



# Reframe Entertainment



THE  
*growth*  
DISTILLERY



**TRA**

# We are living in an age of attention overload.

More noise, more demands, and more distractions are pulling us in every direction. The attention economy is in full force, and social media has trained us to expect instant hits of information, reshaping our patterns of focus.

Layer on top of this the rising cost of living and global instability, and people are carrying a heavier mental load than ever.



"Everything needs to be short, sharp and shiny . Everything needs to be now.

*Everything's trying to get your attention."*

- Female, 41, Adelaide





# Choice has become its own burden.

Entertainment options feel limitless, but the sheer volume has turned abundance into overwhelm.



"I feel like there are **too many choices** to wade through now. I sometimes flick through options but get **too overwhelmed by the options** and annoyed that I am wasting so much time looking at, and researching, them."

- Female, 53, Hobart

# It's not just our attention that's feeling burnt out, emotions are too.

From ads to social media, everything in our daily lives is finely tuned to trigger our emotions and provoke an emotional response.

This constant stimulation leaves people feeling emotionally overloaded, burnt out, and flooded with stimuli.

F<sub>1in2</sub>

Australians say they often feel **emotionally drained** by the constant demands of daily life.



# And this context is creating emotional imbalance.




Sometimes it leaves people feeling

**overloaded,**

over capacity and overwhelmed.

45%

of Aussies say they feel **overwhelmed** by how much content and advertising is competing for their attention.



Or it leaves them feeling

**numb,**

burnt out on feeling.

50%

of Aussies say there's so much emotional messaging and content these days, that they end up **switching off** or **ignoring it**.



# Entertainment is increasingly a tool for **emotional calibration**.



2in3

Australians say they use entertainment as a way to **reset or recharge** emotionally.

The context of overload is changing the way people are using entertainment to manage their emotions, and how they're doing it.

Audiences aren't simply choosing what to watch, play or listen to, they are choosing how they want to feel. People are turning to entertainment to restore their equilibrium.

"You go to entertainment to be entertained, and that brings on different feelings. It's all about the **emotions and the feelings.**"

- Male, 74, Melbourne

People are looking  
to **restore balance** by  
using entertainment to...

## Regulate.

When emotions are **overwhelming**,  
entertainment provides a calming reset.

Entertainment that can gently dial down emotional overwhelm,  
returning to a calmer, more grounded state where feelings can  
be processed, understood, and softened.



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to restore balance by  
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## Regulate.

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Entertainment that can gently dial down emotional overwhelm,  
returning to a calmer, more grounded state where feelings can  
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## Amplify.

When audiences feel **numb**, entertainment  
is used to reignite emotions.

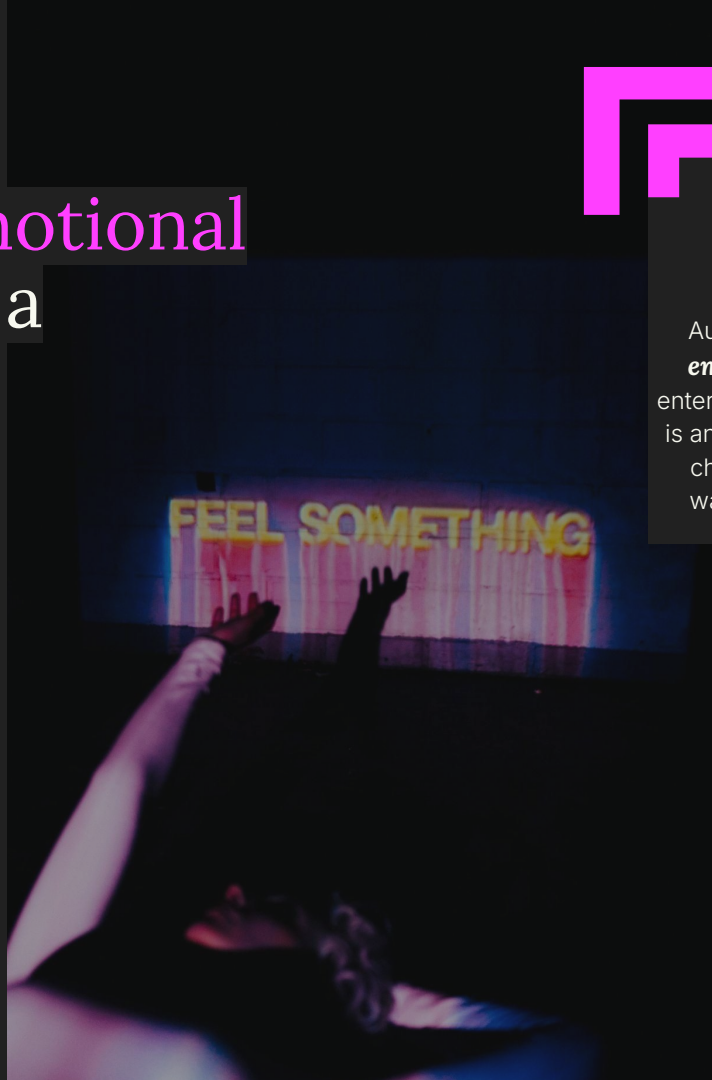
Entertainment that can crank up the dial on feeling, delivering  
a high-energy hit of exhilaration, emotion or awe.  
Experiences that reignite what it feels like to be fully human.



In this context,  
entertainment's **emotional  
payoff** has become a  
**non-negotiable.**

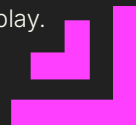
Audiences are becoming more intentional and discerning with their entertainment choices.

They want a guaranteed **emotional return for the time they invest**. That makes the emotional payoff of entertainment the most important signal of whether something feels worth their time.



81%

Australians say that the **emotional experience** entertainment will give them, is an important factor when choosing something to watch, listen to or play.



"There are so many options in everything. You have limited time, but every way you can spend your time. So narrowing it down is tricky. It's just about becoming more decisive."

- Male, 22, Regional Queensland

For brands, the battle for attention is both a challenge and an opportunity. To cut through the noise and become *unmissable*, entertainment must...

## Signal its payoff.

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Entertainment that feels worth it, that feels unmissable, is the kind that ***clearly signals the emotional payoff upfront.***

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Audiences want to know exactly what they're signing up for, whether it's exhilaration, laughter, calm, or awe. If the payoff is unclear, they won't risk wasting their time. They'll scroll past, skip, or choose to spend their time and money elsewhere.

## Deliver on the promise.

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Clarity on the promise is not enough, the experience of the entertainment ***must live up to the promise.***

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When entertainment fails to deliver, the disappointment is amplified in an overloaded context. Anything less than promised risks disappointment, churn and negative word of mouth. Get it right, and audiences reward you with loyalty.



So what are the emotional  
payoffs people are seeking today?



There are three  
*emotional zones* that  
payoffs sit in.



**Unleash**



**Escape**



**Anchor**



**Anchor** offers safety, familiarity, the warm blanket of knowing what comes next.

Choosing entertainment that anchors and grounds, offering predictability, comfort, calm and connection to the familiar. Entertainment gives people a sense of control in a world that often feels overwhelming. Supports rituals, stillness, and emotional reassurance.



"Decompress a little. During the day this isn't an option, I don't have the emotional capacity to process things. During the day my attention is pulled towards a million different things, but at night my favourite shows **feel like a comfy pair of slippers. It's me-time.**"

- Female, 41, Adelaide



"Watching TV and movies is like one of the only times I feel less human. It's almost **like an escape**. To live in another fantasy world that isn't mine."

"Everyone's being **transported to this different place** and it's just through sound."

Male, 22, Regional Queensland



**Escape** allows people to step outside themselves, to indulge, play, remember or to disappear into another world.

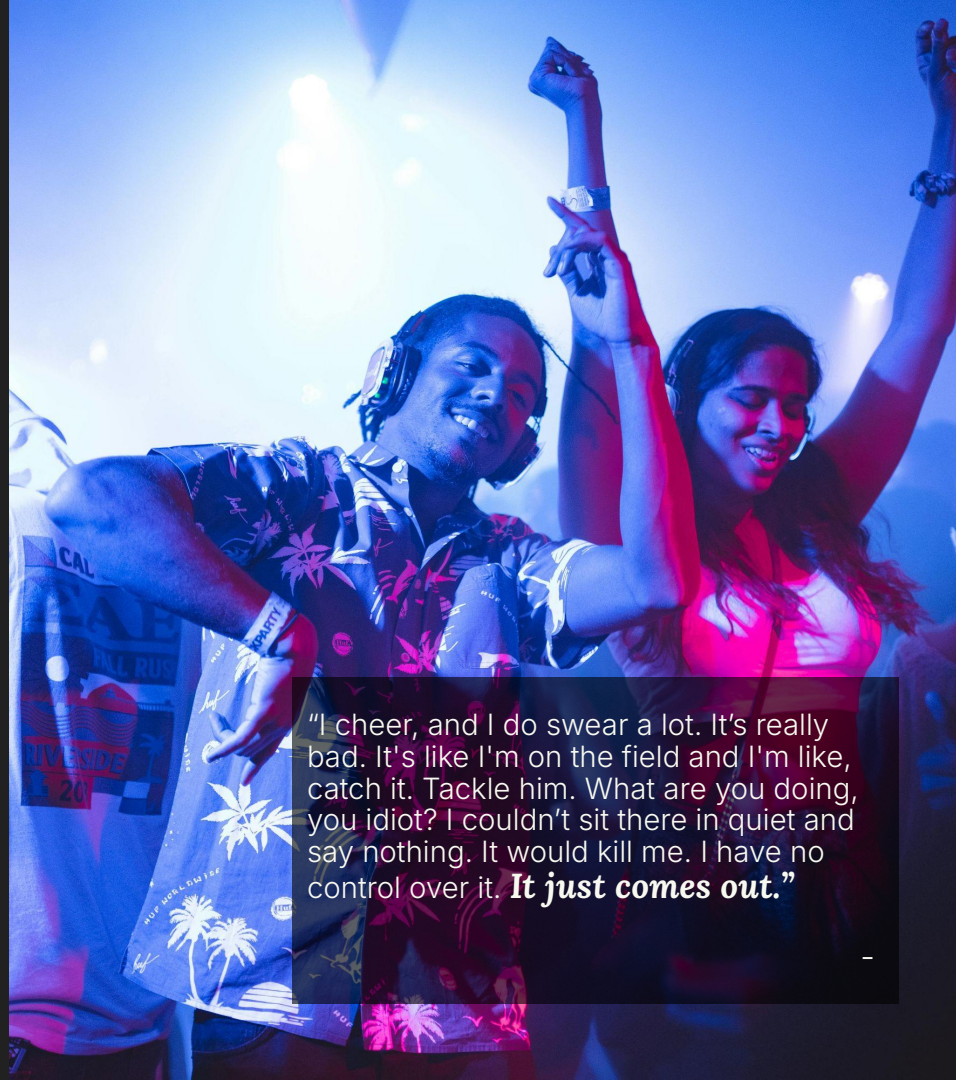
Choosing entertainment that immerses you in another world, helping to regulate by offering distance from the everyday, while also amplifying emotion through new perspectives, sensations, and the freedom to feel differently.





# Unleash amplifies feelings to counter the numbness, giving permission to feel everything, loudly.

Choosing entertainment that breaks through the emotional fog, amplifying feeling through catharsis, awe or joy, and offering a powerful counter to numbness by helping us let go, unleash. Entertainment becomes a vehicle for high-stakes feeling, the rush, the drop, the collective high.



"I cheer, and I do swear a lot. It's really bad. It's like I'm on the field and I'm like, catch it. Tackle him. What are you doing, you idiot? I couldn't sit there in quiet and say nothing. It would kill me. I have no control over it. **It just comes out.**"

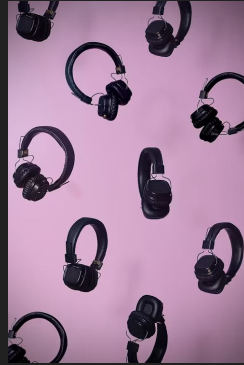
All entertainment categories have a way to meet the needs of any emotional payoff zone.



Streaming  
TV &  
Movies



Gaming



Listening  
to music



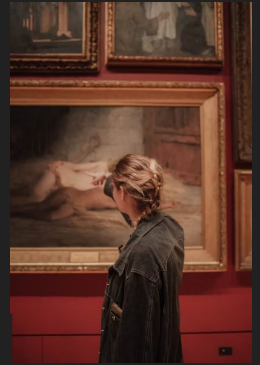
Cinema



Live music



Sports



Arts &  
Culture

The opportunity lies in creating the right triggers that can cut through in a crowded market, signal the emotional payoff and make people stop, choose, and come back.

That's where Hooks come in.

Hooks are the creative triggers that signal the emotional payoff, making entertainment instantly compelling and commercially effective.





This playbook unpacks the hooks within each emotional zone, giving brands practical ways to guarantee the entertainment they create or partner with, *feels unmissable.*

There are 12 *unique* hooks that brands can leverage, that sit across the emotional zones.



## Unleash

- Full Volume
- Break the Seal
- Feel the Fever
- Edge of the Moment



## Escape

- Takeover
- Feeling Free
- Time Portal
- Join the Wave



## Anchor

- Comfort Rituals
- Slow the Scroll
- Simpler Times
- Safe Spaces



## ➤ Anchor Hooks

- Comfort Rituals
- Slow the Scroll
- Simpler Times
- Safe Spaces



# HOOK Comfort Rituals

## Emotional Payoff Safety

### Brand Action:

Create safety through ritual. Dial up entertainment's role as familiar routine to counteract the unpredictability and overwhelm of the outside world.

## The Experience

Regular, dependable entertainment people can weave into their routine.

Shape content to fit daily or weekly rituals.

Encourage simple preparatory acts that become part of the experience.

## The Promise

Switching off, soothing and calming.

A coping mechanism to regulate stress.

Decompression and emotional reset.

A sense of closure at the end of a long day.

## The Signals

Language that frames entertainment as relaxing and restorative,

- Phrases like: "Just relaxing" or "Play a game and just chill out"
- Cue words: relaxing, let go, chill out, comfort, connection, joy, serene, oasis.

Use familiar formats, tones, or settings that instantly create comfort.

Layer in physical and sensory cues that signal "time to unwind".



# HOOK Slow the Scroll

## Emotional Payoff Serenity

### Brand Action:

Provide relief from overstimulation by advocating stillness, space and emotional presence. Sink into the moment, reduce distraction to be present.



## The Experience

Design immersive experiences that require full attention.

Slower paced entertainment that rewards mindful engagement.

Favour formats that can't be consumed passively.

## The Promise

Immersion and focus, mindfully concentrating on one thing to calm a busy mind or life.

Being pulled in so deeply you can't look away.

Freedom to focus and let go of daily distractions.

A sense of purpose in downtime.

## The Signals

Language that elevates stillness and focus as valuable,

- Phrases like: "locked in", "switch off, sink in", "nothing else matters"
- Cue words: absorbed, immersed, fully present, hooked in, part of it.

Keep storytelling minimal and focused, avoiding overstimulation.

Environments and cues that encourage stillness and presence.





# HOOK **Simpler Times**

**Emotional Payoff**  
**Familiarity**

## **Brand Action:**

Use nostalgia and familiarity to create comfort. Lean into tried and tested stories, themes and styles that feel easy, warm, and reassuring.

## **The Experience**

Lean on reruns, retellings and adaptations of well-loved stories.

Prioritise comfort first content, over experimental or challenging formats.

Weave in nostalgic touches that recall shared past moments and connections.

## **The Promise**

The reassurance of knowing what to expect.

Familiar favourites that feel timeless.

The comfort of "slipping into something warm and safe".

Nostalgia and memory recall, often shared with others.

A sense of being held, understood and connected to the past.

## **The Signals**

Language that highlights familiarity and continuity as valuable,

- Phrases like: "known and loved", "brings back memories"
- Cue words: favourites, familiar, warm, timeless, nostalgic

Use clear cues and familiar structures that signal what to expect.

Maintain consistency in style, tone and format within a genre.



# HOOK Safe Spaces

## Emotional Payoff Reassurance

### Brand Action:

Give people the opportunity to be vulnerable and drop their guard through stories and experiences that reaffirm we're not alone. Reassure people that they're understood, that it's ok to feel the way they do.



## The Experience

Create authentic, heartfelt content that prioritises truth over gloss.

Normalise common emotions through shared narratives.

Build moments that foster empathy and human connection.

## The Promise

Emotional connection and relief in being seen and understood.

Permission to process and accept their own emotions.

Content that feels close to home, relevant and real.

The sense of not being alone in life's ups and downs.

Connection to others' experiences and perspectives.

## The Signals

Language that validates vulnerability and normalises shared struggles,

- Phrases like: "life's ups and downs", "you're not the only one"
- Cue words: real, relatable, not alone, authentic, reflected, like me

Share stories, themes and ideas that reflect relatable, everyday experiences and give permission to be vulnerable.

Portray imperfection and vulnerability honestly.



## ➤ Escape Hooks

- Takeover
- Feeling Free
- Time Portal
- Join the Wave



# HOOK Takeover

## Emotional Payoff

## Elevation

### Brand Action:

Create environments and content so vivid they dissolve reality and transport people somewhere else. Use design, sound, language and colour to enable full immersion and help people lose themselves in the experience.

## The Experience

Build full-sensory environments that demand deep immersion.  
Create unique, transportive settings that feel unlike everyday life.  
Design experiences that surround, absorb and overwhelm the senses.

## The Promise

The feeling of being transported somewhere else, away from real life.  
A sense of being lifted outside themselves, part of something bigger.  
Total immersion, like stepping into a different world.  
Forgetting who they are and losing track of time.  
Feeling fully surrounded, the experience is all you can feel.

## The Signals

Language that emphasises being carried away or absorbed into another reality,

- Phrases like: "In a new world", "all you can feel"
- Cue words: transported, engulfed, surrounded, lifted, immersed, in a new world.

Layered sound, visuals and language to dissolve the boundaries of reality.

Rich world building and immersive design and context.



ESCAPE



# HOOK Feeling Free

## Emotional Payoff Liberation

### Brand Action:

Give people permission to explore different sides of themselves. Use stories, styles and spaces that liberate audiences from everyday constraints and open gateways to new perspectives, identities and forms of self expression.



## The Experience

Fantastical or alternative worlds that reframe familiar human themes.  
Offer alternative settings that challenge the familiar and inspire fresh points of view.  
Creative spaces that encourage exploration of identity and expression.  
Standout characters that audiences can connect with or project onto.

## The Promise

Freedom to explore the boundaries of who you are, see themselves differently.  
Emotional release through expressing or imagining "someone else".  
The ability to expand horizons and try on new perspectives.  
A sense of inspiration and transformation, outside the everyday.

## The Signals

Language that emphasises exploration, experimentation and discovery,

- Phrases like: "In a new world", "all you can feel"
- Cue words: inspiring, transformative, unexpected, liberating, reframe, reimagine.

Use bold, expressive styles, experimental design that break convention.





ESCAPE



# HOOK Time Portal

## Emotional Payoff Reawakening

### Brand Action:

Take people back to a previous time so they can rediscover who they were. It's a chance to relive the feelings, moments and identity tied to that time.

## The Experience

Immersive experiences that recreate past eras in full detail.  
Nostalgia brought to life through music, visuals, and setting.  
Live retellings or revivals of beloved stories.  
Context and atmosphere that mirror "how it was then".  
Moments that spark personal and collective memories.

## The Promise

Like being back in the moment, like nothing ever changed.  
Loved experiences and memories reignited.  
Full package immersion into a nostalgic experience, not just the entertainment, but the context, setting, feeling.  
Like it would have been at the time.

## The Signals

Language that connects past and present through shared joy,

- Phrases like: "Spark memories", "Important to me", "Recreate",
- Cue words: nostalgic, immersive, revival, relive, timeless.

Narratives and cues that emphasise the togetherness of reliving, from everyone singing the same chorus to watching a game as one.



ESCAPE

# HOOK Join the Wave

## Emotional Payoff Belonging

### Brand Action:

Provide opportunities for people to escape everyday life by connecting with communities who share their passions, providing collective momentum, and make everyone feel part of something bigger.

## The Experience

Building communities around an entertainment property or event.

Highlight shared passion points that unite audiences beyond the moment.

Conversations and communal excitement that extend across platforms.

Platforms or spaces for fans to connect and engage together.

Moments that make audiences feel part of the same story.

## The Promise

Feeling swept up in a shared emotion, caught in collective momentum.

Escaping the everyday by being part of something bigger with others.

A strong sense of belonging and inclusion.

The emotional lift that comes from feeding off the energy of a crowd.

## The Signals

Language that celebrates unity and amplifies collective energy,

- Phrases like: "All in this together", "Sharing the same emotion", "Feeding off each other"
- Cue words: shared, together, collective, community.

Emphasise the difference between solo and shared experiences (e.g., cinema vs at home, stadium vs living room).



## ► Unleash Hooks

- Full Volume
- Break the Seal
- Feel the Fever
- Edge of the Moment



UNLEASH



# HOOK Full Volume

Emotional Payoff  
Exhilaration

## Brand Action:

Crank the volume, saturate the colours, and flood the senses. Create big, bold, high-octane experiences that deliver pure adrenaline and feel alive, raw and unmissable.

## The Experience

High impact spectacles that are big, bright, bold and no holds barred.  
Full sensory immersion across sight, sound, movement and staging.  
Create one off, must be there moments that feel once-in-a-lifetime.  
Leverage big name talent or productions that push boundaries.  
Surprise audiences with unexpected moments that shock, delight and amplify the thrill.

## The Promise

Adrenaline, excitement and heightened senses.  
The thrill of a moment that can't be repeated or missed.  
Feeling fully alive and part of something bigger than themselves.  
The buzz of unfiltered spectacle and intensity.

## The Signals

Language that conveys intensity, adrenaline and high stakes,

- Phrases like: "The atmosphere is electric", "World first", "Have to be there", "Thrill and chills"
- Cue words: alive, electric, heightened, thrill, chills, unmissable.

Position entertainment as a high-impact event rather than passive consumption.



UNLEASH

HOOK

# Break the Seal

## Emotional Payoff Release

### Brand Action:

Give audiences permission to be loud, raw and unrestrained by going big yourself. Create spaces where emotions can spill out, offering catharsis and freedom normally kept under wraps.

## The Experience

Design high-energy moments that invite loud, visible reactions.  
Dramatic tonal shifts to take people through a full emotional spectrum.  
Experiences that provoke strong physical and emotional responses.  
Signal boldness with big gestures that say: "it's okay to let go".

## The Promise

Permission to let loose (scream, shout, cry).  
Intense emotional responses that turn the dial up on feeling.  
Catharsis, the rush of finally letting everything out.  
A collective release that transforms private emotions into shared highs.  
Freedom to step outside everyday constraints and act differently.

## The Signals

Language that validates emotional surrender and permission to feel,

- Phrases like: "It just comes out", "I can't help it", "outlet"
- Cue words: release, abandon, wild, free, unrestrained, cathartic.

Narratives that highlight the contrast between everyday restraint and big, uninhibited moments.





# HOOK Feel the Fever

Emotional Payoff  
Euphoria

## Brand Action:

Energy is contagious when shared. Electrify the emotional experience through shared rituals, coordinated moments and unmissable surprises to sweep people up in the same euphoric high.



UNLEASH

## The Experience

Build coordinated crowd moments (chants, singalongs, gestures) that everyone can join in.

Synchronised visuals, lighting or sound to unite audiences in real time.

Collective reveals or surprises that spark simultaneous reaction.

Encourage social sharing through timed prompts that flood feeds with the same energy.

Offer exclusive “only here” moments that mark the shared experience.

## The Promise

Being caught up in one big emotional response.

Feeling lifted, energised and “buzzed” by the crowd.

Unique, unrepeatable experiences that feel worth showing up for.

A deep sense of connection and oneness with others.

## The Signals

Language that highlights collective momentum and shared highs,

- Phrases like: “Caught up in the moment”, “Everyone singing”
- Cue words: electric, energising, buzz, joy, ecstasy, in sync.

Narratives that emphasise “you had to be there” moments and the thrill of unity.



UNLEASH

# HOOK Edge of the Moment

## Emotional Payoff

## Anticipation and Unleash

### Brand Action:

Build emotional tension that heightens the payoff. Use teases, pauses and cues to stretch anticipation, amplify the climax, and create the irresistible "what next?" energy.

## The Experience

Run countdown campaigns and scheduled reveals.

Offer pre-event exclusives, early access invitation and teaser glimpses.

Signal anticipation with physical cues (curtains, covers, unopened packaging) or iconic cues (logo stings, theme music etc).

Time content drops to build momentum and collective hype.

Dramatic silences, fades, or slowed pacing that heighten tension before release.

## The Promise

The thrill of slow build-up and rising energy.

Excitement that feels like being "on the brink".

A rush of enthusiasm, like a kid before Christmas morning.

The heightened buzz of knowing something big is about to happen.

Shared anticipation that makes the reveal feel bigger together.

## The Signals

Language that highlights anticipation as valuable and thrilling,

- Phrases like: "Edge of your seat", "Can't wait", "What next?"
- Cue words: hype, rush, on the edge, can't wait, build up.

Frame the pause before the payoff as essential to the experience.



# How do you make entertainment unmissable...

## Signal its payoff

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Entertainment that feels worth it, that feels unmissable, is the kind that **clearly signals the emotional payoff upfront**



## Deliver on the promise

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Clarity on the promise is not enough, the experience of the entertainment **must live up to the promise.**

## Lean on the three Emotional Zones..

**Anchor** offers safety, familiarity, the warm blanket of knowing what comes next.

**Escape** allows people to step outside themselves, to indulge, play, remember or to disappear into another world.

**Unleash** amplifies feelings to counter the numbness, giving permission to feel everything, loudly.







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