

How Gen Z is changing social media—and why marketers should care

Article

It's been a tough year for social media.

Meta is struggling after **hemorrhaging money** on its metaverse ambitions and as Instagram faces serious competition from TikTok. Meanwhile, **TikTok recently reduced its global revenue goals** for the year and could be facing some **regulatory** and **legal** hurdles ahead. And don't even get us started on Twitter.

As the social media giants battle it out, the question on everyone's mind is: Is social media over?

“**Social media isn't dying, it's simply evolving.** And Gen Z is driving the change,” said our analyst Jasmine Enberg during the keynote session of our “**Attention! Trends and Predictions for 2023**” event.

Back to basics: While TikTok is still the app of choice for teens (we expect nearly 70% of Gen Zers to use it monthly next year), emerging competitors are catching up.

- According to our data, nearly three years since its launch, over a third of teens are currently on **BeReal**, ahead of where Instagram was at its three-year mark and on par with Snapchat's.
- We expect that Gen Z will continue to reject old-school social media and turn to new platforms like Fizz, Gas, and Geneva in the year ahead.
- “What's interesting about these apps is that they tap into the original premise of social networking, connecting [people] in smaller groups,” said Enberg.

Why it matters: While it may be tempting to write off these new-fangled platforms as a fad, all evidence points to their staying power. Here are three reasons marketers should be paying attention to the newcomers:

1. They give Gen Z what they crave.

Free speech has become a major topic of discussion among Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter. But that isn't what's most important to teens, said Enberg. In fact, over 60% of US teens report that feeling “welcome and safe” is more important than having a space to speak freely online, per Pew Research Center.

2. They're based on connecting in smaller, more intimate groups.

Platforms like **Gas**, which is made for high schoolers, or **Reddit**, which emphasizes fandoms and shared interests, have recently seen a boost in engagement among teens, according to Enberg.

3. Ads may not be their primary revenue source.

Enberg expects that the newest crop of platforms will look to commerce, subscriptions, and paid features to drive revenues. “Many of these new apps will eventually have to turn to advertising,” she predicted. Still, just because a platform isn’t ad-driven, **doesn’t mean there isn’t any value for marketers.**

The bottom line: Social media isn’t going anywhere, but it is in a transition phase. Marketers should look to Gen Z for a glimpse into its future and be prepared for more changes in 2023 and beyond.

Missed the “Attention!” event? You can rewatch sessions [here](#).

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