Winning over Gen Z's 'me mentality,' with Alo Yoga, Ulta Beauty, and more
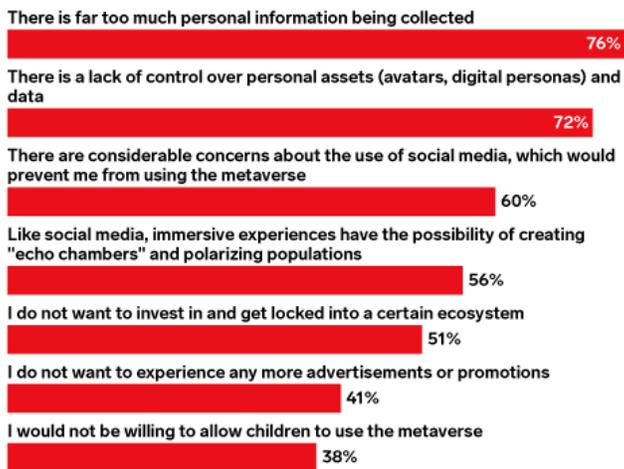
Article

The majority of US Gen Zers are now adults, according to the US Census Bureau. The cohort is more diverse than any other generation and has a distinct identity shaped by its digital dependency during the pandemic. Gen Z has emerged with a distinct "me mentality," prioritizing mental health and individuality after a childhood behind screens.

With Gen Zers' spending power on the rise and fierce competition for their dollars, marketers need to feed that "me mentality" to stay competitive.

Barriers to Using the Metaverse According to Internet Users Worldwide, Aug 2022

% of respondents

There is far too much personal information being collected	76%
There is a lack of control over personal assets (avatars, digital personas) and data	72%
There are considerable concerns about the use of social media, which would prevent me from using the metaverse	60%
Like social media, immersive experiences have the possibility of creating "echo chambers" and polarizing populations	56%
I do not want to invest in and get locked into a certain ecosystem	51%
I do not want to experience any more advertisements or promotions	41%
I would not be willing to allow children to use the metaverse	38%

Note: ages 18+
Source: Capgemini Research Institute, "Total Immersion: How Immersive Experiences and the Metaverse Benefit Customer Experience and Operations," Dec 8, 2022

279886 InsiderIntelligence.com

1. Offer a confidence boost

Some 64% of Gen Z adults agree their life isn't where they thought it would be, and 54% of Gen Z teens feel they missed out on typical teenage experiences because of the pandemic, according to Mintel.

Brands need to acknowledge and account for areas where Gen Zers feel they missed out while accepting that most of the age group has reached adulthood.

Brand example: Athleisure brand Alo Yoga plays to Gen Z by offering affordable luxury that allows young consumers to buy a premium product at a price they can afford. By using influencers like Hailey Bieber and Bella Hadid, the brand emphasizes star quality while remaining accessible.

2. Support mental health

Gen Z adults' top health priorities are taking care of mental health (42%), managing stress (41%), taking time for themselves (38%), and eating healthy (38%), according to Mintel. Gen Zers are looking for brands that value mental health the same way they do.

Brand example: Stationery brand Papier has emphasized the mental health benefits of journaling and of a "digital detox" in order to appeal to mental health-conscious consumers on TikTok.

3. Enhance individuality

Some 60% of Gen Z adults prefer to stand out over fitting in, compared with 43% of overall adults, per Mintel. Following several years of fitting into a Zoom box, the generation is looking for personalization and individuality in the products they buy.

Brand example: Beauty brand Ulta Beauty is investing in its personalized omnichannel experiences, an effort that will only help the brand grow as one of Gen Z's favorite brands, according to Piper Sandler.

4. Offer quality

Despite the fact that just 19% of Gen Z adults feel financially healthy, 77% agree it's worth it to pay more for higher-quality products, according to Mintel. That means fast fashion isn't always going to cut it. Gen Zers are willing to splurge on items and experiences they feel are worth it.

Brand example: Brands like Coach and Kate Spade have leveraged resale to stay relevant with Gen Z. About 30% of Gen Z buys resale to afford higher-end brands, according to a thredUP report.

5. Tap into social media

Gen Z adults trusts influencers over brands because they value real-world experience. That means leveraging organic social media and influencer marketing on TikTok, Instagram, and beyond to get Gen Z buy-in.

Brand example: Language app Duolingo has made its presence (and its green owl mascot) ubiquitous on TikTok and other social media platforms. The force behind Duolingo's social

media success? Gen Z marketing professionals.

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