

# Engaging Gen Z on Social

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# A New Generation Is Preparing for College

Who is Gen Z?

What is Gen Z's  
viewpoint?

How do they use  
social?

## Strategy

- Action requires ability, motivation, and a prompt
- Know your audience to produce the right action
- Plan themes and messaging over a time frame

## Tactics

- Tailor messages to the social platform
- Focus on engagement
- Think of it as a conversation



# Engaging Gen Z requires a more sophisticated social strategy

Gen Z has specific uses for each of the social media platforms they use, and connecting with them requires understanding the etiquette and playing by their rules.



# Rule #1 of Gen Z: They are NOT Millennials

- **Born:** Mid 1990's-2010
- **Influences:** Raised primarily by Gen X, heavily influenced by watching Millennials enter adulthood
- **Technology:** Plugged in and social from a very early age, but they have different views on technology and use of social
- **Worldview:** Combine traditional and non-conformist values and behaviors



Photo from Shutterstock

# Quick Comparison

## Millennials

- **Optimistic:** All thanks to their Boomer parents, still desire the lifestyle of their parents
- **Communal:** More likely to assemble desks into a circle
- **Digitally fluent:** Witnessed the rise of the internet and mobile devices
- **Public:** Put their whole life on display
- **Formal Education:** More likely to have a post-secondary degree and student debt

## Gen Z

- **Realistic:** Grew up in a recession and the 9-11 era, not as coddled, and harder to sell to
- **Independent:** More likely to want their own workspace, but like to collaborate
- **Digital Natives:** Born into the Digital era
- **Private:** More cognizant of privacy, tend to prefer time-bound content sharing
- **On-Demand Learning:** More likely to pursue online or piecemeal learning



# Influencing Gen Z

## Their Parents: Cynics of Gen X

- Raised them to question everything and not settle for the status quo
- Did not believe in everyone gets a trophy
- Struggled financially after layoffs and recession

## Millennial Siblings

- Went out into the world, having been told they could do anything and fully expecting to do so
- Ratcheted up massive student loan debt
- Returned home to live with their parents

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**Gen Z has a cautious outlook on their finances and expect to work hard to achieve their goals. They're looking for support and return on their investments.**



# Gen Z Perspective on Technology

## Technology

- Born and raised in a high-speed, connected world
- Don't believe technology will save the world; it's just a tool
- Expect on-demand, low-barrier to access learning tools
- Have access to unlimited new information, making them more self-reliant

## Social Media

- Watched the evolution of social media and started sharing early
- More judicious in what and how they share
- 44% use social media hourly
- *Have their own etiquette when it comes to social media*

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**Gen Z expect digital learning tools to be deeply integrated into their education and want to collaborate and share in person or using technology.**



# The Duality of Gen Z

## Traditional

- Value hard work and expect to have to work for what they get
- Want to be supported in their efforts, but maintain independence
- Financially responsible, even cautious
- Determined to succeed
- Crave authenticity

## Non-conformist

- Liberal in their views on race, gender, identity, and sexuality
- Want to define themselves, not be labeled
- Champions of justice and equality
- Socially and technologically empowered to drive a progressive, even radical, agenda

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**Gen Z are more traditional in their ideas of success, money, education, and career, but they have fiercely liberal views on diversity and inclusion. Equality is non-negotiable.**



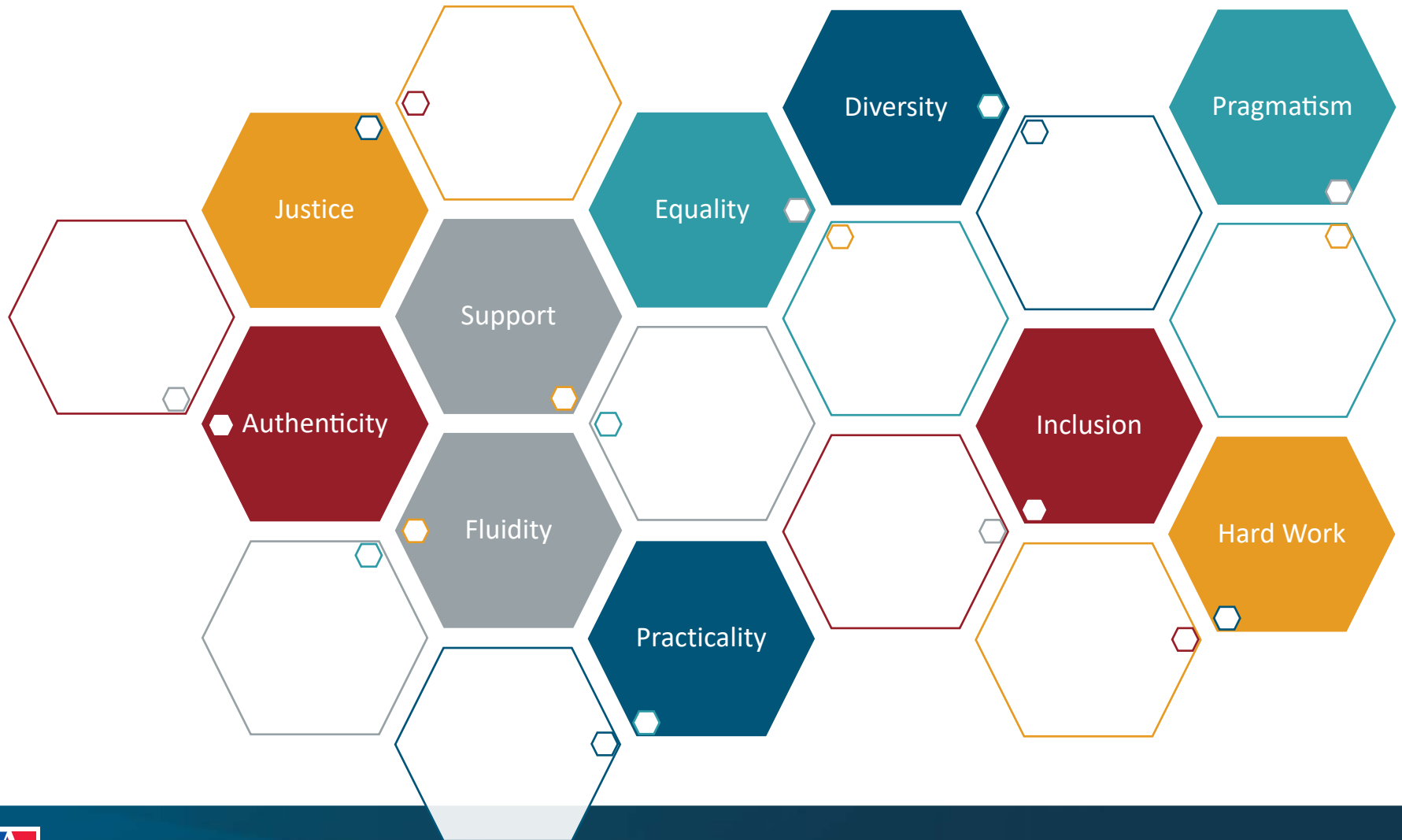


# Gen Z and the Future

- Gen Z believes college is important, but they want to see the return on the investment of tuition. They worry about student loan debt.
- They expect their education to be focused on preparing them for the real world. College is a tool for getting to the best job possible, so they are highly motivated by career outcomes.
- 13% have already started a business on their own. This entrepreneurial spirit drives their desire to customize their curriculum and learning environment.
- They're willing to sacrifice a challenging or inspiring career in favor of one that will provide financial and social stability. Their top priorities are getting a job, graduating from college, and saving for the future.



# Themes that Resonate with Gen Z



# Top Social Platforms for Gen Z

- >**60%** of Gen Z uses each of these platforms
1. Facebook
  2. YouTube
  3. Instagram
  4. Snapchat
  5. Twitter
- 45%** use Twitter

Gen Z is the heaviest user segment for 9 of the top 16 social media platforms, and they use each differently.

Intense use of social may be just part of being a teenager, but researchers\* believe it's more likely a result of social media and digital technology being engrained in all aspects of their lives, for their whole lives.

**The divide between real life and digital is much less significant to Gen Z than older generations.**



# Facebook

The only platform where Gen Z isn't the largest user segment, Facebook is still their most used platform.

Facebook is more for browsing than engaging for Gen Z. They scroll for information more than they post.

Gen Z is less likely to engage with content posted on Facebook than other platforms.

- Gen Z is still seeing what you post on Facebook.
- Most engaging content for Gen Z is video, followed by photos.
- It's a great platform for reaching and engaging with parents of college prospects.

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*\* Facebook's recent data issues and role in the 2016 election cycle could still impact how Gen Z uses it.*

# FACEBOOK

Most popular

**1.9**  
BILLION

unique  
monthly  
users



**predominantly female**

83% of online women

75% of online men

AGES  
**18-49**

**best place to reach Millennials and Generation X**

Generation X spends almost **7 hours per week** on social media

**75%**

of users spend 20 minutes or  
more on Facebook every day

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, [Marketing Profs](#)



# Video on Facebook

**8**  
**BILLION**

average daily video views on Facebook. Facebook users watch 100 million hours of video every day.

**85%**

of users watch video on Facebook with the sound off. Make sure you caption your content!

**20%**

of videos on Facebook are live streams

Source: [Sprout Social, Facebook Stats for Marketers](#)



# Facebook (or Instagram) Live

- Choose a **topic that is relevant** to the conversation
- **Strong wi-fi** connection is necessary
- **Fully charged phone** or connect to a **power source**
- Use a **tripod**
- Think about **sound**
  - Lavalier mics and a splitter
- **Choose a static background** and frame your shot
- **Interact** with commenters
  - A white board or poster board to write questions on is helpful



# Instagram

63% of Gen Z uses Instagram

Instagram feeds are highly curated and groomed by Gen Z

Teens are very careful how they use Instagram, favoring higher-quality images

They will delete photos to optimize their “likes” per photo

- Don't over post on Instagram and “clog” their feeds
- Quality over quantity
- Aspirational content engages best
- Teens are looking to be inspired





# INSTAGRAM

Fastest growing



unique  
monthly  
users



predominantly female  
38% of online women  
26% of online men



90% of Instagram users  
are under 35



of Instagram users  
follow brands

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, [Marketing Profs](#)



# Instagram Stories

- Snapchat copycat feature: photos and video
- Disappear after 24 hours
- Featured at the top of everyone's Instagram feed
- Can edit photos and add captions inside the app
- "Live" video option similar to Facebook



# Don't be afraid to have fun!



# Snapchat

61% of Gen Z uses Snapchat

Less curated and more real life content

Manual selection of who receives content makes them more selective in who they choose

Quickly becoming the new texting for teens

- Platform for “in the moment”
- Not about the perfect, sharable moment
- Tell stories through pictures
- Snapchat filters are a way to engage



# SNAPCHAT

100  
MILLION

daily  
active  
users

54%

of users log in  
every day

60%

of users are  
age 13-24

400%

year-over-year increase in  
daily video views (more than Facebook)



Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, [Marketing Profs](#)





# Snapchat Stories and Geofilters

- Snapchat geofilters are graphic frames that overlay snaps.
- You can purchase a geofilter through the [Snapchat website](#).
- Once you've created a geofilter, make a Snapchat story, so users can submit their snaps from your event for all to see.



# Twitter

Lowest use by Gen Z, but still used by 45%

Content is more about volume than curating an image

Looking for what's happening right now

#MarchForOurLives shows the powerful voice of Gen Z on Twitter and their savvy in wielding it

- Another “in the moment” platform
- Gen Z engages with others in conversation, doesn't just broadcast
- Use their voices to progress their agenda and show support for others
- Conversations happen on Twitter

# TWITTER

Most oversaturated

unique  
monthly  
users

**317**  
MILLION

predominantly male  
22% of online men  
15% of online women



mostly 18-29  
year-olds

AGES  
**18-29**

53% of Twitter users never  
post any updates

**53%**

users only spend an average of 2.7 minutes  
on Twitter's mobile app per day

**2.7**  
MINUTES

Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, [Marketing Profs](#)



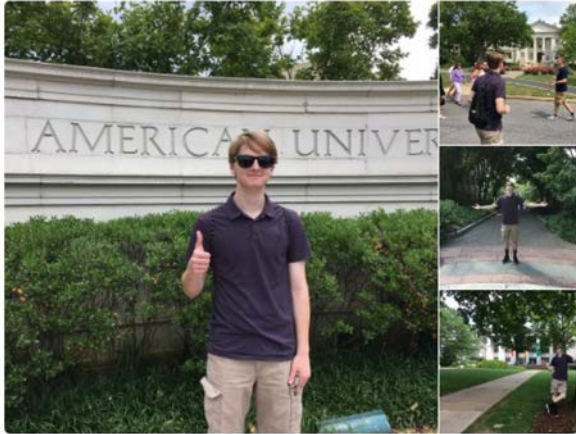




Denton A. Cohen  
@DentonCohen

Follow

My tour of @AmericanU ✓ Such a great campus and overall atmosphere; I'd love to go there if they would take me... 😊



6:51 PM - 15 Jun 2016

22 Likes



3



22



American University  
@AmericanU

Replying to @DentonCohen

Campus looks good on you! Hope you'll apply!

11:39 AM - 16 Jun 2016

1 Retweet 5 Likes



1



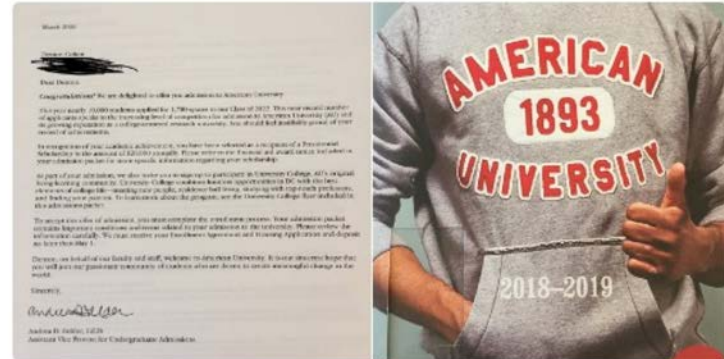
5



Denton A. Cohen  
@DentonCohen

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nearly two years later...



4:06 PM - 26 Mar 2018

1 Retweet 48 Likes



AmericanU Admissions



1



48



American University  
@AmericanU

Replying to @DentonCohen

From touring to admission--what a difference two years makes! Welcome, #NewAUEagle



5:34 PM - 26 Mar 2018

1 Like



1



# Have a conversation (and a sense of humor)

 **Oregon State University** ✓  
@OregonState

[Follow](#)

Settle the debate forever. The ability to fly or the ability to go invisible? Which would you choose? #BigQuestions #College

1:15 PM - 17 May 2017

16 Likes

19 16

 **Sylvia M. Burwell** ✓  
@SylviaBurwell

[Following](#)

15 minutes here won't save you money on your car insurance... 🦎

But it could improve your experience at AU!  
Click here to participate: [bit.ly/AU2018NSSE](http://bit.ly/AU2018NSSE)

It will only take 15 minutes for you to help...

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## SHAPE AU'S FUTURE

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The link to participate in this year's National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is already in your inbox.  
Click the link and share your thoughts.

 **American University** ✓  
@AmericanU

This is Cindy Bear. She was nervous about finals. Not anymore, thanks to her new study group. 13/10, would give extra credit cc: @dog\_rates



12:15 PM - 27 Apr 2017

87 Retweets 1,133 Likes

5 87 1.1K



# YouTube

Used by 91% of Gen Z

They use YouTube as a search engine, as much as for entertainment

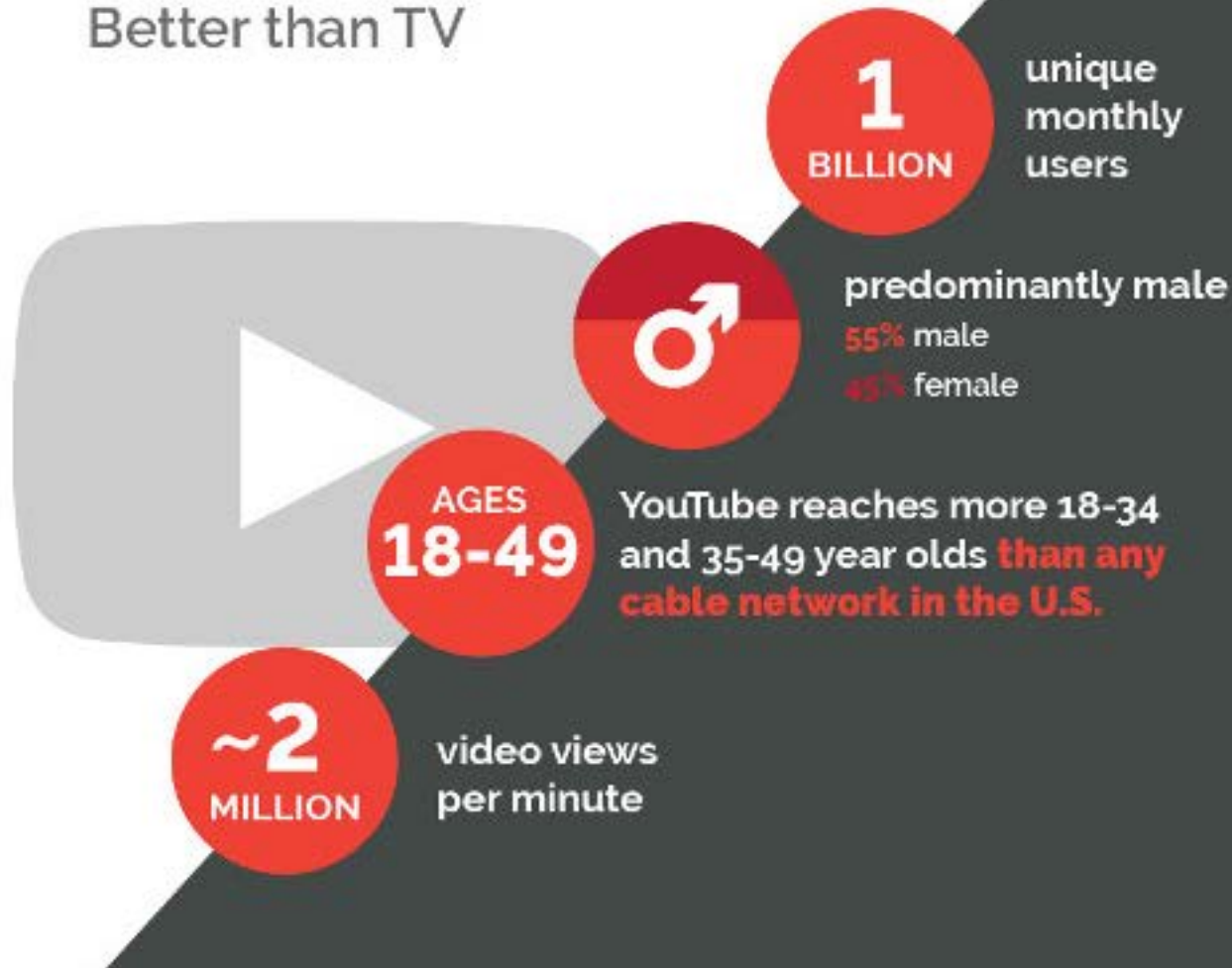
Consuming content, not necessarily creating it

Trust YouTube “celebrities” as much as main stream celebrities

- Keep it short
- Be sure to caption videos for accessibility
- Does not need to be highly produced
- Keep it real; it’s OK to talk to the camera
- Focus your message in each video; don’t try to cover too much
- Did we mention KEEP IT SHORT?

# YOUTUBE

Better than TV



Source: Demographics of the Top 7 Social Networks, [Marketing Profs](#)

# If you remember nothing else ...

- Customize content for the platform, as well as the audience
- Ease into sharing and increase frequency to find the sweet spot
- Use social media to have a conversation; don't just broadcast
- Listen as much as you “talk”
- Leverage video and photos to boost engagement
- Don't be afraid to have some fun!



# Questions?

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**Instagram:** @AmericanUniversity





# Articles

- <https://www.inc.com/ryan-jenkins/generation-z-vs-millennials-the-8-differences-you-.html>
- <https://socialmediaweek.org/blog/2017/12/7-ways-engage-millennials-gen-z-social-media-2018/>
- <https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/meet-generation-z/>
- <https://www.campaignlive.com/article/gen-z-quitting-social-media-droves-unhappy-study-finds/1459007>
- <http://www.thedrum.com/opinion/2018/01/22/has-gen-z-od-d-social-media>
- <http://www.adweek.com/digital/infographic-50-of-gen-z-cant-live-without-youtube-and-other-stats-that-will-make-you-feel-old/>

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- <http://blog.ryan-jenkins.com/2017/03/27/how-generation-z-will-transform-the-workplace-with-david-and-jonah-stillman-podcast>
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- Report: *Getting to Know Gen Z - Exploring Middle and High Schoolers' Expectations for Higher Education*, Barnes & Noble College
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