Engaging Gen Z on Social

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A New Generation Is Preparing for College

**Strategy**
- Action requires ability, motivation, and a prompt
- Know your audience to produce the right action
- Plan themes and messaging over a time frame

**Tactics**
- Tailor messages to the social platform
- Focus on engagement
- Think of it as a conversation

**Who is Gen Z?**

**What is Gen Z’s viewpoint?**

**How do they use social?**
Engaging Gen Z requires a more sophisticated social strategy

Gen Z has specific uses for each of the social media platforms they use, and connecting with them requires understanding the etiquette and playing by their rules.
Rule #1 of Gen Z: They are NOT Millennials

- **Born:** Mid 1990’s-2010
- **Influences:** Raised primarily by Gen X, heavily influenced by watching Millennials enter adulthood
- **Technology:** Plugged in and social from a very early age, but they have different views on technology and use of social
- **Worldview:** Combine traditional and non-conformist values and behaviors
Quick Comparison

**Millennials**
- **Optimistic:** All thanks to their Boomer parents, still desire the lifestyle of their parents
- **Communal:** More likely to assemble desks into a circle
- **Digitally fluent:** Witnessed the rise of the internet and mobile devices
- **Public:** Put their whole life on display
- **Formal Education:** More likely to have a post-secondary degree and student debt

**Gen Z**
- **Realistic:** Grew up in a recession and the 9-11 era, not as coddled, and harder to sell to
- **Independent:** More likely to want their own workspace, but like to collaborate
- **Digital Natives:** Born into the Digital era
- **Private:** More cognizant of privacy, tend to prefer time-bound content sharing
- **On-Demand Learning:** More likely to pursue online or piecemeal learning

*2017 Inc Magazine*
Influencing Gen Z

Their Parents: Cynics of Gen X

• Raised them to question everything and not settle for the status quo
• Did not believe in everyone gets a trophy
• Struggled financially after lay offs and recession

Millennial Siblings

• Went out into the world, having been told they could do anything and fully expecting to do so
• Ratcheted up massive student loan debt
• Returned home to live with their parents

Gen Z has a cautious outlook on their finances and expect to work hard to achieve their goals. They’re looking for support and return on their investments.
## Gen Z Perspective on Technology

### Technology
- Born and raised in a high-speed, connected world
- Don’t believe technology will save the world; it’s just a tool
- Expect on-demand, low-barrier to access learning tools
- Have access to unlimited new information, making them more self-reliant

### Social Media
- Watched the evolution of social media and started sharing early
- More judicious in what and how they share
- 44% use social media hourly
- *Have their own etiquette when it comes to social media*

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Gen Z expect digital learning tools to be deeply integrated into their education and want to collaborate and share in person or using technology.
The Duality of Gen Z

Traditional

• Value hard work and expect to have to work for what they get
• Want to be supported in their efforts, but maintain independence
• Financially responsible, even cautious
• Determined to succeed
• Crave authenticity

Non-conformist

• Liberal in their views on race, gender, identity, and sexuality
• Want to define themselves, not be labeled
• Champions of justice and equality
• Socially and technologically empowered to drive a progressive, even radical, agenda

Gen Z are more traditional in their ideas of success, money, education, and career, but they have fiercely liberal views on diversity and inclusion. Equality is non-negotiable.
Gen Z and the Future

• Gen Z believes college is important, but they want to see the return on the investment of tuition. They worry about student loan debt.

• They expect their education to be focused on preparing them for the real world. College is a tool for getting to the best job possible, so they are highly motivated by career outcomes.

• 13% have already started a business on their own. This entrepreneurial spirit drives their desire to customize their curriculum and learning environment.

• They’re willing to sacrifice a challenging or inspiring career in in favor of one that will provide financial and social stability. Their top priorities are getting a job, graduating from college, and saving for the future.
Themes that Resonate with Gen Z

- Justice
- Support
- Authenticity
- Fluidity
- Equality
- Practicality
- Diversity
- Inclusion
- Pragmatism
- Hard Work
Top Social Platforms for Gen Z

1. Facebook
2. YouTube
3. Instagram
4. Snapchat
5. Twitter

Gen Z is the heaviest user segment for 9 of the top 16 social media platforms, and they use each differently.

>60% of Gen Z uses each of these platforms

45% use Twitter

Intense use of social may be just part of being a teenager, but researchers* believe it’s more likely a result of social media and digital technology being engrained in all aspects of their lives, for their whole lives.

The divide between real life and digital is much less significant to Gen Z than older generations.

*2017 Barkley, Inc. and Futurecast, LLC
Facebook

The only platform where Gen Z isn’t the largest user segment, Facebook is still their most used platform.

Facebook is more for browsing than engaging for Gen Z. They scroll for information more than they post.

Gen Z is less likely to engage with content posted on Facebook than other platforms.

• Gen Z is still seeing what you post on Facebook.
• Most engaging content for Gen Z is video, followed by photos.
• It’s a great platform for reaching and engaging with parents of college prospects.

* Facebook’s recent data issues and role in the 2016 election cycle could still impact how Gen Z uses it.
FACEBOOK
Most popular

1.9 BILLION unique monthly users

predominantly female
83% of online women
75% of online men

AGES 18-49
best place to reach Millennials and Generation X
Generation X spends almost 7 hours per week on social media

75% of users spend 20 minutes or more on Facebook every day

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, Marketing Profs
Video on Facebook

- 8 BILLION average daily video views on Facebook. Facebook users watch 100 million hours of video every day.
- 85% of users watch video on Facebook with the sound off. Make sure you caption your content!
- 20% of videos on Facebook are live streams

Source: Sprout Social, Facebook Stats for Marketers
Facebook (or Instagram) Live

- Choose a **topic that is relevant** to the conversation
- **Strong wi-fi** connection is necessary
- **Fully charged phone** or connect to a **power source**
- Use a **tripod**
- Think about **sound**
  - **Lavalier mics** and a **splitter**
- **Choose a static background** and frame your shot
- **Interact** with commenters
  - A white board or poster board to write questions on is helpful
63% of Gen Z uses Instagram

Instagram feeds are highly curated and groomed by Gen Z

Teens are very careful how they use Instagram, favoring higher-quality images

They will delete photos to optimize their “likes” per photo

• Don’t over post on Instagram and “clog” their feeds
• Quality over quantity
• Aspirational content engages best
• Teens are looking to be inspired
Instagram
Fastest growing

600 million unique monthly users

Predominantly female
38% of online women
26% of online men

Age <35
90% of Instagram users are under 35

53% of Instagram users follow brands

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, Marketing Profs
Instagram Stories

• Snapchat copycat feature: photos and video
• Disappear after 24 hours
• Featured at the top of everyone’s Instagram feed
• Can edit photos and add captions inside the app
• "Live" video option similar to Facebook
Don't be afraid to have fun!
Snapchat

- Platform for “in the moment”
- Not about the perfect, sharable moment
- Tell stories through pictures
- Snapchat filters are a way to engage

61% of Gen Z uses Snapchat
Less curated and more real life content
Manual selection of who receives content makes them more selective in who they choose
Quickly becoming the new texting for teens
SNAPCHAT

100 MILLION daily active users

54% of users log in every day

60% of users are age 13-24

400% year-over-year increase in daily video views (more than Facebook)

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, Marketing Profs
Snapchat Stories and Geofilters

• Snapchat geofilters are graphic frames that overlay snaps.

• You can purchase a geofilter through the Snapchat website.

• Once you’ve created a geofilter, make a Snapchat story, so users can submit their snaps from your event for all to see.
Twitter

Lowest use by Gen Z, but still used by 45%

Content is more about volume than curating an image

Looking for what’s happening right now

#MarchForOurLives shows the powerful voice of Gen Z on Twitter and their savvy in wielding it

• Another “in the moment” platform
• Gen Z engages with others in conversation, doesn’t just broadcast
• Use their voices to progress their agenda and show support for others
• Conversations happen on Twitter
**Twitter**

Most oversaturated

- **317 million** unique monthly users
- Predominantly male
  - 22% of online men
  - 15% of online women
- Mostly 18-29 year-olds
- 53% of Twitter users never post any updates
- Users only spend an average of 2.7 minutes on Twitter's mobile app per day

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, Marketing Profs
My tour of @AmericanU ✔️ Such a great campus and overall atmosphere; I’d love to go there if they would take me... 😊

6:51 PM - 15 Jun 2016
22 Likes

Campus looks good on you! Hope you’ll apply!
11:39 AM - 16 Jun 2016
1 Retweet 5 Likes

nearly two years later...

4:06 PM - 26 Mar 2018
1 Retweet 48 Likes

From touring to admission--what a difference two years makes! Welcome, #NewAUUAEagle
5:34 PM - 26 Mar 2018
1 Like
Have a conversation (and a sense of humor)

Settle the debate forever. The ability to fly or the ability to go invisible? Which would you choose? #BigQuestions #College

1:15 PM - 17 May 2017

16 Likes

19

16

Sylvia M. Burwell

@SylviaBurwell

15 minutes here won’t save you money on your car insurance...

But it could improve your experience at AU! Click here to participate: bit.ly/AU2018NSSE

It will only take 15 minutes for you to help...

SHAPE AU’S FUTURE

The link to participate in this year’s National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is already in your inbox. Click the link and share your thoughts.

12:15 PM - 27 Apr 2017

87 Retweets 1,133 Likes
• Keep it short
• Be sure to caption videos for accessibility
• Does not need to be highly produced
• Keep it real; it’s OK to talk to the camera
• Focus your message in each video; don’t try to cover too much
• Did we mention KEEP IT SHORT?

Used by 91% of Gen Z
They use YouTube as a search engine, as much as for entertainment
Consuming content, not necessarily creating it
Trust YouTube “celebrities” as much as main stream celebrities
YouTube
Better than TV

1 BILLION unique monthly users

predominantly male
55% male
45% female

AGES 18-49

YouTube reaches more 18-34 and 35-49 year olds than any cable network in the U.S.

~2 MILLION video views per minute

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, Marketing Profs
If you remember nothing else ...

• Customize content for the platform, as well as the audience
• Ease into sharing and increase frequency to find the sweet spot
• Use social media to have a conversation; don’t just broadcast
• Listen as much as you “talk”
• Leverage video and photos to boost engagement
• Don’t be afraid to have some fun!
Questions?

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Articles

- http://www.thedrum.com/opinion/2018/01/22/has-gen-z-od-d-social-media
Articles

• http://blog.ryan-jenkins.com/how-generation-z-uses-technology-and-social-media
• Report: Getting to Know Gen Z - Exploring Middle and High Schoolers’ Expectations for Higher Education, Barnes & Noble College
• Report: Social Media Use in 2018, Pew Research Center
• Report: Getting to Know Gen Z: How the Pivotal Generation Is Different from Millennials, Barkley, Inc. and Futurecast, LLC