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Are you ready for Gen Z?

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27TH SEPTEMBER 2018

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Recent studies have shown that Gen Z will account for 40% of consumers in [two years time](#).

Stand-alone traditional marketing methods won't cut it anymore. Millennials are the digital natives of society with a totally new outlook.

So, what really makes them tick and ultimately, what really ticks them off?

Why should you care?

Studying generations and their differences in attitudes, preferences and familiarity with technology allows marketers to effectively understand engagement among different consumer groups. Being able to tailor ads and content to segmented audiences allows for a better reaction, thus, marketers need to evolve to the different age groups.

What's special about this generation?

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Source : Ad Hook

Being born after 1995, in the midst of revolutionary technological advancements, the aftermath of 9/11 and the financial crisis, has significantly set Gen Z apart from any other cohort. Fundamentally, Gen Z are the most ethnically diverse and globally connected generation ever: since 2000, the amount of multiracial youths in the US has increased by [50%](#). They are an extremely opinionated, politically active generation where strong importance is placed on human rights, the environment and equality.

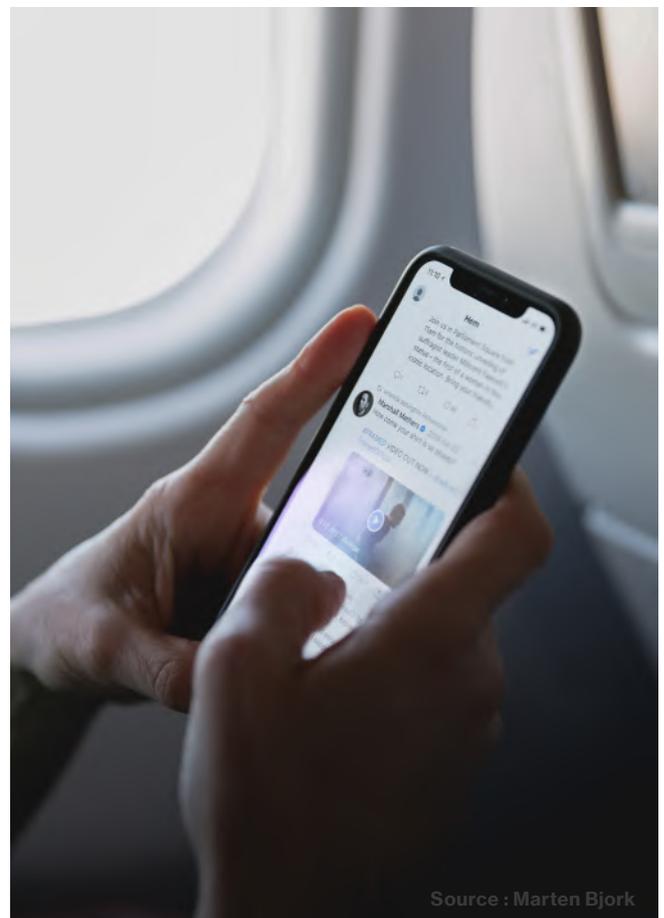
Growing up in a time where everything is instantaneous and connectivity is a given, Gen Z expect a lot and with very little patience. In fact, Gen Z's attention span has dropped to just 8 seconds and has adapted to process information faster and in [smaller chunks](#). They are also excellent multi-taskers from constant switching between different media; paying attention to a wide range of stimuli all at once.

In terms of life practices and work ethic, there has been a shift from going to university to going straight into the workforce. The pressure of progressing into higher education has fallen, as the burden of debt is inferior to affordable online alternatives and apprenticeship schemes. Gen Z also dreams big. The idea of being stuck in a rut in the corporate world has meant that Gen Z have become increasingly entrepreneurial, with 72% of teens saying they would like to start a [business one day](#).

How can you target them?

Gen Z is set to account for 40% of consumers by 2020, meaning being able to communicate a message to them that is engaging and effective is paramount. It's estimated that on average they spend 4 hours a day on their mobile phones, [whilst 44% check their platforms hourly](#) and so it's a no-brainer that marketing efforts should prioritise social media usage.

Gen Z are renowned for getting FOMO (fear of missing out), and Snapchat has pioneered their platform to cater for this through time-limited content. Ephemeral (short lasting) ads are key to



Source : Marten Bjork

content. Ephemeral (short lasting) ads are key to attracting Gen Z's short attention span, since 55% of teens say they do not like things that [last forever online](#). In order to get optimal reaction from Gen Z, tailoring ads will put you in favour of delivering content that is in line with their interests. For instance, filtering ads into Snapchat or Instagram whilst Gen Z's are swiping through stories means they will be introduced to the ad, and the short length of it means the message will be easy to digest.

Stepping up a level, AR is a fun, interactive way of getting Gen Z to engage with offerings by using live footage and adding digital or 3D element. Therefore brands are able to create entertaining and highly visual content that consumers are more likely to share with their friends and on their stories. It's set to be the next

biggest phenomena, with a huge \$120bn market compared to [VR's minimal \\$30bn share](#).

That said, content is just as important. Messages need to be concise with some sense of **unpredictability**. In an industry focused around understanding what consumers want, why not go against the status quo and catch people off guard? Humour and relatable content are more likely to get an engaged response, which is often why memes perform so well among this generation. Influencers are also an effective way of promoting a brand, as they are 'real' people who have normal lives and similar interests as many consumers, meaning the audience are more likely to pay attention if it is in line with their personal preferences.



What should you take from this?

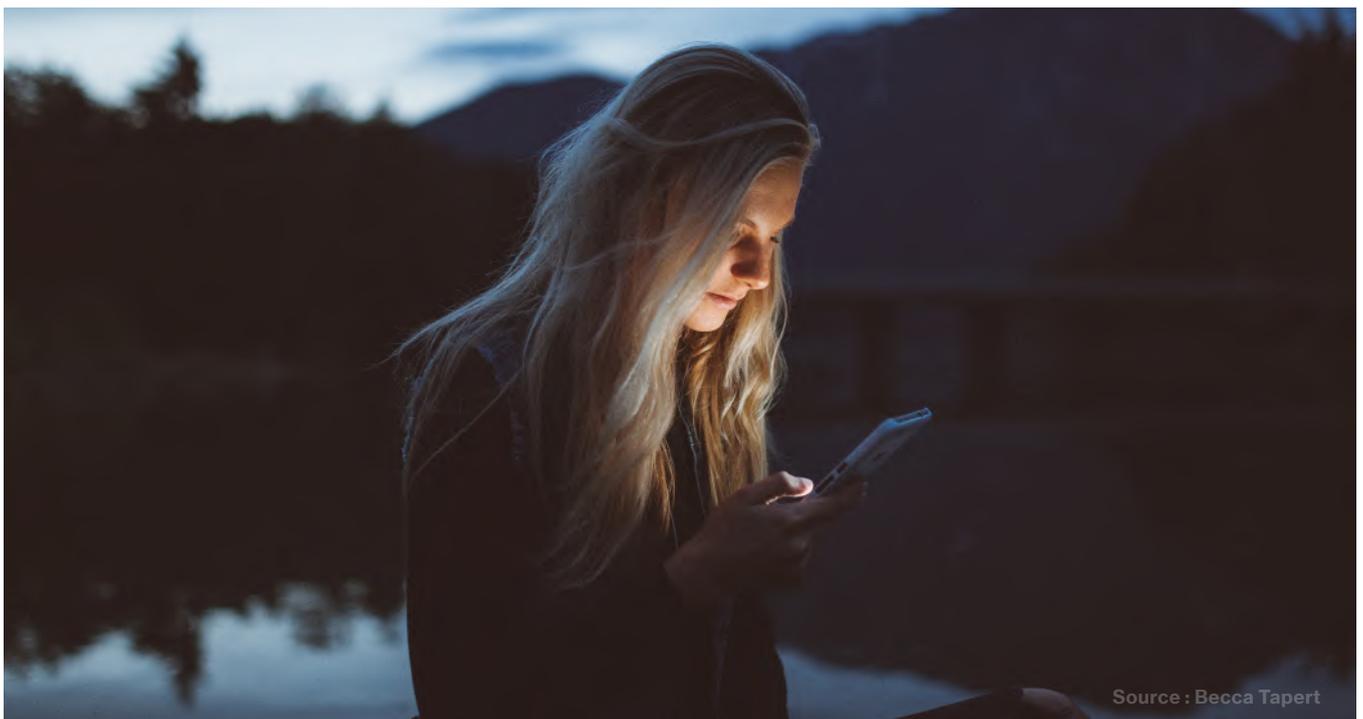
It is clear to see that nowadays, traditional media campaigns will not get a brand very far with Gen Z. Mundane, generalised adverts are likely to get overlooked or even cause annoyance. For instance, 74% of internet users said they get fed up with a site when sponsored ads do not align with [interests](#), which is highly damaging to brand image. Marketers need to be aware of changing attitudes and behaviours with respect to social media and societal norms among the younger demographic, who are now the most active generation on these platforms.

Therefore relevant, entertaining and unpredictable content is most likely to resonate with Gen Z who have shorter attention spans and demand a lot more than ever before. Viral

content such as from YouTubers and memes is an effective way of getting a message spread far and fast, whilst interactive methods such as through Snapchat filters and AR are likely to engage consumers with the brand more intimately.

Things to think about

Although Gen Z are the most digital savvy and socially aware, research has found that 5.6% of 18-24 year olds will leave Facebook [this year](#). Therefore brands need to be more strategic about **where** they target Gen Z's as popularity may be shifting to more youthful, interactive platforms such as Snapchat, which has more 12 to 24 year old users than Instagram. Another thing to bear in mind is that a staggering 45



million users in [the US alone](#) have ad blocking software meaning pop-ups and integrated adverts on sites will not be seen by a high proportion of consumers.

You'd think with increasing digital addiction and over-connectivity there must be some repercussions, and you're right, with 59% of teens think they spend [too much time online](#). Mental and physical health issues are subsequently on the rise from the pressure to appear perfect, and the lack of exercise that has been forfeited. Facebook has just released a new time limiting tool on its app after recent health concerns, meaning users can check how much time they've spent scrolling, and [set allotted time periods](#). As a result, the digital detoxes are likely to increase and Gen Z's methods of interaction could revert back to the good old days.

If you'd like to tap into the next generation of big spenders, get in touch today. [S](#)