

(Ghostwritten blog for advertising client)

Connecting with Generation Z: New Facts for Marketers

In a recent post, we looked at the buying habits of Generation Y, or Millennials, and some of the ways companies can market to this significant and largely influential segment of the population. The next audience that cannot be ignored is the Generation Z population, or today's kids, teens, and young adults who are just entering college or the job market.

The demographic born between 1996 and 2010 will soon be nearly 25% of the total US population. And don't make the mistake of thinking Gen Z individuals are mere copies of their older Gen Y siblings – according to recent studies, these savvy teen consumers are establishing their own consumer identities and habits. Companies who want to capture their attention need to adapt both the message and the delivery.

Some key facts about this demographic are exactly what you would expect:

- 96% of Gen Z own a smartphone and if you haven't noticed by now, they're on them all the time.
- While millennials came of age in the digital world, Gen Z has had total digital access to anything they want or need for literally their entire lives. As one study puts it, Gen Z learned to swipe before they learned to speak <https://www.visioncritical.com/generation-z-statistics/>.
- They are well-versed in juggling as many as five screens or devices simultaneously (smart phone, tablet, laptop, tv, and computer) and do not spend their time on annoying interruptions such as commercials or digital ads that they can't swipe away from.

They are also good researchers and because they grew up in an economic downturn, are very good at bargain shopping. Post-millennials are also among the most socially conscious segment of the population. They actively and deliberately look to buy from companies that promote practices that are good for the environment and humanity.

While some of this is also Gen Y behavior, there are some distinctions that marketers should keep in mind when trying to reach a Gen Z audience.

First, Gen Z has a tiny attention span – no more than 6-8 seconds according to some studies. And is your ad interrupting something else they're watching? Forget it. They're already gone. This is the generation of Netflix, not NBC. They will not be sticking around to watch even five seconds of your commercial. This negative view of interruption advertising extends to digital ads that display on their smartphones and other devices.

Interestingly enough, advertising studies also show that Gen Z buyers often reveal a positive reaction to more traditional advertising such as billboards and display ads. This suggests that more unconventional advertising methods and tools, such as restroom ads, sidewalk ads, or outdoor temporary artwork, may be good ways of connecting with teens.

And like everyone else, Gen Z like appreciate high quality and entertaining content. Humor, good music, and a great story are key to keeping their attention.

If your target audience includes Gen Z, keeping their preferences in mind while marketing to them may help you attract their attention and maybe even capture some of their enthusiasm for your brand.

Copyright 2018 – Word Spiral Media, LLC – DO NOT REPRODUCE OR
DISTRIBUTE