

The Future of Keynote Design Is Here

12 emerging trends transforming B2B stages into experiences attendees actually want to attend.



Keynotes are dead. At least, the old version is.

What's replacing them? Experiences that blur the line between business presentation and cultural event. Keynotes that feel more like music festivals than corporate announcements. Stages that transform into living rooms, art installations, and immersive worlds.

The most forward-thinking brands have already moved beyond traditional presentation formats. They're creating general sessions that channel the cozy maximalism of a TikTok home tour, the kinetic energy of live theater, and the architectural minimalism of luxury retail, all while delivering strategic messages that drive business.

We surveyed the landscape—recent client work, industry flagships, future-casting reports, architectural innovations, and even the 2025 Tony Awards to identify 12 trends redefining what keynotes *can be*. More than aesthetic choices, these trends change how brands connect with audiences in an increasingly experience-driven economy. In a world where attention is the ultimate currency, these trends reveal how the smartest event designers are staying ahead of the curve.

Go ahead, dive in.

1. In-Home Sets

- **The Shift:** Corporate stages are trading slick minimalism for cozy living room vibes. Think couches, rugs, lamps, and bookshelves that make audiences feel like they're visiting a friend.
- **Why It Works:** Intimacy beats intimidation. These environments create psychological safety and genuine connection. When your audience feels comfortable, they're more likely to engage, remember, and act.
- **See It in Action:** Google's [Gemini at Work](#) event utilized a living-room style set with deep lounge seating to intentionally soften the formality of a traditional keynote environment, supporting a more human-centered approach to thought leadership.



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This week [@experiencemas](#) celebrated the future of AI-powered creativity with [@google](#) Workspace and [#GeminiAtWork](#) 🧠 ✨
We created a unique, hands-on experience to share the magic of Gemini and transformation stories with business leaders and influencers through:

- ➡ An engaging, innovative live show with Aparna Pappu, VP & GM of Google Workspace, featuring real business use cases and impact stories from Workspace customers and [@mcuban](#).
- ➡ Experiential demos that brought the power of generative AI to life, whether it was creating stunning images in the AI Photo Booth, uncovering clues with Gemini to unlock success in an escape room, or catching up and responding to an urgent email thread in a recreated subway car.
- ➡ Hands-on learning via product demos, exploring how to use Gemini and [@googleworkspace](#) to acquire customers, automate routine tasks, streamline projects, work safer, and more.
- ➡ Learning Lab workshops with Google experts to learn how to boost your productivity and amplify your workday and transform your workflow with effective prompting techniques.

Gemini is helping businesses transform how they work and unlock success and MAS is excited to play a hands-on role in moving the mission forward. 🙌 🚀

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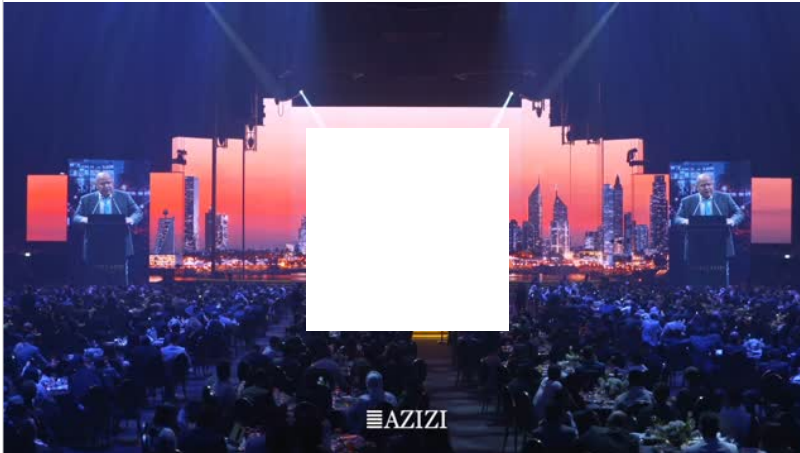
2. World-Building Sets

- **The Shift:** Brands are ditching corporate branding for bold storytelling environments. The set becomes its own character, sometimes even more memorable than the speakers themselves.
- **Why It Works:** Stories stick better than statistics. When your environment tells a complete narrative, you create emotional connections that transcend traditional B2B boundaries.
- **See It in Action:** The [Burj Azizi launch event](#) featured an emotionally charged keynote design, with kinetic stage elements, an overhead LED ceiling, and layered scenic



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Burj Azizi, our most anticipated launch of 2025, sets a new benchmark for luxury living! 🌃 ✨

The spectacular event brought together prestigious guests, global agents, media, and celebrities to witness the vision behind the second tallest tower in the world. 🌃 ✨

With breathtaking views, unmatched elegance, and groundbreaking innovation, Burj Azizi is redefining what it means to live at the pinnacle of luxury.

To make the evening even more special, the iconic superstar @jlo graced us with an unforgettable performance, lighting up the night with her signature energy and style. 🎤 🔥

A huge thank you to everyone who joined us for this unforgettable evening. 🚀 🌟

🌟 ✨! برج عزيزي: الحدث الأبرز لعام 2025 ومعيّار جديد للحياة الفاخرة

في أجواء يملؤها الحماس والإبهار، انطلق هذا الحدث الاستثنائي الذي شهده نخبة من الضيوف، الوكلاء العالميين، نخبة من وسائل الإعلام، إلى جانب مجموعة من ألمع المشاهير

غمرت أجواء حفل إطلاق ثاني أطول برج في العالم لمسة من الأناقة اللامتناهية، حيث يعيد برج عزيزي تعريف معنى العيش في قمة الفخامة، ويضع مفهوماً جديداً للحياة الراقية.

ولأن التميز كان عنوان الأمسية، أضاءت النجمة الأيقونية جينيفر لوبيز الحفل بأدائها المذهل، حيث قدمت عرضاً استثنائياً أضفى على الأجواء طاقة وحماساً لا مثيل لهما

🌟 🚀. شكراً جزيلاً لكل من انضم إلينا وشاركنا هذه الأمسية الساحرة التي ستظل خالدة في الذاكرة

#Azizi #AziziDevelopments #BurjAzizi

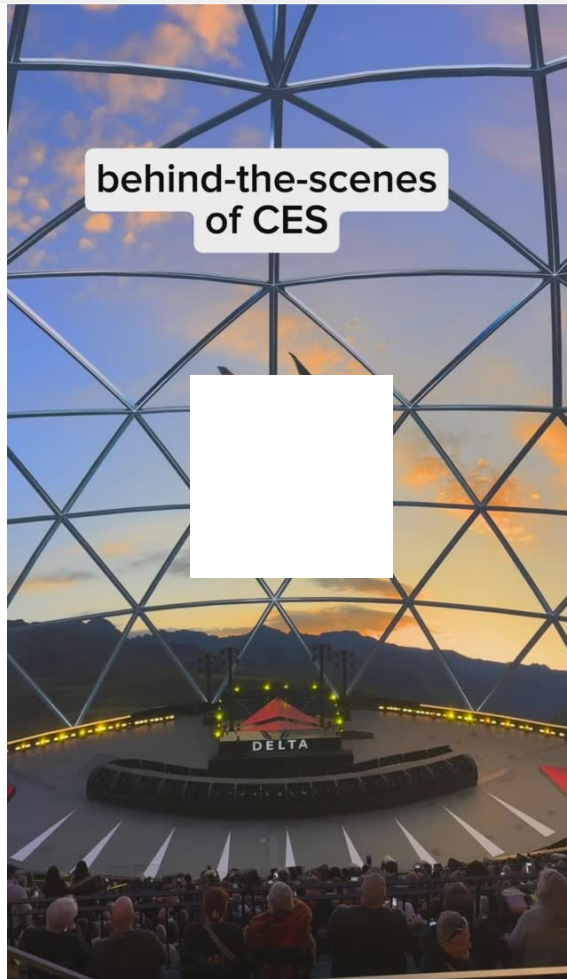
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Visual Frameworks and Canvases

- **The Shift:** Panoramic and ultra-wide LED screens are replacing single focal points with immersive visual experiences that span massive canvases.
- **Why It Works:** Cinematic storytelling commands attention. These formats enable real-time data visualization and multi-layered motion graphics while completely changing keynote choreography.
- **See It in Action:** Apple, Salesforce, and Adobe lead this trend. CES took it further with [Delta Airlines' keynote](#) at The Sphere, featuring surround LED that completely immersed the audience.

behind-the-scenes of CES



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That's a wrap on CES 2025! Big reveals, unforgettable moments and so much more ahead.

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4. Shifting Angles

- **The Shift:** The most impressive general sessions are abandoning straight-ahead configurations for slanted layouts and 360-degree stages.
- **Why It Works:** Perspective creates impact. This simple shift makes brands appear more innovative without requiring special equipment or additional cost.
- **See It in Action:** [Salesforce World Tour](#) features 360-degree, in-the-round seating that reimagines the traditional panel format. By placing speakers at the center, the setup transforms passive viewing into a shared experience.

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Nearly 20 years ago, [@salesforce](#) partnered with Opus Agency to rally its global [#Trailblazer](#) community in local markets. Thus, the Salesforce World Tour was born.

Today, World Tour is an international platform for Salesforce to showcase its latest innovations, products, and services, bringing together tens of thousands of customers, partners, developers, and enthusiasts around the world.

Read more about our epic partnership at the link in our bio. [🔗](#) 

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5. Dimensional LED

- **The Shift:** LED screens are moving beyond content display to become architectural elements—wrapping stages, constructing towers, creating content "ceilings," and forming new shapes.
- **Why It Works:** Technology accessibility meets creative ambition. LEDs are more cost-effective than ever, sync with lighting effects, work outdoors, and create depth while providing dynamic entrance and exit opportunities.
- **See It in Action:** [Google Cloud Next](#) featured dimensional LED panels and a dynamic overhead installation that evoked movement and forward momentum. Suspended LED spheres added a playful, kinetic layer—bringing color, energy, and depth to a visually cohesive environment.



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Everything you missed at [#GoogleCloudNext](#)

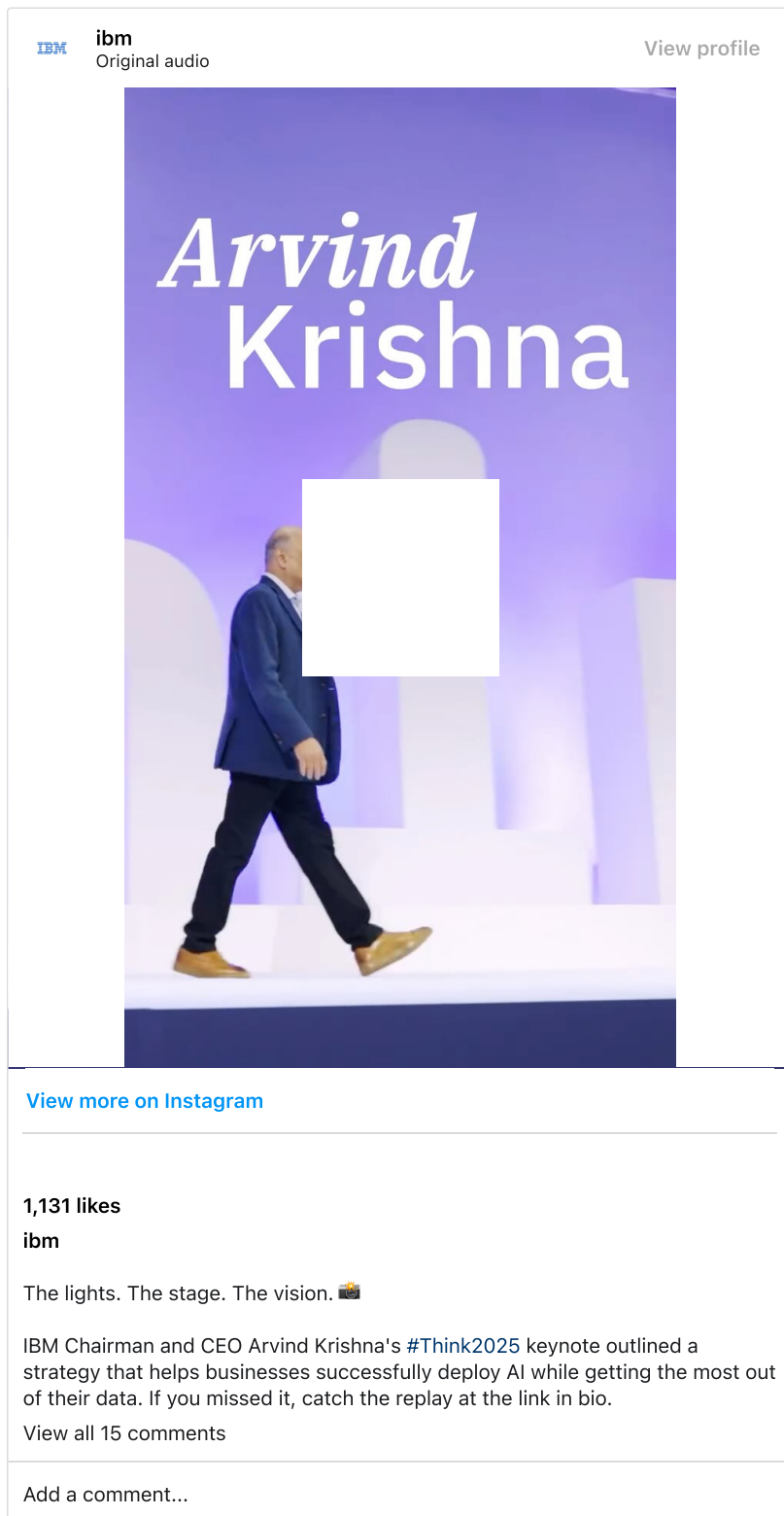
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Aesthetic Philosophies

6. Minimalist Aesthetic

- **The Shift:** Some brands are choosing scenographic restraint—one chair, one screen, one big idea—letting lighting, sound, and video content carry the weight.
- **Why It Works:** In a noisy world, restraint commands attention. This approach focuses on the message while allowing presenters to breathe and audiences to concentrate.



7. Maximalist Aesthetic

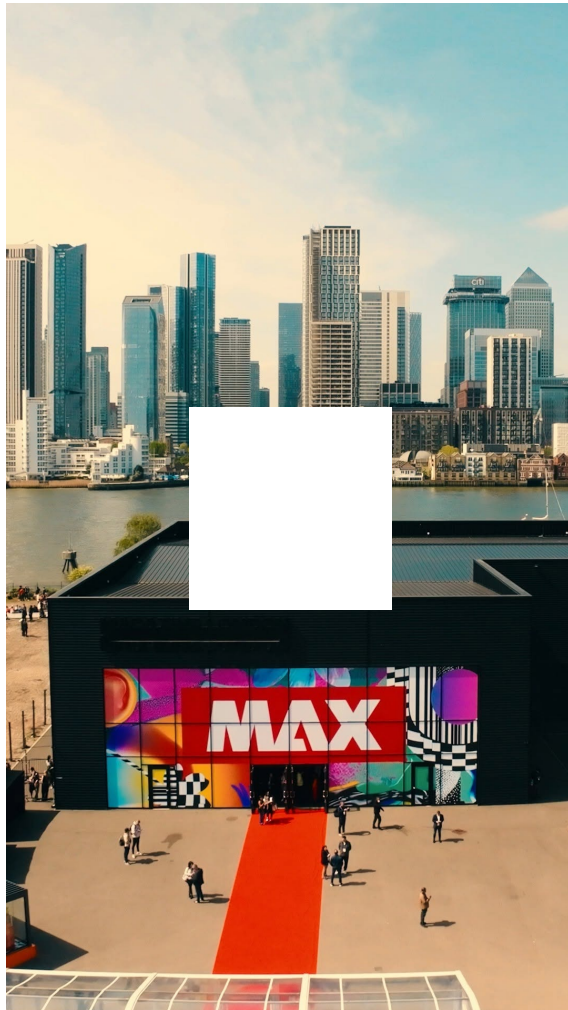
- **The Shift:** Other brands are embracing bold patterns, textures, and intentional visual richness, with [Pinterest's 2025 Predicts](#) report calling it "more is more."
- **Why It Works:** When business trips must provide escape and content overload owns attention spans, maximalism

can enhance rather than overwhelm when every element serves the overall narrative.



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We came, we saw, we MAX'ed out at #AdobeMAX London. 🤖 Catch up on everything that happened at MAX London at the link in bio.

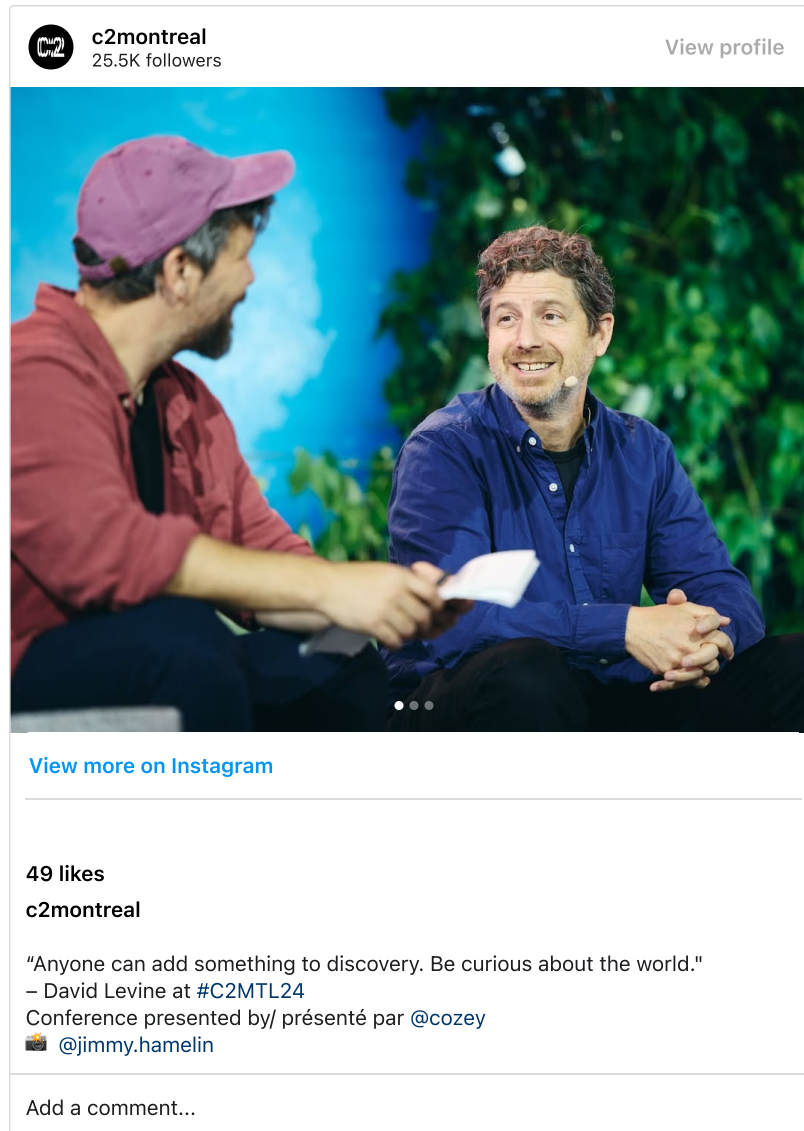
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Materiality and Texture

8. Organic Materials

- **Why It Works:** Natural materials create authenticity. They showcase natural patterns, textures, and imperfections that add character and visual interest while making spaces feel grounded and genuine.
- **See It in Action:** [C2 Montreal](#) incorporates organic, leafy materials and natural forms in its set designs, proving that nature-inspired elements can feel both contemporary and timeless.



9. Layered Fabrics

- **The Shift:** Drawing inspiration from the dramatic flair of baroque elegance and contemporary social event design, draped and layered fabrics are experiencing a major resurgence. Designers are moving away from flat designs toward depth, layers, and shadow through layered fabric elements, transparent screens, and rear projection scrims.

- **Why It Works:** Luxurious textiles enhance ambiance by

films beautifully.

- **See It In Action:** At MBC's [2024 Joy Awards](#), layered fabric installations created a striking "flow state" effect—surrounding attendees in a luxurious, immersive environment that felt both fluid and elevated.



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[@JoyAwards](#) – the largest awards ceremony to recognise talent and artistic achievements in the Arab world and beyond. This year's design aimed to bring an energy of continuous flow from the very beginning of the audience experience all the way through to the auditorium and on stage.

The holistic environment took the visitors on a journey which began as a long canyon-like path and went through a series of different nature inspired moments as the guests approached the theatre. The [#stufishstudio](#) design for the auditorium was enlivened by a large-scale fabric installation over the audience which enveloped them as the wings of a golden flying falcon, the symbol of the awards. The organic and dynamic language was continued on stage, framing the performances that would completely transform every act. On both sides of the seating and the background to the stage an 80 piece orchestra was layered on multiple levels and balconies that gave the feeling of a modern day opera house.

As part of the ceremony, we designed nine different acts that combined music and dance for which we collaborated with the producers MBC, Done and Dusted and Creative Directors and Choreographers, Black Skull Creative. "Defying Gravity performance designed in collaboration with [@yoann_bourgeois](#)

Performances by

[@bandalooping](#) [@langlangpiano](#) [@gloriagaynor](#) [@beberexha](#) [@sherine](#)
[@constantini_music](#) [@assala_official](#) [@amrdiab](#), Abdul Majeed Adullah and Nagat Al-Saghira

Thank you to the whole team. [@mbc1](#) [@doneanddustedtv](#) [@weareblackskull](#) [@hellocharliehq](#) [@tonybriess](#), [@jeanmarieriachi](#) Gurdip Mahal, Mark Gardiner, Sven De Beul, Harry Guthrie, Dewi Wynne, Nick Malbon, Richard Olivieri and his amazing art department, [@maddenforit](#) and the amazing stage crew who make it all happen on stage [@coldharbourindustries](#) [@unusual_rigging](#)

#joyawards2024 #riyadh #riyadhfestival #riyadhseason #joyawards
#entertainmentarchitecture #stagedesign #productiondesign #stufishstudio

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10. Textural Diversity

- **The Shift:** Designers are embracing textural storytelling—combining diverse materials with varying finishes, colors, and tactile qualities to create rich, layered spaces.
- **Why It Works:** Different textures evoke distinct emotional responses. Smooth surfaces convey sophistication and calmness, while coarse textures add warmth and earthiness.
- **See It In Action:** At [Shopify's Summit 2025](#), the main stage design brought the brand's builder mentality to life. Inspired by the grit and craft of commerce, the environment featured working garage doors, hidden crate entrances, and tactile materials like tape, metal, and cardboard, turning the merchant's journey into a tangible, immersive experience.



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@shopify's Event Blueprint Leaked 🛒

At Shopify e-Commerce Summit 2025, 6,000 employees didn't gather in ballrooms. They wandered through vinyl lounges, loading docks, and barstool brainstorm zones. The venue was stitched together with the real-world textures of entrepreneurship: shipping labels, wooden crates, industrial tape. Even the main stage had working garage doors and crate entrances, because commerce doesn't start with polish, it starts in the grit 📦

"There's a reason conference fatigue exists. This type of work has a tendency to be treated as formulaic. We're grateful to work on a brand like Shopify that embraces new ways of working" says Sara Vinten of @themintagency

Tap the 🔗 in bio to see why this wasn't your average conference...

#EventDesign #BrandMarketing #Meetings #ShopifySummit
#ExperientialDesign

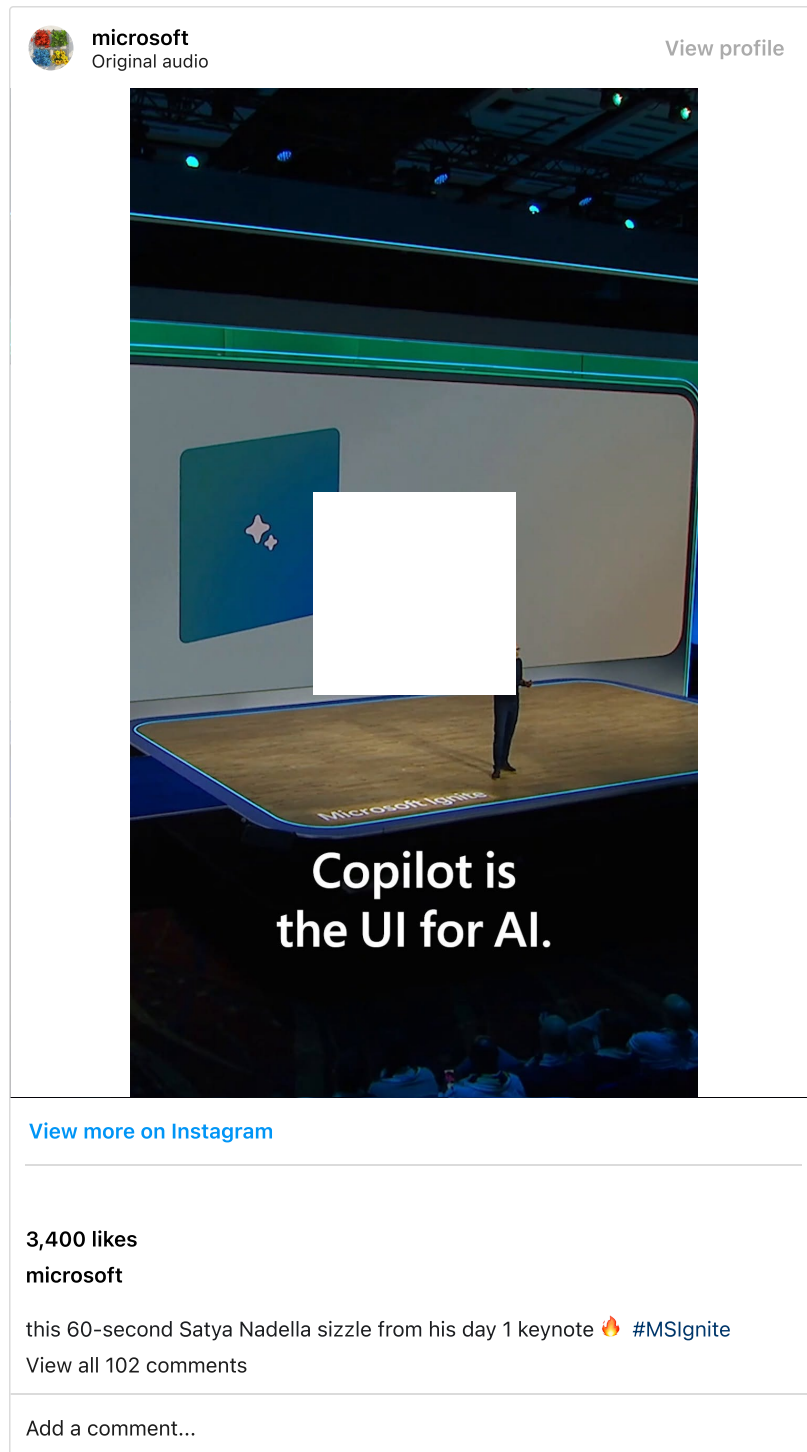
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Dynamic Elements

11. Multi-Sensory Experience

- **The Shift:** [Keynote design is evolving](#) beyond sight and sound to create systematic multi-sensory engagement through strategic use of scent, tactile elements, and immersive sound scoring.
- **Why It Works:** Multi-sensory strategies are essential for winning audience loyalty and creating memorable experiences. [Research shows](#) that distinctly scented environments enhance recall for other event attributes, with effects lasting up to two weeks after exposure.

strategically reinforcing sonic branding through multidimensional sound design.



12. Architectural Lighting

- **The Shift:** Designers are using lighting as part of the design language through architectural light structures, kinetic light walls, and programmable LED tubes that double as scenic elements.
- **Why It Works:** Lighting is the most flexible way to shift mood, tone, and pace. It sets ambiance, signals topic

- See It in Action: [Web Summit](#) demonstrates how purposeful lighting can accomplish strategic goals while providing boundless creative options without massive cost increases.



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Tonight, we kick off the first edition of [#WebSummitVancouver](#) 🇨🇦

Please be aware that Centre Stage has limited capacity and is likely to fill up early, but you can still experience Opening Night in Bentall Centre ahead of Night Summit.

We can't wait to see you there!

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The Bottom Line

These 12 trends signal a fundamental shift in how we think. The lines between entertainment, retail, hospitality, and corporate events are blurring more than ever, and your audience expects more immersive, multisensory, culturally-fluent experiences. In an attention economy where every moment matters, keynote design has evolved from backdrop to main character.

Are you ready to design the future?

The teams at Opus Agency live at the intersection of culture and strategy to design trendsetting keynote experiences. Let's craft something built for the future.

[Transform your next keynote](#) with Opus Agency.

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about Audience Acquisition,
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more.

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