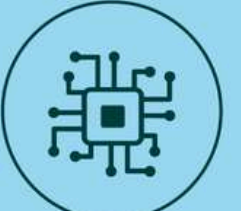




 THE FITNESS	 THE STYLE	 THE BEAUTY	 THE TECH	 THE PIONEER
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SHIFT **HAPPENS**
FIND YOUR COMMUNITY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



At the Nedbank IMC 2026, Style ID Africa invited delegates to name their community, then play a short game that read their everyday behaviours. 203 delegates played. Together, their answers gave us a live snapshot of how South Africa's marketing industry sees itself and how that differs from how it behaves.

Three insights stood out:

- **Wellness is the common ground.** Fitness was the largest community, at 26.6% of results, and the only one to grow significantly once behaviour was measured.
- **Style is who people want to be.** It was the most claimed community, yet fewer than half of those who claimed it got a clean match.
- **Nobody belongs to just one tribe.** One in four players landed between two communities.

The lesson for brands is simple. Demographics describe people on paper. Communities explain what they care about, who they listen to and where they spend. The brands that find those communities, and earn a place inside them, will lead the next decade of marketing in Africa.

THE BRIEF



Nedbank International Marketing Conference asked the industry to talk about change. We wanted delegates to feel it.

The conference's 2026 theme, Shift Happens, captured the constant movement of culture, technology, marketing and people. Brand marketers, agency leaders, media owners and platform partners came to hear about that shift.

Our starting point was a question the industry rarely asks of itself. Marketers spend their days sorting other people into segments, so which community would they fall into? People don't belong to one audience. They move between interests, behaviours and identities, and they trust the voices inside those circles more than any advert. So we made community the lens, and turned Shift Happens into **Communities Shift**.

FIVE COMMUNITIES

We distilled Style ID Africa's community intelligence framework into five communities anyone could recognise in seconds:

COMMUNITY	WHAT IT STANDS FOR	WHO THEY ARE
Fitness	Movement, wellness, performance	People who feel better after moving their body, set wellness goals and pull their friends into active plans
Style	Expression, fashion, aesthetics	People who notice what others wear first, have a signature look and treat getting dressed as self-expression
Beauty	Self-care, grooming, discovery	People with go-to beauty and grooming products who love discovering products that actually work
Tech	Innovation, curiosity, digital living	Early adopters who are curious about new gadgets, want apps that make life easier and fix everyone's tech problems
Pioneer	Ideas, making, building	Makers and starters who come up with things to build, suggest new ways of doing things and prefer creating to watching

THE EXPERIENCE

IMC 2026

Find Your Community turned a stand visit into a moment of self-discovery, and every individual answer into a collective picture of the room.

THE JOURNEY

The trigger: A community card, in conference bags and at registration, asked one question and pointed delegates to our stand.

01

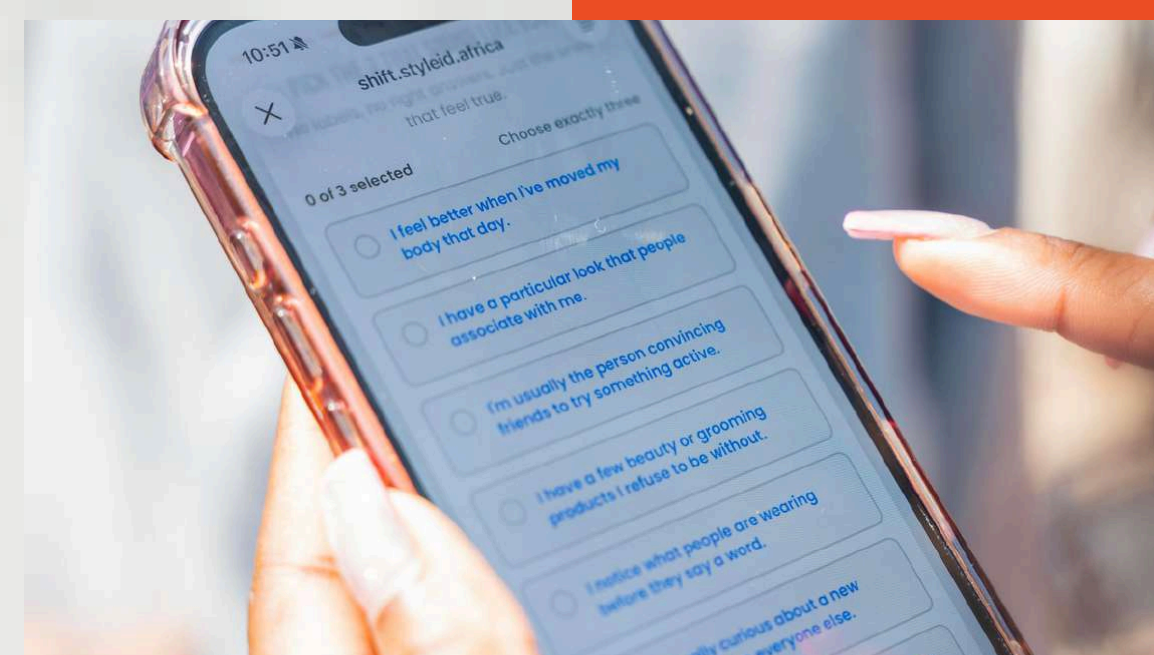


02

The wall: Our team walked each delegate through the Community Mapping Wall, where every community had its own colour, portrait and description.

The declaration: Delegates told us out loud which community they belonged to. Committing first is what made the reveal land.

03

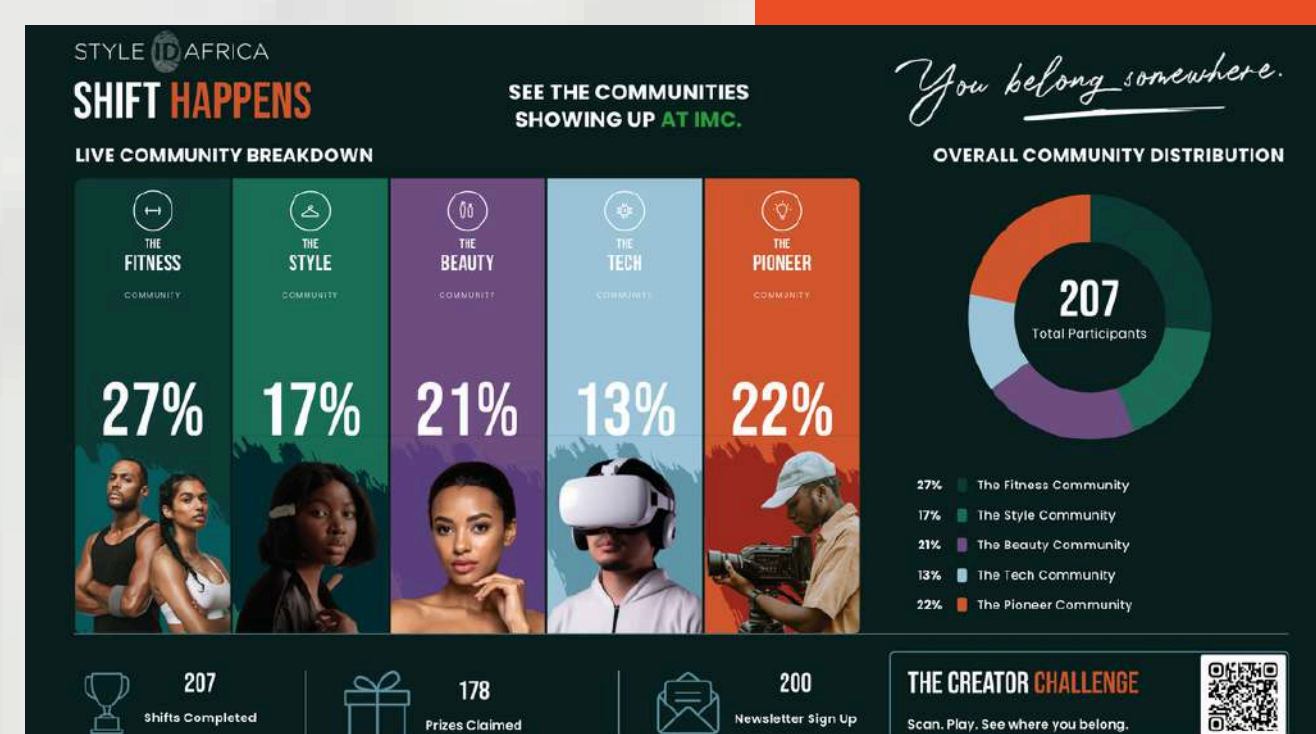
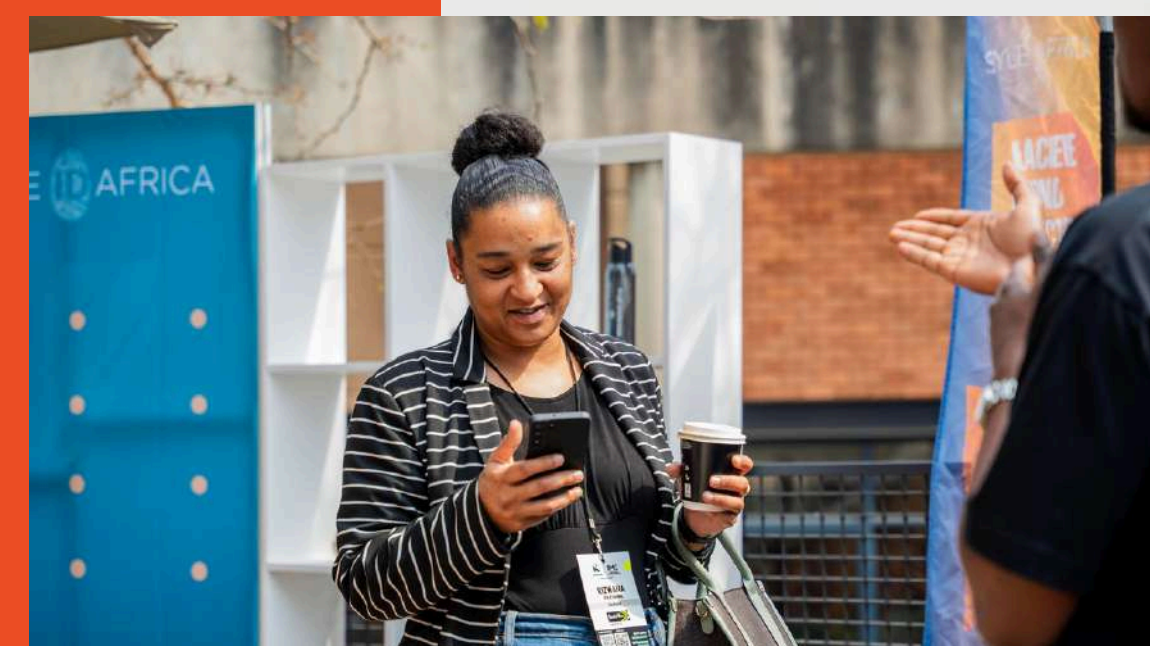


04

The game. They scanned a QR code and, on their own phones, chose the three statements that sounded most like them. No community labels were shown, so they picked behaviours rather than identities.

The reveal: The game compared what they said with what they chose. The result was a match, a different community, or a tie between two.

05



06

The shift: Every result fed a live screen at the stand, so delegates watched the room's community picture change as more people played.

The stand was built around conversation rather than technology. Our team facilitated rather than directed traffic, and each reveal opened a natural discussion about what communities mean for brands. Alongside it, the Business of Influence studio recorded 15 podcast episodes in a single day.

DESIGNING THE GAME

Every statement describes an everyday behaviour, such as "Notices what people wear before they speak" or "Comes up with things to make or start." People pick the version of themselves they recognise, not the label they would like to wear.

We also designed for trust. Game results and prize claims were stored separately, so no player's community is linked to their name. People could explore their identity without feeling profiled.



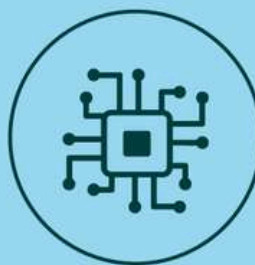
THE
FITNESS



THE
STYLE



THE
BEAUTY



THE
TECH



THE
PIONEER



STYLE ID AFRICA

SHIFT HAPPENS

LIVE COMMUNITY BREAKDOWN



THE
FITNESS

COMMUNITY

27%





THE
STYLE

COMMUNITY

17%





THE
BEAUTY

COMMUNITY

21%





THE
TECH

COMMUNITY

13%





THE
PIONEER

COMMUNITY

22%



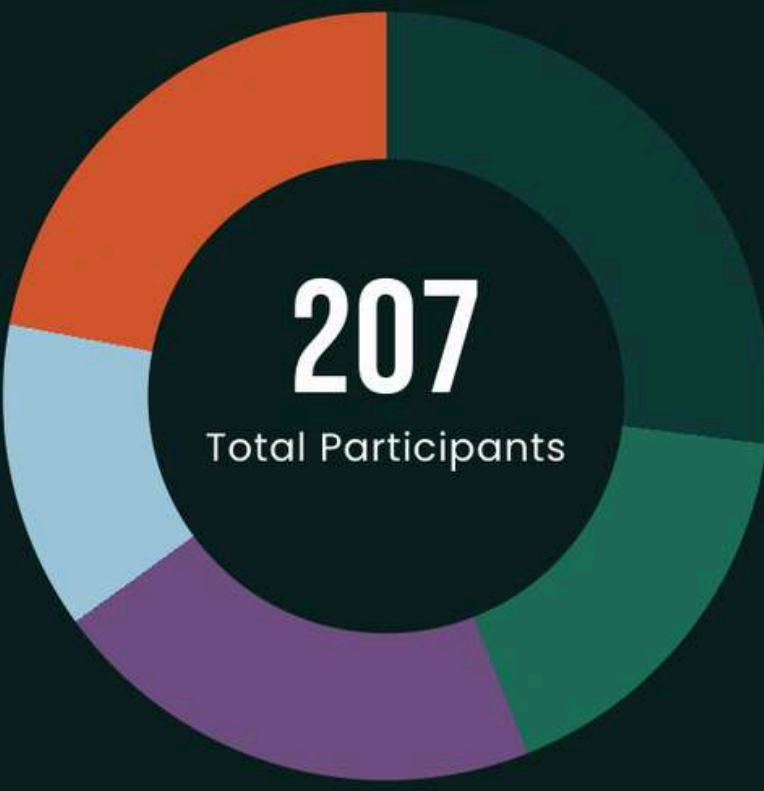
SEE THE COMMUNITIES
SHOWING UP AT IMC.

You belong somewhere.

OVERALL COMMUNITY DISTRIBUTION

207

Total Participants



27%

The Fitness Community

17%

The Style Community

21%

The Beauty Community

13%

The Tech Community

22%

The Pioneer Community



207

Shifts Completed



178

Prizes Claimed



200

Newsletter Sign Up

THE CREATOR CHALLENGE

Scan. Play. See where you belong.

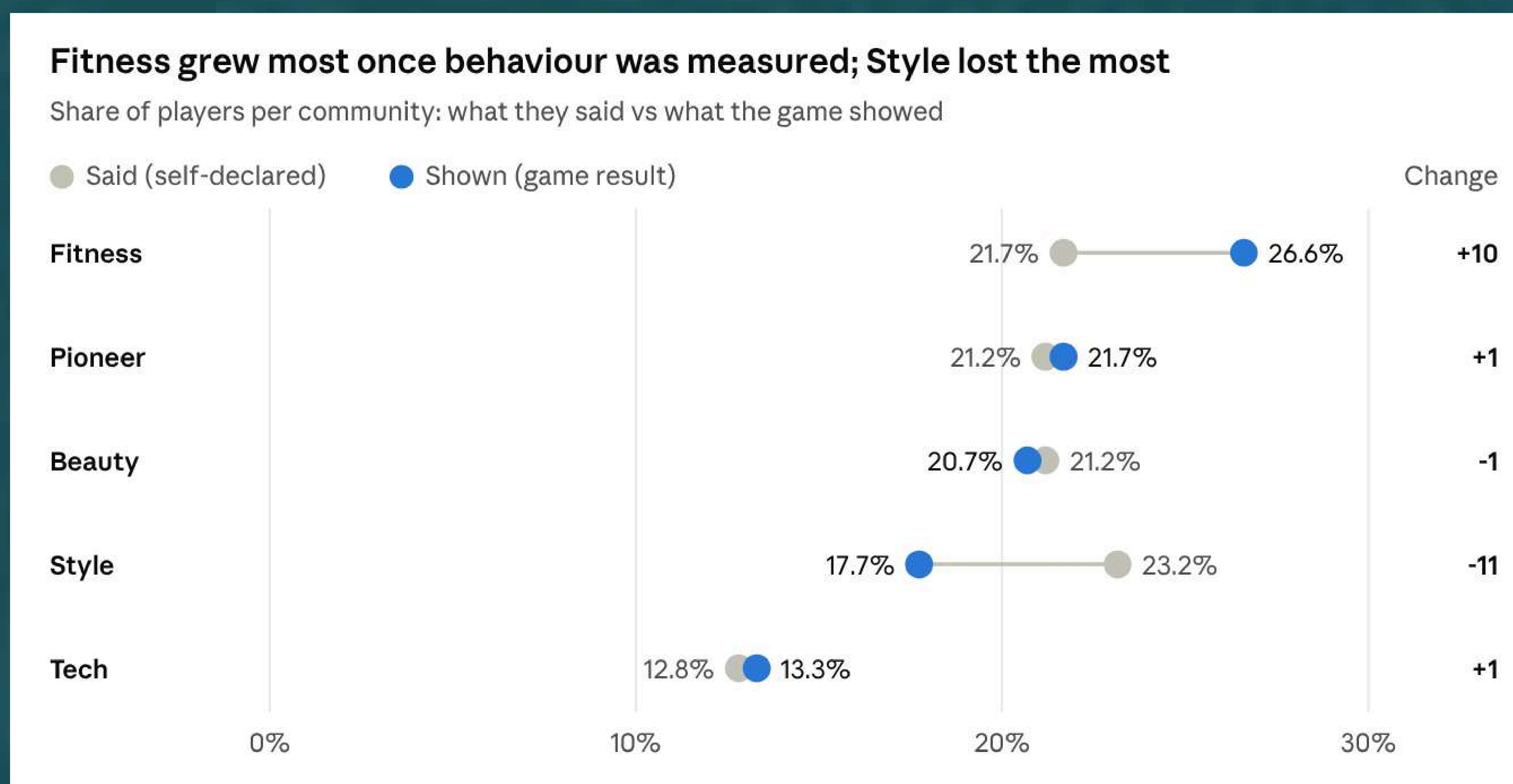


STYLE ID AFRICA

05

WHAT WE FOUND

For 57.6% of players, behaviour confirmed the community they named. The other 42.4% are where the insight lives.



Source: Find Your Community game data, Nedbank IMC 2026 (203 plays)

WELLNESS IS THE COMMON GROUND

Fitness was the largest community, with 26.6% of results. It was also the only one to grow significantly once behaviour was measured, drawing players from all four other communities and losing just one. "Feels better after moving their body" was the single most chosen statement in the game, picked by more than a third of all players. Wellness is no longer a niche passion. It is a shared value.

STYLE IS ASPIRATION

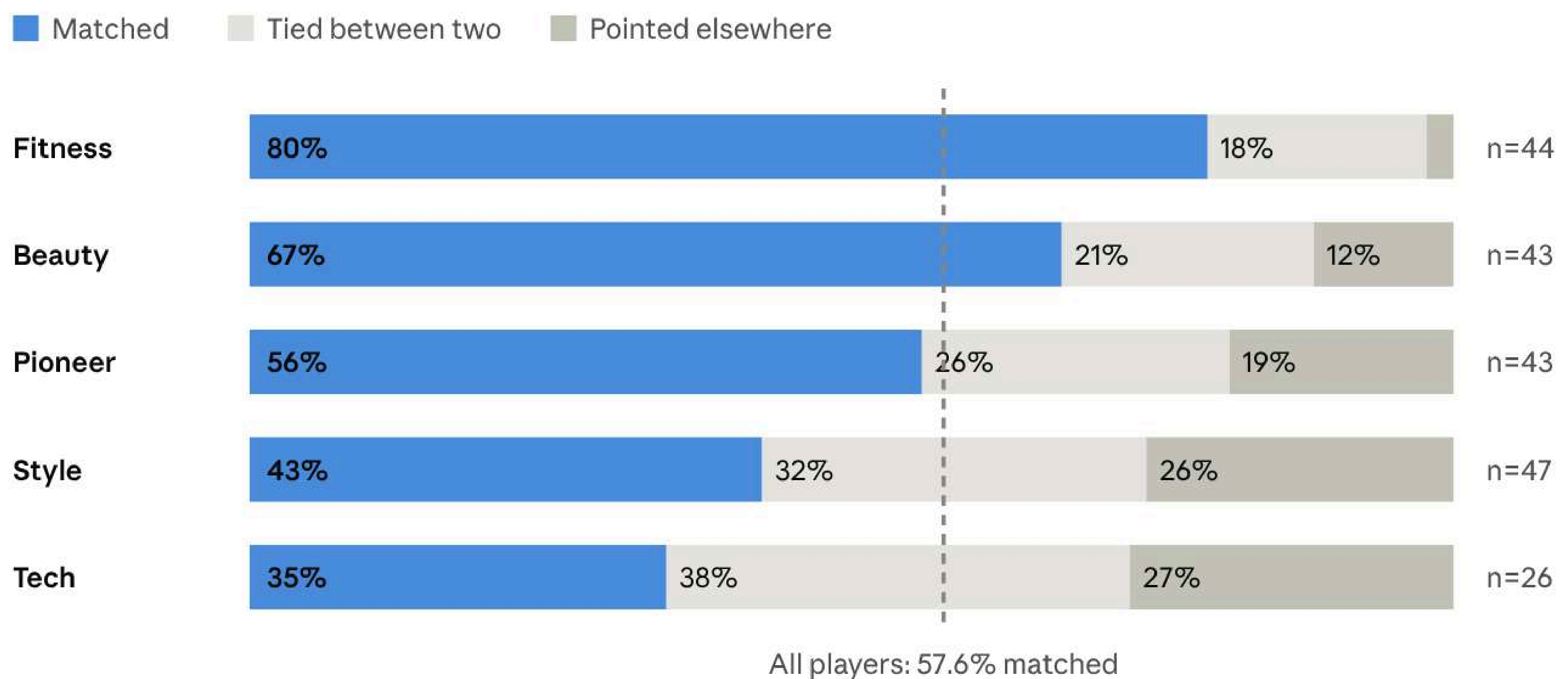
Style was the most claimed community, at 23.2%. Yet only 43% of those who claimed it got a clean match, and a quarter were pointed to a different community altogether. Style behaves less like a tribe and more like a layer people add on top of their real passions.

TECH IS THE TOOL, PIONEER IS THE IDENTITY

Tech was the smallest community (13.3%) and the least certain. Only a third of self-declared Tech players matched, and several turned out to be Pioneers: builders first, gadget lovers second. For many people, technology is how they pursue a passion, not the passion itself.

Fitness players know themselves best; Tech players least

Outcome of the game by self-declared community, share of players



Source: Find Your Community game data, Nedbank IMC 2026 (203 plays)

CLEAR RITUALS MAKE CLEAR COMMUNITIES

Fitness players knew themselves best, with almost four in five confirmed. Beauty followed at two in three. Both are built on repeated, visible rituals, like a workout or a go-to product. Communities built on aspiration or utility, such as Style and Tech, overlap with others and take a sharper lens to find.

THE VALUES THAT TRAVEL

COMMUNITY	WHAT DEFINES IT MOST	WHAT COMES NEXT
Fitness	Feels better after moving their body (91%)	Convinces friends to try active things (59%)
Pioneer	Comes up with things to make or start (84%)	Suggests new ways to try things (64%)
Style	Notices what people wear before they speak (75%)	Has a signature look people associate with them (47%)
Tech	Wants new apps that make life easier (74%)	Curious about new gadgets first (63%)
Beauty	Loves discovering products that actually work (69%)	Has go-to beauty/grooming products (67%)

Some behaviours crossed community lines. "Loves discovering products that actually work" was chosen by 27.6% of all players, from Beauty to Tech to Pioneer. "Getting ready sets their mood" was a top choice for both Beauty and Style. Proof and ritual are values a brand can carry into several communities with one credible story.

FROM PLAY TO CONVERSATION

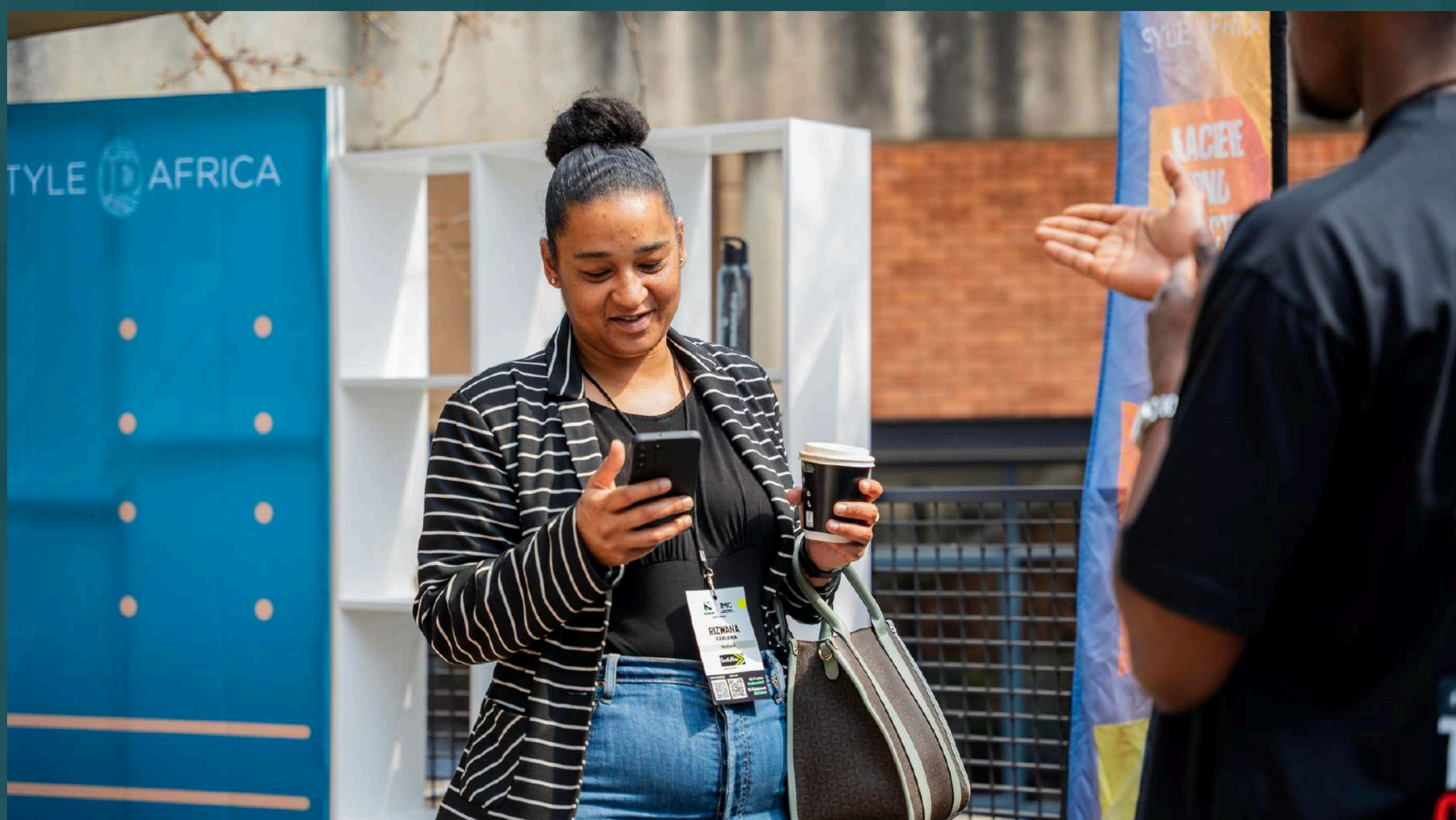
The game did more than entertain. 146 delegates from more than 80 organisations, across banking, telecoms, FMCG, automotive, agencies, media and higher education, claimed a prize after playing. That is 72% of everyone who played, and it gave us a warm list of people to continue the conversation with.

WHAT IT MEANT TO PLAY

The game worked like a mirror. Each outcome gave players something different to take home.

- **Recognition:** For more than half the players, the game proved them right. That moment of "I knew it" is belonging in its simplest form: your passions are seen, and shared by others.
- **Discovery:** One in six was pointed to a community they had not named. The Style player who turned out to be Fitness, or the Tech player who turned out to be a Pioneer, learned that everyday habits say more about us than the labels we choose.
- **Permission:** One in four tied between two communities. The game gave them language for something most people already know: we are rarely just one thing.

Because delegates declared their community before they played, the reveal was never just a screen result. It was a moment shared with our team and the people around them. That is how communities work in real life: identity is formed and confirmed in conversation with others.



WHAT THIS MEANS **FOR BRANDS**

If a room full of marketers can surprise themselves, imagine what brands miss about their customers. The game points to five shifts every brand should plan for.

01 AUDIENCES ARE OUT, COMMUNITIES ARE IN

Age, income and location tell a brand who someone is on paper. They don't explain why two 30-year-old marketers in Johannesburg spend their money in completely different ways. Communities do. A Fitness member and a Style member may share every demographic, yet follow different creators, trust different voices and build different rituals.

02 SELF-IMAGE IS NOT BEHAVIOUR

People describe who they want to be. Their habits reveal who they are. Research built only on what people say will capture the aspiration and miss the person. Brands need both views, and they need to know where the two part ways.

03 EVERYONE LIVES IN MORE THAN ONE COMMUNITY

Today's consumer is a Beauty lover who runs, or a Pioneer who builds with the latest tech. Brands that speak to only one side of a person leave the rest of the relationship on the table. The intersections are where fresh, distinctive ideas live.

04 NOT EVERY COMMUNITY IS FOUND THE SAME WAY

Communities built on a clear, repeated ritual, like Fitness and Beauty, are easier to identify and speak to. Aspirational and utility-led communities, like Style and Tech, blur into others. They reward deeper insight and more careful creative, because a one-size message will miss most of the people in them.

05 SHARED VALUES OPEN MANY DOORS

Wellness, proof that a product works and the ritual of getting ready all showed up across community lines. A brand that owns one of these values credibly can travel into several communities with a single story.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Communities are where trust is formed. Inside them, people take recommendations from peers and creators they relate to far more readily than from advertising. A brand that is invited in gains more than reach. It gains relevance, advocacy and a seat in the conversations that shape what people buy next.

HOW BRANDS CAN FIND AND ACTIVATE COMMUNITIES

Finding a community is not a media buy. It is a process of listening, proving and earning a place, and Find Your Community followed the same six steps we recommend to every brand.

- **Define communities by behaviour,** not labels. Start with what people do repeatedly, such as how they move, shop, create and get ready. Our fifteen game statements were everyday behaviours for exactly this reason.
- **Test what people say against what they do.** Pair self-reported insight with behavioural signals. At IMC, one in six people sat in a different community from the one they claimed.
- **Map the overlaps.** Look for where communities meet, such as Beauty and Fitness or Pioneer and Tech. A message that speaks to two passions at once stands out where single-community messages blend in.
- **Enter through trusted voices.** Communities follow their own creators and leaders. Partner with the people a community already listens to, rather than talking at it from outside.
- **Give before you ask.** Offer something the community values, such as an experience, knowledge, access or a product that genuinely works. Find Your Community gave delegates a moment of self-discovery before it asked for anything.
- **Measure, learn and stay.** Track how each community responds, refine the approach and keep showing up. Communities remember brands that stay, and quickly forget brands that only arrive for a campaign.

Brands that follow this approach stop chasing attention and start building belonging. That is harder to copy, and it compounds over time.

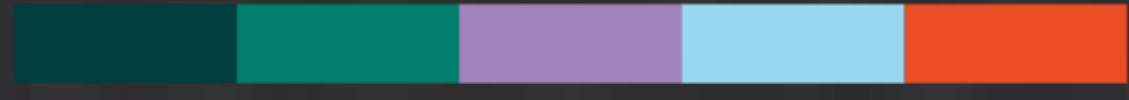
HOW STYLE ID AFRICA CAN DO THIS FOR YOU

Your audience already belongs somewhere. We help you find where, prove who is really there, and connect you to the voices they trust.

Style ID Africa is a creative and influence-driven agency. Find Your Community was a live demonstration of the community intelligence framework we use with clients every day. Here is how we put it to work for your brand:

WHAT WE DO	WHAT YOU GET
Community intelligence	Our Intelligence team maps the communities around your category, defines them by behaviour and shows you where they overlap
Behavioural validation	Research and interactive tools, like the Find Your Community game, that test what your audience says against what they actually do
Creator and community partnerships	Access to the creators and community leaders your audience already trusts, matched to the communities you need to reach
Experiential activations	Stand, event and campus experiences that turn your brand into a moment of discovery and capture qualified leads
Content and amplification	Community-led content and platforms, including the Business of Influence podcast, that keep your brand in the conversation

IMC 2026



STYLE AFRICA



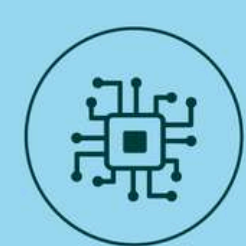
THE
FITNESS



THE
STYLE



THE
BEAUTY



THE
TECH



THE
PIONEER

LET'S FIND YOUR COMMUNITY

Every brand already has communities waiting for it. Most simply have not found them yet. Let us show you who they are, what they care about and how to earn your place among them.

CONTACT DETAILS

SOCIALS @style_id_africa

EMAIL info@styleid.africa

WEBSITE styleid.africa

STYL
ID
AFRICA