

THE PURSUIT BY EQUINOX

Activating the experience at South By Southwest 2015

*Client: Equinox Fitness
Creative Direction: Lee Changzhi
Agency: INVNT LLC*



The Brief:

Equinox, the high-end fitness club whose motto is **"It's not fitness, it's life,"** launched its new data-driven cycling class, The Pursuit by Equinox at the 2015 South by Southwest festival, the prestigious Austin-based emerging technology conference.

Equinox's mandate for inVNT's activation of the cycling class, which uses groundbreaking in-studio gaming and data visualization to drive competition and peak performance, was to "create an experience that brings to life the intersection between technology, innovation and motivation, empowering and enabling a high-performance lifestyle."

Quick Facts:

Scope:

Business to Business / Business to Consumer / Showcase / Launch / Event Production

Location:

Austin, TX

Client:

Equinox Fitness

Challenge:

Equinox wanted their first-ever experiential activation to "wow" visitors "in a way that makes them rethink what fitness is all about," reinforcing Equinox as a holistic lifestyle brand that also successfully integrates technology into its package.



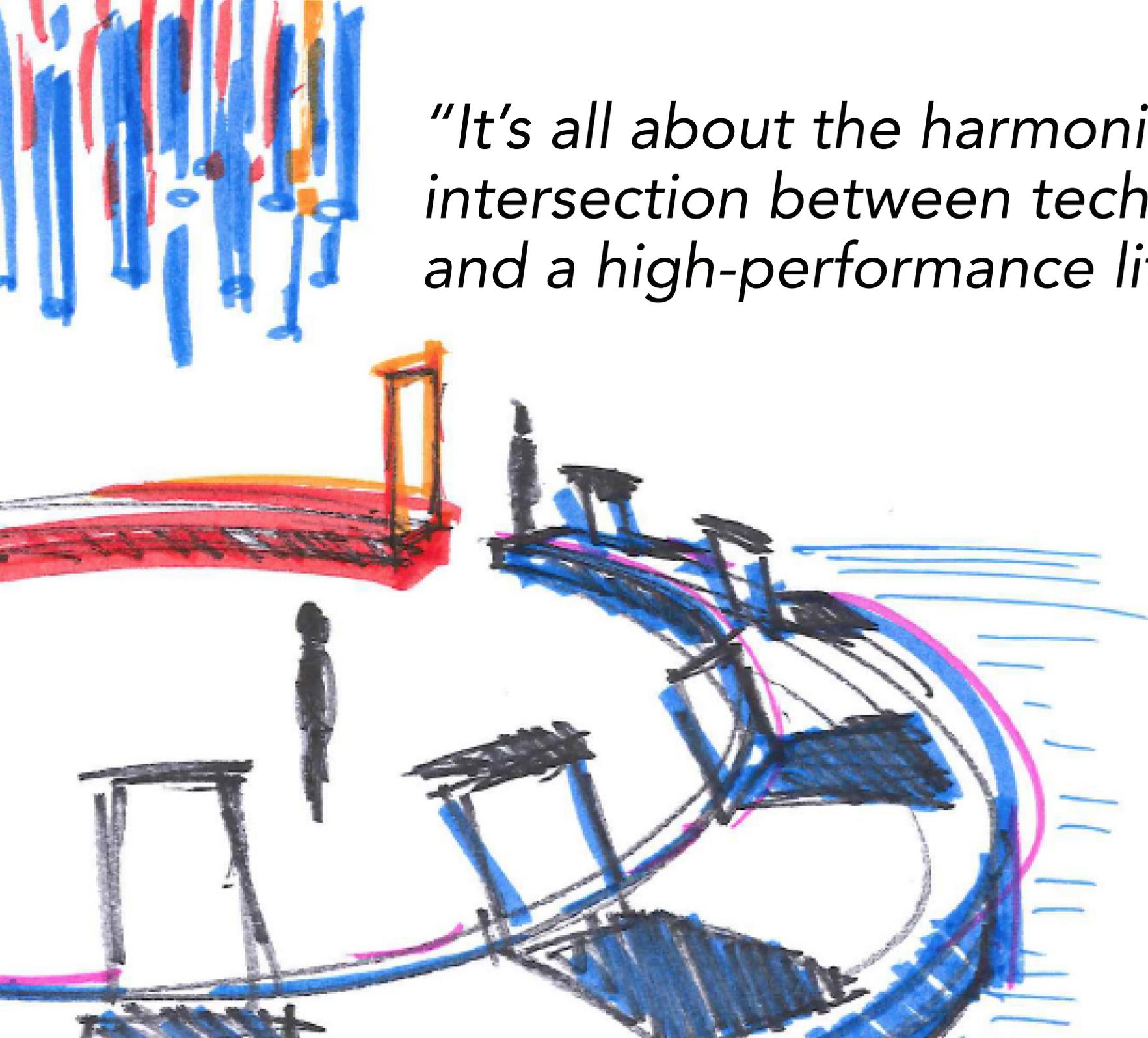
ONE. WILD. RIDE.

THE PURSUIT
BY EQUINOX

The 6 things we heard the Client say...

- We are speaking to a discerning audience that has seen everything, and been everywhere. We need to impress them in a way that makes them rethink what fitness technology is all about.
- Create a conducive and energy driven atmosphere that brings out the essence of 'The Pursuit by Equinox'.
- Design an environment that facilitates an experience for two groups: a participating, and an observing audience.
- Create an environment that is optimized for photography, sharability, and social media exposure.
- Facilitate an atmosphere that bring our vision of 'an intersection between technology and fitness' to life through music, lighting, scenic and show-flow.
- Reinforce Equinox as a holistic lifestyle brand that has successfully integrated technology into the mix.

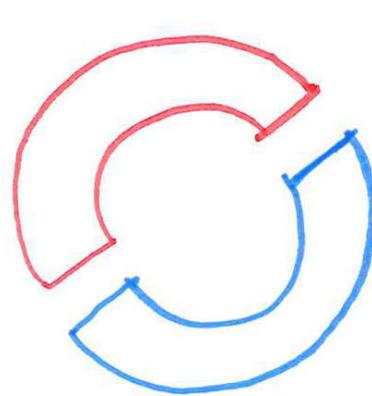
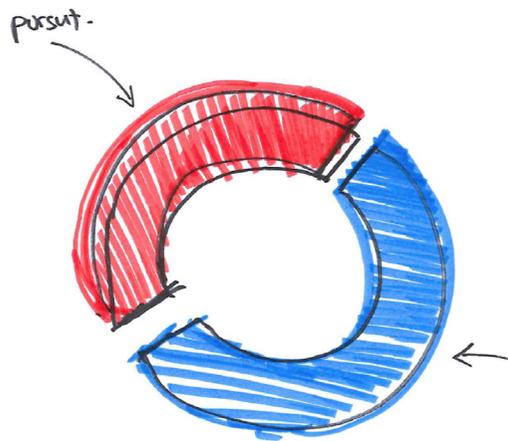
"It's all about the harmonious intersection between technology and a high-performance lifestyle."



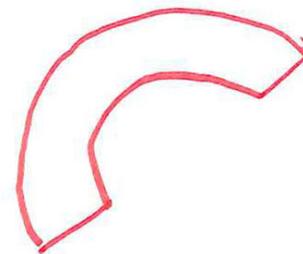
Looking to the Equinox brand for inspiration, inVNT placed the letter "O," featured in Equinox's logo, at the center of the audience experience. It was all about harmony, the wheel of the bicycle, the spinning motion that comes with the burning of calories.

We commenced the process by returning to the roots of the Equinox brand. Rather than 'reinventing the wheel', we transformed it into the center of the event experience. The heart of it all. We considered the brand's three core values of Motivation, Nutrition and Technology as we envisioned the event space, and what resulted was a structure that reflected a sense of seamlessness. We wanted it to be organic, cyclical, fluid and malleable.

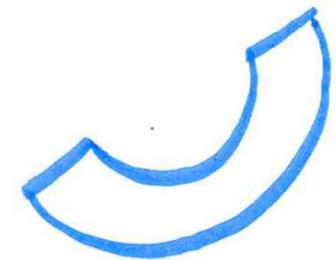
We also considered structures that were iconic, futuristic and most importantly, stand out in a busy and competitive festival environment.



Combined mode.



PURSUIT mode

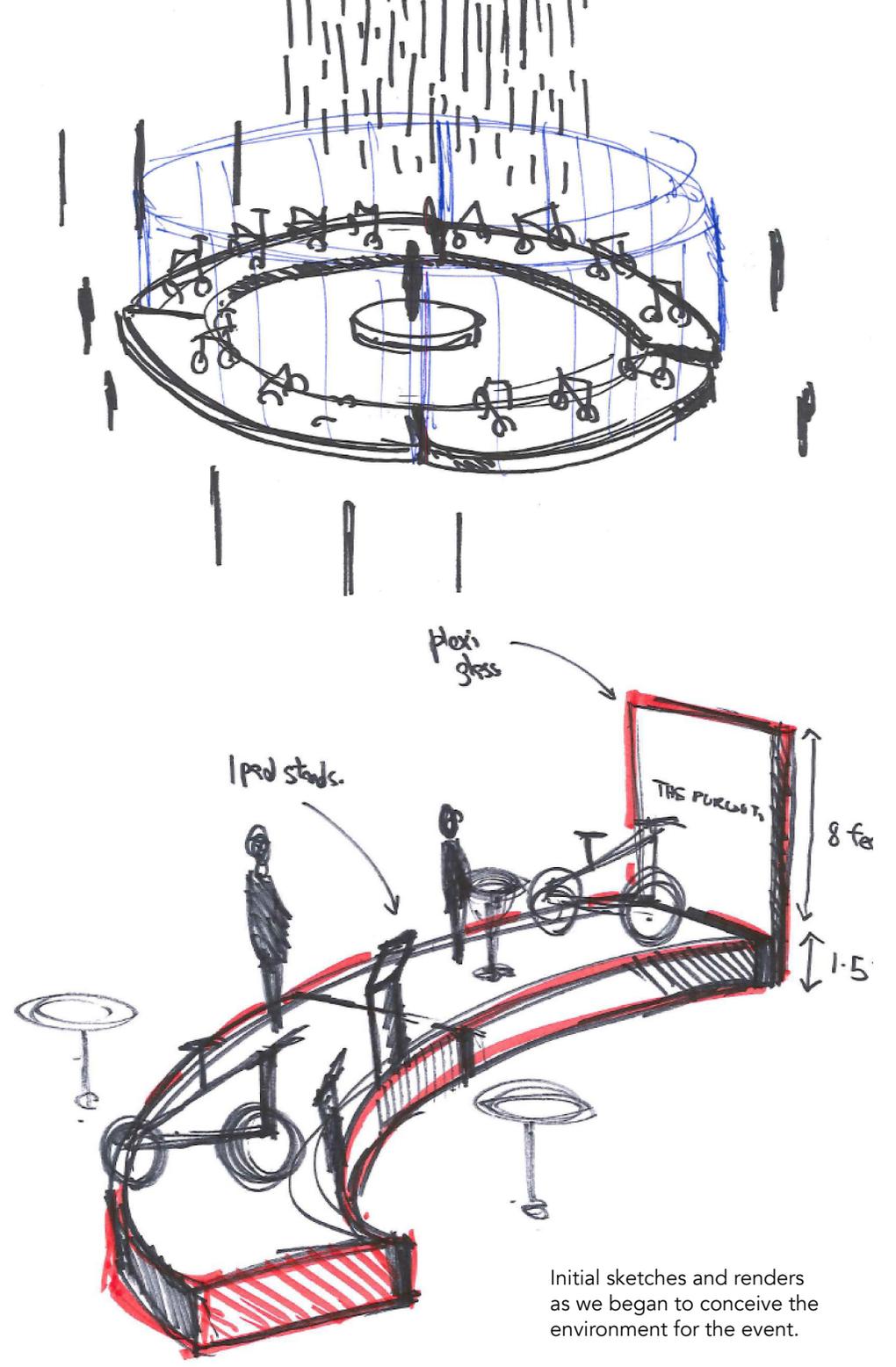
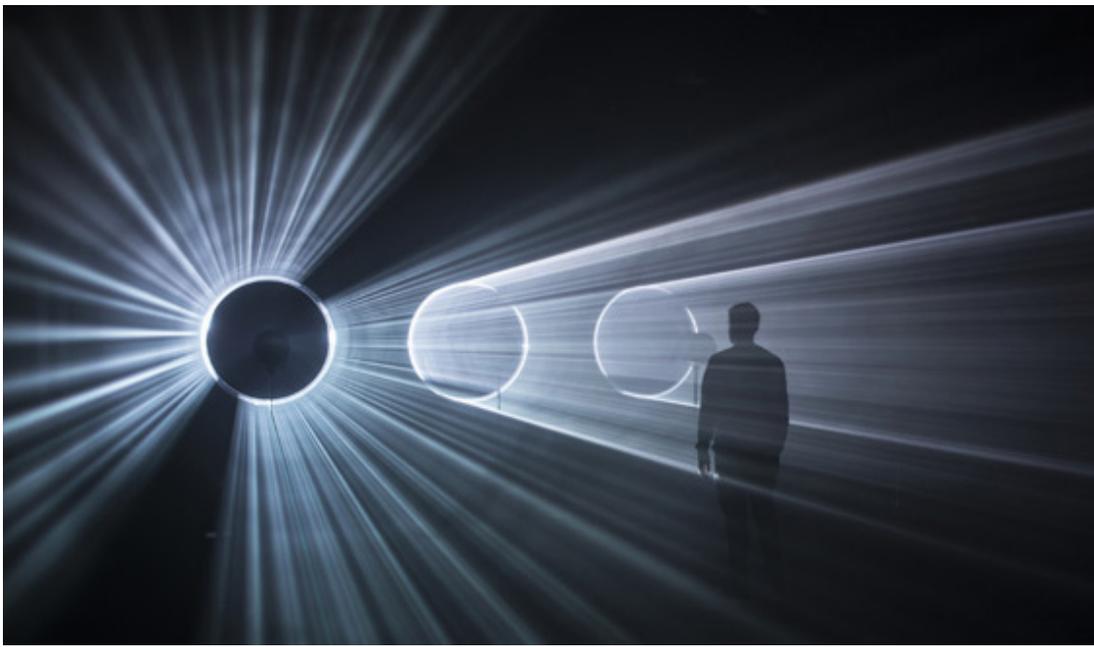
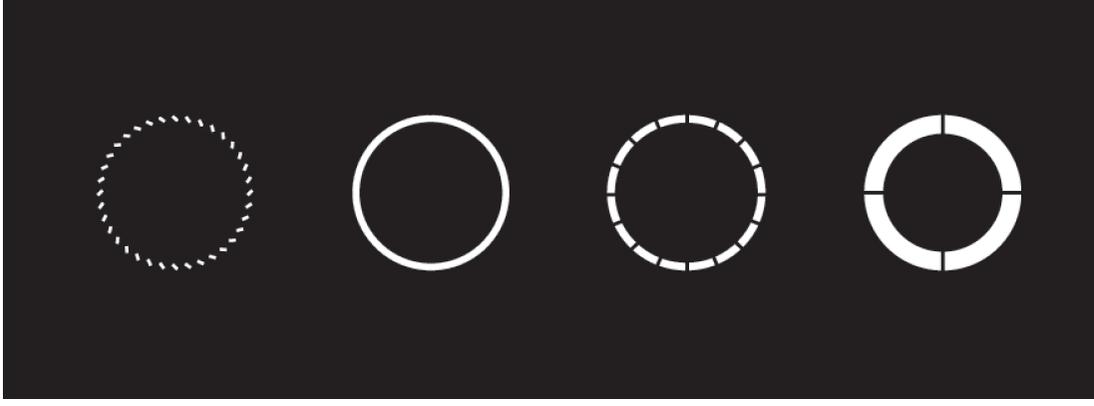


PRECISION mode

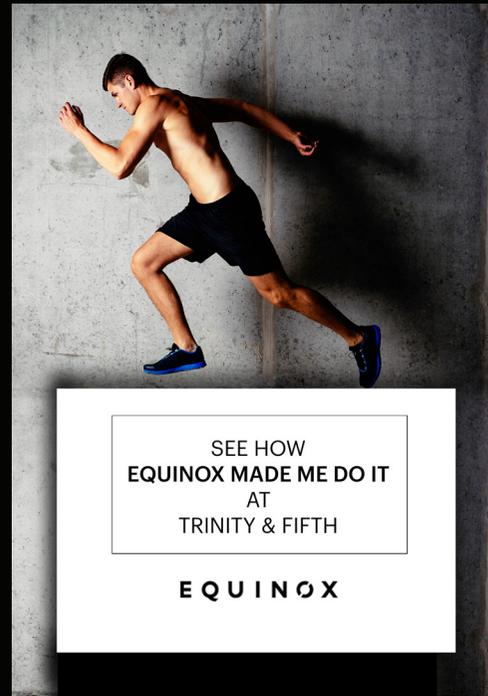
inVNT's design, housed within Smart Company's pavilion, took the form of an intimate 900-square-foot, in-the-round environment structured to support both the "Ride" and the "Tour" components of the activation.

Positioned in an arc surrounding the instructor's central cycle, the four "Ride" participants' bikes faced a 20-foot-wide by six-foot-high LCD screen that relayed real-time data as they experienced a 9-minute live demo of the class. This data enabled the cyclists to monitor their performances individually and in competition with their classmates. The "Tour" component allowed observers to engage with the live demo via an interactive presentation, guided by Equinox brand ambassadors, on iPads linked via Apple TV to LCD TVs encircling the space.





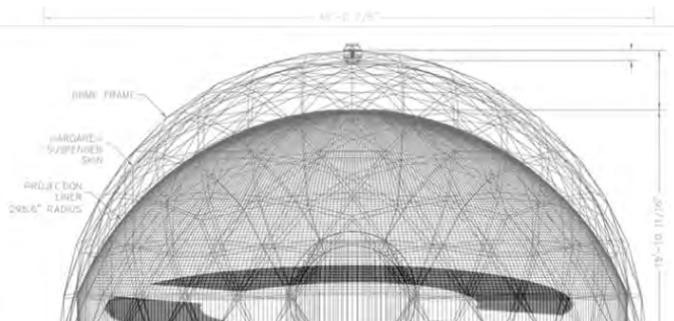
Initial sketches and renders as we began to conceive the environment for the event.



Key to #EQXPursuit is the sense of community created by competition, a concept beautifully reflected in inVNT's organic, cyclical design. Maintaining a tight time-line and budget, inVNT embraced the challenge of scalability—retaining core ideas, an innovative approach, and an impressive end-product—even as the parameters shifted.

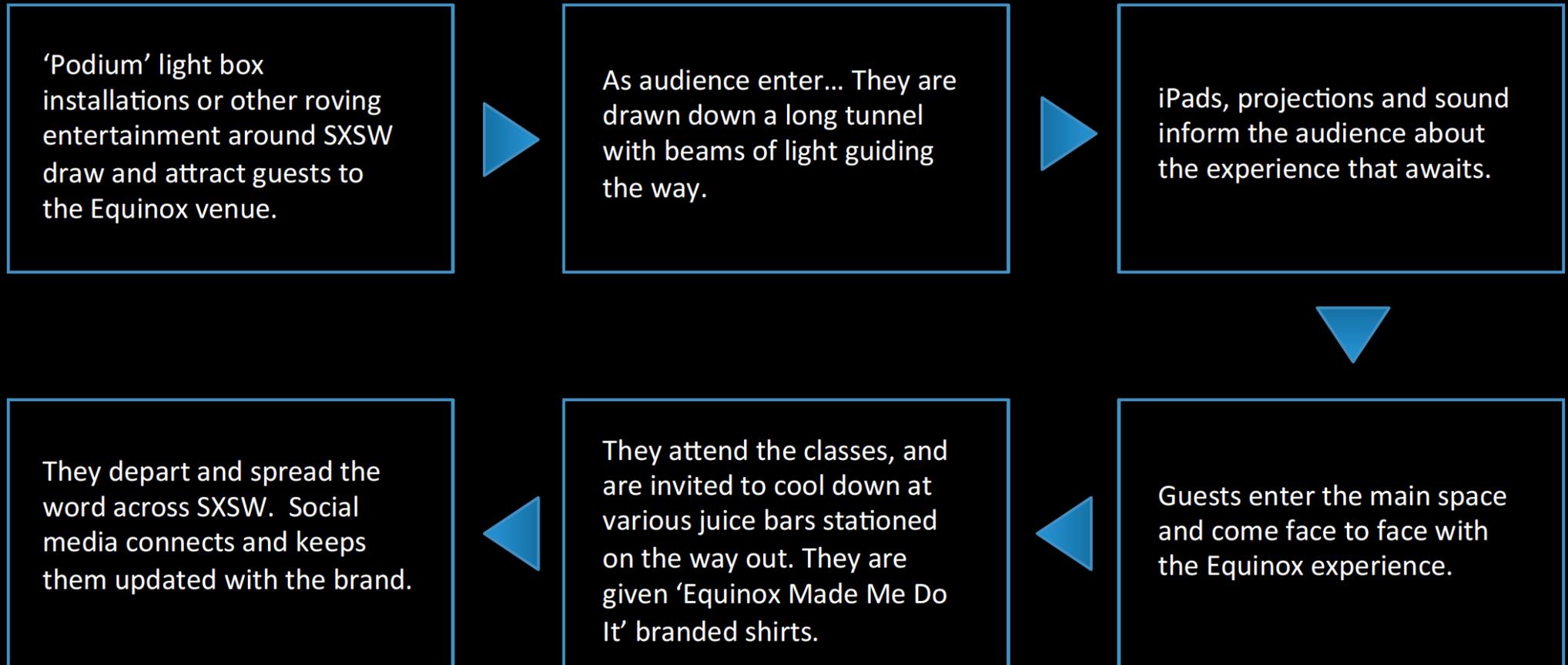
Working with Fast Company's designated vendors under extremely fluid circumstances, inVNT implemented an iconic, futuristic design that resonated with Equinox's core values—motivation, nutrition and technology— while seamlessly cohering with the fitness club's marketing materials and standing out in a busy festival environment.

An early concept included creating a futuristic dome, that would draw the audience in from afar, and set our experience out from all others.



Besides the physical environment, part of our wider strategy included mapping the audience journey and every touch point of how consumers would interact with the brand at SXSW.

Audience Journey:





WALK-IN LOOK



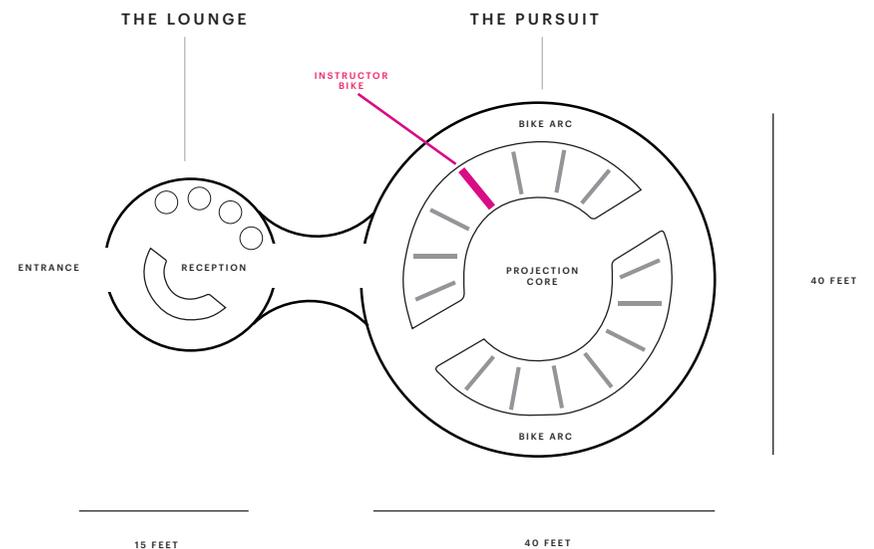
BUILD LOOK



BURN LOOK



INITIAL EXTERIOR ARTISTIC IMPRESSION & FLOOR PLAN



EQUINOX AT SXSW

RECEPTION / PARTY SPACE

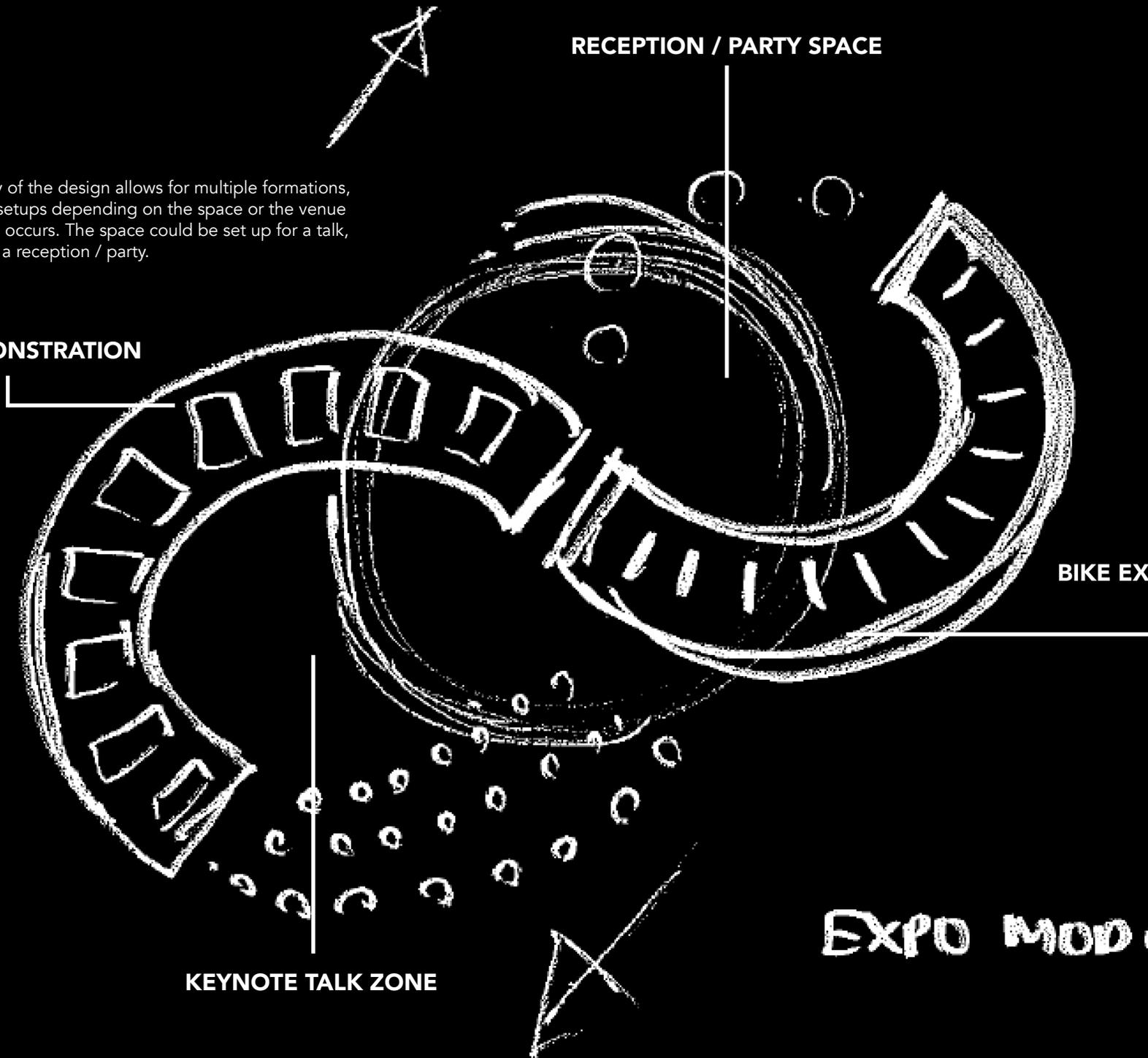
The versatility of the design allows for multiple formations, positions, or setups depending on the space or the venue the activation occurs. The space could be set up for a talk, an activity, or a reception / party.

BIKE DEMONSTRATION

BIKE EXHIBITION

KEYNOTE TALK ZONE

EXPO MODE



LEADER BOARD

MIRRORED ENVIRONMENT

SCREEN

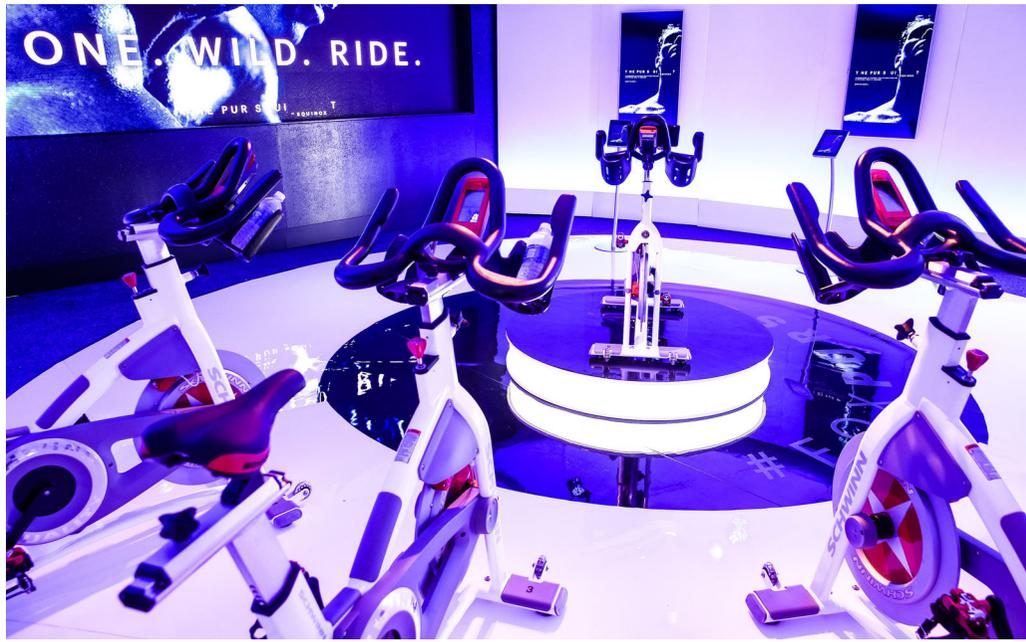


RAISED LED LIT PLATFORM

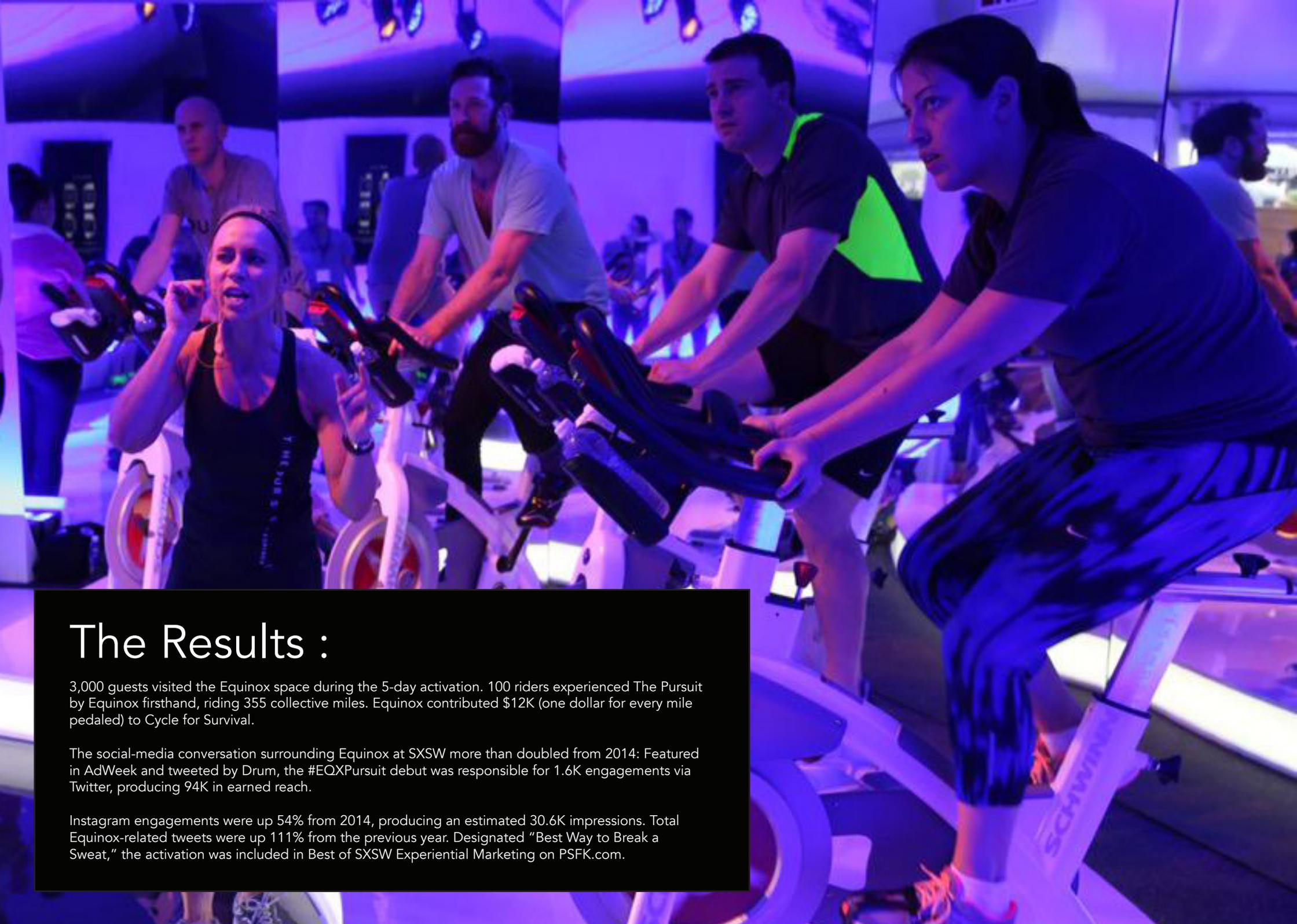
INSTRUCTOR STAGING AREA

VINYL CIRCULAR FLOORING

The final environment took a slightly different form, but consisted on many similar elements that allowed the space to be used as in activity mode, keynote speech mode, and exhibition mode.



The room set up for walk-in, a class in progress celebrities engage with the product.

A group of people are riding stationary bikes in a gym. The scene is lit with blue and purple light. In the foreground, a woman in a black tank top is riding a white Schwinn bike. Behind her, a man in a black and green shirt is also riding. In the background, other people are visible on bikes. The overall atmosphere is energetic and focused.

The Results :

3,000 guests visited the Equinox space during the 5-day activation. 100 riders experienced The Pursuit by Equinox firsthand, riding 355 collective miles. Equinox contributed \$12K (one dollar for every mile pedaled) to Cycle for Survival.

The social-media conversation surrounding Equinox at SXSW more than doubled from 2014: Featured in AdWeek and tweeted by Drum, the #EQXPursuit debut was responsible for 1.6K engagements via Twitter, producing 94K in earned reach.

Instagram engagements were up 54% from 2014, producing an estimated 30.6K impressions. Total Equinox-related tweets were up 111% from the previous year. Designated "Best Way to Break a Sweat," the activation was included in Best of SXSW Experiential Marketing on PSFK.com.

#EQXPURSUIT

About Lee Changzhi

Lee Changzhi is passionate about creating experiences that bring people together. Lee has a strong interest in telling stories through theatre, environmental, exhibitions and large-scale public events. He has a global perspective in leading the creative strategy process, and has helped organize events for some of the most dynamic brands in the world, with work experience in New York City, Sydney, London, Beijing and Singapore.

Corporate clients include Volkswagen, Huawei, BlackBerry, Nestle Nespresso, Coles Australia, Campbell's Soup Company, Caltex, PepsiCo, ABC Family, Microsoft and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games Ceremonies.

On top of that, he absolutely loves to design the occasional bespoke wedding and Christmas tree. Lee currently works as a creative director for inVNT, based in New York City, and enjoys nothing more than walking down Madison Avenue looking at the various window displays.

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