



# SUPPORTING & ENGAGING GEN Z

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# A NEW GENERATION IS PREPARING FOR COLLEGE

Who is Gen Z?

What is Gen Z's viewpoint?

How do they use social?

## 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

# 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

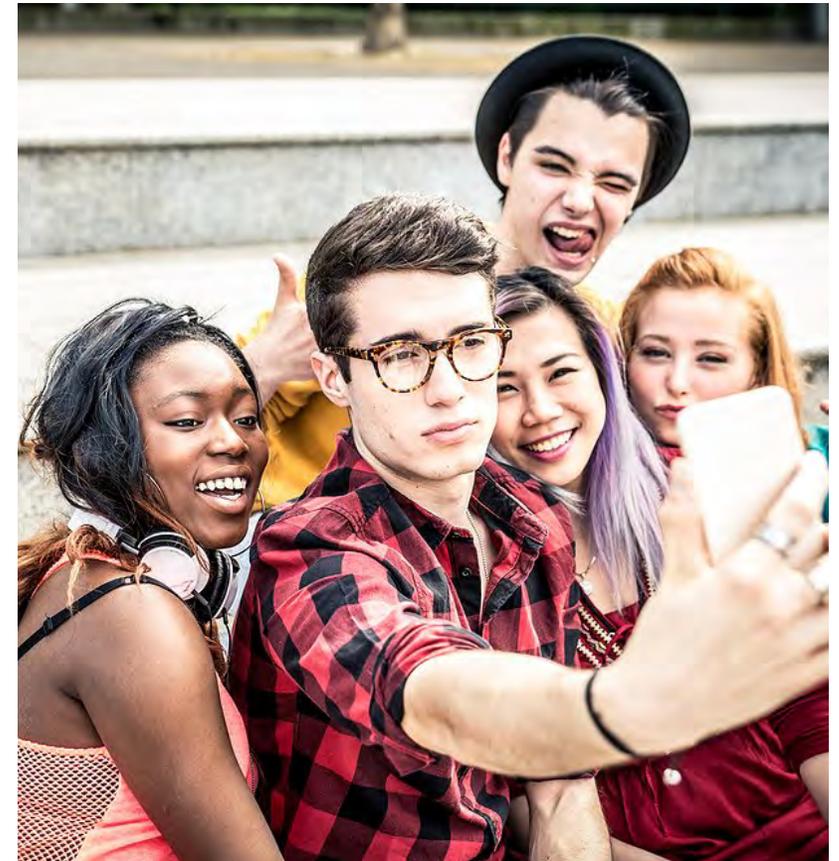


Photo from Shutterstock

# 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

# 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

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**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 TECH

## 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

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**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 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



# CREATING CONTENT FOR GEN Z



# ONLINE CONTENT CONSUMPTION

- Gen Z effortlessly switches between platforms, so make sure your content works on them all.
- Terms to know: Device-agnostic, responsive.
- They are highly selective in what they consume. Content must be scannable and “snackable.”
- Use the Bite-Snack-Meal approach to allow them to dig in where they want.

# ONLINE CONTENT CONSUMPTION

- Gen Z prefers a “cool product” to a “cool experience,” 60% vs. 40%.
- That means your content can sizzle, but there better be steak to go with it.
- Authenticity is king.
- Tell them a story and make it visual!
- They watch 2x as many videos on mobile as any other demographic, and 70% watch 2 hours of YouTube per day. (Source)

# ONLINE CONTENT CONSUMPTION

- Show them how they can change the world!
- 60% of Gen Z aspires to change the world, compared to 39% of Millennials.
- 20% say their impact on the world is an important issue in their day-to-day life.
- Gen Z cares. Give them something to care about.

“There is a popular belief that this age-group are disconnected from the ‘real world’, but this couldn’t be further from the truth. They are more interested in experience and connection than ever before, and strive to spend their money on memorable experiences, spend their clicks supporting genuine creators, and spend their time watching meaningful content.”

– Amy Reed, *Think Jam*

In short ...

KEEP YOUR  
CONTENT  
CONCISE, VISUAL,  
& MEANINGFUL



# GEN Z & SOCIAL MEDIA

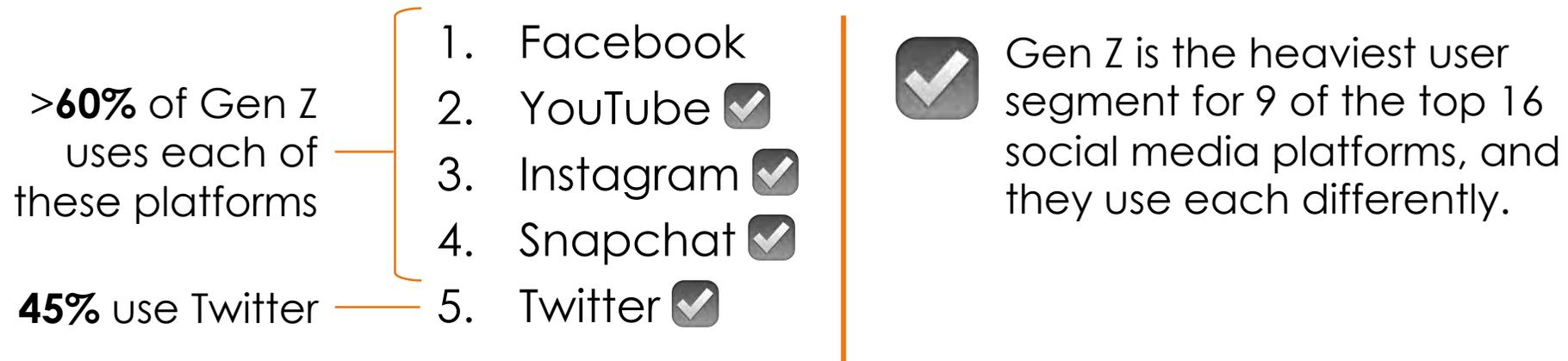
53% of teens say social media will have the biggest impact on their generation



# 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.

# TOP SOCIAL PLATFORMS



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.**

# 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.

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*\* Facebook's recent data issues and role in the 2016 election cycle could still impact how Gen Z uses it.*



# FACEBOOK

## Demographics

- 1.9 Billion unique monthly users, most popular platform
- Predominantly Female: 83% of online women vs. 75% of online men
- Ages 18-49: Best place to reach Millennials and Gen X. Gen X spends almost 7 hours per week on social media.
- 75% of users spend 20 minutes or more on FB every day

## Video

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

# 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
- Accessibility Consideration: Cannot be live captioned in platform

# INSTAGRAM

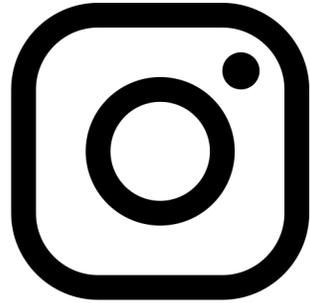
63% of Gen Z uses Instagram

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
- Fastest Growing Social Media Platform
- 600 Million unique monthly users
- Predominantly Female: 38% of online women vs. 26% of online men
- Age <35: 90% of IG users are under 35
- 53% of IG users follow brands

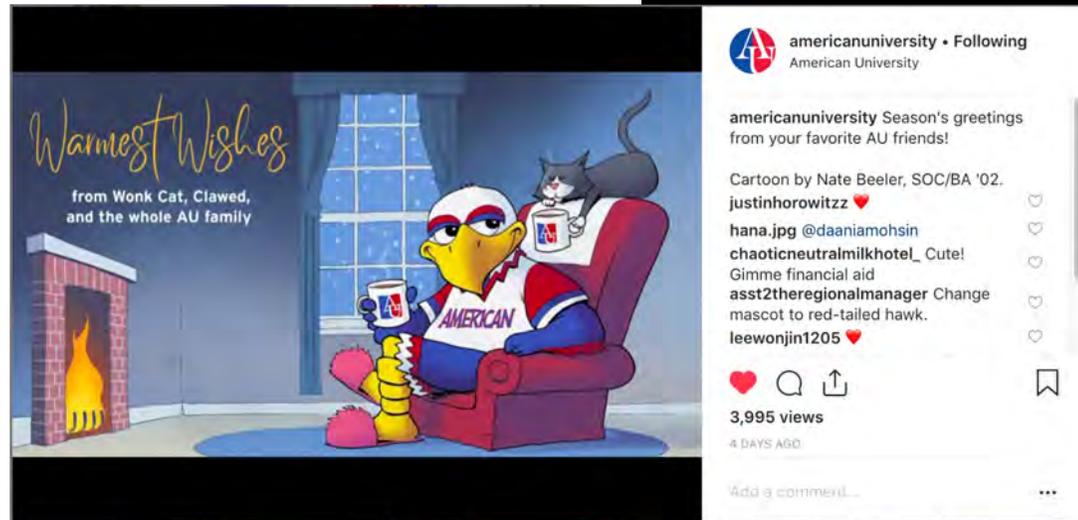


# INSTAGRAM STORIES

- Snapchat copycat feature: photos and video
- Disappear after 24 hours, making it a good way to share content without clogging their feeds
- 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

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

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

# SNAPCHAT STORIES & 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

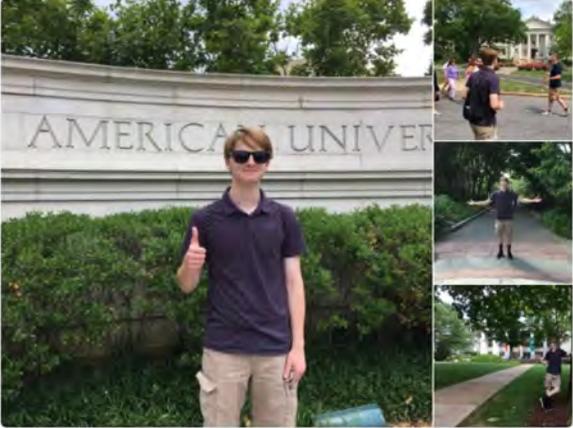
#MarchForOurLives shows the powerful voice of Gen Z on Twitter and their savvy in wielding it

- 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

**Denton A. Cohen** @DentonCohen Follow

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

**American University** @AmericanU

Replying to @DentonCohen

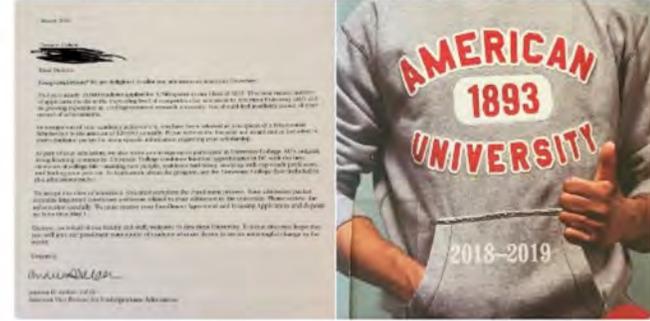
Campus looks good on you! Hope you'll apply!

11:39 AM - 16 Jun 2016

1 Retweet 5 Likes

**Denton A. Cohen** @DentonCohen Follow

nearly two years later...



4:06 PM - 26 Mar 2018

1 Retweet 48 Likes

AmericanU Admissions

**American University** @AmericanU

Replying to @DentonCohen

From touring to admission--what a difference two years makes! Welcome, #NewAUEagle

5:34 PM - 26 Mar 2018

1 Like

- Most Oversaturated Platform
- 317 Million unique monthly users
- Predominantly Male: 22% of online men vs. 15% of online women
- Ages 18-29
- 53% of Twitter users never post any updates
- 2.7 minutes: Time users spend on Twitter's mobile app per day

# HAVE A CONVERSATION (AND A SENSE OF HUMOR)



Oregon State University  
@OregonState

Follow

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

Following

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](http://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.



American University  
@AmericanU

This is Cindy Bear. She was nervous about finals. Not anymore, thanks to her new study group. 13/10, would give extra credit cc: @dog\_rates



12:15 PM - 27 Apr 2017

87 Retweets 1,133 Likes

5 87 1.1K

# YOUTUBE

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

- 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
- Use text overlays with visual footage for easy digestion, especially on muted platforms
- Focus your message in each video; don’t try to cover too much
- Did we mention KEEP IT SHORT?



# YOUTUBE

- Better than TV
- 1 Billion monthly unique users
- Predominantly Male: 55% male vs. 45% female
- Ages 18-49: YouTube reaches more 18-34 and 35-49 year olds than ANY cable network in the U.S.
- Please read the previous bullet again and really absorb that!
- Many younger users use YouTube as their search engine
- ~2 Million video views PER MINUTE

# IF YOU REMEMBER NOTHING ELSE ...

- Gen Z are not Millennials!
- 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!

# ARTICLES

- <https://www.inc.com/ryan-jenkins/generation-z-vs-millennials-the-8-differences-you-.html>
- <https://socialmediaweek.org/blog/2017/12/7-ways-engage-millennials-gen-z-social-media-2018/>
- <https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/meet-generation-z/>
- <https://www.campaignlive.com/article/gen-z-quitting-social-media-droves-makes-unhappy-study-finds/1459007>
- <http://www.thedrum.com/opinion/2018/01/22/has-gen-z-od-d-social-media>
- <http://www.adweek.com/digital/infographic-50-of-gen-z-cant-live-without-youtube-and-other-stats-that-will-make-you-feel-old/>
- <https://www.thedrum.com/opinion/2018/07/13/why-generation-z-understand-the-world-social-media-far-better-any-other-group>

# ARTICLES

- <https://www.campaignlive.com/article/gen-z-quitting-social-media-droves-makes-unhappy-study-finds/1459007>
- <http://blog.ryan-jenkins.com/2017/03/27/how-generation-z-will-transform-the-workplace-with-david-and-jonah-stillman-podcast>
- <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
- Report: *Gen Z: The Audience You Can't Ignore*, Awesomeness and Trendera