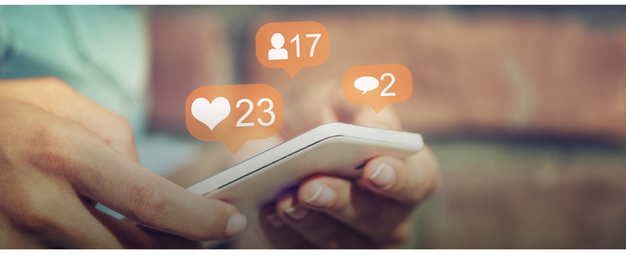

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Inspiration

Two Ways Technology Is Making It Easier Than Ever to Get Connected

Business cards—once a necessity—now feel more like a formality, especially when there are so many more immediate and convenient ways to connect with someone, like through LinkedIn or Instagram. But, even when connecting on LinkedIn, you're still just one of thousands of connections, and it's becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish yourself from everyone else. The convenience of an online network can be overshadowed by the sheer volume of requests to connect with people who you've never even met.

However, at the Cannes Lions Festival, global consulting firm Accenture found a way to reinvent how we make those connections, through a frictionless exchange of information. They launched the Cannes Connected Band in 2017, and all delegates at Cannes Lions were able to pick up their bracelet, which stored a unique user ID. From there, all that was needed for two people to exchange their information was a simple wrist bump.

Promoted with the tagline, "Meet, Bump, Connect," the wearables meant there would be no need to fumble around looking for a pen or a card, or to ask for someone's social handle. On a deeper level, they brought back requiring actual physical contact in order to establish connections—it's subtle, but that type of bond is important, especially when you're connecting with your peers.

At Cannes, Connect Bands made it easy for people to connect, while Braindate helped bring the right people together after their initial connection. Working similarly to a matchmaking app, Braindate is meant to facilitate professional relationships, instead of romantic ones, adding a level of focus and customization to meetups.

At events like the Cannes, C2, or TEDWomen conferences, attendees fill out a profile that outlines their interests and availability, and the Braindate app connects them so that they can learn from each other. By matching users with other individuals that can help them deepen their understanding of topics they are already interested in, the service is helping users leave conferences and events with deeper connections than what is possible when two random people meet for a drink.

Once established, the actual connections made through innovations like the Connected Bands and Braindate are not all that different than those of 50 years ago. But these developments remove a lot of the pain points of the old systems and allow users to get to the good stuff, faster.

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