

textnow

Smashing Demographic Stereotypes



The 5 Pillars to Creating Successful
Gen Z Marketing Campaigns in 2022

OCTOBER 2021

Welcome to the Gen Z Moment

A unique demographic, Gen Z preferences, habits and expectations are completely reshaping the media, marketing, and advertising landscape.

In September 2021, TextNow conducted a survey to gain insights into Gen Z's motivations and preferences around advertising and marketing. We discovered five key pillars that help brands with their 2022 Gen Z marketing and growth strategies:

- 1. The Power of Purpose**
- 2. The Influenced to Influencer Dynamic**
- 3. The Holy Grail: Obtaining Phone Info**
- 4. Reaching Gen Z: Go Social**
- 5. Gen Z Marketing Don'ts**



Who Is Gen Z: An Overview

Born between 1996 and 2012, Generation Z is the post Millennial generation.

- Nearly all (98%) Gen Zs own a smartphone and, on average, spend more than four hours a day on mobile apps (not including time spent gaming).
- Gen Z is more racially and ethnically diverse than any earlier generation. They are also on track to be the most well-educated.
- They are an economic force. Gen Zs already make up 40% of all global consumers, and by 2031, this fast-growing demographic will earn more than Millennials.
- 44% of Gen Z check social media channels at least hourly, with 7% checking in every 15 minutes.

The average Gen Zer has an attention span of just eight seconds (compared to 12 for Millennials). Despite the shorter attention spans, their ability to hyper-process information is faster than ever.

The result is that brands have just 1.2 seconds to capture their attention before they move on.



TAKEAWAY

There is now an opportunity for brands to connect with this audience and build affinity in a transformative way. Gen Z prioritizes authenticity. Building a genuine connectivity will help drive authentic communication channels and intuitive strategies that bring brands and Gen Z consumers together – creating stories and communities that become part of the brand ecosystem.



“ Brand marketers need to emphasize authenticity and transparency when engaging with this cohort. Companies that can demonstrate purpose when connecting with Gen Z will earn true engagement and loyalty, and our study has found that it’s one of the most effective ways to reach this coveted demographic.”

– Ken Willner, Chief Growth Officer at TextNow



1. The Power of Purpose



Gen Z is the most vocal generation on social justice and active in driving change. They place significant importance on a brand's authenticity and transparency, defining and evaluating companies on their ethics as well as their products.

This makes purpose-driven messaging critical. In fact, Gen Zs are more likely to make a purchase from a brand if their ads mention topics such as:

Mental health advocacy	Public health and safety	Sustainability	Racial equality	LGBTQ+ acceptance
71%	66.2%	65.8%	58.9%	53.5%

Companies and brands that have an authentic purpose related to key issues for Gen Z will be rewarded with their attention and support.

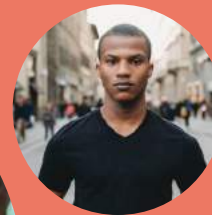
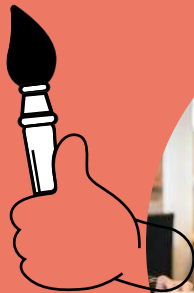


2. The Influenced-to-Influencer Dynamic

Gen Z has a unique relationship with influencers and social media celebrities. They are skeptical of traditional airbrushed celebrities yet incredibly open to influencer persuasion and engagement when it is authentic and reflective of their values.

The good news for marketers is that Gen Z is very receptive to influencer marketing.

- **40.2% of Gen Z are likely to purchase a product from an influencer's sponsored post** (think: posts on Instagram with the #sponsored or #ad hashtags)
- Gen Zs are the new influencer generation, **44.4% believe they have some sort of sway**, even if it is only within their small circle of family and friends (23.9%).
- **Over 40% report that if they were influencers, they would choose to work with the brands and products they often use.** This is the same authenticity they expect from brands they engage with. Gen Zs prefer brands that use real customers as models and want their influencers and brand ambassadors to have a genuine relationship with the brand they promote.



TAKEAWAY

Gen Z has a natural affinity with relatable influencers versus social celebrities who seem out of reach. They crave connection with like-minded influencers and see themselves as a vital part of the influencer ecosystem, creating 360-degree stories in their lives. Brands have an opportunity to be part of that story.



TAKEAWAY

For Gen Z to release personal information, such as a phone number, brands need to offer specific, genuine and significant incentives. This information provides a critical step in building a direct channel of communication with Gen Z.



3. The Holy Grail: Obtaining Phone Info

Since their phones are an extension of themselves, Gen Z is reluctant to give out their cell phone numbers for low-value rewards or incentives.

When giving out personal information for larger rewards such as sweepstakes and promotional emails, Gen Zs are willing to trade:

Email address

61%

First and last name

54.3%

Age

44.3%

Cell number

36%

Date of birth

31.9%

But even with a greater financial incentive, only 36% are willing to share their cell phone numbers.

4. Reaching Gen Z: Go Social

The foundation of any effective Gen Z marketing strategy is to understand where they are and how often:

- **Social media is the second most important use for mobile devices for Gen Z** (30.9%), behind calling and texting (43.90%).
- **Ads on social media get the most attention** (36.9%) followed by those on YouTube (31%).

Calling and texting are still the predominant use of phones, but to effectively reach Gen Z, advertisers must be both mobile and social.



TAKEAWAY

Marketers need to understand that for Gen Z, their phones and social media platforms are truly extensions of themselves and their world. Advertisers need to create campaigns that are fluid, not forced for this audience. Gen Z is more interested in connective storytelling vs. advertising.



TAKEAWAY

The values of a brand and alignment with Gen Z are more meaningful than image or hype. The unique, purpose-driven sentiment of Gen Z needs to be met with a mission that moves the brand to become part of the fabric of their everyday lives.



5. Gen Z Marketing Don'ts

“Selling” to Gen Z does not work. These digital natives can easily spot, filter and screen pitches.

Instead, Gen Z needs entertaining content that provides something of value. It also must be delivered in an intuitive way that works for them and reflects their digital preferences and habits.

Gen Z will steer away from ads that are:

Irrelevant, non-personalized ads

44.6%

Influencers or memes

42.9%

Band wagoning or hijacking viral videos

40.5%





Ready to change your Gen Z strategy?

Contact us: advertising@textnow.com

Survey Methodology:

Who: Respondents include 1,000 consumers between the ages of 16 and 24

When: Conducted on Sept. 8, 2021

How: Online survey conducted with a survey platform Pollfish

About TextNow

Founded in 2009, TextNow is the largest provider of free phone service in the U.S. With offices in San Francisco, Waterloo, and Seattle, the TextNow app has been downloaded more than 200 million times globally, helping millions of people stay connected with a free phone number and ad-supported calling and texting over WiFi and a nationwide LTE network. For more information visit textnow.com