

# Why Olipop, Crocs, and Coach are feeling the Gen Z love

Article

To catch Gen Z's interest, brands need to understand how the generation eats, drinks, shops, and thinks. Olipop uses TikTok and the promise of gut health to capture Gen Z's attention, while Crocs leans on Gen Z's sense of nostalgia and cool collaborations. Coach reinvented itself to appeal to a younger generation of fashion consumers who want to express themselves and GU makes its US debut as Uniqlo's younger sister brand.

Here are four brands that have zeroed in on what Gen Z wants and why they're gaining popularity right now.

## 1. The newcomer: Olipop

Olipop, a prebiotic soda brand, is gaining attention as consumers seek out healthier alternatives to traditional soda. The brand is on **track to earn \$200 million in annual sales this year** and has already seen interest from PepsiCo and The Coca-Cola Co., according to founder and CEO Ben Goodwin, per CNBC.

Olipop comes in a variety of flavors, ranging from watermelon lime to classic root beer. In February, the latter became the best-selling single-serve root beer in the US, surpassing A&W, **per Spins data** as reported by PureWow.

**Why Gen Z loves it:** Using **celebrity influencers** and **recipe content**, Olipop has built up a pretty big following on TikTok, where 29% of Gen Z shoppers most often discover consumer packaged goods products, **according to Tinuiti**. It also claims to promote gut health, one of Gen Z's most sought-after health benefits from food, beverages, or nutrients, **per 2022 International Food Information Council data** as reported by Food Insight.

## 2. The younger sister: GU

GU (pronounced like the letters) is owned by Uniqlo parent company Fast Retailing Group. **Founded in 2006**, the clothing retailer has over 450 stores across Asia but just opened its first US location in New York City last October.

GU carries "elevated basics" like T-shirts, sweaters, jeans, and cargo pants for a lower price point than Uniqlo. Also unlike Uniqlo, which maintains a consistent range of styles from season to season, GU changes its offerings to stay current with major fashion trends and current pop culture moments, according to Insider.

**Why Gen Z loves it:** Gen Z is just as concerned about sustainability as it is with staying on trend. GU's prices won't break the bank, but its clothing is still of high-enough quality that it won't fall apart after one use. Plus, basics are always in-style, giving Gen Z the ability to mix and match their outfits to whatever their mood is that day, whether it's a button-up for work or a super-wide cargo pant for hanging out with friends.

### 3. The unexpected comeback: Crocs

Crocs have had quite a ride. Introduced in 2002 as a comfortable boating shoe, the easy-to-clean non-slip shoes were soon deemed uncool and ugly. Now, 20 years later, what once was considered a brand that no fashionable person would wear out of the house has turned into a favorite of Gen Zers and celebrities alike.

On TikTok, users **show off their crocs collections**, or decorate them for occasions like **Halloween** or **even their wedding**. **Justin Bieber, SZA, and Diplo have all collaborated with the brand**, giving the Crocs brand street cred as well as appealing to consumers' desire for one-of-a-kind products.

**Why Gen Z loves it:** **Gen Zers grew up with the “ugly” fashion of the early 2000s**, so it makes sense that their nostalgia for ugly-comfort clothes (like velour tracksuits and Birkenstocks) would resurface. In addition, wearing the highly memeable shoe feels like an inside joke, consistent with Gen Z's sense of humor.

### 4. The reinvention: Coach

After years of disappointing sales, **Coach has reinvented itself** in order to reach a new generation of luxury buyers. The brand is now focused on “expressive luxury,” Joon Silverstein, Coach's senior vice president of global and North American marketing and sustainability, told Insider, inviting customers to use its products to show their emotions and values.

As part of its new image, Coach has partnered with rapper Lil Nas X, actress Camila Mendes, and Japanese model Koki, as well as expanding its sustainability efforts with its Coachtopia line of recycled and restored products.

**Why Gen Z loves it:** By pivoting from accessible to expressive luxury, Coach is tapping into Gen Zers' desire to express themselves through what they wear, not necessarily the label that's on it. It's also tapping into the secondhand market, which Gen Z values for being both sustainable and a way to save some money.

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