

SUMMER WEBINAR SERIES

The Business of Belonging

Building Loyalty in a Lonely World

HOSTED BY KATRYNA EASTWOOD, KINETIC GREENHOUSE DIRECTOR

kinetic kinetic
MARKETING & CREATIVE GREENHOUSE

About Katryna

Katryna Eastwood, MBA | *Kinetic Greenhouse Director*

Katryna is the Director of Kinetic Greenhouse, where she helps small businesses use thoughtful marketing to build stronger brands, meaningful customer relationships and long-term loyalty. She holds an MBA in Marketing and brings more than eight years of experience across small businesses, higher education, nonprofits and Fortune 500 companies, including The Walt Disney Company.

Katryna also teaches advertising in the College of Arts and Media at Grand Canyon University, where she helps future creatives understand how strong messaging can shape what people think, feel and do. Her work has shown her that the most successful brands do more than sell — they make people feel seen, understood and part of something. When she is not developing marketing strategies or teaching, Katryna can usually be found at Pilates, hanging with her family and volunteering for local youth organizations.



Today's Agenda

- The Loneliness Shift
- The Value of Human Interaction
- Automation and Connection
- Brands Doing It Well
- Small Changes, Big Impact
- Q&A

For today's webinar, *you need...*

PIECE OF PAPER

PENCIL/PEN

Throughout the webinar I will give prompts for you to write down and explore on your own either during the webinar or after the webinar. These prompts will be in yellow boxes.

My goal is not only do you take away knowledge but also be able to apply this to your own business practices.

Example Prompt:

WHAT IS YOUR PERFECT BREAKFAST?

A brunch with friends, a quiet coffee
with a loved one, in a bustling cafe, etc.?

We're eating
alone more.

We are eating *alone* more.

Sharing meals is strongly linked to well-being. According to the World Happiness Report, the relationship between shared meals and life satisfaction is comparable to the effects of income and employment status.

Yet in 2023, **26% of U.S. adults ate every meal recorded during their survey day alone** — up from about 17% in 2003.

And we're *socializing* less.

Ten years ago, **38% of Americans** spent time socializing or communicating with others on an average day.

Today, that number is closer to **30% and rapidly declining.**

And over the past two decades, the amount of time Americans spend with friends in person has fallen dramatically.

We haven't stopped needing connection.

We simply encounter less of it in everyday life.

What does this mean for *my* business?

More than you might think.

The U.S. Surgeon General identifies **local businesses, institutions and gathering spaces as part of our social infrastructure** — the places and systems that help people connect.

Your customers may have fewer opportunities throughout their day to feel:

Seen. Known. Connected.

Every call, appointment, visit and purchase gives your business an opportunity to create one.

When connection becomes less common, human interaction becomes more valuable.

The new value of *human* business interactions.

Human interaction is now scarce *throughout businesses.*

Your customers can buy almost anything without speaking to another person.

They can book online.

Order from an app.

Check themselves out.

Ask a chatbot.

Submit a ticket.

Convenience is everywhere. Human attention isn't.

And that scarcity makes a thoughtful, personal interaction stand out more than it used to.

What used to be ordinary customer service can now feel exceptional.

Customers still
want a person
when it matters.

86% of consumers say human interaction remains important to their brand experience.

Customers may love convenience when everything is going right.

But when they are:

- **Confused.**
- **Making a big decision.**
- **Spending significant money.**
- **Frustrated.**
- **Emotional.**
- **Unsure what happens next.**

They don't want to feel like another transaction moving through a system.

WHEN A CLIENT COMES TO YOU, WHAT IN THEIR LIFE COULD BE GOING RIGHT? WHAT IN THEIR LIFE COULD BE GOING WRONG?

FOR EXAMPLE: A real estate agent

They could be buying their first home, getting married or growing their family.
Or they could be navigating a divorce, a death in the family or financial stress.

And those
moments
influence *who*
customers
choose again.

Customers have more options than ever — and fewer reasons to stay loyal to a business that makes them feel invisible.

29% have stopped buying from a brand because of a poor customer experience.

Only **38% of shoppers are loyal to five or fewer brands**, compared with 22% in 2023.

So the question is no longer just:
“Was the transaction easy?”

It’s now:

“Did the experience give me a reason to come back?”
Does your customer experience make people feel remembered — or processed?

Meanwhile,
businesses are
being *rewarded*
for removing
people from
the process.

Gartner predicts that by 2029, AI could resolve **80% of common customer-service issues without human intervention**, reducing operational costs by approximately 30%.

And none of those things are inherently bad.

The danger is when efficiency becomes the goal instead of the customer experience.

Because the moments that are easiest to automate are sometimes the exact moments where a customer needs reassurance, context, flexibility or care.

The goal isn't to remove automation. It's to know when not to automate the human out of the experience.

Automate *the*
task. Not the
relationship.



What does
your technology
say about you
before you
ever do?

Think about every automated touchpoint a customer encounters:

Your scheduling link

Your contact form

Your automatic email response

Your phone system or voicemail

Your invoices, reminders and confirmations

Your chatbot or customer portal

Decide where a human actually makes a difference.

You do **not** need to personally handle every email, appointment or question.

Instead, look for the moments where a little human attention carries disproportionate value.

Ask yourself:

- **Where is the customer most uncertain?**
A new client may appreciate a five-minute welcome call more than five automated onboarding emails.
- **Where is the customer most emotional?**
A complaint, cancellation or difficult life event probably shouldn't receive the exact same workflow as a routine request.
- **Where are they making a big decision?**
The larger the commitment, price or risk, the more valuable reassurance becomes.
- **Where could someone easily feel forgotten?**
After the contract is signed. After the appointment. After the purchase. Between major milestones.

You don't need human interaction everywhere.

You need it where being noticed matters most.

Make it personal
without making
it impossible
to scale.

Human connection doesn't have to mean adding hours of work.

Automate the predictable. Personalize the meaningful.

You don't have to give everyone more of your time. You have to make the time you do give them feel like it was meant for them.

WHAT IS ONE SMALL WAY I COULD MAKE CUSTOMERS FEEL MORE NOTICED WITHOUT CREATING MORE WORK FOR MYSELF?

Where might my customers feel processed instead of remembered?

Brands who are doing this *well*.

Nespresso is not *just* selling coffee pods.

Nespresso turns a simple restock into a premium experience.

Customers are welcomed by a Coffee Specialist, invited to taste before they buy and guided toward flavors that fit their preferences.

They could order online in two minutes.

Instead, the boutique gives them something the website cannot:
personal attention, discovery and a small moment of luxury.

@_lagiuditta



Their new in-store experience creates the relationship.

The product: coffee at home

The benefit: convenience

The feeling: everyday luxury

The experience: tasting, learning and being guided

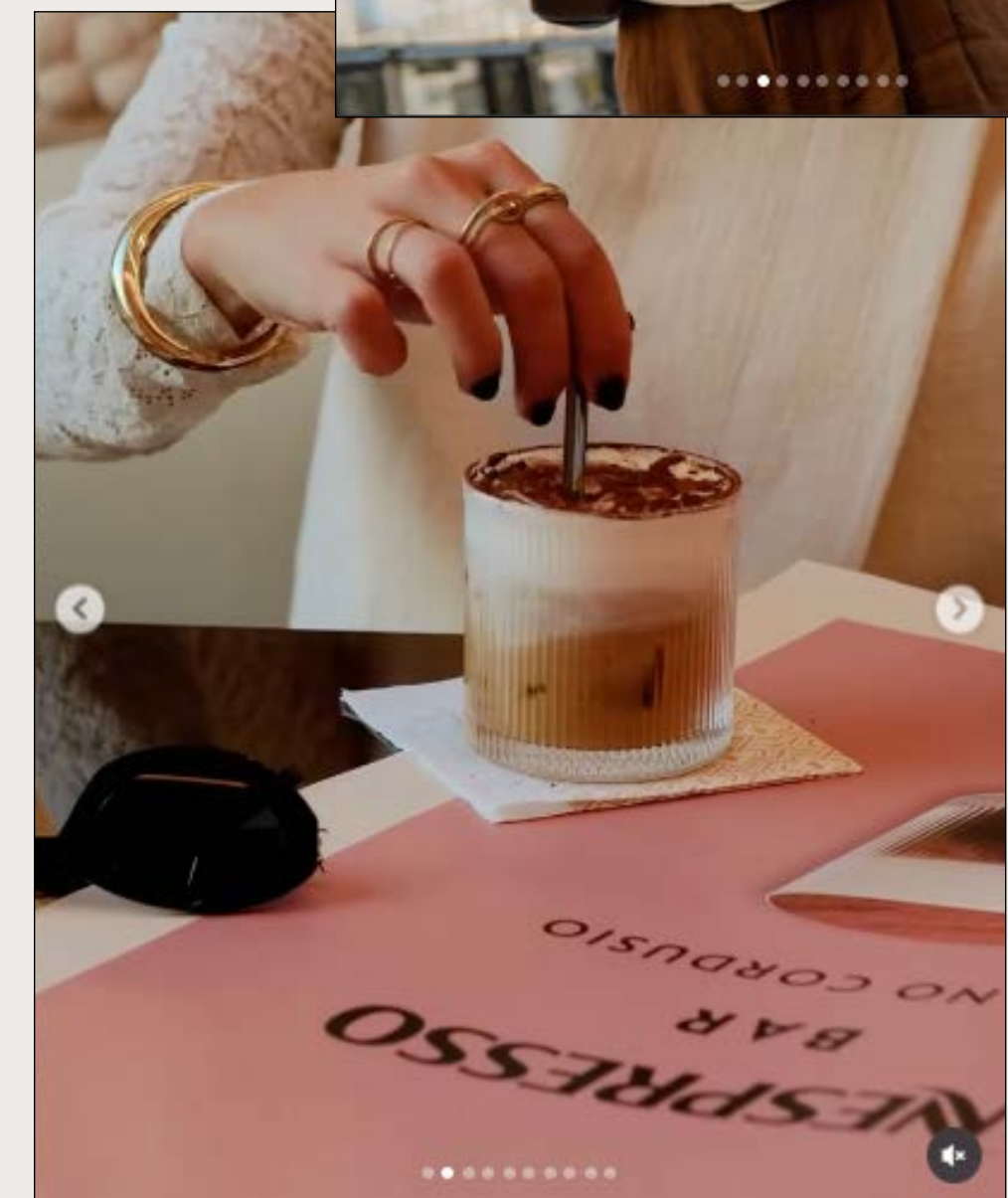
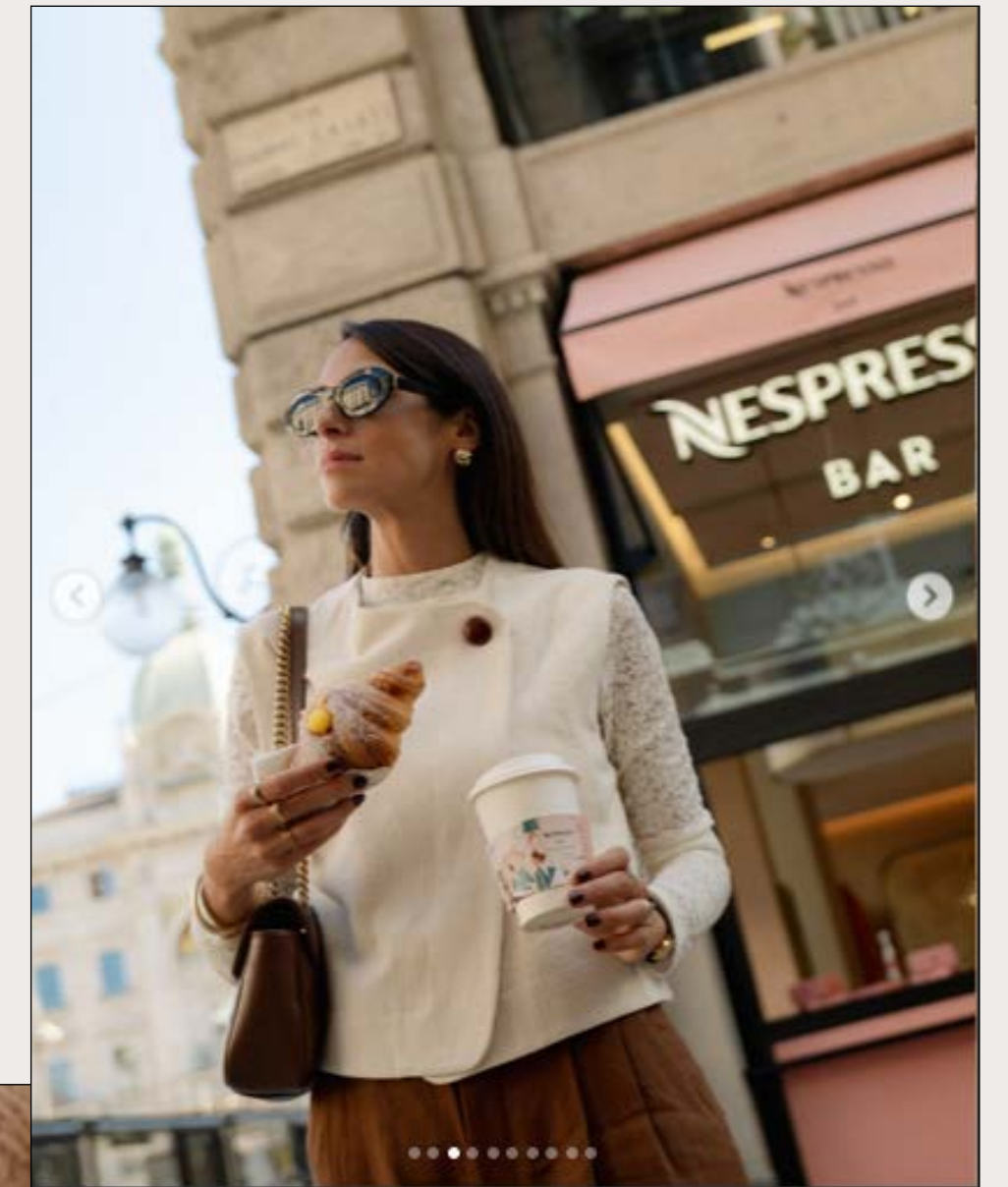
The relationship: a reason to return

The human experience does not replace convenience — it gives customers a reason to stay, spend and return.

57% of shoppers say they would spend more at stores that offer social or community spaces.

58% say they would be more likely to return.

Among Gen Z shoppers, the willingness to spend more rises to **68%.**



@_lagiuditta

**HOW DO YOU MAKE IN-PERSON INTERACTIONS FEEL
MEANINGFUL, NOT JUST TRANSACTIONAL?**

Chewy turns customer service into care.

Chewy's customer service is built around a simple idea: pets are family, so service has to feel human.

When customers contact Chewy after a pet passes away, many report receiving refunds, being told to donate unused food and later receiving flowers, handwritten cards or even pet portraits.

That kind of service turns a painful cancellation into a moment of care.



@rachcleve

Care creates repeat business.

83.3% of Chewy's annual sales come from Autoship customers.

In fiscal 2025:

- Active customers grew **4%**
- Spending per customer increased **2.2%**
- Net sales reached **\$12.6 billion**

A condolence gift may not create an immediate sale.

It creates trust, word of mouth and a customer who remembers Chewy the next time they — or someone they know — needs pet care.

The gesture is small. The relationship can be worth years of repeat business.

mollymeister216 I am moved by this beautiful and perfect gift from Chewy (the pet food company) as a memorial for Olive. They even drew olives on it.

Plus I called them after she passed because I had a brand new bag of Eukanuba and wanted to know if I could return it. They credited me the money (over \$80.00) and asked me to donate it. We gave it to SISCA. Customer for life! [#chewy](#)

mlycan12 In this cyber and increasingly impersonal world we live in, it's so refreshing to find companies who still manage to conduct business in a way that defies modern technology.

[@chewy](#) does just that and more and it's a reason everyone should be giving them business. I contacted them recently to stop my auto delivery when I had to put my beloved Belle down and they asked if it was Laila bc I had never let them know of her passing. Shortly thereafter, this beautifully packaged box with blue velvet sachets arrived along with a handwritten note providing tokens of sympathy for both.

I am a Chewy customer for life.

[#Chewy](#) [#RainbowBridge](#) [#BoxerDogs](#)

**WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE SALE THAT COULD
MAKE A CUSTOMER FEEL REMEMBERED?**

Buc-ee's turned a pit stop into an experience.

You can get gas anywhere.

But at Buc-ee's, customers come for more than the transaction:

A recognizable experience

The beaver, the billboards, the food, the merchandise — you immediately know where you are.

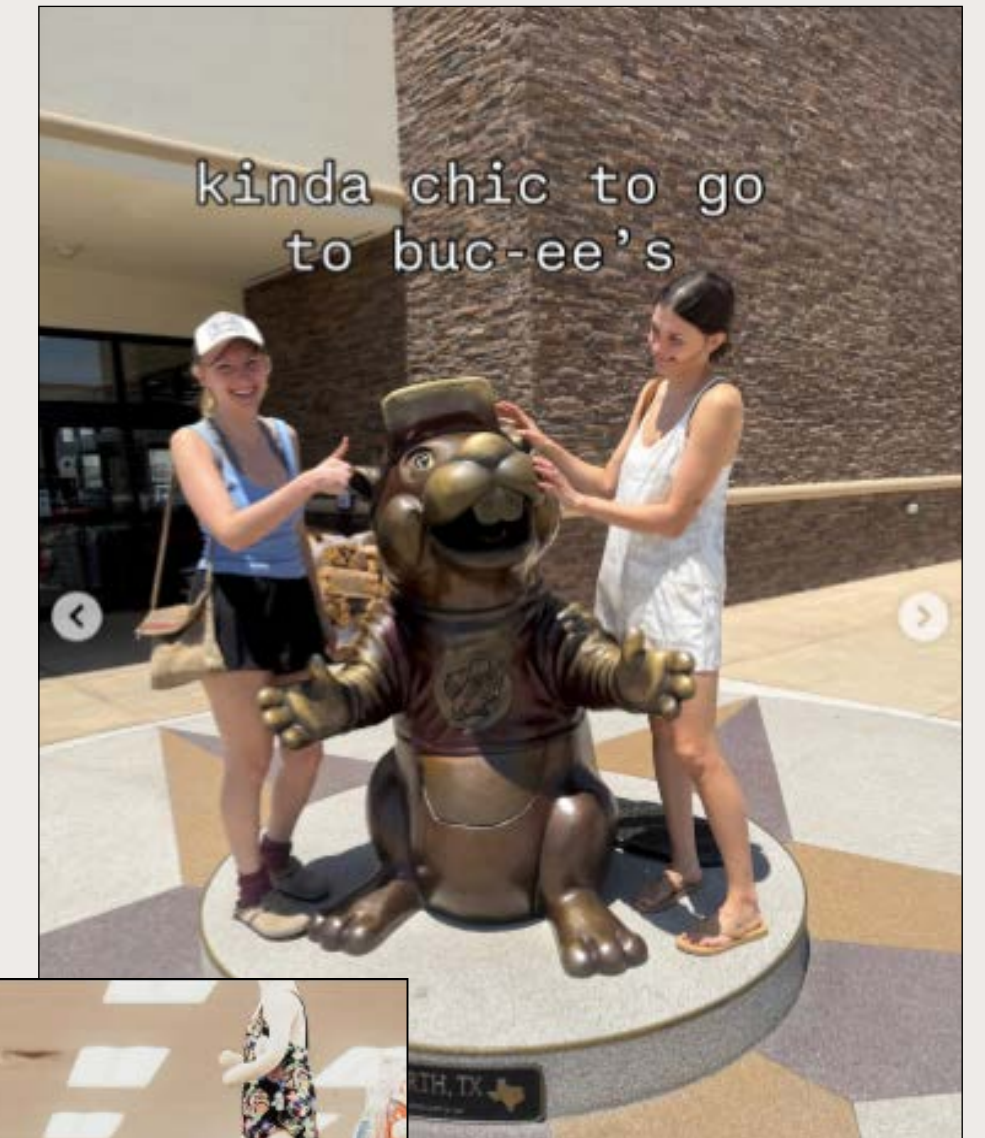
Something worth talking about

Clean restrooms, fresh barbecue and Beaver Nuggets became part of the brand story people repeat to one another.

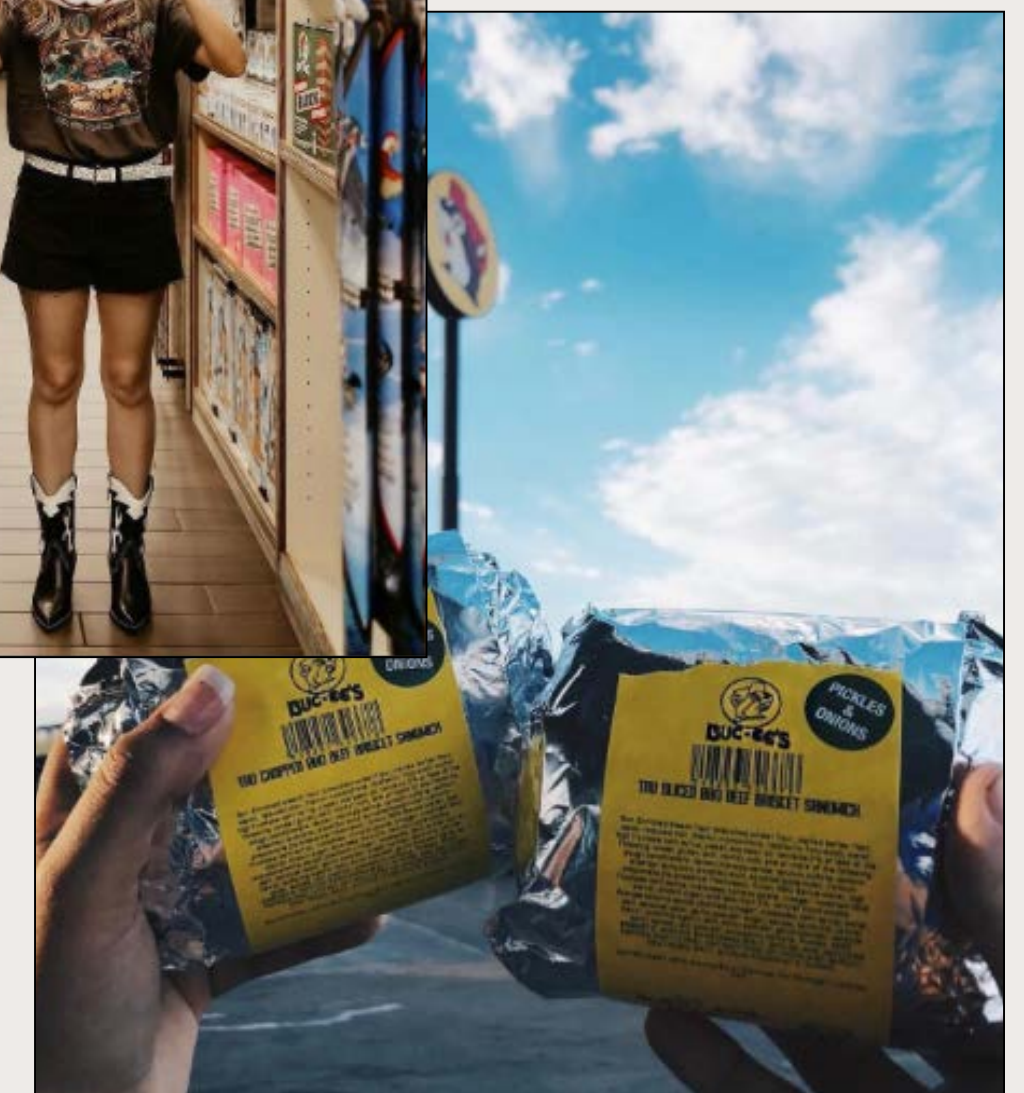
A sense of participation

People wear Buc-ee's shirts, take photos with the mascot and bring products home from road trips. The brand has become enough of a destination that travelers have visited from overseas specifically to experience it.

@wearedarlin



@bucees



They don't just
make the stop
convenient.
They make it
memorable.

What part of your customer experience could become “your thing”?

The welcome.

The packaging.

The follow-up.

The way you answer the phone.

The little extra you always include.

The ritual customers begin to associate with you.

**WHAT WOULD MAKE SOMEONE CHOOSE YOU EVEN IF
YOU WEREN'T THE CLOSEST OR CHEAPEST OPTION?**

SMALL CHANGES, BIG IMPACT

Small changes. *Big impact.*



Start smaller than you think.

Combating a lonely world doesn't require a huge community initiative.

Sometimes it looks like:

- Remembering someone's name.
- Walking them to the door.
- Checking in after a difficult appointment.
- Introducing two customers who should know each other.
- Writing one sentence that sounds like an actual person.
- Taking an extra minute to explain what happens next.

Look for one moment you can make more human.

Go back through your customer journey and find one place where someone could easily feel overlooked, uncertain or processed.

Ask yourself:

- Where could we acknowledge the person, not just the purchase?
- Where could we replace confusion with reassurance?
- Where could we create a tiny moment someone wouldn't expect?

You don't need to humanize everything.

Choose the moments where being noticed matters most.

Small gestures
become big when
they happen
consistently.

So this week:

Remove one point of friction.

Make something easier.

Add one human moment.

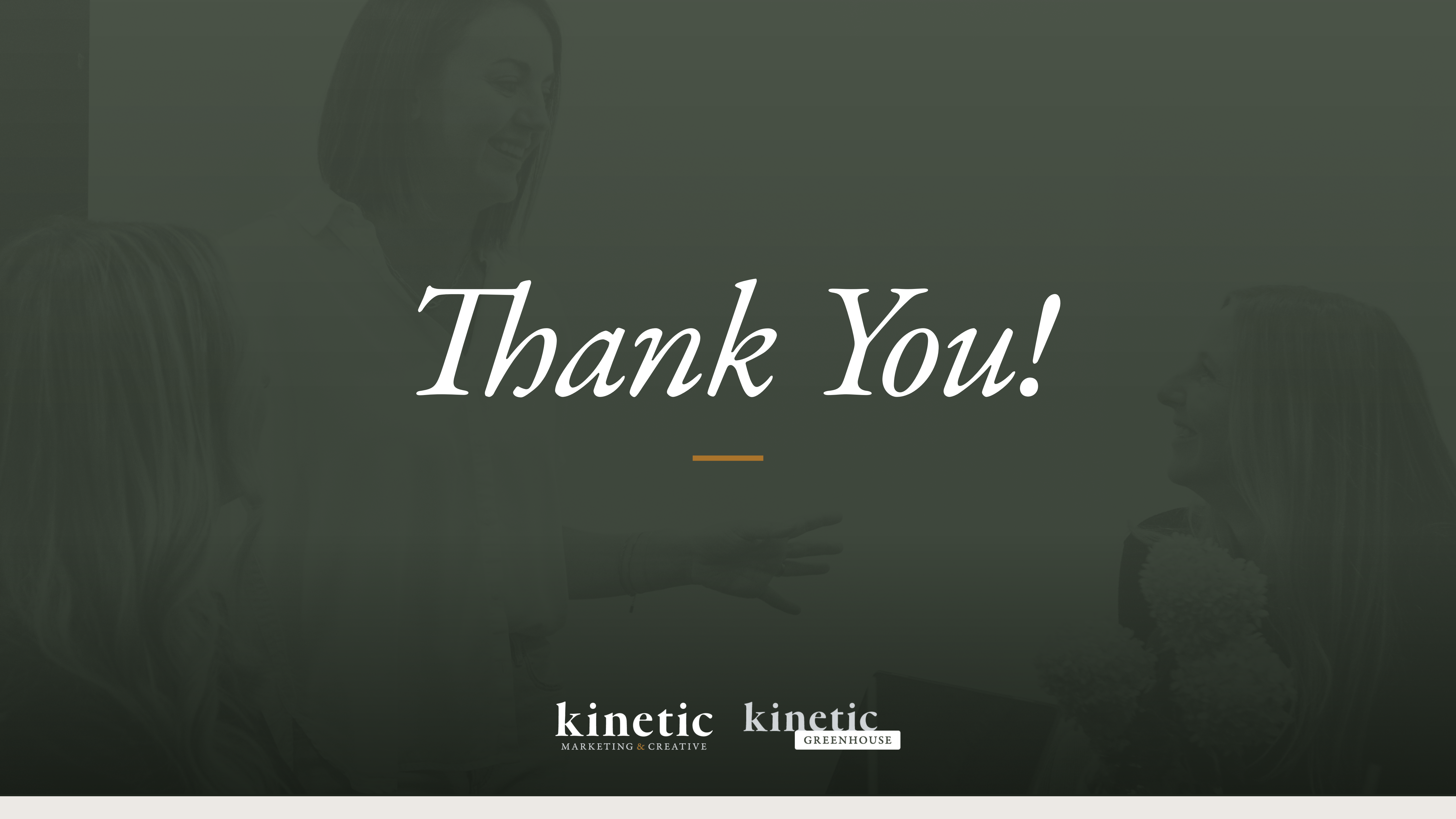
Make someone feel noticed.

Repeat it.

Turn the gesture into part of your culture.

You may not be able to make the world less lonely. But you can make your corner of it feel a little more human.

Questions?



Thank You!

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