

Why it's time for marketers to pay attention to Gen Alpha

Article

Millennials are parenting. Gen Z is entering the workforce. And the never-ending wheel of time has spun a new generation for marketers to watch: **Generation Alpha**. The oldest members of this digitally native, pandemic-influenced generation are tweens now, and marketers need to pay attention to how today's children differ from their Gen Z older siblings.

Diverse and digital: Gen Alpha comprises those born around 2012 through to now, meaning the oldest members of Gen Alpha are already 11 years old.

- The up-and-coming generation is more **diverse than the rest of the US population**, according to the US Census Bureau.
- Gen Alpha will be the **largest generation in history**, with over 2 billion members by 2025, according to RetailWire. The demographic **already makes up 13%** of the US population.
- Over 73% of US children under 12 use the internet, and nearly 17% are smartphone users, according to our data.

Mobile first: Gen Alpha will be “**immersed in a mobile reality**,” said our analyst Christina Obolenskaya. They’re not just borrowing their parents’ smartphones, either. By 2026, 10.2 million US children will own a smartphone, per our forecast.

YouTube, YouTube, and more YouTube: That’s where kids are spending their smartphone time. More kids watch YouTube than TikTok, Disney+, and even Netflix.

- Nearly 57% of US kids under 12 use YouTube, meaning YouTube has a higher penetration among the youngest users than among those ages 65 and older, according to our data.
- Just 5.1% of US kids under 12 use TikTok, though that figure could rise as TikTok is younger than most of its Gen Alpha users.

How can marketers catch and keep Gen Alpha’s attention? Authenticity, interactivity, and gamification.

- In the same way Gen Alpha was born with a smartphone in their hands, they were born gaming. Marketers need to leverage this by attaching gaming opportunities to brands, the way **Lego has on its website**, or building experiences within games like Roblox.
- Interactivity is important beyond gaming as well. As true digital natives, members of Gen Alpha can spot paid promotional content immediately. Keep them from scrolling past by leveraging polls or promos.
- Or bypass the problem by opting for native ads within YouTube videos, though those can run in the multimillion-dollar range when working with **major creators like MrBeast and PewDiePie**, according to Observer, so advertisers may want to search for smaller creators.

- Don't be afraid to go global. For the generation that attended online school at an early age, no distance is too far when it comes to connecting or shopping. **Gen Alpha is more than willing to shop globally**, so don't be afraid to think big.

Beware potential regulation: In his State of the Union address, President Biden **called for legislators to “ban targeted advertising on children.”** While a true ban seems unlikely, stricter privacy policies for kids' data is entirely possible. And while boosting familiarity with young consumers, don't overindex on targeted ads for kids.

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