

## CMO Trend Brief

# Future Consumer

**ANA Marketing Futures** focuses on the innovations and trends that will shape the future of marketing to prepare brands for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

### **Who is Gen Z?**

Marketers have spent extraordinary time and resource learning how to market to millennials over the past years. It's now important for brands to understand the youngest of the five generations that are on the minds of marketers today. Brands should neither ignore Gen Z, nor should they treat them just like millennials. Gen Z has grown up in a post-9/11 world, has seen their parents struggle through the Great Recession and for these reasons, their world has been more uncertain and fraught with peril than it was for millennials coming of age. Since the size of this generation is growing rapidly, as is their spending power and influence, brands are wise to understand them now.

### **Why Should Marketers Care?**

Because of millennials and Gen Z are adjacent generations, it's quite easy to make assumptions that these generations behave in similar ways. The data that is emerging about Gen Z says otherwise. Brands naturally want to resonate with this generation. Logic and past experience teaches marketers that they must reach Gen Z on its terms and the ground of its choosing. Understanding how the growing influence of this segment is shaping the culture is imperative to connecting with it and becoming a brand that stands for things that matter to this generation. Marketers cannot afford to remain ignorant about what these young consumers expect of brands today.

### **Key Future Consumer Stat**

According to [Fung Global Retail & Technology](#) research, Gen Z made up an estimated 26% of the global population in 2015 and this share is expected to peak at 33% in 2020.

Expert  
Perspective

**KANTAR CONSULTING**

## **Kantar Consulting report**

*"Global Centennials: The Next Wave of Influencers, Disruptors, and Consumers."*

"As Centennials (Gen Z) age into young adulthood, they will reshape categories and upend industries. Brands that know where to look can begin to read the signs and make predictions about how Centennials will influence their future. Understanding this generation's values and motivations is a key first step in setting yourself up for success as Centennials take the reins and drive global markets."

# What Gen Z Expects from Brands

Angie Read shared the actions that correspond to the mindsets shared previously that brands can take to reach Gen Z:

- 1 Take a stand.** Brands must stand for something more than just the bottom line. Gen Z is watching what brands do and will support those that take a stand on issues that they believe in, especially regarding human rights, race, and sexual orientation.
- 2 Prove it.** Gen Z requires proof, and this is frequently seen through a brand's advertising. This generation doesn't want great storytelling; it wants great story-living. Brands must live their story and purpose through their products, hiring practices, and all business decisions.
- 3 Get real.** This generation expects transparency, authenticity, and originality. For this reason, brands are finding out that Gen Z prefers to see real people in advertisements instead of celebrities.
- 4 Play by their social rules.** Gen Z expects brands to educate themselves on, and adhere to, their detailed rule system for using the four major platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat.
- 5 Support "brand me."** Members of Gen Z are attracted to brands that help them curate and manage their own personal brand by listening to them, reflecting their values, building trust, engaging, and inspiring them.
- 6 Blend their worlds.** Gen Z doesn't separate their online and offline experiences, and they value brands that seamlessly blend the physical and digital worlds.

Brands that want to connect with Gen Z should test themselves to see how well brands meet these expectations.

## Want to learn more?



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