty one for the arts, especially if you have employees that are showing up to performances, rehearsals, casting sessions.

So I do want to note, work-life balance doesn't just mean total freedom to work the hours and locations of your choice. It can sometimes be as simple as empowering your employees to un-plug during those times where they don't need to be on their email, or actually telling them to take their vacation time and knowing that they are supportive. There are still a lot of organizations where employees don't feel that way. So even moving in the direction of being very intentional with the flexibility you can offer goes a really long way.

So the three takeaways here. Flexibility is key more than ever to attracting and retaining top talent. Also, job seekers are choosier about finding the right fit, whether that's in staying or in choosing a new work place. And also, work-life balance is a top factor for most job seekers. And because I'm on the creator team at LinkedIn, I'd be remiss to say if you love your work, you should be sharing about it. Because you would be surprised how many people in your network are actively wondering, you know, where are the best places to work, how can I find fulfillment.

So if you love like the policies of your work place and the mission that you're working for and the shows that you're part of, by all means share that. I think that people have never been more interested to take a peek in each other's work lives and see what fulfills them. So we definitely encourage everyone to be sharing about what you're learning and going through as an employee working on such fantastic work. So thank you.

AUBREY: Thank you, thank you. Okay, it's question time. So as a reminder, Slider.com. Upvote, which many of you have, this is great. So we're — I knew this would happen. We have very little time, which is why I did it this way. So the number one question that's gotten the most upvotes in this room is for you, Jennifer Chang. Can you give an example or hypothetical of what an orchestra NFT might look like? If not, I can help you, but you go. You go.

JENNIFER C: Yeah, so I've been following a lot of different projects, and there's definitely a lot of stuff happening around music, a lot of it — what you're seeing is around like hip-hop and stuff like that. But when I think of an orchestra NFT, I think orchestras do make a lot of sense because you have so many different participants. And right now, the way it probably works is that you have all these, you know, musicians, and you have like an orchestra or symphony or whoever that is like collecting the money and distributing it on these musicians' behalf.

But I could see an opportunity where a group of musicians could come together, collaborate, put together some kind of record or, you know, some kind of audio file that they can share as an NFT, but it would only be exclusive to the people who owned the NFT. And then, each time one is sold, it could be distributed across the 100 people that contributed to that symphony automatically. So you no longer have to have this kind of like third party bringing it all together.

You know, I could see an orchestra NFT being built on some kind of platform where people can contribute different stems or whatever, you know, pieces to the composition, and maybe it kind of gets put together in some way and distributed in that way. So I think there's a lot of different ways that this can be applied, and I think we've only scratched the surface. So you know, these are some ideas, but get creative, and I think there's even more.

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

JENNIFER C: So I am not 100% sure if there is a platform for it. I know that there has been a lot of music collaboration, but the ones I've heard a lot about have tended to go around hip-hop and electronic music, just because of the scene of who's in it. That being said, some of those tools might be applicable to classical music. Or, I would say that in itself might be a business opportunity. You know, this is a real green space here, and so there's just so many new things that can be added, and you know, new things that are getting funded every day.

AUBREY: Okay, also very quickly. People want to know environmental impact. Can you talk about what's happening in this space? Because I know it's changing.

JENNIFER C: Yeah, so you know, another thing that blockchain gets a lot of heat for is the fact that it's —

[OFF-MIC CONVERSATION]

JENNIFER C: That, you know — heat for causing climate change. So you know, there's a couple of things there. First off, the reason that people talk about blockchain in regards to energy consumption is because it uses a lot of electricity to power transactions. So a few ways that I address this is, one, what uses the most electricity is a system that powers Bitcoin and Ethereum currently, which is called Proof of Work. It requires these miners, these like, you know, whatever, servers to like basically try to figure out all of these really complex calculations to mine a bitcoin.

Lately, the technology standard has been changing to something that is called Proof of Stake, that requires less energy. That being said, it also involves — it's, you know, you're kind of compromising a little bit on security there as well. I think a lot of these algorithms are still in the works, and I think we're going to keep coming up with better and better ideas. And so I think that will be resolved some way or another. We are moving towards lower energy usage in the blockchain.

Another thing that I want to point out too is that it all has to do with the source of energy. So the reason blockchain has been — has the reputation for being so dirty is because a lot of the min-ing activity was happening in places like China, where there is a lot of like, you know, coal, and carbon based — things that are being used. And so the source of the energy is really the issue. So as we move to more cleaner renewable resources, this will solve itself.

Another thing that we should be really aware of is that actually China has banned Bitcoin and cryptocurrency mining, and so a lot of that activity has now relocated to the US. So it's really now on the onus of Americans to push for cleaner energy, which will also impact the blockchain as well. And so you know, I see this as larger — part of a bigger problem, where we really need to push our governments to do something about climate change and clean energy and renewable energy, more so than a blockchain specific problem.

And then the third thing is that, you know, the reason blockchain gets a lot of this criticism is because the data is transparent and publicly available. We know how much energy the block-chain is using. We do not know how much energy Bank of America is using. We do not know how much energy, you know, Chase, JP Morgan Chase is using, right? And so I think at a cer-tain level too, you also just have to be aware that we're — when you're talking about block-chain and saying this is a bad thing, you

also just don't have the data to really compare it to the existing traditional systems either. So yeah, that's the energy side of things.

AUBREY: Great. All right, there's one more popular NFT question, I'm going to take it, and then I've got one that I want both Drew and Geri to weigh in on. And then we're going to move on. Successful NFT project in the performing arts space. So Dallas Symphony last year, if any-body remembers, when Dallas Symphony brought in the Metropolitan Opera musicians and performed, they then turned that into an NFT project. They released, I think it was photos, maybe a few audio clips. So that's a good one to look at. Also, Verdigris Ensemble, this is a chorus, they were the first organization — help me out, because you were on that panel with me — they were the first organization to sell I think a composition on the — ?

DREW: Was that Christina Spanay [?]?

AUBREY: That's not Christina's piece, that was — oh my god, I'm blanking on his name. The composer. I'll just say, this composer was the first composition released as an NFT. Quarter million dollars was the sale. I mean, this composer, and he sat on a webinar we did together, I never make that kind of money in a year. We're like, we know, you're a composer. But he was so open about this. He was like, "It changed my life." So those are just a couple quickly to rattle off.

Okay, question for — this is on the creator economy. So the question is, if the advice is have a YouTube channel, but whatever the platform, creating content is not always so easy. So how to ensure social media or content success? I would like if you have quick tips, and then I know you have advice too probably.

DREW: So there's no easy way to do it. You have to figure out — it's kind of like mining, you know? You have to just like dig a hole and just see what you find in there. Oftentimes you're going to get nothing. But — and a lot of people tend to view that as a waste of time, but I think that that is the most valuable work you can do. You've got to figure out what doesn't work before you find what works.

And oftentimes what works that you know of is already being done. So if you're doing something other people are doing, you're never really going to develop the asymmetrical growth that you may be looking for. So I think that definitely my advice would be to start simple, and start with authenticity. I mean, if you do any google searches, this is what people say, but it's real. If what you are creating says something authentic about your organization that is novel, that is interesting, that is different from every other organization, it's going to have merit, and it's definitely going to have some traction.

Now, it also takes time to build an audience. And when we're dealing with platforms that are disseminated by Meta, you know, Facebook and Instagram, they're incredibly saturated. You are competing against everybody who uses that platform, including professional organizations with dozens and dozens and dozens of hired content creators, managers, that are pumping out, you know, hundreds of pieces of content a week. You're competing with that.

So it's much better, if you don't have that resources, to be way more niche and way more interesting and quirky. Think 2007 YouTube kind of quirky. Because at the end of the day, if what you're doing is novel, it doesn't matter — it's not like some — it's not some like — what I would say junk food content that is just trying to get engagement, trying to boost numbers.

It says something about who you are. And because it is that essential, indelible piece of real es-tate you've created, it's always searchable. People will always know you, know that about you. So I think maybe investing more in the curation and the niche nature of your content, that will give you a better chance to succeed, whereas trying to just produce a ton of content that doesn't mean anything.

AUBREY: I'm also hearing consistency in that. Like you have to keep [UNINTEL] —

[OVERTALK]

DREW: Oh yeah, yeah, definitely. Consistency.

AUBREY: All right Geri, put your creator manager hat on. What else do you have? What other advice to offer?

GERI: Two words you said are the ones that I want to really hammer home. Authenticity, which is like not going all in on the tools, or thinking you need to be an illustrator or an animator or a video editor. Really like, it could be a straight to camera conversation that can take you all the further. So I wouldn't overthink the technical side of creation. Just think about, you know, how to express what you want people to know about your organization and what you're doing and all of the beauty it creates.

The other one is consistency. It is like — it's just worth it to like create, create, create, rather than, you know, put something out, evaluate the metrics, wonder if it wasn't worth it, and then kind of go into
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paralysis. It's better to just keep going. And three, think of engagement and success as quality over quantity. Like the reality is you're going to see things in your scrolls that are completely viral and be like, oh, how do I do that though? And that's not really the game that we're playing, especially in the arts.

Like, you know, one video might be lip synching to a funny quote, and it might have four million loves on it, but if you attract two people to buy a ticket, and one of them ends up subscribing and it got twelve likes on that video, like that's success. So I would focus on those sort of things. And make sure you're talking to the people who might buy the ticket, who might become a subscriber, rather than trying to talk to everyone in the world, and the trends that they might be following.

JENNIFER C: I want to just like add one thing to that too. Another thing is, I think there's a lot of organizations here, but I want to organize like social media content tends to be around people. You know, research has shown that people tend to gravitate toward faces of other people. We're naturally social creatures, so we like humans. I think often, organizations are trying to push their agenda as an organization and as a collective, but you really need to start thinking about who are the characters within our team that we can really emphasize.

You know, people don't think — you know, when they watch Friends, they're like, that character Joey, that's who I relate to, right? People gravitate towards characters, and so how do you develop that within your organization. It's going to require relinquishing some control and empowering your people, and then having to figure out how to retain them. But you know, you're — I think it's really worth the investment if you want a content strategy.

AUBREY: And that's good news for us. We have an army of 80, 90, 100 people on stage every day who are available to us. So I think this is one of the things that is such an asset we have in our corner. Okay, we have just a few more minutes, and then we're done. I promised we would do five other trends adjacent to our work. A very quick lightning round. So Rick, I want to bring you up here. Rick Talaske is an engineer turned scientist turned acoustician, and I wanted to involve our sponsor for this session in a way that was different and more interactive than a typical sponsor.

Thank you. So I pitched to Rick this idea that we would do this bonus round and ask, can I put you on the spot, and do this lightning round with five trends, and he said yes. So Rick, let's hit it here. On this lightning round, first trend is green tech. So we're talking sustainability, environmental impact across supply chains, materials. The question for you is, this affects our concert halls. What are you seeing in terms of what's being used, what's happening in this space?

RICK TALASKE: Great question. Basically, we're ahead of the curve you might say. And the building industry is well along on creating environmentally friendly buildings. You know, you have the Well Building, you have the Lead Programs that helps develop buildings that are environmentally friendly. There are proper materials used, LED lighting, and those types of things. That's really helpful.

Materials are a particular consideration. Many of you might be involved in re-seating your concert halls, that being changing the audience seating. And the seating has a profound effect on the acoustic quality of a space. So you really have to pay attention to that. It involves porous materials, sound reflecting materials, those all have to be managed and selected. There are other durability considerations that come into play. Appearance, of course. Things like flammability and smoke developed and the like.

Other materials are, cork is a really great material. It can be used on floors, it absorbs impact, it's not porous like carpeting, it keeps the hall alive and reverberant. Felt materials can be made from recycled materials, like bottles and things like that. Concrete can be used to actually — what's the term? Basically absorb pollutants, and they become encapsulated. We like concrete as acousticians, and that's a good way to manage the environment.

Hemp is another product that is being used for making sound absorbing materials. I'll say that the smoke developed associated with that product is not part of this conversation, so — but in any case, we're doing a really good job of staying ahead of —

AUBREY: Stoner Cats!

DREW: Stoner Cats.

AUBREY: It's all connected. It's all connected. Okay, very quickly, I'm going to hit trust architecture, and then I've got another one for you, Rick. Trust architecture is an increasing trend, every tech writer is talking about this. This is also known as digital trust. This is the privacy conversation. Ethical use of data. I'm seeing nodding heads, good. Cybersecurity. Very quickly, I want to say, many of you probably know this, Apple made recent iOS changes that limits the tracking these other apps can do. It lets you opt out as a consumer.

As a consumer, this is good news. Facebook is upset, if you've been following this, and other advertisers, but they're the big one, because it limits their ability to super target ads. So as a marketer, a little more challenging. But anyways, so that's what's happening. This also affects us, not

just because we run ads on these platforms, but it affects our ticketing systems. We are e-commerce businesses, so consumer privacy is important. This is not just PCI compliance, this is now, you know, a full on trend globally basically.

Okay, metaverse. All right, this word has come up a little bit. The metaverse. The metaverse, very quickly, is not one type of technology, it's more about the amalgamation of technologies. This is the one earlier where we were like, who knows metaverse? And this was like the pre-dominant answer. I think that is very fitting, more broadly as well.

JENNIFER C: People keep asking me where it is and how to get there.

AUBREY: How do we get there. It's the convergence of technologies, and this also sometimes is the convergence of virtual reality, augmented reality. So Rick, my question for you is, how is your team like navigating this? How are you — are you working on virtual reality? What are you doing? How are you using this technology to the benefit of symphony orchestras?

RICK: Sure, sure. Well, let's talk about those words separately. And for us, virtual reality isn't putting some little iPhone headset on, and having a wow factor. And that doesn't really convert to, you know, subscription tickets, right? For us, it's trying to understand, and letting everybody know that patrons expect and deserve a great sound experience. And so the foundation of good acoustics, the reality of good acoustics, relates to clarity of sound, adequate loudness, proper localization, reverberance, envelopment, those types of things.

Localization, that's a tricky one because what that means is what you hear matches what you see. And that's not always the case in a lot of these, you know, toys, VR toys. So we think that's extremely important, and sometimes not addressed in some of the commercial acoustic en-hancement systems that are out there. So when you venture into the virtual world, you need acousticians who understand, you know, what the goals are in terms of clarity, loudness, etcet-era. And audio consultants who can, you know, work together and make that happen.

You talked about Henry and his talk, and how the board members finally understood what he was trying to convey in terms of importance of sound quality. I'm the same way. If somebody asks me why I like this wine or vodka, you know, I'm at a loss of words to try and describe it. But in the case of acoustics, we have a number of certain characteristics, and those basically are the goals, if you will.

So our bias, strong bias, is to develop architectural solutions to create these important sound qualities for enjoying music. However, sometimes we understand that some buildings aren't ca-pable of doing that, and that's where we resort to the use of electronic systems, call it electronic architecture, if you will, that supplements the natural architecture of the room.

JENNIFER C: I think that's going to be a very interesting area moving forward, like really ex-cited about that.

RICK: Well, there's a lot that can be done.

AUBREY: That's right, a lot of it can be done. All right, two more lightning round trends. Four out of five. AI and machine learning, that's artificial intelligence. Using computers and algo-rithms that can

improve automatically through their experience and the use of data. So a lot of Jennifer's work is at the intersection of AI and the arts. We've talked about that. I mentioned at the top, her business partner at PlayForm was part of the Beethoven 10 AI reconstruction of the finish of the — of that symphonic work.

San Francisco Symphony recently debuted a piece where they used AI media, images, and video, along with the Ligeti score. So the advances here in AI, what we want to say, and machine learning, can influence everything, from writing our marketing copy, to writing music. And again, it's not about liking it, but being aware of the trend.

And our fifth lightning round topic. All right, ubiquitous computing. Computers are everywhere, that is what that means, and we are more connected than ever. We know that as individuals. The Internet of Things. We have smart everything, smart thermostats, smart homes, Alexa, all those things. Quantum computing on the rise. This affects our consumer's access to our online content, it affects their experience in our concert halls potentially. So Rick, the question here, and this is really putting you on the spot, this is in part an acoustic problem. Cell phones in the concert hall. Thoughts? Go.

RICK: Well, I'll revert back to two years ago, the first virtual concert by LAO, conference by LAO, and there was a presenter that offered results of a survey. One of the questions in the survey was to potential patrons, what would cause you to not buy an orchestra — a ticket to an orchestra performance? And half of the respondents said, "I don't go because people are rude, that they use their cell phones." The other half said, "They won't let me use my cell phone."

So this is a real, real dichotomy that we need to solve as an industry. So what could be done? I mean, we could design concert halls where there are designated areas, where — you know, create a little
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privacy and that type of thing, but we know how that works. You know, smoking are-as and the like have gone away. So another option might be to work with like Google Glass systems. Allow people to have images that they can see without disturbing people. There are assisted listening systems that are regularly available, by law, that perhaps could be joined together to help with that communication process.

A third very easy way here is the screens, they're disturbing because they're bright. Why do we have to watch, enjoy, listen to performances in the dark like we did last night? So I would encourage us to bring up the lights during music performances. If you do that, you're not — when people do use their phone, they will use their phone, they won't be as disturbing. So —

AUBREY: I love that. It reframes the problem completely, which I think is great, and then it's not a problem.

DREW: It's a great idea.

AUBREY: All right, thank you Rick. I really made him do this, and he was like, I'm in, I'm game. So thank you for doing this, for sponsoring the session. As we wrap up, just very quickly, our trends in review here. You heard about the creator economy, online education, streaming as a strategy, NFTs and blockchain, and the future of work, plus our bonus lightning round of five more trends. You all have been fantastic. You stayed to the end, you were here at eight a.m. From all of us, thank you so much.