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Forget convenience, these 21 brands want to help you slow down

While new brands often sell consumers on their convenience, a COVID-era crop of businesses are focused on commercializing the art of slowing down.



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Contributing Writer · September 6, 2022



Photo: Anna Goldberg for Dough Dealer

THE ART OF SLOWING DOWN

Venture capital funding continues to flow into companies that tout rapid delivery, subscription models and instant gratification, but many pandemic-born brands made it their mission to create joyful offline experiences for consumers itching to unplug. From the rise of puzzle brands to the Instagram-fueled craze of baking bread, consumers have increasingly bought into brands that offer an experiential premium that affords them a few hours of phone-free engagement rather than ready-made convenience.

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While the convenience category rages on, brands like [Loftie](#), [Dough Dealer](#) and [Artisans](#) are prioritizing the art of slowing down.

Phone-free zones

Matt Hassett, CEO of Loftie, noticed that smart devices were eroding the boundaries between the home and office, so he launched the brand's signature alarm clock in the Fall of 2020 to help create distance between consumers and their technology.

"Setting up your environment to facilitate better choices is a far better approach than going back on your phone for meditation apps alongside your work and social media," he says, adding that it's hard to count on willpower alone to limit yourself from dopamine-generating devices. Loftie clocks have in-built alarms, sound baths, meditations and music, and can be used as Bluetooth speakers when connected to a phone.

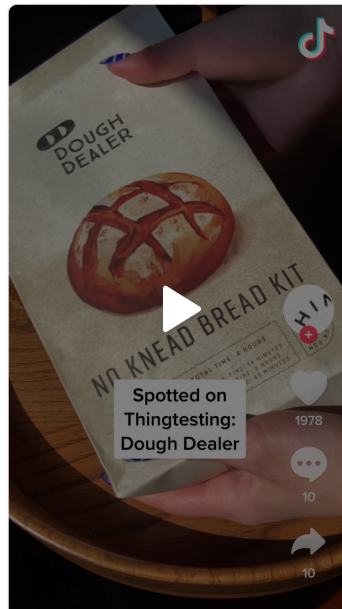
The brand has more in the pipeline along the same lines: sunrise lamps that pair with Loftie clocks, more audio content, and even a clock for kids.

Read more: [How are direct-to-consumer puzzle brands keeping people interested?](#)

For those who prefer to switch off by rolling up their sleeves in the kitchen, Dough Dealer offers ready-to-bake bread kits with pre-portioned ingredients for the perfect loaf. Anna Goldberg, a software engineer by day, founded Dough Dealer in the pandemic to bring bread back from its "bad rap" and give beginners a simpler alternative to sourdough, which requires making and feeding a starter.

"I grew up with the pervading belief that bread is bad, but people have been eating bread for thousands of years, so I started to question that," says Goldberg.

Sourcing ingredients from local farmer-founded companies, such as organic stone-milled flour from upstate New York and olive oil from California, Dough Dealer loaves aim to pack more vitamins and minerals than your run-of-the-mill loaf.



os on TikTok W: [Watch now](#)

@thingtesting
Testing at-home bread kits from Dough Dealer 🍞 #thingtesting #bread #baking
🎵 original sound - Thingtesting

Actively inconvenient

The anti-convenience trend is also experiential in that it helps people build skills recreationally in a way that previous generations did out of necessity. “[Older generations] had to learn things like bread baking to get by, but we’ve been so exposed to convenience that we’ve lost the need to learn things,” says Goldberg, citing nostalgic pastimes like knitting and film photography. “People are now turning to places to gain those skills and go back to understanding these things.”

Founded in November 2020, UK-based Artisans is another company doing just that with its DIY craft kits that help people make products like card holders, coin purses and pencil pots from leather materials sourced from Spain.

“We recognize the health benefits of crafting and wanted to create an accessible way for people to experience them without having to use expensive equipment or get to a workshop,” says Rebecca Frost, who works in marketing for the brand. Leather craft often uses a repetitive sewing motion called the saddle stitch, which Frost says engages different parts of the brain and promotes a flow state in the 2-3 hours it takes to create one of Artisans’ products.

Read more: [After Cards Against Humanity, a new generation of conversational card games is here](#)

The Artisans team had to explain to people at craft fairs that the kits do not contain finished products, and are about the process of making something yourself. While not immediately intuitive to new customers, the satisfaction of completing something is a common theme.

Brands helping us slow down are proving their staying power: Artisans is launching clutches, phone pouches, travel journals, leather tassels and keyholders in several drops, Dough Dealer is seeing wholesale distribution growing steadily, and Loftie has a pipeline of new products in the works.

For Hassett, slowing down is not just a trend, it’s a societal necessity in our overly online world. “Technology makes us feel so confident and powerful, and we think we can keep up with it, but we can’t,” he says. “There’s this idea that putting on a headset and going to an artificial world is the future, but we are humans. We don’t need to be plugged in.”

21 brands to help you slow down



Clay Club

Clay Club makes DIY pottery kits that air-dry at home.

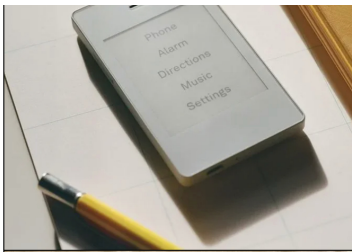
Write a review

Want to test

Tested

light phone

★★★★★ 5.18



5 • 1 Review

light phone makes a minimal phone filled with simple tools, no social media, and a black and white display.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



The Folklore Company

The Folklore Company offers customized cross-stitch embroidery kits delivered straight to homes.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Wool and the Gang

4.8 • 10 Reviews

Wool and the Gang offers yarns and kits to inspire people to create their own clothes.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Piecework

4.2 • 9 Reviews

Piecework creates curated art-inspired jigsaw puzzles.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Book of the Month

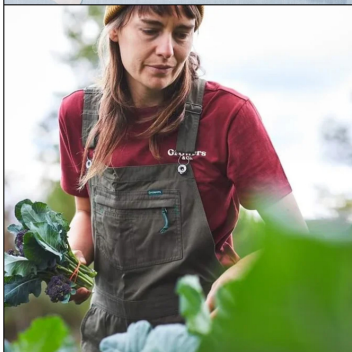
4.4 • 16 Reviews

Book of the Month curates and delivers new fiction books to subscribers every month, and also organizes virtual book clubs.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



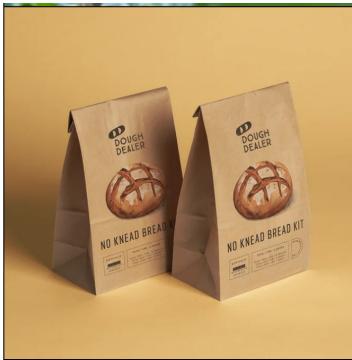
Growers & Co.

Growers & Co. sells tools and designs functional gear for gardeners, farmers, and everyday food growers.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Dough Dealer

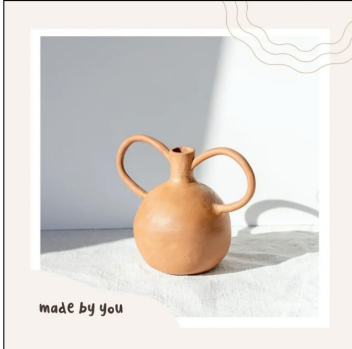
●●●●● 5 · 10 Reviews

Dough Dealer sells at-home Bread Kits with quality first ingredients sourced from small and farmer-founded companies.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Crockd

●●●●● 4.7 · 12 Reviews

Crockd sells craft kits designed to clear minds and promote mindfulness.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Loftie

●●●●● 3.1 · 14 Reviews

Loftie creates a smart alarm clock with a two-phase alarm featuring a sleep timer to fade content and improve sleep quality.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Sculpd

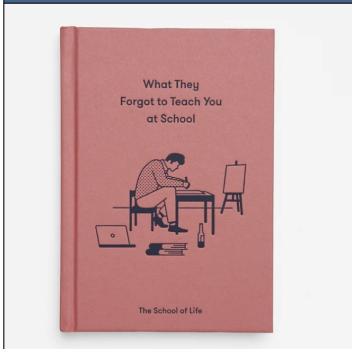
●●●●● 4.5 · 8 Reviews

Sculpd makes pottery kits, bundles, and other accessories.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



The School of Life

●●●●● 4.6 · 7 Reviews

The School of Life offers a range of online resources to help users live calmer, more resilient, and self-aware lives.

Write a review

Want to test

Tested



Tuft the World

●●●●● 3 · 1 Review

Tuft the World provides all high-quality tools, materials, and instruction needed to make professional and stunning rugs at home.



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Artisans

Artisans sells DIY leather craft kits that are perfect for beginners and enthusiasts.

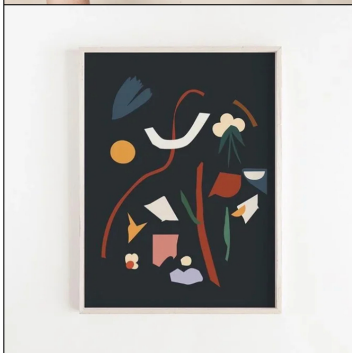
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Pattern Project

Pattern Project makes owning contemporary, high-quality & sustainable fashion accessible to everyone by simplifying sewing.

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Cut Out & Co

Cut Out & Co allows for personalized artistic craft through original prints.

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Para Moda

Para Moda sells luxury knitting kits that include quality wool, knitting needles, and instructions in a reusable bag.

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We Are Knitters

We Are Knitters offers sustainable luxury yarns and DIY kits.

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Viledge

Viledge delivers curated boxes including gardening, wine, meditation, and game products made by

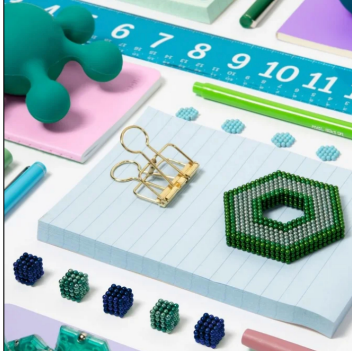


Black-owned businesses.

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Want to test

Tested



Speks

Speks makes a variety of fidgets and stress-relieving magnetic desk toys for adults.

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The Dough Project

The Dough Project sells plant-based playdough for endless creations.

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Want to test

Tested



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