

UNFILTERED SHOPPING MALLS

LIFE-LED[®] INSIGHT 2026

OUR GUIDE FOR CREATORS OF
PEOPLE INSPIRED EXPERIENCES



London Istanbul Dubai Riyadh Jakarta

THE YEAR IN REFLECTION

As we move deeper into a decade defined by rapid technological advancement and renewed questions of trust, people are seeking genuine experiences, transparent interactions, and technology that enhances rather than replaces human connections.

Our report will show how the insights from our report in 2026 manifested in real world experiences delivered by brands, and how these are influencing our situations, traits and desires throughout the year.

We will focus on the key insights driving human behaviour through the lens of **Humanity Unfiltered**, a perspective that values authenticity, care and connection and explore HOW this might affect the way brands show up. Providing practical suggestions for creating brands and experiences that are relevant, resonant and real in 2026, a year that is about growth, optimism and opportunity.

We hope there are takeaways that are interesting and useful, and that there are some moments of inspiration to make us all wonder 'what if'.... Thanks for reading!

The I-AM Insight Team.



HUMANITY UNFILTERED

IN UNCERTAIN TIMES, AUTHENTICITY BECOMES COMFORT, AND TECHNOLOGY FINDS ITS ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.



A growing desire for authenticity, emotional honesty and genuine connection is emerging as people navigate an increasingly uncertain world. Geopolitical tension, economic pressure, climate concerns and rapid technological change continue to reshape how people live, work and relate to one another.

In response, consumers are becoming more selective about what they engage with. Perfection driven narratives and hyper-curated identities are losing relevance, while vulnerability, transparency and imperfection are emerging as signals of trust. People are seeking products, services and experiences that recognise the realities of everyday life and support them within it.

Expectations of brands are shifting. Empathy, responsibility and emotional intelligence are becoming essential as consumers look for support rather than aspiration. Technology remains central to daily life, but its role is evolving with the most meaningful innovations working quietly in the background to ease decisions, enhance wellbeing and enable connection without adding to overload.

Together, these forces are shaping new behaviours in 2026 that prioritise integration over excess, functionality over hype and meaningful human experiences over surface level innovation expressed through three emerging themes:

Supportive Systems, Functional Care and Restorative Escape.

WHAT HUMANITY UNFILTERED MEANS FOR SHOPPING MALLS

Shopping malls are entering a new era where retail, entertainment and convenience alone are no longer enough. For years, the industry has optimised for scale, efficiency and footfall. While these efforts have created more connected and commercially successful destinations, they have also made many malls feel transactional, overstimulating and emotionally forgettable.

Humanity Unfiltered represents a shift from designing places that simply attract visitors to **creating destinations that genuinely enrich everyday life**.

This means moving:

- From retail centres to **life-centred destinations**
- From consumption-driven visits to **experience, wellbeing and personal fulfilment**
- From disconnected retail offers to **integrated ecosystems where shopping, culture, community and services naturally intersect**
- From attracting footfall to **building trust, belonging and long-term relationships**.

The shopping malls that thrive will be those that create environments people actively choose to return to—**not because they need to buy something, but because the experience makes them feel better**.

HUMANITY UNFILTERED THEMES



SUPPORTIVE SYSTEMS

WHEN TECHNOLOGY FADES INTO THE BACKGROUND AND LIFE COMES FORWARD

Supportive Systems in 2026 reflect a growing demand for technology that quietly serves human needs without demanding constant attention. As people push back against one-size-fits-all platforms and algorithmic noise, they are gravitating toward personalised systems that adapt to individual lives supporting decisions, wellbeing and daily routines without dictating behaviour or shaping identity.

The most meaningful innovations are increasingly invisible. Rather than competing for attention, they use intelligence to reduce friction, remove complexity and create space for presence, purpose and more human ways of living in the physical world.

People Inspired Experiences



FUNCTIONAL CARE

WHEN WELLBEING BECOMES PRACTICAL, SHARED AND GROUNDED IN REAL LIFE

Care in 2026 will move beyond superficial self-care and the idea that wellbeing must be managed alone. As burnout, health anxiety and economic pressure intensify, traditional life milestones such as career progression, parenthood and retirement will become less predictable, driving demand for more genuine, preventative and collaborative forms of support.

Wellbeing will no longer be organised around age, but around life stages and lived realities. This reframes care as infrastructure rather than aspiration, with support designed to integrate seamlessly into everyday routines and respond to moments of transition rather than fixed demographics or idealised wellness goals.



RESTORATIVE ESCAPE

WHEN ESCAPE IS ABOUT RESTORATION, NOT DISTRACTION

Restorative Escape in 2026 responds to the emotional compression of culture by offering intentional, time bound experiences that help people pause, reset and reconnect. Rather than immersive fantasy or hyper stimulation, these experiences prioritise presence, sensory engagement and emotional grounding.

Whether through nature, culture, hospitality or design, restorative escapes create space to recover capacity allowing people to return to everyday life feeling more connected, not further removed from reality.

SUPPORTIVE SYSTEMS

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR SHOPPING MALLS

How does the destination make everyday experiences effortless?

Seamless Journeys

The shopping journey is no longer defined by individual stores but by **the quality of the experience as a whole**. Seamless Journeys reimagines the shopping mall as an **interconnected ecosystem**, where physical spaces, digital services and everyday conveniences work together effortlessly. From intuitive navigation and smart parking to integrated mobility and personalised services, **every interaction feels natural, efficient and human**.

Rather than asking visitors to adapt to the destination, **the destination adapts to them**. Flexible environments, connected services and responsive technologies anticipate changing needs, supporting everything from a quick errand to a full day of work, leisure and social connection.

The result is **an intuitive, frictionless destination** where convenience becomes almost invisible and every touchpoint contributes to **a more enjoyable and meaningful visit**. Shopping malls evolve into places that naturally fit **the rhythm of everyday life**.



K11 ECOAST | SHENZHEN

- **Culture Embedded in the Journey**

Rather than separating culture from commerce, K11 ECOAST integrates galleries, public art and event spaces directly into the retail journey, allowing visitors to move naturally between shopping and cultural experiences.

- **Intelligence Behind the Experience**

A smart building management platform and real-time visitor analytics continuously optimise lighting, climate, occupancy and circulation, creating a more responsive environment without making technology visible.

- **Neighbourhood-Style Circulation**

Instead of a linear mall layout, interconnected indoor streets, waterfront promenades and landscaped public spaces encourage visitors to explore freely and create their own journey.



ONE BANGKOK

- **Retail Loop**

Over 900 stores are connected through a continuous Retail Loop, encouraging visitors to explore the district as one seamless journey.

- **City-Scale Connectivity**

Direct MRT access, six entry points, EV shuttles and expressway links seamlessly connect One Bangkok to the wider city.

- **Invisible District Intelligence**

A 24/7 command centre uses data from over one million sensors to optimise comfort, safety and operations in real time.

- **Walkable Experience Network**

More than 5 km of shaded walkways and a 2 km Art Loop transform circulation into an engaging, pedestrian-first experience.



FUNCTIONAL CARE

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR SHOPPING MALLS

How does the destination support everyday life?

Everyday Wellbeing

Future shopping malls are becoming **everyday support systems** rather than purely retail destinations. They respond to visitors' **physical, emotional and practical needs** by integrating wellness, family services, flexible workspaces and places to pause into the shopping experience. Instead of encouraging people to stay longer simply to consume, they create environments where people feel **more comfortable, supported and connected** throughout their day.

Wellbeing is no longer confined to dedicated wellness spaces—it is **embedded throughout the entire visitor journey**, from restorative public areas and healthy dining to inclusive amenities and flexible environments that adapt to different lifestyles. By responding to everyday needs alongside retail and leisure, shopping malls become destinations that **fit naturally into daily routines** and encourage **balance, connection and a greater sense of wellbeing**.



THE EXCHANGE TRX

- **Urban Park at the Heart**

A 10-acre rooftop park transforms the development into a green urban destination, giving visitors access to nature, recreation and open public space in the centre of Kuala Lumpur.

- **Wellbeing by Design**

Biophilic landscapes, natural ventilation, low-emission materials and high indoor air quality are integrated throughout the development to create a healthier everyday environment.

- **Active Everyday Living**

Walking trails, fitness areas and outdoor activity spaces encourage movement and make physical wellbeing a natural part of the visitor experience.

- **Family-Friendly Destination**

Interactive playgrounds, water play areas and family-focused amenities make the destination welcoming and accessible for visitors of all ages.



BATTERSEA POWER STATION

- **Public Living Room**

Riverside parks, plazas and generous seating areas encourage people to meet, relax and spend time beyond shopping.

- **Work Meets Lifestyle**

Retail, offices, cafés and public spaces support the growing blend of work, leisure and everyday life.

- **Culture in Everyday Life**

Art, exhibitions, seasonal events and community programmes make cultural experiences part of the daily visitor journey

- **Heritage Reimagined**

A historic power station has been transformed into a vibrant mixed-use destination while preserving its architectural identity.

- **Neighbourhood Destination**

Homes, workplaces, leisure and retail come together to create an active destination throughout the day and into the evening.



RESTORATIVE ESCAPE

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR SHOPPING MALLS

How does the destination help people disconnect and recharge?

Creating Moments of Pause

Modern shopping malls are no longer designed solely to stimulate consumption—they are increasingly designed to **restore attention, reduce stress and create moments of pause**. As urban life becomes faster and more digitally saturated, destinations that offer **calm, nature and sensory balance** become increasingly valuable.

Rather than maximising retail space, future malls prioritise **green landscapes, daylight, natural materials and welcoming public spaces** that encourage people to slow down. By creating **high-quality places to spend time**, they evolve into **important third places** where people choose to relax, connect and recharge as part of everyday urban life.



WEAVE SINGAPORE

- **Nature as Experience**

Greenery is woven into every part of the visitor journey, making nature an integral part of the shopping experience.

- **Blurred Indoor–Outdoor Living**

Retail, dining and public spaces flow seamlessly between indoor and outdoor environments, creating a slower, more relaxed pace of visit.

- **Wellbeing Through Place**

Shaded landscapes, natural ventilation and generous public spaces encourage visitors to pause, recharge and reconnect with nature.



HONGQIAO QIANWAN INCITY MEGA

- **Urban Retail Resort**

Retail is reimagined as a resort-like destination where nature and leisure shape the visitor experience.

- **Outside-In Experience**

Landscaped streets and terraces blur the boundary between architecture and nature.

- **Restorative Landscapes**

Biophilic design, water and greenery create spaces for pause, comfort and relaxation.

- **Social Escape**

Public gathering spaces encourage people to meet, unwind and spend time beyond shopping.

- **Designed for Slow Living**

The destination prioritises calm, exploration and quality of time over fast-paced consumption.



People Inspired Experiences

5 KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1.

From Shopping to Everyday Living

Future malls are becoming integrated lifestyle destinations that support everyday urban life — not just places to shop.

2.

Designing for Quality of Time

Success is increasingly defined by how people feel, connect and spend their time, rather than how quickly they make a purchase.

3.

Nature as Everyday Experience

Green spaces, daylight and restorative environments are becoming essential to creating healthier, more human-centred destinations.

4.

Invisible Intelligence

Smart technologies quietly improve convenience, mobility and operations, allowing visitors to focus on the experience rather than the process.

5.

Belonging Drives Loyalty

Culture, community and shared experiences create emotional connections that encourage people to return long after the shopping mission is complete.

Unfiltered Shopping Malls

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE BRANDS AND EXPERIENCES THAT BUILD DEEP, AUTHENTIC HUMAN CENTRED CONNECTIONS, TO FORGE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CONSUMERS AND ELEVATE YOUR BUSINESS.

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH IF YOU WOULD LIKE A CONVERSATION ABOUT OUR INSIGHT, A CHAT OVER A COFFEE, OR IF YOU WANT TO SHARE AN INTERESTING CHALLENGE.

GET IN TOUCH

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