GIF DANCE PARTY

INSTALLATION

expectations + beyond

The music might be different, the drinks may taste better, the outfits might be sexier, but the formula for a successful party night out with friends or work colleagues had remained somewhat unaltered over the years. Yes, we added projectors, VJs, killer bass-lines, photo booths, and even a charismatic attendant in the men's restroom who will ensure no man leaves without fresh breath and a fully zipped fly. But still, promoters and event planners are challenged to exceed the expectations of partygoers – to go above and beyond – and deliver an experience that is truly unique and imaginative.

a party to remember

Over a six-month period, a team of artists, designers, and programmers worked together to create an experimental party experience that is surely not to be forgotten – regardless of the severity of the hangover. We wanted this experience to be fun, engaging, and a departure from the conventions that have long limited the interactions between partygoers and their environment. We embrace the playful and wild energy of the people in party mode. We digitize this energy. Then we project it, loop it, arrange it, reverse it, clone it, wiggle it, thrust it, etc. There is nothing we can't do with it. It vanishes as fast as it appeared. And while this is being beamed at a grand scale in front of the crowd, we are creating a party experience weird enough that it is able to plant itself deep within the cerebral cortex – at a depth that no amount of alcohol can scramble.

smiles

While we like the idea of creating an experience that lives on in the mind of the partygoers well after the final call, our motivation for creating this installation was simple – smiles. We believe smiles are the overlooked metric for evaluating a successful party. More smiles, better party. In an idealistic future, we suspect that entry for events will be free, and payment will be made thereafter for each of your smiles. Smiles are the currency of the party future. Our installation is nothing more than a bit of technology optimized to generate as many smiles per second (SPS) as possible. If we could charge per smile, we would be rich.

SMILE:20%

SMILE:100%

SMILE:52%

smiles
vs
class

Smiles are, for some unexplainable reason, at odds with class. There is a chance you want a 007-type event. Champaign. Hors-d'oeuvre. Suits. Exquisite dresses. And dammit, if anybody smiles, it better be rhetorical or ironic. We can't have a bunch of yahoos making a joke of your party. As you may suspect, given the way we amplify interactivity, play, and smiles, our installation is likely not suitable for the Bond crowd or even these suspiciously serious Techno crowds that are prominent in parts of Europe and NYC. While Bond is most definitely cool, he isn't the top pick for a night out with the mates. So in the interests of not wasting your time – if you feel smiles or playfulness may, in some way, compromise the status of your event, you can feel free to stop reading now.

origin

GIF DANCE PARTY stems from a viral website created by Fuzzy Wobble back in 2012. The website enabled visitors to easily curate and arrange a digital dance party using many iconic and loved characters, who are brought to life in the form of animated GIFs. The website has reached millions of people worldwide and continues to make the rounds today, three years after release. If you haven't seen or tried the website, now would be the time. gifdanceparty.giphy.com

Given the widespread appeal of the website, it was clear this project needed to move beyond cyberspace. GIF DANCE PARTY INSTALLATION blasts this concept into a new dimension – the IRL. With the use of projectors, 3D cameras, and many many many lines of code, we are now able to digitize partygoers in the form of dance GIFs. These dance GIFs become part of a wild and dynamic visual spectacle, projected for all to see, offering a captivating alternative to conventional VJ visuals, because for the first time, the partygoers become an integral part of the multimedia performance. Together, the GIF DANCE PARTY VJ and partygoers will work together to curate and arrange the content. Two dance floors now exist in parallel. The tangible everyday dance floor, and the otherworldly digital GIF DANCE PARTY dance floor. While they may be dancing to the same beat, these dance floors are in different dimensions.

wtf is it

digitize

We have created a discrete capture booth using a 3D camera where partygoers can quickly record dance moves alone or with a group of friends. One of our team members is at the capture booth ensuring partygoers have a great experience both in the IRL and the digital. Partygoers are encouraged to get groovy and weird. As moves are captured, the GIFs are played back on a small display allowing the dancers to easily review their creation. Because of the dynamic nature of both GIFs and dancing, the capture booth becomes a wild area. This ain't no photo booth. Expect karate kicks, thrashing, 360's, and pelvic thrusting. Immediately after a GIF is created, it is sent over our local network to our GIF DANCE PARTY VJ who is perpetually receiving content and quickly adding it to the digital dance floor.

The key responsibility of the VJ is to take what could have been a somewhat uninspiring dance move and edit it into brilliance, which has proven to be easier than expected. A sluggish participant who is simply trying to find a place to rest their drink while the capture booth records, can quickly be edited by the VJ into a crowd favorite – the drink scramble. The VJ has an unthinkable arsenal of stock content and editing tools. Anything he can imagine, can come to life in seconds.

video jockey

After partygoers record their solo or group moves, they engage in a mad dash to the projection screen. *How will I be edited? What iconic character will I be dancing with? How will I be looped? How big will I be?* When they see themselves join the digital dance party, projected for all to see, this is the magical moment. The jaws drop, the smiles per second are maximized, and the smartphones often come out to document this unthinkable way they were able to engage with the party environment.

max SPS
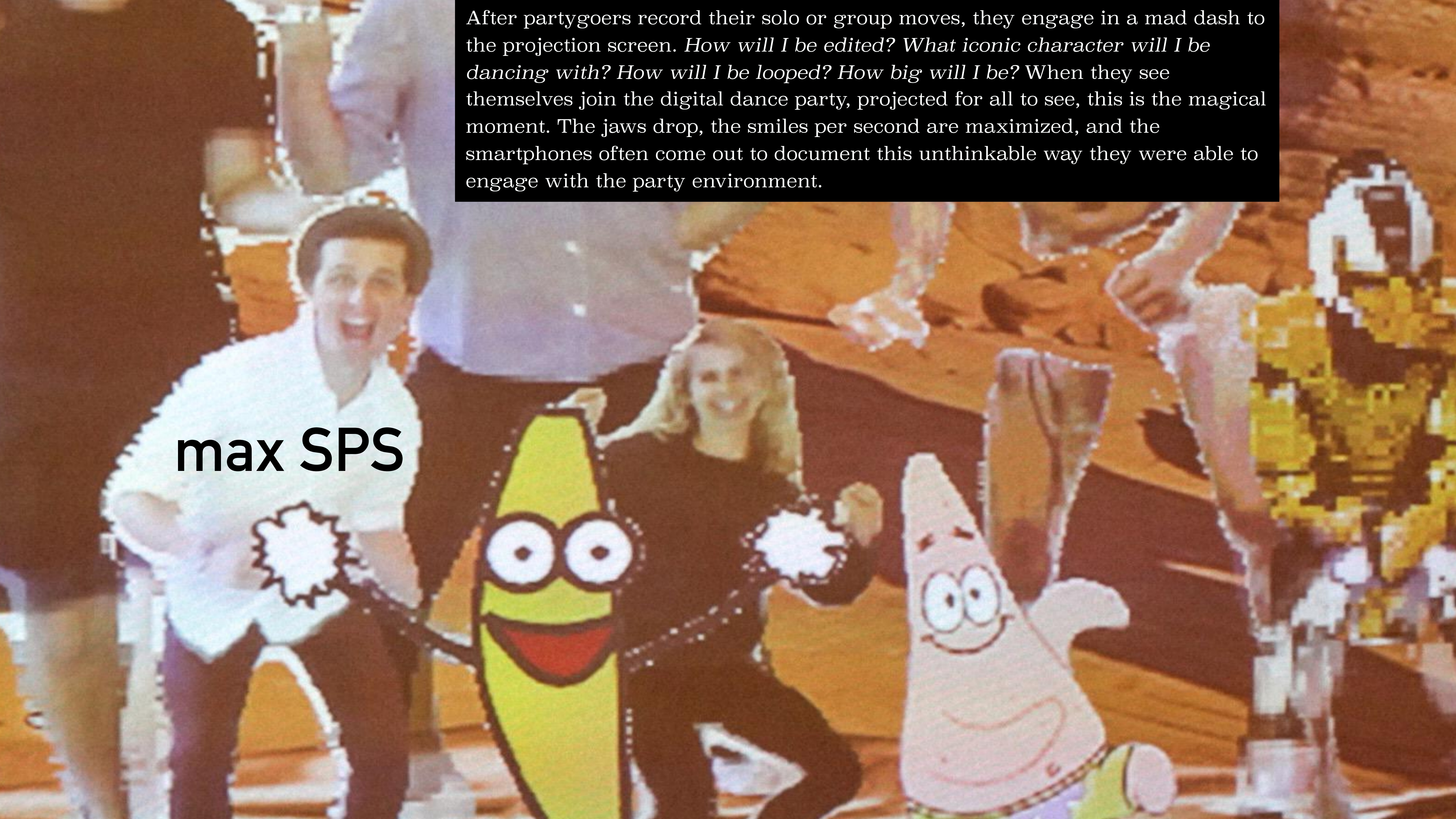
Throughout the night a flux of partygoers passes through the capture booth, and each new GIF contributes to the dynamism of the digital dance floor. At times the dance floor may become too crowded and the VJ will swiftly clear the floor to introduce a new background from which an entire new visual experience will develop. The heads-down behavior of the GIF DANCE PARTY VJ paired with the selfie-lust habits of the modern day partygoer ensure the visuals are anything but dull.

dynamism

app for that

In the interest of not neglecting partygoers too shy to be immortalized as a dance GIF, they also have the opportunity to participate through their smartphones. By visiting a URL unique to that party, they can access our custom mobile web app from which they can take control of a projected dance GIF. Partygoers then work in collaboration with the GIF DANCE PARTY VJ to curate and arrange the digital dance floor. While this feature may be attractive for some party atmospheres, we sympathize with those who prefer not to see another smartphone extended from the crowd. So, depending on the event, we may be running the installation with the mobile features disabled in the interest of keeping people in the moment.

versatile

This installation was released mid-2015, and while we have done enough events to know we are onto something, we continue to experiment with new ways of engaging the crowd and generating more smiles. As a team of coders, we have a scalable and versatile offering. The experience described here is just the foundation for what is possible. We are open to creating a tailored user experience that will best suit your event or brand.

brandy

GDPI excels in a party environment, specifically when we have more lumens than partygoers. Many eyes land on our projection, and they tend to stay fixated longer than expected. The dynamic nature of the content – rapidly changing to introduce new backgrounds and dancers – creates a captivating digital landscape that connects with the audience in a phenomenal way. As a result we have many requests to introduce branding into the experience. This can easily be done through custom backgrounds, GIFs, or through the header marquee where hashtags commonly appear. In short, branding integration has proven to be extremely straightforward and effective with this experience.
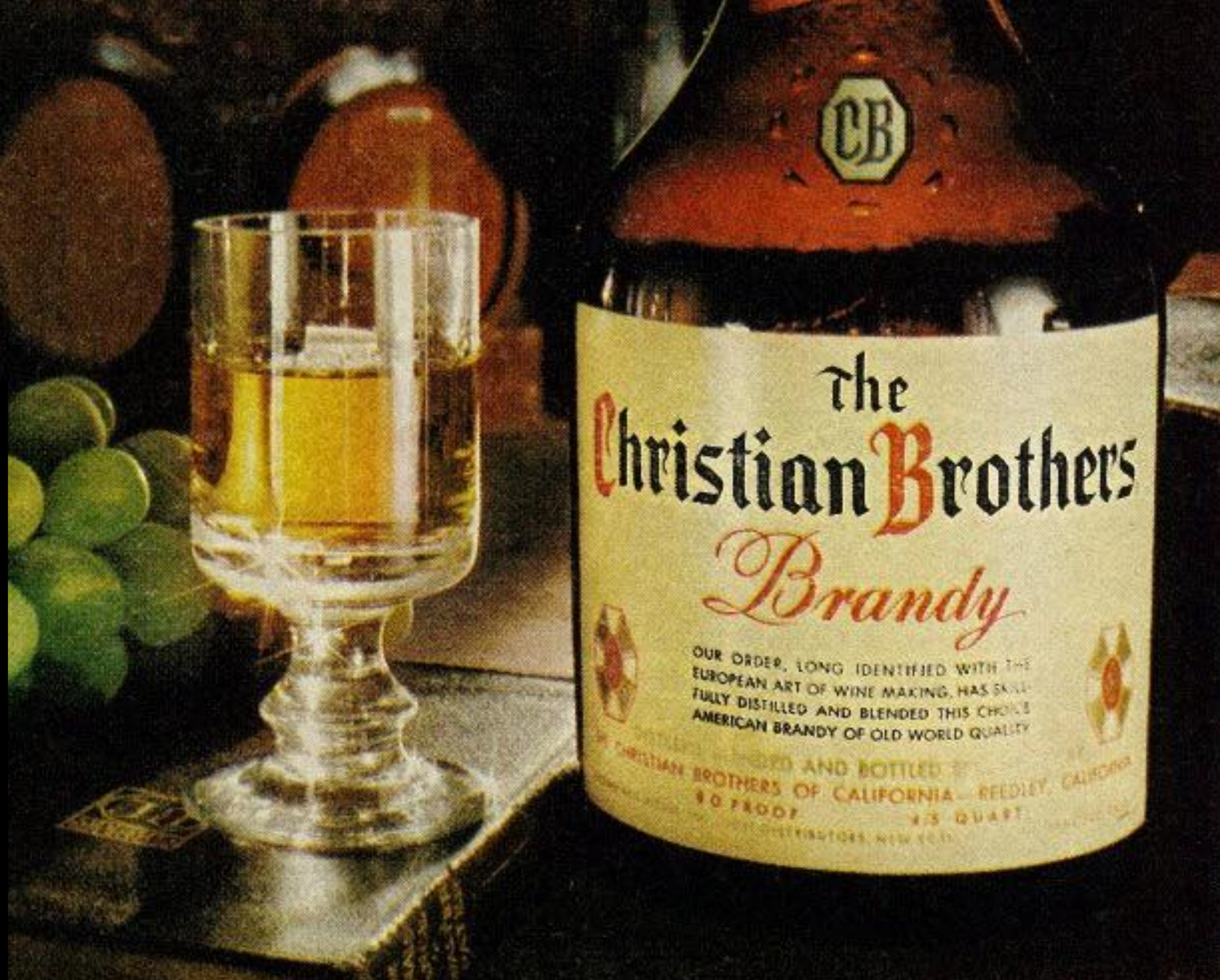
sharing

Sharing has additionally become a frequent request. While partygoers do not at all hesitate to pull out their smartphones to record the projection, we are trying to imagine more inventive sharing opportunities. One approach is to export all the dance GIFs taken by partygoers throughout the night and package them into a website that lives online thereafter the party. This online experience will be similar to the original GIF DANCE PARTY website, but will, in addition, include all the dance GIF created by partygoers throughout the night. Click here to see an example. After the event, go to the website, create a party, and easily share it online. The stamina of these digital dancers will ensure this is a party that never dies.

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