

MARKETING TO

MILLENNIALS



A WHITE PAPER

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Marketing to Millennials



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Executive Summary: Marketing to Millennials

The best way to describe a millennial is to say that they are driven to make a difference.

Marketing to Millennials is filled with myths and mysteries. What makes this very large section of the population tick, and how can your brand take advantage of their buying power and influence?

Millennials are the Largest Section of the Workforce

With so much of the past focus on the Baby Boomer generation as the largest section of the population, it may have slipped past many marketers that the largest group in the workforce today is, in fact, the millennial – or Generation Y age group. There are more than 76.7 million workers in this generation and they have a buying power worth \$1.3 trillion. They are a force to be reckoned with and are very specific about where they want to put their money.

Millennials are Concerned with Giving Back

The best way to describe a millennial is to say that they are driven to make a difference. They will choose the brand that communicates how it is giving back over another that isn't, and will evangelize a brand if it lifts people out of poverty, feeds the hungry, or clothes the poor. They buy products that save rainforests, clean up polluted places, and are cruelty-free and sustainable. Millennials see their place in the world as being part of a larger community and want to use their dollars as a means to purchase their necessities, and at the same time, create a better world.

Your Message Matters Most

So, how do you move those world-changing dollars to your business? You win their dollars by making your message fit their understanding of the world and their place in it. If you hit the right mark, millennials can reward you by promoting your brand further and faster through their network of friends, fans, and followers, creating a tremendous following and increasing your bottom line. It is important that you see the millennial generation as the diverse group that they are by creating your marketing pieces to reflect a global and diverse identity.

Print Trumps Technology; the Digital Myth

Even though millennials are digital natives and are completely at ease with technology and digital communication, they are nostalgic about paper and print. Millennials are the largest consumer group of printed books, and there is nothing more attention-grabbing for a digital generation than to be holding something printed in their hands. In fact, in a 2013 study by the Direct Marketing Association of United States Postal Service response rates, the highest return rate for direct mail belongs to millennials.

Who Are The Millennials?

Share your cause! Send out postcards or invitations for prospects to join in when your employees help sort food at the food bank.

Technically speaking, people born between 1980 and about 1999 are considered part of the millennial label. They make up half of the current workforce and are a very diverse group. Concerned with the state of the world and feeling a personal drive to make a difference in it, millennials are active in supporting causes that are important to them and look at their involvement not as charity, but as a calling. They are driven to experience their cause through volunteering rather than simply donating money with no hands-on involvement.

Millennials Identify as Tribes

Millennials don't identify themselves as an age group – in fact, targeting them as an age group is ineffective. Instead, they identify as a “tribe,” happily labeling themselves through their interests. Nerds and Geeks are two very prominent examples of labels that millennials wear proudly, and yes, they are different groups.

“You Can Be Anything You Want to Be”

Previous generations often misunderstand the millennials' drive and work ethic because this younger generation will happily throw away or throw out anything that doesn't work for them. As a product of “you can be anything you want to be” and “you can do anything you want to do,” they also understand that they alone are in charge of their future. They're good at saying “no” to the old ways and welcoming new thinking, new systems, and new ideas. They are under no obligation to hold on to the past.

Focus on specific interests! By tracking people's digital footprints, you can easily create a tailor-made marketing piece.

Why Market to Millennials? Buying Power

Set aside any preconceived ideas you may have of millennials. This section of the current population has tremendous buying power and incredible influence on brand success and visibility. They are early adopters and brand evangelizers and when you win them over to your brand, you gain an invitation into their entire network of friends, fans, and followers.

Where does this buying power come from? On the average, millennials carry less consumer debt than older generations, including and especially credit card debt. They also save more than previous generations through personal savings and investments. With an average household income of \$60,000, they should have plenty of disposable income.



MILLENNIALS

according to Forbes.com

- ✓ Born between 1980 and 1999
- ✓ 76.6 million millennials in the U.S.
- ✓ Currently the largest generation in the U.S.
- ✓ Millennials make up one-half of the workforce in the United States
- ✓ \$1.3 trillion buying power
- ✓ \$60,000 – average household income

Source: Forbes (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/patrickspenner/2014/04/16/inside-the-millennial-mind-the-dos-donts-of-marketing-to-this-powerful-generation-3/#2ae4924d371b>)

Why Your Message Matters Most

Marketing to millennials can seem like a mystery until you have a good understanding of what matters most to them. They do not have the same fears as previous generations because they see the world through different eyes, and the whole world is their neighborhood.

Sending the Right Message

For anyone who has ever done a lot of successful marketing, you know that your brand has an overall emotion tied to it. Your product or service fulfills an emotional need for your customer.

Because of this, be cautious of fear-messaging to a millennial who is more interested in your solution and its impact than pointing out their need to be afraid. When you blast them with what's wrong with the world without giving them an opportunity to make it right, you'll miss the entirety of the way they view their place in the world.

Your marketing materials must reflect how you are the best solution to the problem at hand, and that your product or service provides them with the happy outcome they're looking for.

This group is a visual group. Create brochures, postcards and flyers that are visual and that reflect the millennial mindset.

Here are some things to keep in mind when creating materials with a millennial mindset:



This generation was born into a globally-connected world. They have always communicated with people around the world and want their efforts to make a difference in the world as part of a community.



Millennials are a very diverse generation. They are the highest percentage of non-whites of any generation in North America. It's important that they see a reflection of themselves in your marketing, both visually and in your message.



Their mantra is "how can I make a difference?" This is both a local idea as well as a global one. How does your product or service make a difference to their local family, as well as to their global family of all of mankind?



The environment is also a top priority. Being attuned to a changing climate and the belief that they can make a difference drives them to make sure the products and services they consume also make a difference. They want to save animals from extinction, save forests from annihilation, and reward sustainable activities. At the very least, they don't want to support or buy products that neglect these issues.

When you market to millennials, the more you can point out your company's and product's efforts to further these ideals, the more success you will have at gaining loyal millennial customers.

Tom's Millennial Messaging Win – Buy a pair of shoes, provide a pair of shoes

For every pair of shoes sold, Tom's will donate a pair of shoes to a person in need in the developing world. Much of their marketing efforts show children in Africa with big smiles, wearing a pair of Tom's. The shoes themselves are not fancy, just simple canvas slip-ons, but they capitalized on their global efforts to solve a real-world issue of people needing shoes. Millennials grabbed on to this message, passed it through their social media networks, and made Tom's a giant brand, worthy of support – and millions of dollars in the process. Tom's is a good cause – that just happens to make shoes

Products like Tom's, or the hundreds of other successful kickstarter projects like building water filters and solar lights for poverty-stricken communities across the globe, are highly effective at reaching the millennial audience because they fulfill their need to use their consumer dollars to advance the greater good.

Previous generations know companies make a difference in their communities, but don't expect to be told of the company's efforts in detail. **To a millennial, a company IS their charitable activities.** They evaluate their interest in your brand through your brand's impact on the environment, global community, etc. Your marketing materials must show your global impact. You must answer their burning question, "how will purchasing your product help others?"

Diversity

- ✓ They belong to a global community.
- ✓ 43% of millennials in North America are non-white.
- ✓ Gender roles are not rigid – for millennials, there have always been women astronauts.

Service

- ✓ Impact – how does buying your product help others?
- ✓ Millennials need to make a difference.

Eco Service

- ✓ What is the environmental impact?
- ✓ What are your company's recycling efforts?
- ✓ What green issues do you address?
- ✓ Do you use/produce cruelty-free products?

Message Delivery? Think Old School

Millennials get bombarded with digital advertising so much that it just becomes noise to them. Take advantage of this generation's nostalgic obsession with the time before technology, when people wrote letters and received mail. Millennials love tangibles, and they love getting mail!

That's right! Millennials are more likely to open mail and respond to direct marketing efforts than previous generations. For them, it is a novelty. Their friends and family don't write letters. Their bills are most likely delivered electronically. Junk mail to a millennial happens in their inbox, not their mailbox.

"Junk mail to a millennial happens in their inbox, not their mailbox."

The Power of a Handwritten Note

Do you think the days of handwritten cards are dead? Not to a millennial receiving one. True, they are less likely to send out thank you notes, but you can take full advantage of that trait by sending out a card to them instead. If marketing is supposed to target a consumer's emotions, what better emotion to strive for than a personal connection?

Consider creating a post-it-forward campaign. You may already support a charity that helps groups of people in one way or another. Send out blank cards that people can use to write encouraging notes. Your company can then distribute them to the people you help, like notes to soldiers, or notes to kids that receive backpacks and school supplies at the beginning of the school year, or notes to seniors receiving meals-on-wheels.

Vinyl Taco

A taco shop with a retro feel has a unique way of capitalizing on the throwback days of their branding. Along with vinyl records dotting the walls, the restaurant plays up the days of turntables and 8-track tapes with using lyrics of well known 70's music on their marketing pieces. A unique experience this business gives its customers is when the bill comes. In addition to a pen and food ticket, they're given a postcard to fill out. They are told by their server that this taco shop will send the postcard to anyone the customer would like.

The restaurant is hitting a number of winning points with their postcards at the table. With smartphone in hand, close family and friend's addresses are, too. This establishes a warm mailing list, as people usually send the postcards to friends or family that would also enjoy patronizing the restaurant. It takes advantage of the nostalgia of sending mail that people don't do on a regular basis anymore. One last thing to point out is that the postcard design is part of the equation. Not only does it match the retro feel of the brand, it uses lyrics to invite the postcard recipient to visit Vinyl Taco with the sender next time. This creates new customers and repeat customers at the same time.

Print Still Works: The Digital Myth

Be honest, when you think of marketing to millennials, what do you think of? Smartphones, apps, social media, and all kinds of technology.

The truth for millennials is that, yes, they are very comfortable with technology, but they also buy shirts and shoes just like the rest of us. You don't have to BE technology to capture the attention of the millennial market.

Experience

Millennials are all about the experience. They are not prisoners to their computers, never to see the light of day, ordering everything they ever need through the internet. Yes, they have a strong digital network of friends, but they are out and about in the real world every day.



Myth: Millennials are lacking in people skills since they only communicate through texting.

If you look at pop-culture, you'll see that some of the most successful TV shows are apocalyptic, where technology like computers and phones are no longer available. Plenty of popular shows are historical in nature, before modern communication systems. The Millennial generation finds novelty in direct communication, giving them the highest success rate for direct marketing efforts of all generations combined.

Some thoughts about using technology...

Don't:

- ✓ Don't think that you need to have an app to attract millennial customers. They won't use an app just because you have one.
- ✓ Don't solely market digitally.
- ✓ There is an over-saturation of digital advertising, and to millennials, it's all the same noise.

Do:

- ✓ Stand out by using marketing they can touch, like print pieces and direct mail.
- ✓ Tie your print efforts to online efforts though QR codes and adding your web and social media addresses to all your printed materials.
- ✓ Make your product or service available to purchase over technology if that makes sense for your business.
- ✓ Make your rewards program smartphone friendly.

The Visual Appeal

Millennials are visual consumers. They love anything that “shows” them your message. Let them see your impact and see themselves making an impact through buying into your brand message.

Here are some things to keep in mind when marketing to millennials.

Diversity is a big issue for millennials. Make sure the marketing images you use show diversity. To a millennial:

- Women have always been scientists, astronauts, CEO's etc.
- Men are also homemakers.
- White, middle-aged men are not in the millennials' tribes (so stop marketing exclusively with them).

Millennials want to make a positive difference!

- Happy people = positive solutions.
- End results inspire action for millennials.
- They are dreamers. Show them their dreams are possible.

Social media inspired layouts will help millennials consume your content.

- Use catchy titles and headlines.
- Use bullet points and short paragraphs.
- Use infographics to show complex information in simple formats.

“Feel” creates a strong emotional connection for a millennial. In a digital world, having something in their hands grabs their attention.

- Choose paper with weight and texture.
- Use and identify that it's recycled paper.
- Identify natural and cruelty-free efforts.

Remember, make your marketing efforts and materials personal. Reinforce your positive messages by explaining the benefits to them and how it affects the greater community.

Concluding Summary

As a consumer group, millennials have a big impact on the economy. Your business must capitalize on gaining their loyalty as customers and the most effective way to capture their attention is through combining your print and digital marketing efforts into one, attention-grabbing message.



Grab a Millennial's Attention

- ✓ Create a postcard campaign that takes advantage of the rarity of how often they send a note to someone through the mail.
- ✓ Mail directly to a millennial to announce something new and appeal to their emotional connection to tangible things in a digital world.
- ✓ Cut through the noise of spam and pop-ups by putting printed materials in their hands. They cannot delete a flyer at the touch of a button when they can feel it in their possession.
- ✓ Be visual and diverse, but make it personal.

Don't be fooled into thinking that the largest sector of working adults are glued to their smartphones and that the only way to capture their attention is through digital advertising. The rule of thumb for any marketing campaign is to stand out. You will stand out when you use print to capture the millennial audience. They are waiting to hear all about you, all about your products, and all about your contribution to the greater good. What are you waiting for? Create your millennial-minded marketing campaign today!

About Your Sponsor

We created this white paper about marketing to millennials because we want to help you with creating and printing the most effective marketing materials possible for cornering the millennial market. We hoped to point out a few key strategies to keep in mind when targeting this generation that has tremendous buying power. It was our intent to give you insight to how a millennial thinks about brands, how they think about spending, and how you can capitalize on that knowledge.

When you are ready to create your next marketing campaign, look to us for expert service, expert advice, and great ideas for your print materials. We are here to serve you and help you build your brand. Contact us today.

Contact Us

Origo Communications
20-4480 Chesswood Dr
Toronto, ON M3J 2B9

416.398.7678
Origo.ca