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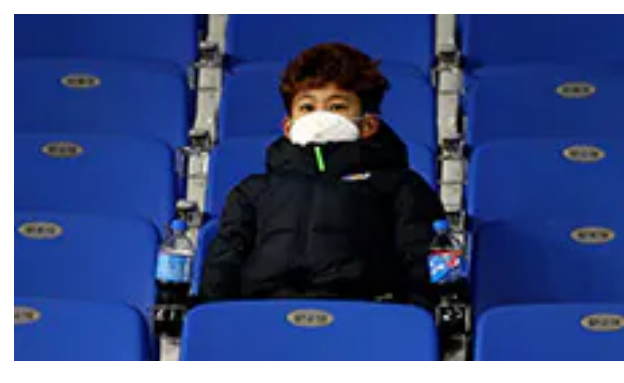


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Close your eyes. Literally envision the consumer of tomorrow – the consumer who is deciding the future of business with their wealth, education and renewed sense of purpose.

And if you're not picturing a woman, your vision is off.

Specifically, you should envision the new Power Players: Gen Z and Millennial women. Fiercely independent, relentless in their quest for global unity, diversity, flexibility, and a better future, these two generations hold all the economic power. Vastly different from yesterday's consumers, will they include your brand in the future they're shaping?

Gen X and Baby Boomer women paved the foundation for today's Power Players, bringing us from the 70s "women's lib" to the normalization of women as the household breadwinner. This momentum has only accelerated with Gen Z and Millennial women. Coming into their own as consumers, workers, students and citizens of the world, not only is this group establishing control over the financial future of our global economy, they're also forcing societal change at an unprecedented pace.

Need proof?

First, consider that women are amassing greater wealth than ever, controlling 85 per cent of household purchases, influencing 89 per cent of banking decisions and adding \$5tn to the wealth pool every year (Boston Consulting Group, 2020). Millennial and Gen Z women are also outpacing all other generations of both men and women in the job market. They embrace entrepreneurship and accordingly earn a greater share of their own wealth, serving their stronger sense of empowerment and agency. (Boston Consulting Group, 2020) Need more? Women now hold 57 per cent of all bachelor's degrees and, in 2019 – for the first time in history – the majority of the college-educated workforce comprised women (NPR, 2019). As educational attainment is highly correlated with income, this is big.

Let this generational economic power shift sink in.

Then know: The differentiator for these women is that they are not seeing this shift as a rebellion, but rather a necessity to create a sustainable global community for generations to come. Your new job is to support them.

Understanding that they are constantly connected, financially deliberate, and incredibly informed, they are also inundated with information at every turn and are looking for brands to ride shotgun with them while building a better world. Moving these women from an afterthought to the entire strategy means understanding their four non-negotiables.

On-demand at new levels: Known as 'digital natives', these younger women desire always-on connectedness and service that truly supports them whenever and wherever they are in their dynamic lives. Understanding and anticipating their needs is critical, but so is respecting their wish to opt out of your offers. These women believe in the power of technology but demand that it serve them, not the other way around. Brands should invest in really understanding them – through technology and partnerships.

Heightened purpose: Steadfast in their values of inclusivity and intent on building a better future, Gen Z and Millennial women view daily decisions – such as purchases, posts, and places they spend their time – as essential to creating the future they want. And they expect brands with power and influence to lead with purpose to help foster the greater good. Your brand's purpose can be your superpower. However, it is critical that brands have legitimate, authentic objectives to action purposeful change. A woman's ability to identify lip-service and fluff is uncanny, so be real.

Anticipate their needs, but champion all: Gen Z and Millennial women seek real-time, reflexive concepts: brand interactions that personally acknowledge them as individuals and what they need now. In turn, retailers, media brands and advertisers must respond with emotion-analyzing technology, data-driven AI, and mood-curated products. These personalized technology experiences not only enhance one-to-one engagement but will enable these women to connect with the brands they want to connect with, on their terms, on the platforms they choose. However, as the most diverse generations yet, they're also the most inclusive. They champion, and even demand, ideas of representation that move beyond tokenism. Given that both generations experience high levels of loneliness (despite their connectedness) they place strong emphasis on seeking communities that celebrate individuality and self-expression while also a sense of belonging.

Accentuate their best: Gen Z and Millennial women face an incredibly dynamic world each day. Busy schedules, rising expectations, digital fatigue and increasing pressure from all angles drive higher-than-ever-before rates of stress, anxiety and exhaustion. No longer willing to engage life according to old rules, they seek to craft a new model to better accommodate the obligations put upon them. Save the planet, right the economy, create a society we all want to live in – heady stuff. In their quest to meet life where they can best succeed, they are rewriting the rules on nine-to-fives (side hustle anyone?), education, and peer-to-peer learning. As such, they are constantly engaged in growth and self-development, from online school to DIY videos to better mental health. With so much riding on their shoulders, Gen Z and Millennial women are incredibly creative, entrepreneurial and ambitious, and bolster themselves with new learning platforms, needing brands to serve them where they live and explore.

Rest assured, we have an incredible set of women rising. They are powerful, informed, and shifting how we approach life – for the better. Position your brand for success by anticipating their needs, celebrating their community and supporting them in their quest for a more unified world.



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