

Kate O’Neill

Tech Humanist, Author, and Experience Strategy Expert

Tech Humanism: How Data and Technology Shape the Future of Meaningful Human Experiences. With so much emphasis in business on artificial intelligence, automation of various kinds, and digital transformation, the future of human work — and even humanity itself — can feel uncertain. And while we often talk about user experience, customer experience, patient experience, and so on, we rarely consider what a truly integrated human experience might look and feel like. But “Tech Humanist” Kate O’Neill presents the case for why the future of humanity is in creating more meaningful, dimensional, and integrated experiences, and how emerging technologies like chatbots, wearables, IoT devices, and more can be included in this kind of human-centric design. While weaving in examples from a range of industries, applications, and even pop culture, Kate offers an inspiring and useful framework for designers, strategists, or anyone creating experiences for humans.

The Future of Trust. With conflicting sources of “truth” in the news, on social media, among politicians, and in the public, the climate crisis, the political process, accelerating changes in technology, and more, what is the future of trust? In an era characterized by disagreement over basic facts, where algorithmically-optimized social media platforms show us the truths we most want to see, the roles of truth and trust in ethics, in systems design, and in human experience strategy are crucial for us to understand.

And what does it mean to bring machines into this dynamic? To cross-pollinate these very human concerns with data, with algorithms, with machine learning? For algorithms optimized for platform-specific engagement and retention to shape our exposure to news and opinions? How do changing notions of privacy play into this, and what do people need to know to prepare? Moreover, how do businesses and organizations need to adapt to make sure their products and services resonate in this new trust landscape?

In this mind-expanding keynote, Kate O’Neill puts it all into context as she surveys emerging technology and cultural trends and demonstrates how the technologies we use impact the future of human experience as a whole. Kate makes the humanity-affirming case for the importance of meaning and meaningful experiences as guiding principles within innovation and business strategy, and shows corporate and cultural leaders how to use these clarifying insights to articulate the kind of organizational focus that can help align priorities and resources so they can adapt with confidence and create more meaningful and trustworthy human experiences at scale.

Pixels and Place: Digital Strategy, UX, and Place-Making. There is no “online” and “offline” anymore. Whether you’re offering a product for purchase, a travel destination, a healthcare service, an education, or just about anything else, what you’re really offering is an experience — and your customers increasingly expect these experiences to be integrated, contextually relevant, and meaningful. In Kate O’Neill’s 2016 book *Pixels and Place: Connecting Human Experience Across Physical and Digital Spaces*, she describes an approach to serving people relevant digital interactions while meeting them in the context of their physical surroundings — for more memorable, more meaningful, and more integrated digital and physical experiences. In this talk, she applies that approach to the needs of your audience.

Depending on the audience, the content may focus more on brands as placemakers or on digital user experience, exploring digital placemaking and strategy: the meaning of place, and how digital “place” creates context for behavior, reactions, and experience and what marketers and designers can do to harness that. Kate will cover real-world, current examples from a variety of industries and review action-ready ideas for implementing integrated experiences.

Human-Centric Digital Transformation: Strategy Articulation. Intended to help companies, organizations, cities, museums, and entities of all kinds solve strategic problems arising from integrating data and emerging technology into their business model, operations, and experience strategy, and to do so by aligning the data model and technology deployment in these areas around human experiences meaningfully, respectfully, and profitably.

Business can’t ignore the need for digitization, and humanity can’t ignore the need for purpose and meaning. The best and ultimately most successful approach to digital transformation strategy is one that starts with strategic purpose, uses ongoing data and results to improve, and achieves sustainable business success. What’s more, the benefits go beyond a sense of future-readiness. It’s now-readiness. This work aligns the entire organization, offers efficiencies, clarifies priorities, uncovers inconsistencies that hold back growth, simplifies decision-making, and puts resources where they matter most. It’s the surest way to a better data-guided, future-ready company.

A Tech Humanist Look at the Future of Work. From AI-enabled recruitment systems to virtual presence robots, even the workplace of the present can seem a little strange. But what do emerging and exponential technologies mean for the future of human jobs? It no longer sounds alarmist to say that at least some parts of our jobs are probably going to be replaced by automation or by cognitive computing. Depending on which forecast you consult, as many as half of all job categories risk displacement, if not complete replacement, by machines in the years to come. There will certainly be impacts on the economy, on production, on efficiencies of scale, and on innovation. But beyond the economic impacts, how will this shift our human understanding of meaningful work, of accomplishment, of achievement? And how can companies prepare for workplaces that increasingly blend human and machine contributions? This thought-provoking and ultimately inspiring talk from Kate O'Neill, author of Tech Humanist, offers clarity, encouragement, and a thoughtful approach for business leaders to adapt to the big changes ahead while grounding the discussion in the timeless fundamentals of humanity.

Automation, Integration, AI, and the Future of Meaningful Human Experience. Every day our physical surroundings and our digital interactions converge more and more, through data analytics, connected devices and the Internet of Things, wearable technology, geo-tagged and geo-targeted social media, surveillance, sensors and beacons, and so on. In very real ways, our human experiences create a targeted feedback loop, defining our opportunities, our relationships, our knowledge, and, ultimately, our selves. The most meaningful strategy, then, means thinking beyond the customer context to a holistic human experience that blends online and offline interactions, and builds lifetime value through relevant and respectful use of data. In this compelling keynote address, leading strategic thinker Kate O'Neill explores the relationship between meaning, intention, data tracking, and human experience, with practical insights on how businesses can harness data and technology to create innovative experiences that form the basis of more meaningful and profitable relationships with customers.

Meaningful Marketing: Data Meets Empathy, Context Meets Relevance. Meaningful marketing is customer-centric. It puts emphasis on marketing as the center of knowledge about the customer within the organization. It's empathy-driven but data-validated. It's iterative. It emphasizes metaphor and narrative as a means of achieving resonance with customers. It focuses on long-term value creation and profitability rather than short-term sales and gimmicky promotions. In this talk, experience strategy expert, Kate O'Neill, provides audiences with actionable takeaways to create a more meaningful marketing strategy.

Meaningful Business Growth: Strategic, Purposeful, Aligned Through Brand and Cultural. Not all growth is meaningful. When you pay for customer growth, only to watch it trickle away, it's more than a waste of money. It's a waste of customer goodwill, a wasted opportunity to learn something about your customers. When you instead create relationships with customers based on an understanding of their motivations and what compels them, when you use language that resonates with them, when they believe you're solving their problems, and when you use the interactions to observe patterns and learn: you have growth that adds value. Tech Humanist, Kate O'Neill, will help you get there.