

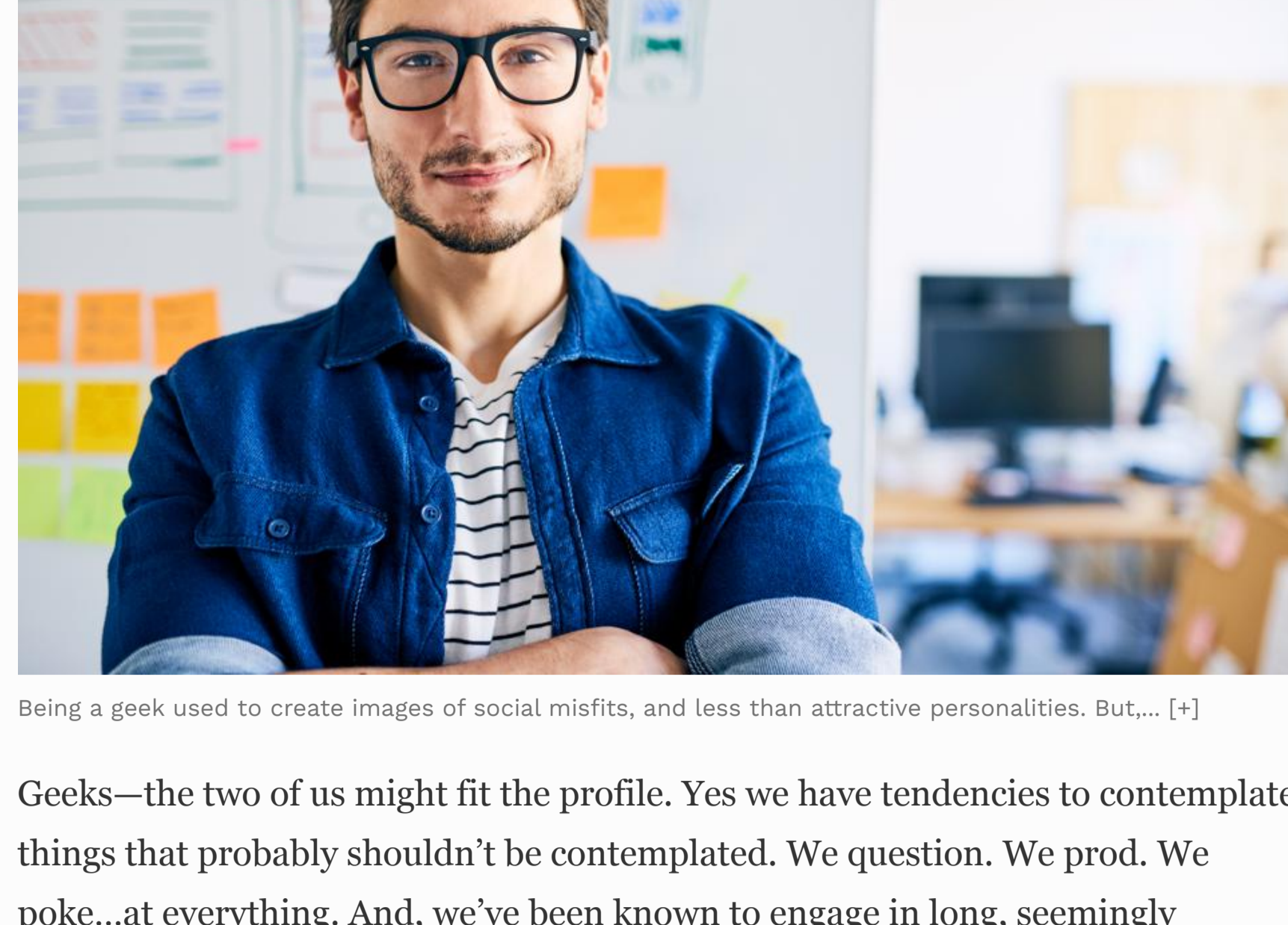
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# Being A Geek: What It Really Means About You And 5 Ways To Leverage It

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Apr 20, 2017, 05:35pm EDT



Being a geek used to create images of social misfits, and less than attractive personalities. But... [+]

Geeks—the two of us might fit the profile. Yes we have tendencies to contemplate things that probably shouldn't be contemplated. We question. We probe. We poke...at everything. And, we've been known to engage in long, seemingly meaningless conversations about random things like: "Is the love of curry a genetic disposition or a socially experiential acquisition?" Or, what is the real meaning of the word "of?" That's a valid question, right? Or, is it just geeky?

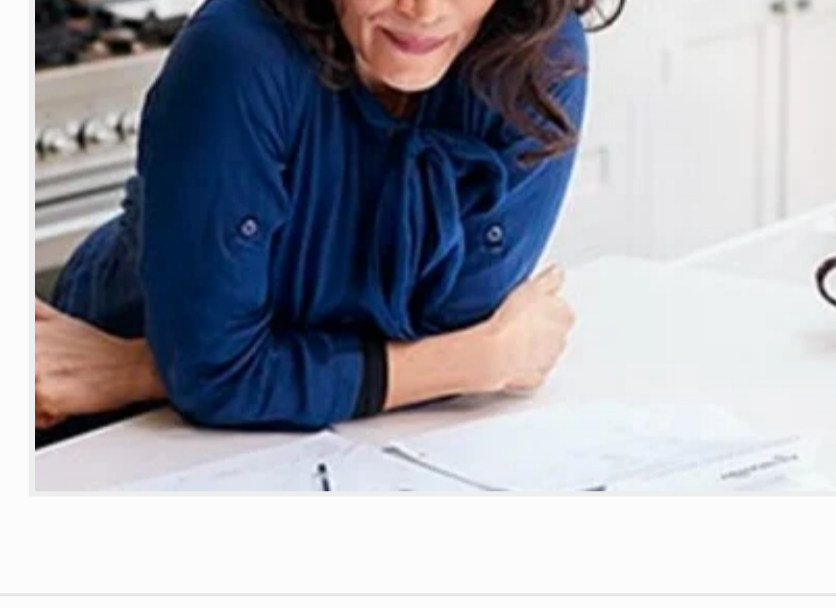
Being geeky, according to [research](#) by Imgur, is actually cool in today's world—especially among Millennials. In fact, 60% of the 83 million Millennials consider themselves geeks compared to just 38% of GenXers and Boomers. And, the study also shows that geeks are the trendsetters and influencers (84% of geeks say people look to them for advice while only 60% of non-geeks say they get asked for advice).

This is, of course, welcome news for all of us who happen to randomly know Peter Parker's red and white (yes, we're referring to the fictional character who turns into Spiderman). But, more than that, it's also welcome news for all of us who geek-out about our own work—passionately probing to innovate, improve, dissect, and lead others to the discovery of their best selves.

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We're geeks about why people and companies do the things they do. We want to understand the reasons Richard Branson is so admired as a leader, the reason Stance socks seemingly transformed men's attire by shining a spotlight on our ankles, and the reason Raj (a guy we met at the airport traveling from Malasia to Los Angeles for business) is feverishly working on a new suitcase prototype that he claims will change everything we know about travel.

The truth is, all of us are geeks on some level, about something. However, we've found that most of us don't focus our inner geek on utilizing some of the most obvious, and powerful, paths to turn ideas into game-changing success. Here are five critical areas you should explore if you want to turn your geeky ideas into results.

**1. The Mentor:** Yes, we can talk about leaders like Gates, Zuckerberg, and Branson. We can hold them all in a mentor-ish spotlight to learn all about their accomplishments. But, when it comes to finding a true mentor, it's important to personally know the individual well enough that they can teach you both the things they did right, and the things they did wrong. "I've failed more than anyone I know," digital innovator [Jay Samit](#) told us in a recent interview. "There's great value in failure." Find a mentor that can show you both what you should do, and what you should stop doing.

**2. The Hurdle:** Finding new ways to solve old problems is not a new idea. But, taking ownership of the problem and the outcome might be. Bestselling author and media dynamo, [Nely Galan](#) recently told us, "Ownership is a mindset, and it's often the biggest hurdle we all need to overcome. Stop thinking that Prince Charming (a person, a group, or a company) is going to swoop in and save the day. The problem is your opportunity. You are the person to solve it." When obstacles exist, it's important to focus your inner geek on the opportunity that's being presented to you

**3. The Silo:** Day in and day out you go to the office and probably sit next to the same people each day. When you have ideas, you probably share them with the same people each day. But research shows that 72% of award winning work stems from people talking to, and sharing ideas with, their outer circle—the people you don't talk to every day. Our friend, author [Tim Sanders](#) recently told us, "Sales has always been the job of salespeople. But, when organizations eliminate the silos, and include everyone in the company who has a stake in the sale, they can achieve a 70% close ratio." Think about the other people who have a stake in your idea. Get out of your silo and talk to your outer circle.

**4. The Beach:** Rest and relaxation is important to our well-being. But, there's more to vacation than just dipping your toes in the water. CEO and Founder of [Sea Side Reservations](#), Steve Schwab, recently told us, "Routines can make us run on autopilot. Going somewhere new, and seeing different things, and the different ways people do things leads to unbelievable breakthroughs, sometimes from the most unexpected places." He's right. Whether you travel across the country or across town, getting out of your routine and daily environment can inspire fresh thinking and analysis for your inner geek to process.

**5. The Child:** Let's face it, a lot of the geek stereotype focuses on science fiction and video games from our childhood. And, although there's probably not a lot we can learn from a Wookiee, organizational thought leaders like Brenda Hardesty and Sue Baechler are combining the science of game-based learning with strategy implementation to deliver impressive business outcomes for players of their game aptly called the *All In* board game. "Game research shows that players retain 75% of what they learn, and 45% after six weeks," said the creators. "That's a stark difference from traditional training methods—where participants only retain 4%." When chasing results, allow you inner child to escape—where your projects are filled with wonder, competitiveness, and fun.

Being a geek used to draw up images of social misfits, awkward conversations, and less than attractive personalities. But, that's not the case anymore, as geeks have become the global trendsetters and influencers. It's a welcome message, long-awaited, for many of us. ...and it's a club we're not ashamed to belong to—because if you focus your inner-geek on the areas above, success isn't too far behind.

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David Sturt and Todd Nordstrom

We are researchers, consultants and authors inside the O.G. Tanner Institute, and we write about people who make a difference—what they think about, what they do, and... [Read More](#)

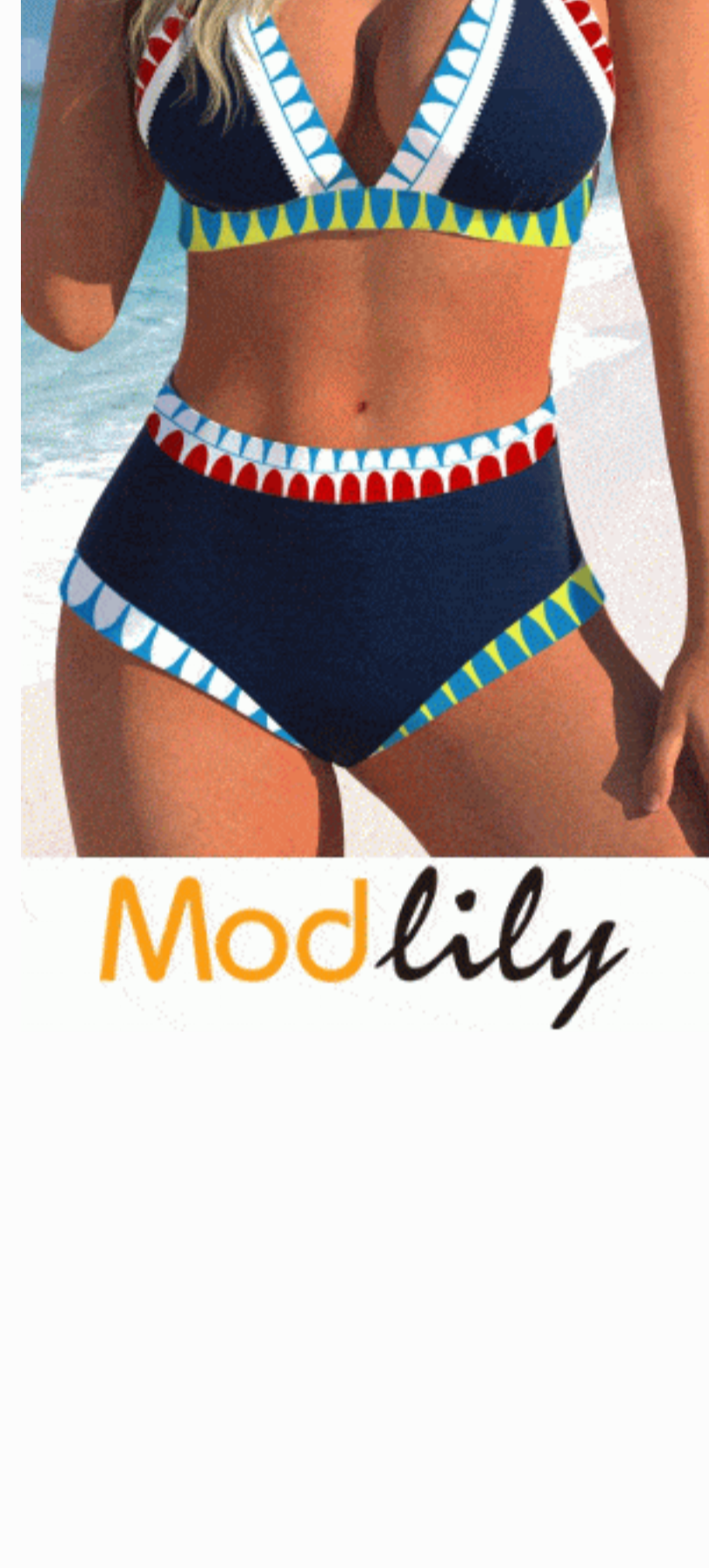
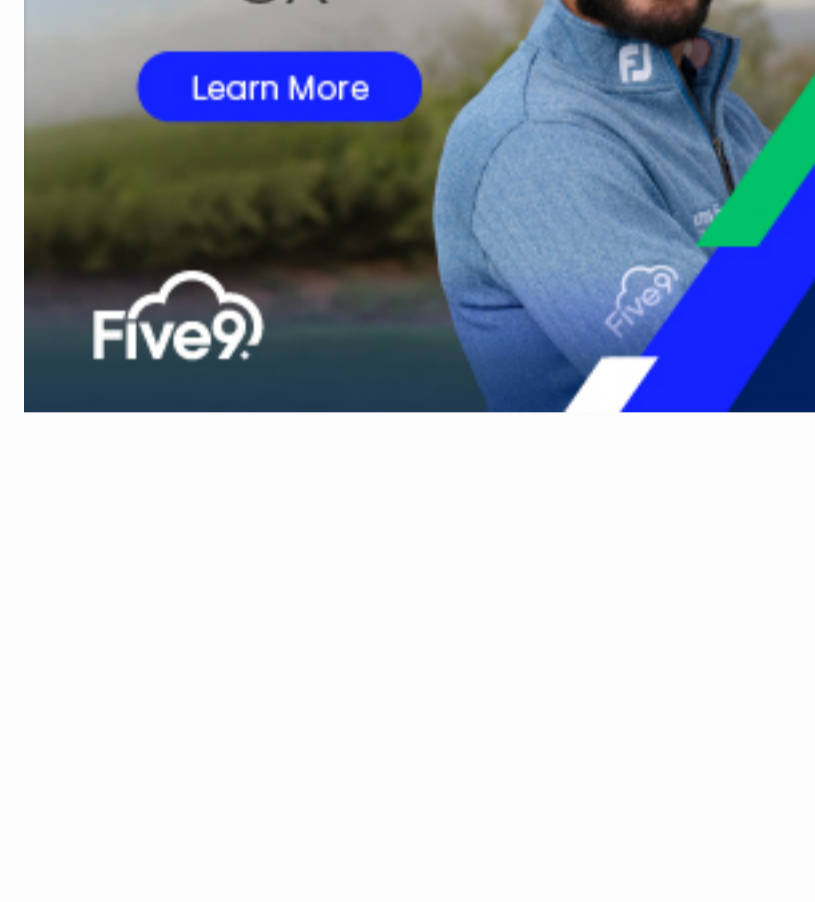
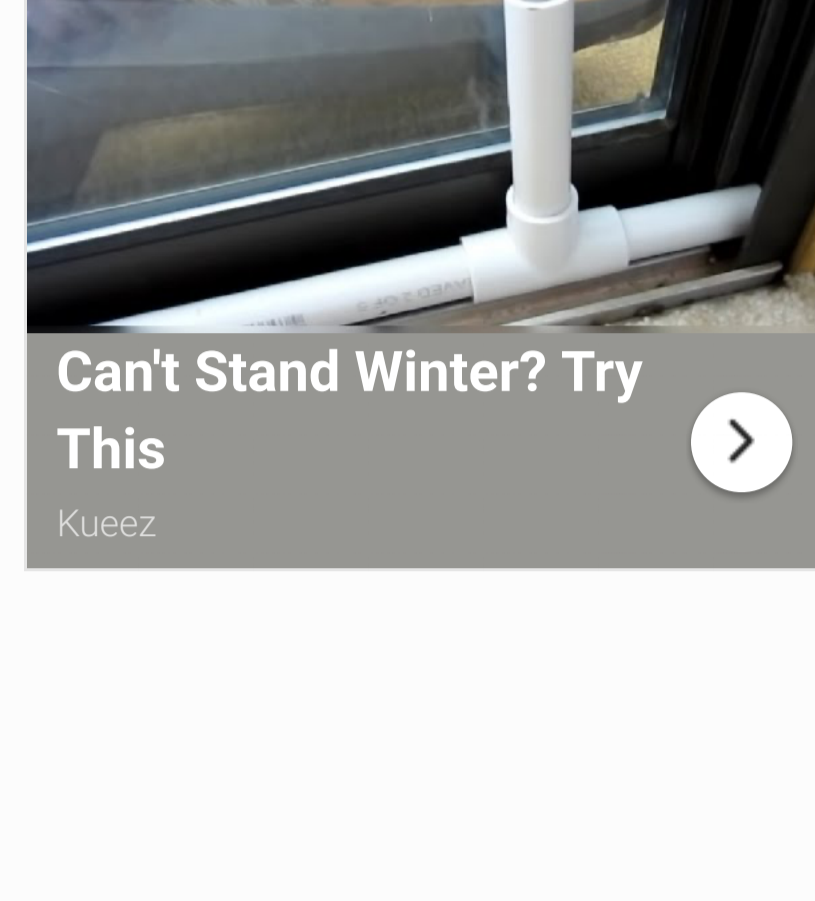
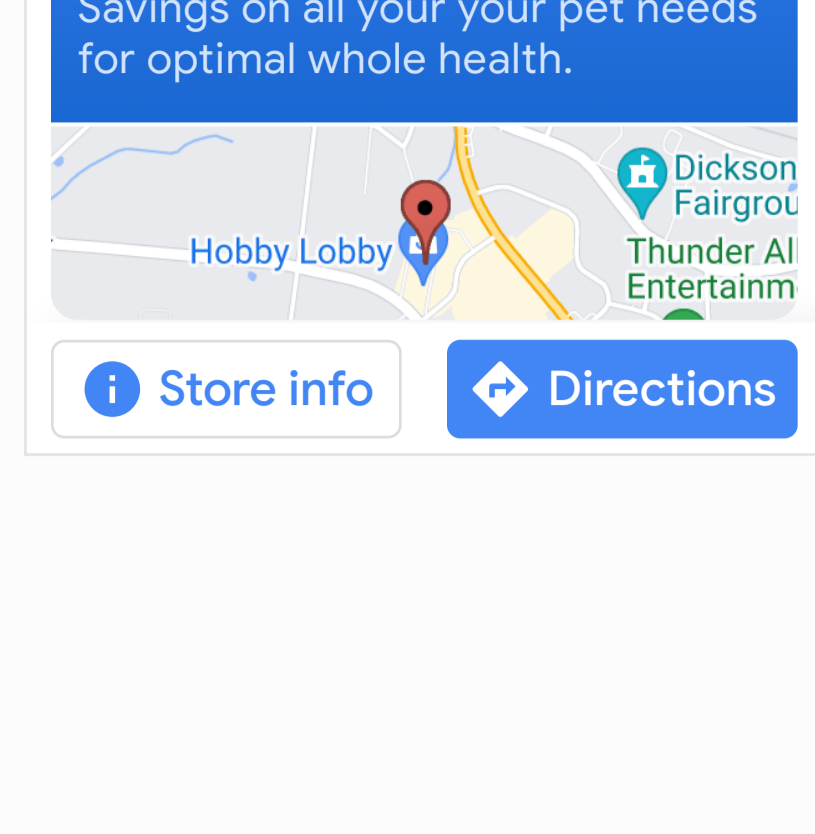
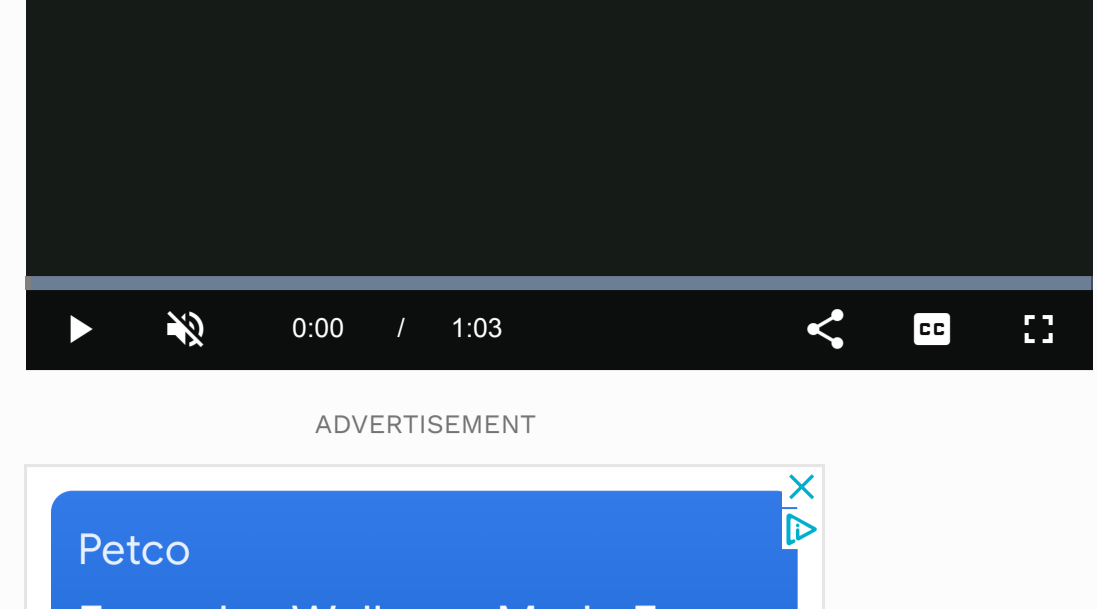
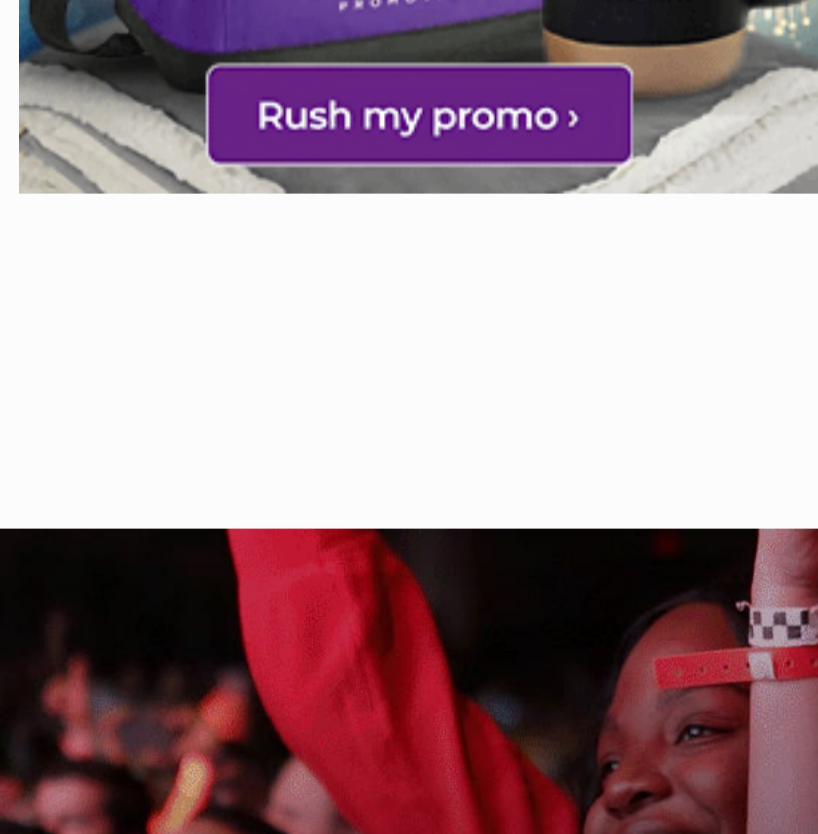
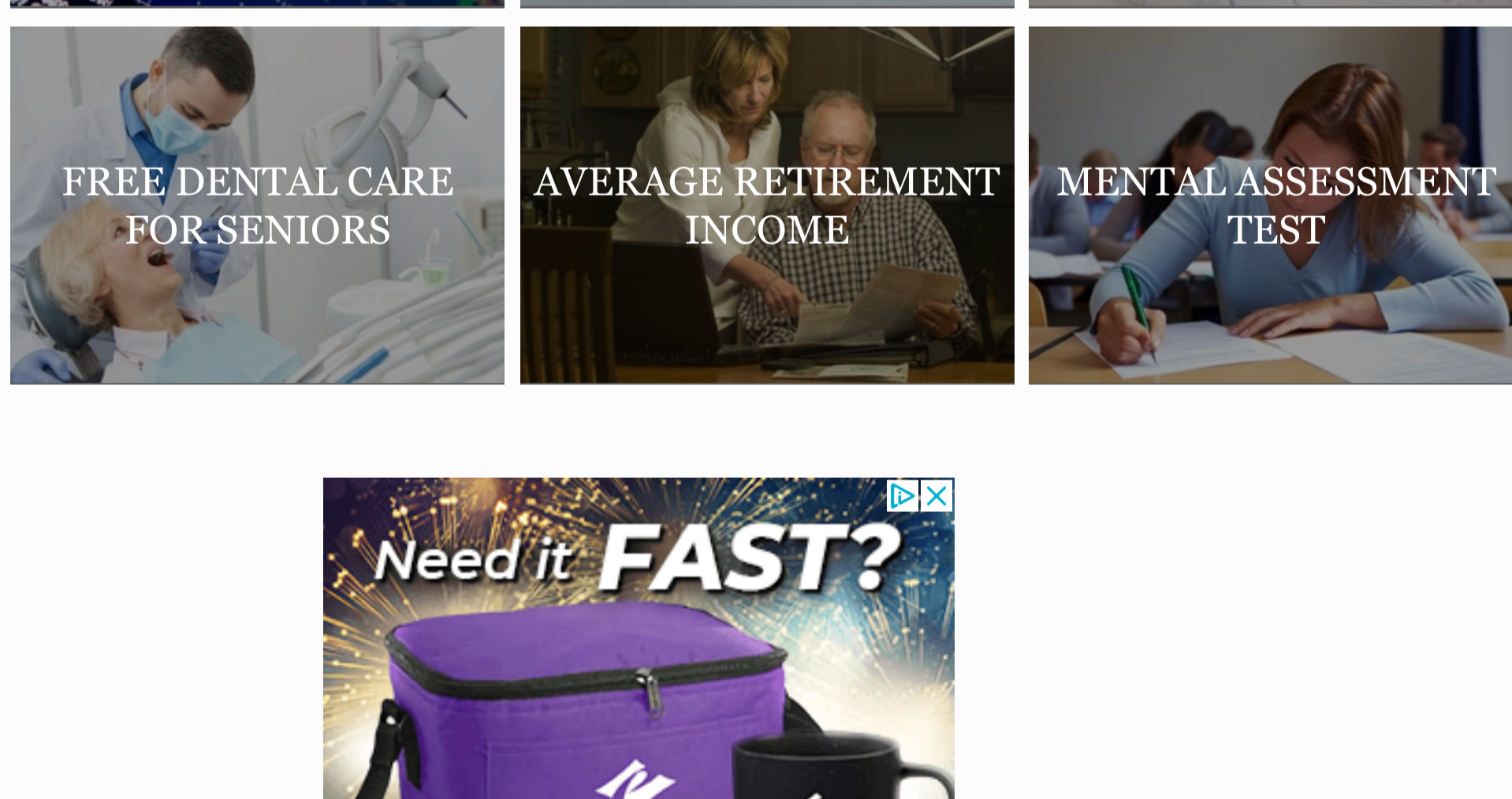
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