

ENGAGING YOUR CUSTOMER IN SNOW SPORTS GET TO KNOW: GENERATION Y





ENGAGING YOUR CUSTOMERS IN SNOW SPORTS

Understanding your customers is the key to staying relevant in a rapidly shifting marketplace. Currently, members of Generation Y, the Millennials, make up the majority of snow sports consumers and soon their children will be taking their first lessons on the slopes. The snow sports market must understand what motivates this generation in order to stay relevant in a world overcrowded entertainment and product options. This report is designed to help you better understand the characteristics of this generation not only in terms of labels and vague character traits, but in terms of the environment they adapted to as they became adults with hundreds of billions of dollars in spending power. This report will help you better communicate with and sell to members of Gen Y, the Millennials.

Upcoming versions:

Gen Z in Snow Sports – a report on the next generation to arrive in snow sports, understanding kids born between 2001 and 2013. (November 2013 release)

Gen X in Snow Sports – understanding and communicating with snow sports consumers age 35 to 50. (January 2014 release)

Baby Boomers in Snow Sports – reporting on the ongoing influence of the generation that changed everything. (April 2014 release)

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For 59 years, SIA has worked continuously with our members: alpine, snowboard, cross country, backcountry, snowshoe, apparel, and accessories, rep, retailer, resort, regional and national associations and Buying Groups. Guidance from these different sectors of the industry make SIA what it is today, an organization representative of suppliers, retailers and reps all with the goal of getting more people on snow more often and making sure they are properly equipped and dressed to give them the best experience of snow sports.

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In 2013 Generation Y, also known as the Millennials make up the largest participation group in the snow sports industry but marketing to them remains vexing. In fact, data suggests that Gen Y does not want to be marketed to at all; they want brands to engage and connect with them rather than simply attempt to sell them a product. And compared to just ten years ago the number of vehicles for communication has skyrocketed making it exponentially more difficult to reach members of this generation.

Successful marketing campaigns like Dos Equis "Most Interesting Man in the World" and Old Spice "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like" are aimed at Gen Y and engage those consumers with a character to follow. These campaigns are designed to draw Gen Y consumers into a story and onto various media platforms to interact with, and to get more information about the character (and the product). These examples and a deeper knowledge of what makes the Millennials unique may help snow sports brands truly engage Gen Y consumers and grow participation in snow sports. Understanding and engaging Gen Y will take more than a list of labels, it requires an understanding of the environment they were born into and required to adapt to in order to thrive.



Photo 2

Gen Y (a.k.a. Millennials) Basic Facts:

70M persons in the U.S. born between 1985 and 2000

8M+ snow sports participants







97% have a mobile phone, 72% own a Smartphone and 41% have made a purchase on their Smartphone



\$200B in annual spending power (Kelton Research)

75% have a profile on a social networking site









13% unemployment rate (compared to 7.1% national average)

34% of Gen Y women have a college degree compared to 27% of Gen Y Men



22% of Gen Y are married, 51% of births among Millennials were to unwed mothers (39% for Gen X in comparable time frame)

29% live with their parents (in 1980 11% of 18 to 29 year olds lived with parents)



How does Gen Y impact snow sports and why should we care? Millennials are not alien creatures we must strive to understand, increasingly in snow sports they *are* us. More than 40% of all snow sports participants fit into the Gen Y category including more than half of all snow-boarders and freeskiers, and 35% of all alpine and cross country skiers. Gen Y snow sports participants are concentrated on either side of

the country; 1 in 3 live on the Eastern seaboard and 1 in 5 live in the Pacific Region but that doesn't mean they don't travel to the middle of the country to participate in snow sports. Males make up about 60% of Gen Y participants and most either ski or snowboard or participate in both. In fact, Gen Y participants are leading the trend in crossover, particularly between snowboard and freeski (park and pipe). In order to

grow, or even maintain participation levels in snow sports Gen Y must be engaged. In particular, snowboard and freeski categories are dependent upon Gen Y participants and in just a few years, the children of Gen Y will take to the slopes. The snow sports market must find ways to engage members of Gen Y in order to grow.

Total Participants	Snowboard	Alpine	Cross Country	Freeski
Total Participants (all ages) 1+ times	7,579,000	10,201,000	4,318,000	3,643,000
Core Participants (9+ times)	1,978,000	2,431,000	1,217,000	925,000
Number of Gen Y (18 to 34) 1+ times	4,114,000	3,620,000	1,568,000	1,822,000
Number of Gen Z (under 18) 1+ times	2,025,000	2,349,000	635,000	699,000
Female Participants	Snowboard	Alpine	Cross Country	Freeski
Total Participants (all ages) 1+ times	2,672,000	3,951,000	1,770,000	1,382,000
Core Participants (9+ times)	602,000	907,000	441,000	311,000
Number of Gen Y (18 to 34) 1+ times	1,570,000	1,428,000	676,000	711,000
Number of Gen Z (under 18) 1+ times	628,000	1,005,000	265,000	276,000
Male Participants	Snowboard	Alpine	Cross Country	Freeski
Total Participants (all ages) 1+ times	4,907,000	6,250,000	2,548,000	2,258,000
Core Participants (9+ times)	1,376,000	1,524,000	776,000	614,000
Number of Gen Y (18 to 34) 1+ times	2,544,000	2,192,000	892,000	1,111,000
Number of Gen Z (under 18) 1+ times	1,397,000	1,344,000	370,000	423,000

Source: 2011 2012 SIA Participation Report – data produced by the Physical Activity Council

Alpine Ski Gen Y Participant Profile

vs. Snowboard Gen Y Participant Profile

35% of all alpine skiers in Gen Y (18 to 34)

3.6M Millennials ski, 60/40 male to female ratio (same as overall)

Ethnic Diversity (all generations) – 80% White, 9% Asian/Pacific Islander, 6% Hispanic, 3% Black

48% live in cities of 2M or more persons

- 38% live in the Atlantic Region
- 21% live in the Midwest
- 19% live in the Pacific Region
- 13% live in the Mountain Region
- 9% live in the North Central Region

1 in 5 will snowboard at least once during a season

1 in 5 will try backcountry skiing (non-lift served backcountry) and 1 in 3 are considering exploring the backcountry terrain in liftserved areas.

The most common reason for not buying new equipment – 75% said "My current equipment still has plenty of life left in it."

The most important factor in their decision to buy new equipment – 75% "I wanted new equipment with better technology."

70% of alpine skiing Millennials say they think global warming is having a significant impact on snowfall and will result in resorts closing and fewer people skiing and riding

Most common words used when asked to describe why they enjoy skiing — "the perfect turn" and various words surrounding the theme of being outside and appreciating nature.

54% of all snowboarders in Gen Y (18 to 34)

4.1M Millennials ride, 62/38 male to female ratio (female compared to overall)

Ethnic Diversity (all generations) – 67% White, 15% Asian/Pacific Islander, 10% Hispanic, 5% Black

53% live in cities of 2M or more persons

- 34% live in the Atlantic Region
- 27% live in the Pacific Region
- 21% live in the North Central Region
- 12% live in the Mountain Region
- 6% live in the Midwest

15% Gen Y snowboarders will ski 1 time or more during a season and another 20% have crossed over a few times in the past to ski and think they probably will again in the future.

7 in 10 will try backcountry snowboarding within resort boundaries (non-lift served backcountry), 20% will ride backcountry and 50% say they are considering trying backcountry riding.

The most important factor in their decision to buy new equipment – 76% "I wanted new equipment with better technology," and 71% said "old equipment was worn out." 28% said they found "a great deal on the Internet" that motivated them to buy.

The most common reason for not buying new equipment – 76% said "my current equipment still has plenty of life left in it."

65% of snowboard riding Millennials says they think global warming is having a significant impact on snowfall and will result in resorts closing and fewer people skiing and riding. Only 5% said they think "skiing and riding will die" as a result of global warming.

Most common word used when asked to describe why they enjoy riding is "freedom."

Cross Country Ski Gen Y Participant Profile FreeSki (Park & Pipe) Gen Y Participant Profile VS. 36% of all cross country skiers in Gen Y (18 to 34) 50% of all Freeskiers skiers in Gen Y (18 to 34) 1.6M Millennials xc ski, 57/43 male to female ratio 1.8M Millennials freeski, 61/39 male to female ratio Ethnic Diversity (all generations) – 74% White, 11% Asian/Pacific Ethnic Diversity (all generations) - 65% White, 18% Asian/Pacific Islander, 8% Hispanic, 4% Black Islander, 9% Hispanic, 7% Black 42% live in cities of 2M or more persons 56% live in cities of 2M or more persons • 36% live in the Atlantic Region · 39% live in the Atlantic Region 33% live in the Mountain Region 21% live in the Pacific Region 11% live in the Pacific Region 17% live in the Midwest 10% live in the Midwest

"People resemble their times more than they resemble their parents.' Gen Yers are children of the cyber revolution," writes Joeri Van den Bergh and Mattias Behrer in their book How Cool Brands Stay Hot: Branding to Generation Y. "Just like the Industrial Revolution changed lifestyle and culture by the end of the nineteenth century, the omnipresent connectivity and digital advancement has reshaped the social DNA of our current and future youth generations."

Keep in mind that there are no truly clear-cut borders when it comes to defining generations, however, generally speaking, Gen Y consists of persons born between 1985 and 2000. This generation is approximately 70 million strong and it is the largest generation in history. Many researchers have worked to describe the attitudes and traits of this generation and have done so with labels like family-oriented, narcissistic, collaborative, entitled, attention-craving, techsavvy, and communicators. Although these labels may help define persons born into Gen Y, they don't adequately describe why this generation exhibits these traits and understanding why is crucial to building a strategy to influence this group, i.e. successful marketing campaigns.

9% live in the North Central Region

Every generation develops traits in response to the environment they are born into and Gen Y is no exception.

Gen Y was the first generation born into the information age, members of Gen Y pioneered social media and most have enjoyed instant access to information and new vehicles for communicating with each other and with the world. This generation's entry into the workforce is significantly affected by one of the most severe economic downturns since the Great Depression and data suggest that the impacts of that will remain throughout the Gen Y professional journey. Gen Y came of age in a more open society and consequently, tends to be more

open to differing views on sex, culture, and a wide array of social issues. Millennials experienced the first foreign terrorist attack on U.S. soil on 9/11/2001 when they were children and have come of age in the aftermath of that event. There are more Gen Y females than males earning college degrees and women increasingly fill the role of family bread winner. Just like every generation, Gen Y is a product of their environment, members have adapted to the world they were born into.

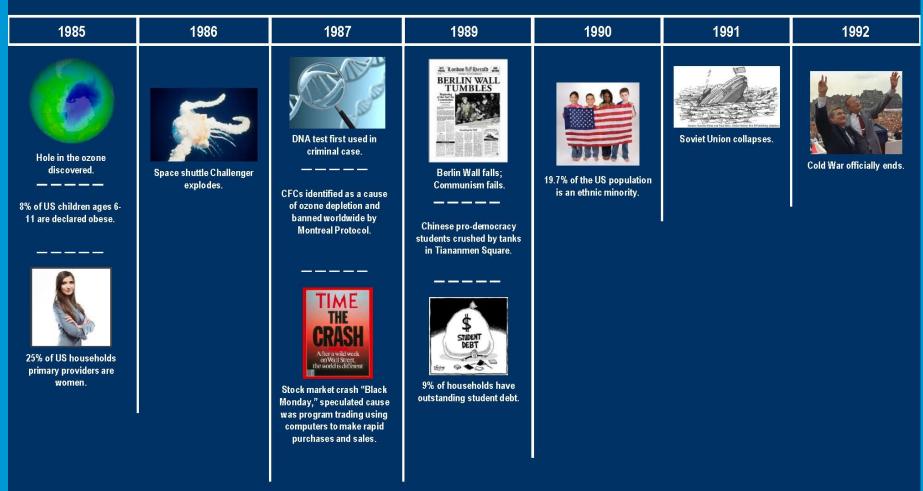
19% live in the North Central Region

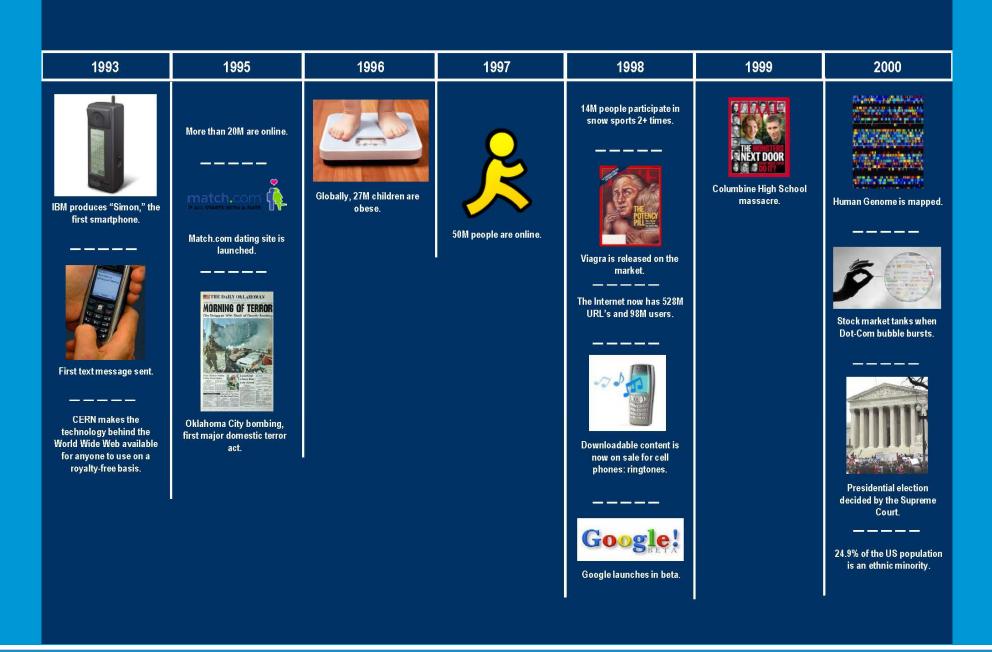
4% live in the North Central Region

Let's take a look at some of Gen Y's experiences so far:

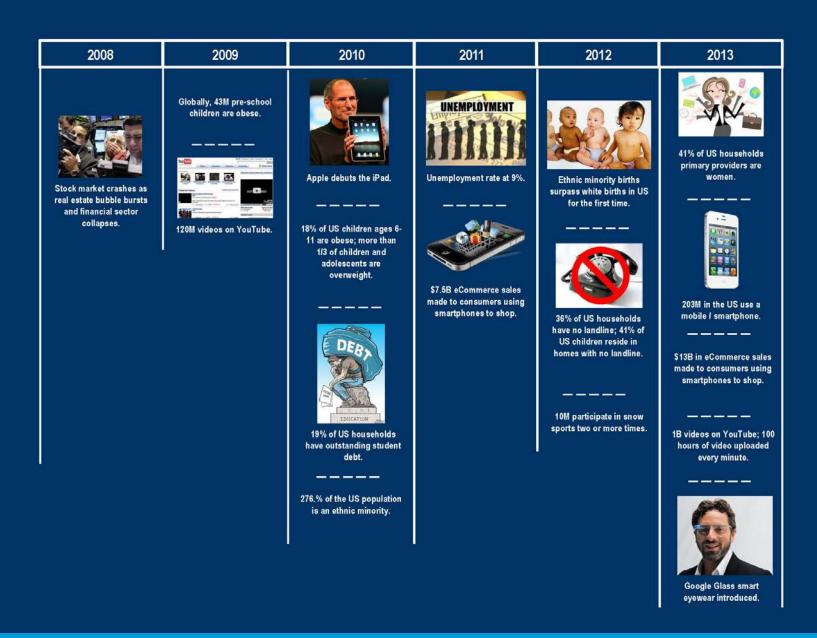
Generation Y

45% of skiers and 53% of snowboarders are between ages 18 and 34.









As the timeline demonstrates, rapid advances in communication and technology have deeply affected Gen Y. Gen Y is Internet savvy and steeped in technology and the costs of marketing to them can be daunting. In fact, their use of Smartphones, dedicated gaming consoles, social media, and their connectivity in general has helped define the generation. Consider that YouTube already had more than 120M videos uploaded before the oldest Millennials were 10 years old. Almost all Millennials (97%) have a mobile phone and 3 in 4 of them own a Smartphone capable of Internet browsing. The average Millennial sends and/or receives almost 50 text messages per day (PEW Research) and prefers text and email over person-to-person calls. In fact, 9 in 10 check their Smartphones as part of their morning routine to get ready for work or for school.

More than ¾ of Millennials have at least one profile on a social media site like Facebook or Twitter and more than 40% update Facebook or Tweet at least once every day. The Internet and various communication tools that have spawned from it have exploded the number of marketing channels available to brands and consumers. Gen Y's broad use of these channels means that marketing campaigns must be widely dispersed across an array of those channels.

To make matters worse for marketing campaigns, Gen Y "trust peers first and parents second, and hate to be 'sold' anything." (Sarah Sladek XYZ University). Successful marketing campaigns by brands including Old

Spice and Red Bull engage Gen Y on multimedia platforms that take advantage of the new array of marketing channels used by Gen Y consumers.

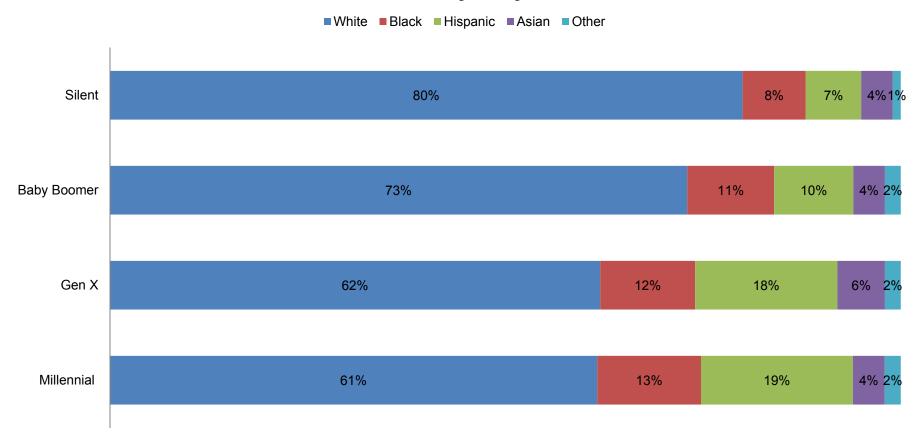
In addition to technology, demographics are crucial to understanding Gen Y's openness to diversity but this is nothing new as demographic shifts have left their mark on every generation in American history. In the 18 to 29 year age category, 61% of the U.S. population is white compared to 70% in the 30 and older age categories. Surprisingly, en X is equally diverse and the increasingly open attitudes about ethnicity and culture more

often decried as a trait embodied by those in the Millennial generation appear to be a continuation of attitudes born on demographic shifts embodied first in Gen X. Census projections and current births by ethnicity statistics indicate that the trend toward a more diverse population in the U.S. is accelerating. This acceleration appears to be a central driver behind Gen Y members' attitudes toward inclusiveness without discrimination based on ethnicity. Snow sports are not commonly associated with diversity but both Gen X and Gen Y members naturally will drive the participation base in a more ethnically diverse direction.



Photo 3

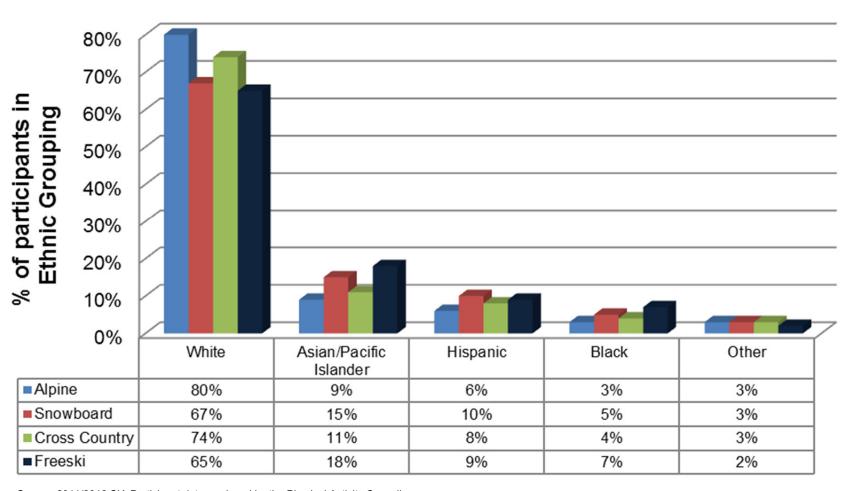
Race and Ethnicity % by Generation



Source: Pew Research Center tabulations from the March 2009 Current Population Survey for the civilian, non-institutional population.

Consider that Gen X pioneered the snowboard and freeski disciplines which are the most diverse in snow sports and also are made up of more than 50% Millennial participants.

Diversity in Snow Sports



Source: 2011/2012 SIA Participant data produced by the Physical Activity Council

Diversity has increased in every snow sports discipline over the past 5 years and the trend is gathering steam. This means that marketing efforts and efforts to grow participation in snow sports must consider a more ethnically diverse participation base.

In addition to diversity and technology, family relationship dynamics between parents and Gen Y children distinguish Gen Y members from past generations. Gen Y's relationship with authority is vastly different than Gen X or the Baby Boom generations; they were nurtured and coached by authority rather than ruled by it. Even so, a significant amount of literature on Gen Y indicates that Millennials lack respect for authority and seeks to describe why. Experts generally describe a generation that was raised to question authority, to challenge the status quo by parents who are members of the Baby Boomer generation.

careers and aimed their Gen Y kids directly toward college and a specific career. Contrast this with the relationship Gen X members are generally described as having with parents; the first latchkey kids were basically abandoned by authority and forced to become independent.

In addition to vast differences in the environment they were born into, this difference in relationships to authority may help explain many differences between Gen X and Gen Y that vex many brands in the snow sports market. Specifically this knowledge may help snowboard brands owned and managed by

Snow sports brands and the industry itself must approach Gen Y on their terms, engage members of this generation in relationships that help them in their day to day lives. Understand the events that have shaped the current environment and how Gen Y and all consumers have adapted to that environment. Keep in mind what has worked in the past and build on those ideas — yes, including amusing, yet effective ideas like the Dos Equis and Old Spice ad campaigns. Remember that people who were born at different times adapted to very different worlds even if they were born in exactly the same place. What was "cool" to a member of Gen X is

"Their teachers and their Boomer parents focused on positive reinforcement. Boomers grew up with teachers who could smack them (as nuns did in my school) and parents who were likely to side with the teachers. But in the lives of Gen-Yers, corporal punishment was discouraged at home and forbidden at school. They were told that if anyone bullied them or made them uncomfortable, they shouldn't endure it. They should speak up or report it. And in a newsroom, you can expect they will. "— Jill Geisler, TV News Director and Ethics and Journalism Instructor

This generation generally was not exposed to corporal punishment or corrected with criticism; they were nurtured with positive reinforcement and coaching as they learned. Their parents helped them manage their schedules, drove them from place to place, and set up play dates for them with acceptable peers. Often, both parents had

the pioneers of snowboarding and key influencers of Generation X who are looking for more Gen Y customers.

So what does this description of Gen Y boil down to and what do snow sports brands and the industry in general need to know to reach and engage members of this generation? most likely not "cool" to Gen Y, and frankly not "cool" to Gen X anymore. Understand the various communication vehicles and how they are used including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, Tumblr – and the list goes on. In short, understand the environment, adapt and engage.

"Generation X grew up much differently than previous generations before them. They grew up in an era where divorce and working moms were commonplace and thus created a group of individuals who became very independent and resourceful and who learned to adapt to a wide range of circumstances very early in their lives. They grew up during a period of hard economic times which deeply affected them as they began to enter the workforce and felt the need to become extremely self-sufficient as they met the tasks of the job." – Penny Loretto, CEO of Career Choice - Human Resources Expert

One final note; beware of over-generalizations of any generation, whether it's the cynicism of Gen X, the entitlement of Gen Y, the connectedness of Gen Z, even the social con-science of the Baby Boomers. While these labels help define generations, they are far less useful at a personal level. Finally, remember that people and attitudes are dynamic and new ideas can change the mindsets across generations. In fact, Gen Y has proven this already with ideas like Facebook, crowd sourcing, and many others that have changed the world for the better for people of all ages.



Photo 4

For more information about Gen Y, snow sports participants, and the snow sports market please contact Kelly Davis, SIA Director of Research via text message at 301-785-2490, by email at KDavis@snowsports.org, or by calling 703-506-4224 to have a person-to-person conversation.

Recommendations for connecting with your Gen Y consumers:

- Build an email and text database of all customers and tailor marketing to demographics
- Offer incentives on your website to gather information about consumers
- Build a presence for your brand/retail shop on social media sites including Facebook and Twitter
- Engage Gen Y with dynamic content and 2 way communication (i.e. product reviews, a curated comments section, consumer posts of videos and personal stories)
- Marketing campaigns that engage Gen Y consumers (and others) on a wide variety of media platforms (email, website and social media)
- Be authentic
- · Emphasize experience rather than product

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