



Generational marketing

The ed marketers' perspective



A diamond is forever, but a generation isn't. A generation is only as young as its youngest member (or oldest, depending on how you look at it). This can make them hard to market to - particularly when selling education.

And it all comes down to your strategy and knowledge of each generation's characteristics, traits, preferences, and pet peeves.

We get our lead's attention with content marketing and nurture them through cycles of emails, hoping that they'll bite and commit to our product. Trying to reach younger users and older users is hard enough. Trying to target both in different parts of their life stages is like playing the game "Catch 22."



Marketing to Gen X

As parents to Millennials, and children of the infamous Baby Boomers, Gen X is sandwiched between the two - often leaving them overlooked. They're often referred to as "the forgotten generation", being the last to be born in an analog world. But - they possess something the rest of us don't, and that is spending power.

How do they use technology?

They're more technologically inclined than you might think.

- 91% use the internet
- 76% of Generation X use social media
- 74% of Gen X say that social media is an essential part of their life
- 46% of Gen X research local businesses online every day

What are their characteristics?

Gen X is fiercely independent, and marketers must acknowledge it.

1. They value their independence
2. They're highly resourceful
3. They appreciate their time & space
4. They're flexible - and adaptable
5. They're tech-savvy, not tech-dependent
6. They're wise spenders

How can we market to them, effectively?

This generation tells it like it is. They respond best to honest and clear messaging, clear paths to purchasing, email marketing campaigns, customer service, offers, and social media.

1. Don't neglect traditional advertising strategies, but include them in your digital campaigns too
2. Utilize reviews at every stage of your funnel
3. Leverage nostalgia, and appeal to their sentimentality - particularly as the parents paying for your student's education
4. Remember the value of a coupon. This generation of wise spenders loves a freebie
5. Ditch the hardcore sales tactics - it just won't work

Marketing to Millennials

Don't overlook the long-term spending potential of this generation. Millennials have come to define digital technology. They are the first generation in history that have grown up totally immersed in a world of digital technology, which has shaped their identities and created lasting political, social, cultural, and spending attitudes.



How do they use technology?

Even the oldest Millennials have had internet access since high school, so it's no surprise that growing up plugged in has drastically affected how Millennials view the world and themselves.

- 61% use social to communicate with family, friends, and acquaintances
- 51% use social to kill time
- 52% of Millennials say technology makes human relationships better
- 43% of them see a double-edged sword and fear tech may someday make their role obsolete



What are their characteristics?

Millennials have been stereotyped as tech-savvy, selfie-snapping, avocado toast-eating young adults. But in fact, they're business and community leaders, civic-minded and altruistic.

1. They value authenticity - especially online
2. They're conscious - in every interpretation of the word
3. They rely on user-generated content and the value of word-of-mouth advertising
4. They enjoy challenging the status quo
5. They have a passion for learning and self-development
6. They're open and adaptive to change

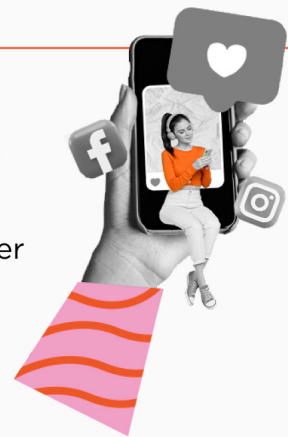
How can we market to them, effectively?

Millennials are more educated and have more choices than any other generation before them. Shocking, we know. But wait there's more: they are unpredictable, not always brand loyal, and are just as comfortable buying online as they are buying off the rack.

1. Prioritize mobile-first advertising - they're busy, but they will always check their phones
2. Emphasize, leverage, and live your brand values
3. Prioritize experience over entertainment
4. Give them something good to read, blogging is not dead
5. Incentivize the buying process

Marketing to Gen Z

Every marketer and their aunty wants to reach Generation Z. They are, after all, the new generation of consumers, with a combined spending power of nearly \$140 billion. Those Gen Zers, on the other hand, are a difficult group to work with. They hold brands to high standards, and they don't respond to traditional advertising methods.



How do they use technology?

Gen Z's outspokenness and constant online presence make predicting their buying patterns much less of a guessing game.

- 40% say working Wi-Fi is more important to them than working bathrooms
- 66% of Gen Z list gaming as their main hobby
- 97% of all Gen Z individuals learn about new products from social media
- 59% of GenZers choose to pursue (formal) higher education

What are their characteristics?

Gen Z is progressive, more racially and culturally diverse than previous generations, and of course - expected to be the most educated - and wealthy. They reject labels, are radically inclusive, and spend time weighing all of their options before making a purchase decision - education or otherwise.

1. They're self-reliant & pragmatic
2. They value diversity & inclusion
3. They're the first true digital natives
4. They're budget conscious and choose to spend wisely
5. They're politically progressive
6. They're curious & value their education

How can we market to them, effectively?

Treating Gen Z as though it were a single entity is a definite way to appear out of touch. It's also critical for brands to figure out how to bridge the generation gap between Gen Z and other generations, such as Millennials.

1. It's in the influence: work with content creators & influencers to build authentic relationships
2. Focus on entertainment over information overload
3. Choose the right platforms, and be prepared to regularly assess their effectiveness
4. Communication is key, so learn to speak "their language"
5. Keep it short, and get to the point quickly

