

Welcome. Part of Propeller's mission and promise is to be at the forefront of digital. We consistently strive to bring innovation and creativity to our healthcare partners and their customers.

It is in this spirit that we curate a quarterly experience, strategically selecting the latest, the most important digital marketing trends and tech innovations—and assess the impact each of these has in healthcare, and why it's important for you to know, now.

Together, let's be experts and so on the Pulse!

WHAT WE SAW AT SXSW 2025:

HEALTHCARE'S FUTURE, NOW

AI, Psychedelics, Wearables, and Living Intelligence: A Front-Row Recap From Propeller

OVERVIEW

SXSW 2025 felt less like a conference and more like a collision. Ideas clashed, disciplines blurred, and what's "next" in health showed up as "now." We didn't just hear about AI—we watched it evolve in real time. We didn't just see wearables—we saw diagnostics that think. Psychedelics took the stage, gaming stole the conversation, and quantum computing quietly promised to rewrite everything. Across the chaos, one thing was clear: healthcare is no longer about catching up. It's about keeping up—with people, with culture, with what's possible. These are the trends we're watching—and how we're acting on them.

TREND #1

AI & US: THE AGE OF HUMAN-AI COLLABORATION

What is it?

AI isn't coming—it's already reshaping how we think, work, and connect. At SXSW 2025, we saw a shift from automation to augmentation. The real opportunity? Human-AI teams that unlock new capabilities. But most people aren't ready yet—only 30% use AI weekly. The AI gap is no longer just technical, it's cultural.

AI is transitioning from a mere tool to a collaborative partner, augmenting human capabilities across various sectors. This shift highlights the importance of fostering AI literacy and designing systems that promote seamless human-AI interaction.

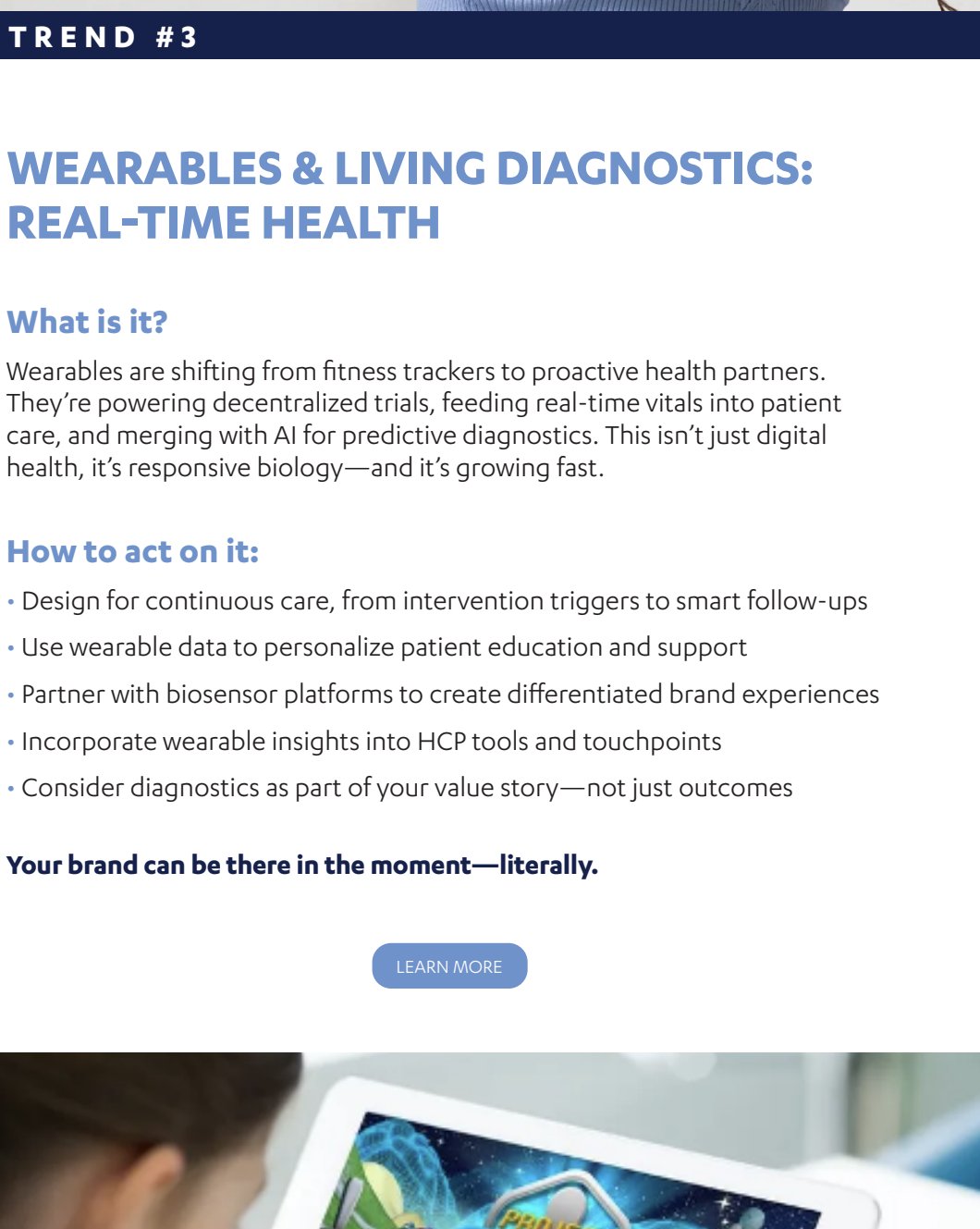
AI's capability to analyze vast datasets is revolutionizing personalization, especially in healthcare. From tailoring patient treatments to customizing user experiences, AI is enabling unprecedented levels of personalization, enhancing satisfaction and outcomes.

How to act on it:

- Elevate AI fluency across roles, not just your tech team
- Frame AI as a teammate, not a threat—especially in health, where empathy matters
- Embed training into culture: reward experimentation, not perfection
- Rethink workflows: flatten hierarchies, streamline with agents, and design for adaptability
- Stay curious: pilot tools, measure impact, and evolve quickly

Build an AI mindset that's less about tools and more about transformation.

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TREND #2

PSYCHEDELICS: FROM FRINGE TO FUTURE MEDICINE

What is it?

Psychedelics are no longer fringe science. At SXSW, they were a central conversation in healthcare, mental health, and biotech investment. From ketamine clinics to psilocybin wellness perks, alternative treatments are moving into mainstream care—with big names and traditional pharmaceutical clients investing in new forms of care.

How to act on it:

- Educate early: patients and HCPs will have more options, so it is critical to inform them of the benefits and the risks of alternative treatments in augmenting their current care regimen
- Address stigma directly with science-backed storytelling
- Prepare to have to answer to new types of competition and brand challenges

If your audience is curious, be the voice that informs, not just advertises.

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TREND #3

WEARABLES & LIVING DIAGNOSTICS: REAL-TIME HEALTH

What is it?

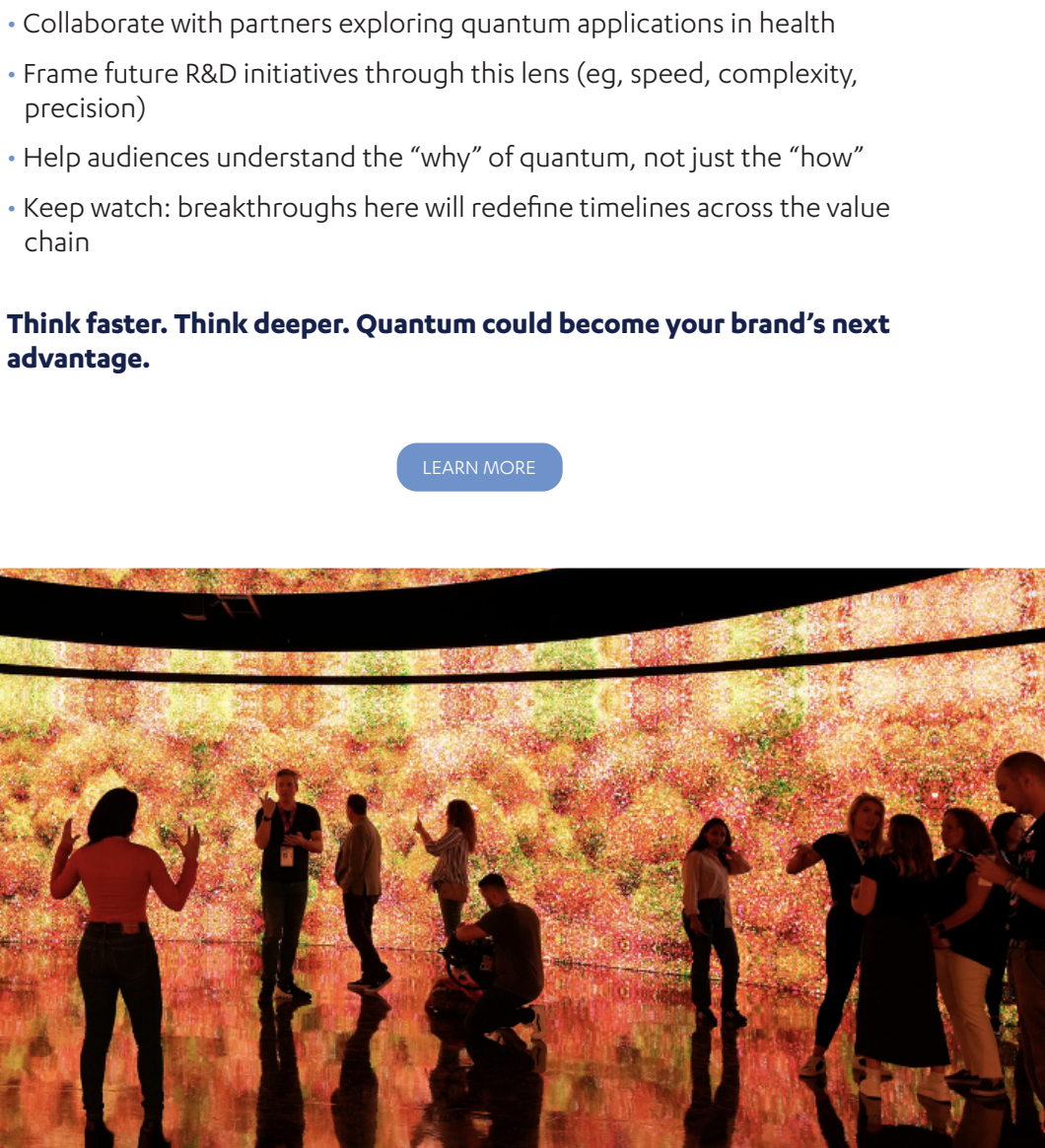
Wearables are shifting from fitness trackers to proactive health partners. They're powering decentralized trials, feeding real-time vitals into patient care, and merging with AI for predictive diagnostics. This isn't just digital health, it's responsive biology—and it's growing fast.

How to act on it:

- Design for continuous care, from intervention triggers to smart follow-ups
- Use wearable data to personalize patient education and support
- Partner with biosensor platforms to create differentiated brand experiences
- Incorporate wearable insights into HCP tools and touchpoints
- Consider diagnostics as part of your value story—not just outcomes

Your brand can be there in the moment—literally.

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TREND #4

GAMING & DIGITAL THERAPY: WHERE CARE GETS INTERACTIVE

What is it?

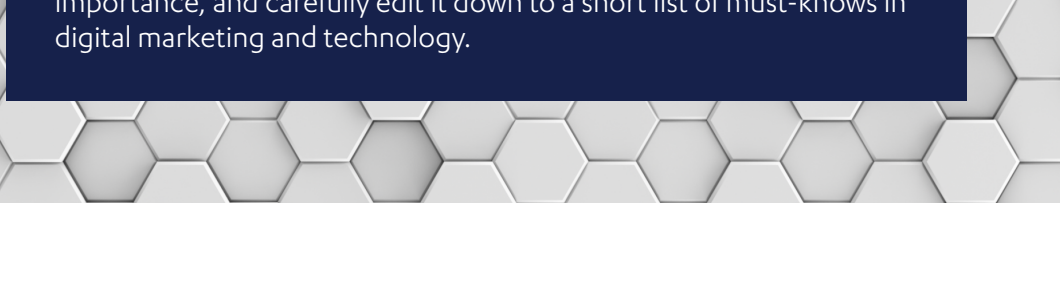
Gaming is no longer just entertainment—it's emerging as a legitimate channel for connection, education, and even treatment. At SXSW, the message was clear: from Gen Z's social life to FDA-cleared digital therapeutics, interactive platforms are where healthcare is gaining traction. Brands aren't just advertising in these spaces; they're building tools, communities, and clinical outcomes inside them.

How to act on it:

- Reimagine digital engagement through game mechanics—quests, levels, and feedback loops
- Explore partnerships with video game therapy platforms as part of patient support services
- Design patient education as interactive experiences, not static slideshows
- Create safe peer communities within game environments to boost adherence and support
- Track behavioral data to personalize care and content over time
- Think of gaming not just as media, but as medicine

If play can heal, your brand should be part of the controller.

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TREND #5

EMOTIONAL & LIVING AI: TECH THAT FEELS

What is it?

The next wave of AI isn't just smart, it's emotive, embodied, and evolving. At SXSW, we saw emotionally intelligent agents, AI-generated personalities, and even "living computers" built from human neurons. Tech is getting closer to us—literally and emotionally.

How to act on it:

- Explore emotionally resonant storytelling with AI (eg, molecule as narrator)
- Rethink patient journeys with interactive, empathetic experiences
- Use voice, tone, and affective design to build trust in digital tools
- Partner with creative technologists to experiment in this space
- Don't just explain science—humanize it

The future of brand voice might sound a lot more ... alive.

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TREND #6

QUANTUM COMPUTING: HEALTHCARE'S CODEBREAKER

What is it?

Quantum computing is no longer conceptual—it's cracking real problems in medicine and biotech. From modeling new molecules to decoding biological data, SXSW showed us that quantum systems will soon be part of drug discovery, diagnostics, and AI at scale.

How to act on it:

- Start learning now: quantum fluency will matter in strategic planning
- Collaborate with partners exploring quantum applications in health
- Frame future R&D initiatives through this lens (eg, speed, complexity, precision)
- Help audiences understand the "why" of quantum, not just the "how"
- Keep watch: breakthroughs here will redefine timelines across the value chain

Think faster. Think deeper. Quantum could become your brand's next advantage.

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TREND #7

EXPERIENTIAL IS EVERYWHERE (EXCEPT THE CONVENTION HALL)

What is it?

At SXSW 2025, the most memorable brand experiences didn't happen inside the official venues—they happened across the city. From low-key café takeovers to intimate off-site immersions, brands ditched traditional booths for unexpected, organic moments that felt more like community than commerce. This shift reflects a deeper truth: attention isn't bought with banners, it's earned through relevance and presence.

How to act on it:

- Design activations that live where your audience already is—physically and emotionally
- Think local first: partner with well-known local venues, artists, and cultural moments within the city your congress or conference will take place in
- Focus on utility or vibe, not messaging. Offer a recharge, a conversation, a connection
- Keep it human scale: the smaller and more personal, the more memorable
- Extend the experience: use content, tokens, or tech to let the moment travel beyond the moment

If your brand is showing up, make it feel like it belongs—not like it's interrupting.

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PROPELLER'S CURATION PROCESS

Propeller is passionate about identifying trends that are important for your business and customers—and we're always looking for the next big thing. We scour the internet and social platforms, read marketing handbooks, listen to what our clients are interested in, and look at what's being talked about in our healthcare industry. We use all this information to find patterns of what's popular, determine their importance, and carefully edit it down to a short list of must-knows in digital marketing and technology.