

Gen Z social usage rising as their parents start to log off

Article

Two-thirds of the US population will use social networks on a monthly basis in 2022, with the largest influx of new users coming from Gen Z.

This year, 4.0 million Gen Zers (born between 1997 and 2012) will become social network users, up 8.4% over 2021. That momentum will continue, and in 2025—the year the youngest

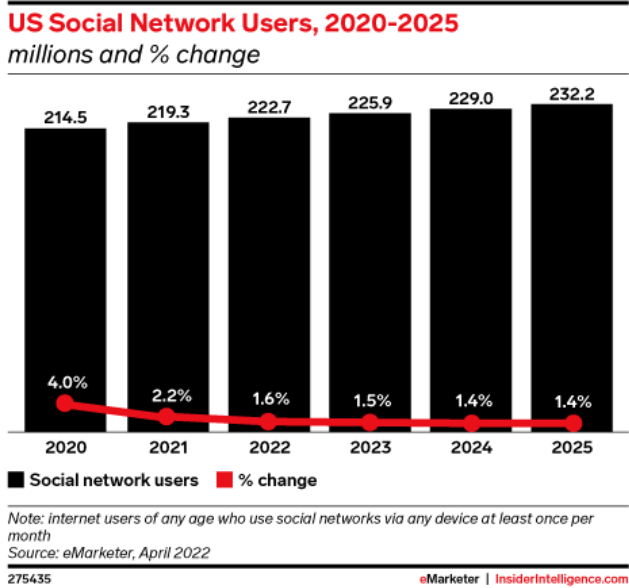
members of the generation turn 13—there will be 13.8 million more Gen Z social network users than there were in 2021.

With each year that passes, younger Gen Zers become teens and start to use social networks for the first time. As a result, all the major social networks will see growth in Gen Z users this year, with double-digit gains on Reddit (up 15.3%), TikTok (11.5%), and Instagram (10.5%). Among the rest, Pinterest will be up 7.9%; Twitter, up 5.9%; and Snapchat, up 5.1%. Even Facebook will be up 4.9%.

Remember—Gen Z is more than just teens. Although the 12-to-17 age group is an important component of this generation, it also includes people younger and older than that. Evaluating social usage growth by age instead of by generation shows a very different pattern. This year, there will be just 1.1% growth among teens ages 12 to 17, reaching 18.4 million users, and 0.3% growth among 18- to 24-year-olds, reaching 27.9 million users.

While Gen Z grows, this year will mark the first-ever decline in the number of Gen X users. As parents, they took to Facebook in the 2000s and 2010s to post countless pictures of their kids, travels, and food. But that excitement has faded, while concerns about privacy, misinformation, and inflammatory content have risen. Meanwhile, platforms that appeal to younger audiences, like TikTok and Snapchat, haven't entirely filled the void.

In 2022, there will be 51.6 million Gen X (born between 1965 and 1980) social network users—down 0.9% compared with 2021. Declines will continue through the end of our forecast.



Boomers will also see declines. The number of social network users born between 1946 and 1965 will slide 1.3% after falling 0.6% in 2021. The two generations will lose a combined 6.1 million social users between 2021 and 2026.

- **Glass half full:** A breakdown by age reveals that the oldest social network users, ages 65 and older, will outnumber the 55-to-64 group—27.3 million versus 26.6 million—this year for the first time. The number of users 65 and older will rise 4.1%, compared with just 1.5% for the next oldest cohort.
- **Glass half empty:** Within the coming decade, millennials will probably be the next generation to experience declines in social usage. We expect users to grow by just 0.6% YoY this year and by 0.3% in 2026.

Read the full report.

Report by Debra Aho Williamson Jun 16, 2022

US Social Media Usage 2022

