



Generational Shopper Insights for Your Omnichannel Marketing Strategy

Research that empowers your connection with
consumers across marketing channels

Why You Need an Omnichannel Marketing Strategy and Generational Shopper Insights to Fuel It

With the flood of online activity that permeates consumers' everyday lives, consumers have greater access to information – and advertising – than ever before. The impact? Often, it's too much information with too little insight.

Audiences need help sifting through the crowded digital space to find what they need, and most consumers are looking for a more comprehensive experience when they interact with modern brands. They want messaging to be fun, engaging, meaningful, informative, and consistent, regardless of which platforms they use for the interaction. Even though the modern consumer seems to be chasing the same aspirations, their priorities shift from one platform to the next, depending on their generation.

The goal of this eBook is to shed light on how consumers in each generation view brand engagement so your business can create a more effective marketing strategy. To that end, what follows uncovers the similarities and differences between different generations of shoppers: Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, and Boomers+.

Our Generational Shopper Insights Study will give you the insights you need to communicate better with your target audience.

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Vice President of Research at 360 Market Reach



Why are Generation-Based Insights Important for Your Marketing?


Creating an effective omnichannel marketing strategy is often easier said than done. When making your strategy, it's essential to know what motivates your audience, where they go to get information, and what kind of shopping experience they prefer.

What You'll Find in This eBook:

- **What Each Generation Values.**
Understand whether your customers value health and wellness, travel, novel experiences, or making a difference in the world around them.
- **Where Each Generation Most Frequently Shop.**
Learn how your customers prefer to shop and align where they are with your business model, giving you the information you need to optimize and pivot your selling strategy.
- **Where Each Generation Finds Your Products and Services.** Discover where your target audience goes to get their information most of the time so you can market the right message in the right place at the right time.
- **What Makes Each Generation of Shoppers Unique.**
Uncover the similarities and distinctions that businesses can understand to create marketing communication strategies that are truly effective when it comes to connecting with an intended audience and, from a business perspective, successfully sell.

Shopper Insights by Generation

- What motivates them?
- Where do they get info for purchasing decisions?
- Where do they shop?
- What kinds of communication appeal to them?



Gen Z

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Millennials

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Boomers+

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Shopper Insights by Generation:

Generation Z

Generation Z (Gen Z) is the youngest generation of shoppers studied in our survey, covering those who were 18-25 years of age at the time the survey was taken.

What Motivates Gen Z?

Members of Gen Z tend to indulge their appetites in unique travel experiences, food-centered celebrations, and high-quality, authentic brands. But they don't take their youth for granted. They look after their well-being with products that provide physical and mental health benefits. This generation enjoys staying active in body and mind.

Take a look at the data showing top 10 attitude statements that members of Gen Z most agreed with:

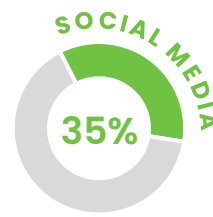
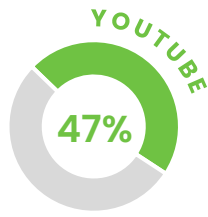
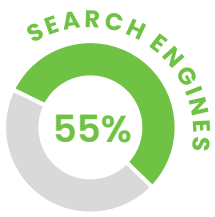


The desire to travel regularly (despite the COVID-19 pandemic) and celebrate with food reflects this younger generation's more active, live-in-the-moment mindset.

This generation's high level of agreement that "brands should be authentic in their values and beliefs" is especially important for any business that regularly interacts with Gen Z. This means that brands need to be careful to take actions that consistently match the values they espouse in their marketing messages.

Where Does Gen Z Get Information for Making Purchasing Decisions?

This generation grew up with the internet and smartphones, so it's no surprise that their shopping journey begins by gathering information online. The top sources of information they rely on are:



Gen Z swears by online reviews, YouTube, and social media — more than any other generation of shoppers. Members of Gen Z don't necessarily trust companies' marketing, so they look out for independent verification of product efficacy from trusted sources — such as friends and family, reviewers on YouTube, or actual customers in the review sections of product pages. This preference highlights another important aspect of the shopping experience — the need for social proof to demonstrate a product or service's value.

An effective omnichannel marketing campaign targeting Gen Z should focus on partnerships with YouTube personalities and review channels, as well as gathering positive reviews from customers to feature on their websites.

Where Does Gen Z Shop?

Like with Millennials and Gen X, **most (81%) of Gen Z has shopped at a "mass merchandiser"** (like Target or Wal-Mart) in the past year—making it the top shopping channel for the youngest generation of shoppers.

Amazon is a close second, with 72% of Gen Z having shopped with the online retailer at least once in the past year. Again, this is a common feature for all generations but the Boomers.

Gen Z shops at these kinds of stores more than other generations:

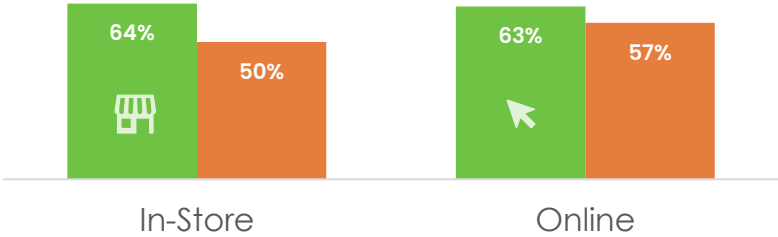
- ✓ **Discount/off-price stores (46%)**
- ✓ **Product delivery apps (38%)**
- ✓ **Directly from product ads in social media feeds (20%)**

If your business is in the discount/off-price store market or handles product delivery through phone apps, you have an excellent opportunity to appeal to younger shoppers.



What Kind of Communication Appeals to Gen Z?

Gen Z looks for different things from different communication channels. When browsing a company’s website, the majority of this generation wants to find two things: **informational facts and figures**, and **explanations of what the brand stands for/mission statements**. This is consistent with the top priorities Gen Z shoppers have when in a store location and looking at in-store displays.



When browsing social media or looking at ads in streaming services or TV, Gen Z is more likely to prioritize entertainment over facts and figures. Conversely, the generation prefers to address social issues and causes via social media instead of TV or streaming service ads.

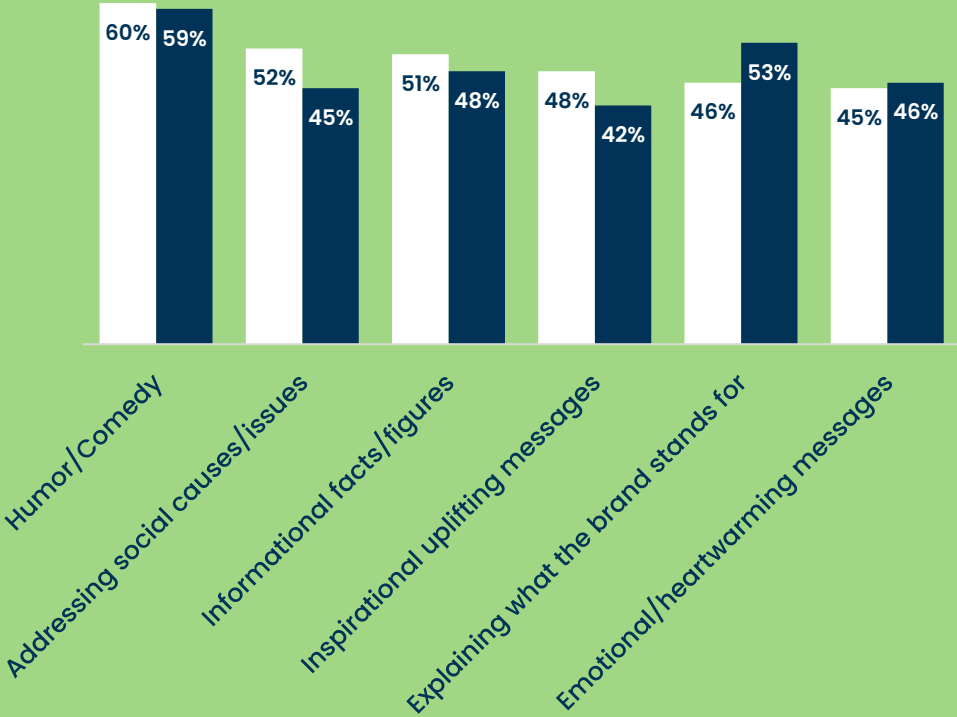


SOCIAL MEDIA

TV/STREAMING



Top Preferred Communication Approaches by Channel:



When targeting Gen Z for marketing, it’s important to keep in-store assets focused on hard information that demonstrates value or showcases core beliefs. For social and television advertising, most of Gen Z responds well to humor that gets their attention. while facts and figures are somewhat less impactful (though still valuable).



Shopper Insights by Generation:

Millennials

Millennials are the second-youngest generation of the four generations covered in our survey, with ages ranging from 26 to 41 at the time of the survey. This generation grew up during the transition from a pre-internet to a post-internet world, exploring the virtual world via online chat rooms and dialup modems.

What Motivates Millennials?

Millennials have an even greater focus on travel than Gen Z, with most liking “to explore and experience new things” when they travel. 75% of Millennials also agreed that they like to travel at least once a year and are willing to spend money on that travel.

Additionally, a high percentage of Millennials are strongly concerned with their physical and mental wellbeing. Where 66% of Gen Z agreed that they “like to stay active,” 78% of Millennials said the same and 79% of them stated that they believe that supplements can make a difference in their health — putting them on par with the Boomer+ generation.

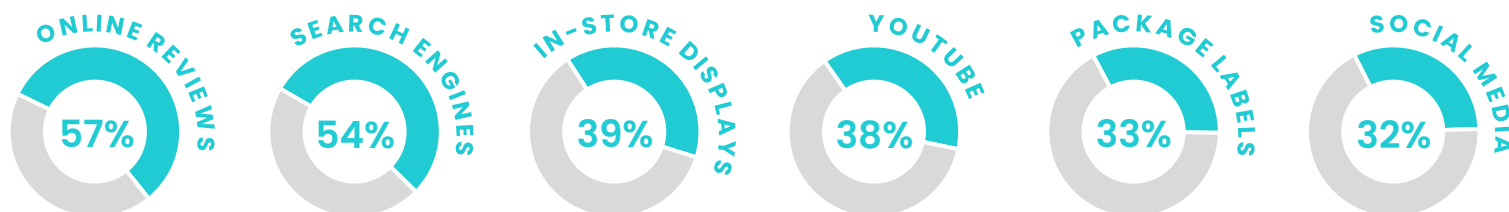


Attitude Statement	% of Millennials that Strongly or Somewhat Agree
I like to explore and experience new things when I travel	80%
I believe that supplements such as vitamins and minerals can make a difference in my health	79%
I like to stay active	78%
I like to indulge or celebrate with food	78%
I am willing to spend money on higher-quality products	77%
I think that products that provide health benefits are worth spending money on	77%
I like to travel somewhere at least once a year	75%
Brands should be authentic in their values and beliefs	74%
I make time to take care of my mental health	73%
I am willing to spend money when it comes to travel	72%

While Millennials hold to many of the same priorities as Gen Z, the order of these priorities is different. This indicates that many of the marketing messages targeted at the needs and wants of Gen Z would also be highly effective on Millennials.

Where Do Millennials Get Info for Purchasing Decisions?

Millennials, like their Gen Z fellows, are invested in digital approaches to gathering information about products and services — as well as the companies behind them. However, Millennials are more willing to include in-person or in-store assets in their recon efforts. Here's a list of the most common sources of information used by Millennials:



Because Millennials are more broadly interested in both online and in-store channels for gathering information about products and services, omnichannel marketing strategies targeting them need to take both into account. However, the specific messaging that Millennials prefer differs from that prioritized by Gen Z (more on that in the communications appeal section).

Where Do Millennials Shop?

The vast majority of Millennials (**86%**) **shopped at a mass merchandiser** within the last year. **Amazon is a close second as 75%** of Millennials stated that they shopped with the online retail company within the last year.

However, the unique shopping channels that Millennials appear to favor over older generations are product delivery apps and directly from social media feed ads—two of the same channels that Gen Z often prefers.

At 32%, **Millennials are only slightly less likely to shop with product delivery apps than Gen Z.** Meanwhile, Millennials are equally likely (21% vs 20%) to buy something directly from an ad in a social media feed.

This may be the product of both generations having been raised with the internet and other telecommunications technologies—making both generations more comfortable with shopping methods that rely on smartphone apps and other telecom tech.

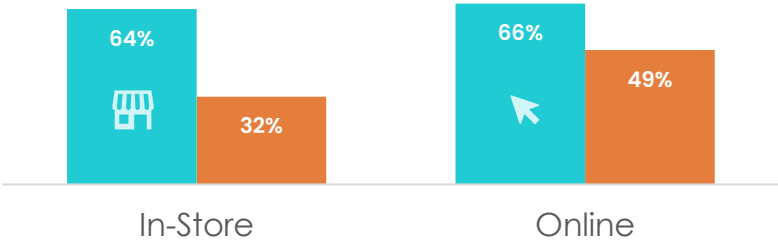


What Kind of Communications Appeal to Millennials?

When it comes to websites and in-store displays, Millennial communication preferences are similar to those of Gen Z: they like to get **informational facts and figures** as well as an **explanation of what the brand stands for**.

Where Millennials start to diverge significantly from their Gen Z counterparts is in the kind of communications they prefer to see on social media.

While humor is still a strong preference, a higher percentage of Millennials are more concerned with if a social post is inspirational or uplifting. However, for TV and streaming service ads, Millennial priorities are largely similar to those of Gen Z—they prefer humor and information over emotional or inspirational messaging (though enough Millennials still prefer that kind of messaging for it to remain important).

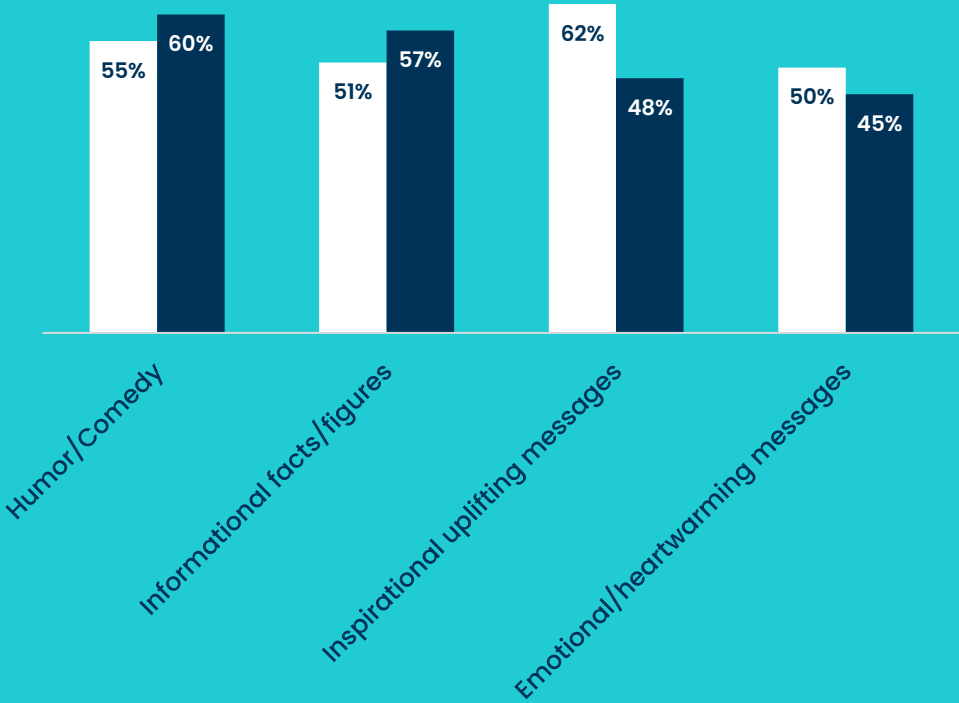


SOCIAL MEDIA

TV/STREAMING



Top Preferred Communication Approaches by Channel:





Shopper Insights by Generation:

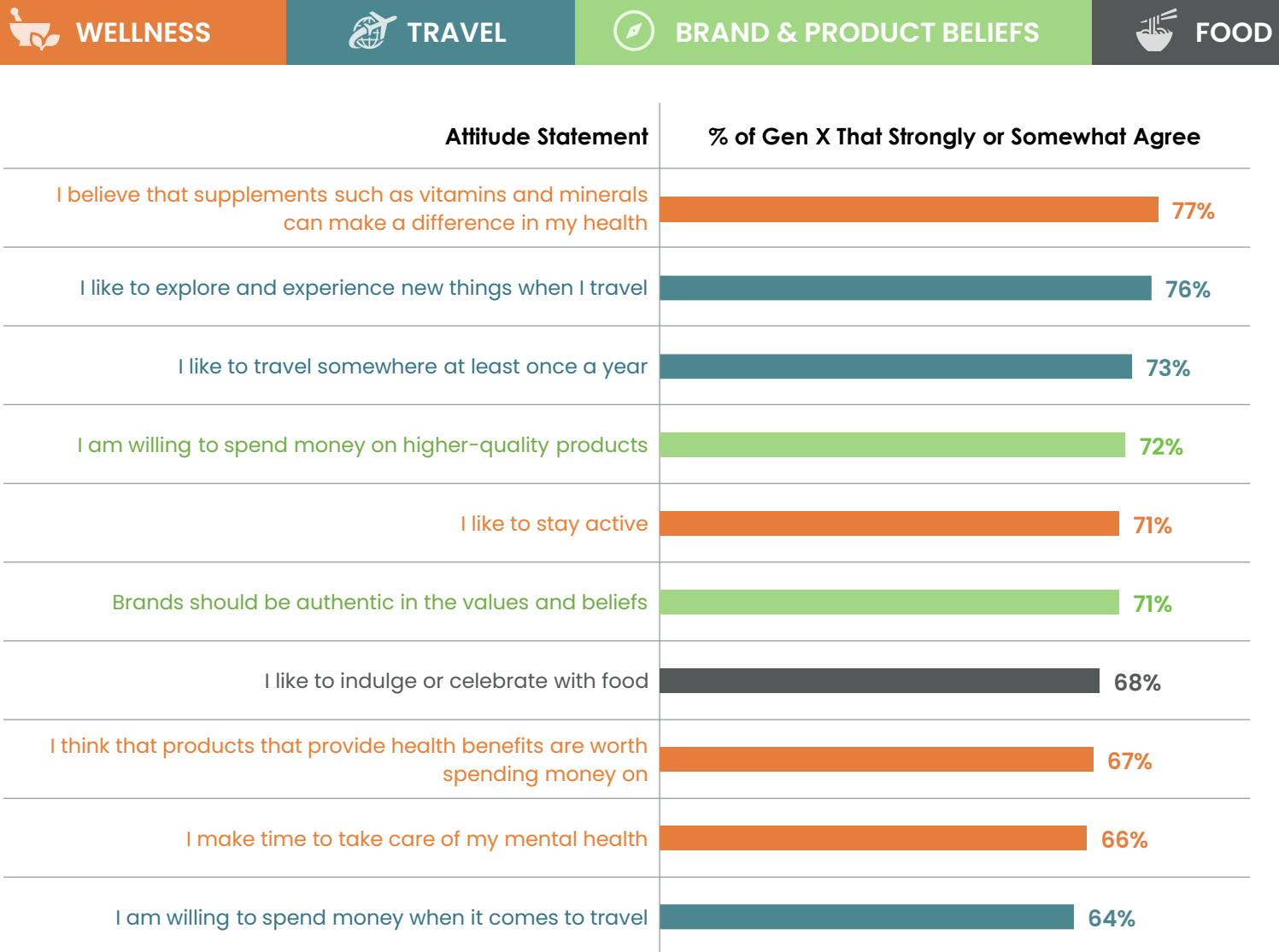
Gen X

Generation X (Gen X) comprises the second-oldest group of survey respondents, aged 42-57 at the time of the survey. This is the latch-key generation that grew up during the Cold War and watched the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

What Motivates Gen X?

As the members of Gen X approach retirement age, many of them are becoming increasingly concerned with their health. This generation has a strong belief in the health benefits of supplements like vitamins and minerals—with 77% of Gen X agreeing supplements can make a difference.

Travel is another high priority with Gen X. Many members of this generation make time for travel each year and like to explore or experience new things when they do. However, they seem to be somewhat less willing to spend money on travel. This could indicate that they have a more cost-oriented mindset when it comes to travel and will need incentives to encourage spending on travel (or offers that make travel more affordable).

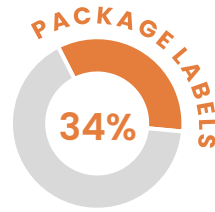
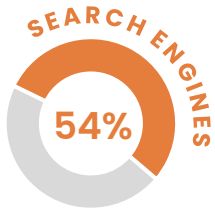


Both Gen X and Millennials like to travel at least once a year (76% vs 75%), but a somewhat higher percentage of Millennials prioritize exploration and new experiences compared to Gen X. That said, both sentiments are important to the vast majority of these generations.

While members of Gen X do like to stay active, they place a lower importance on making time specifically for mental health when compared to Millennials. However, it's still a priority for two-thirds of respondents.

Where Does Gen X Get Information?

When conducting product research, many (54%) members of Gen X like to use search engines and 48% look at online reviews—both are somewhat lower than the younger generations..



One major differentiator for Generation X is that they're more willing to rely on information from product manufacturer websites in their purchasing decisions than Gen Z or Millennials. They're also more likely to base purchasing decisions on package labels than younger generations.

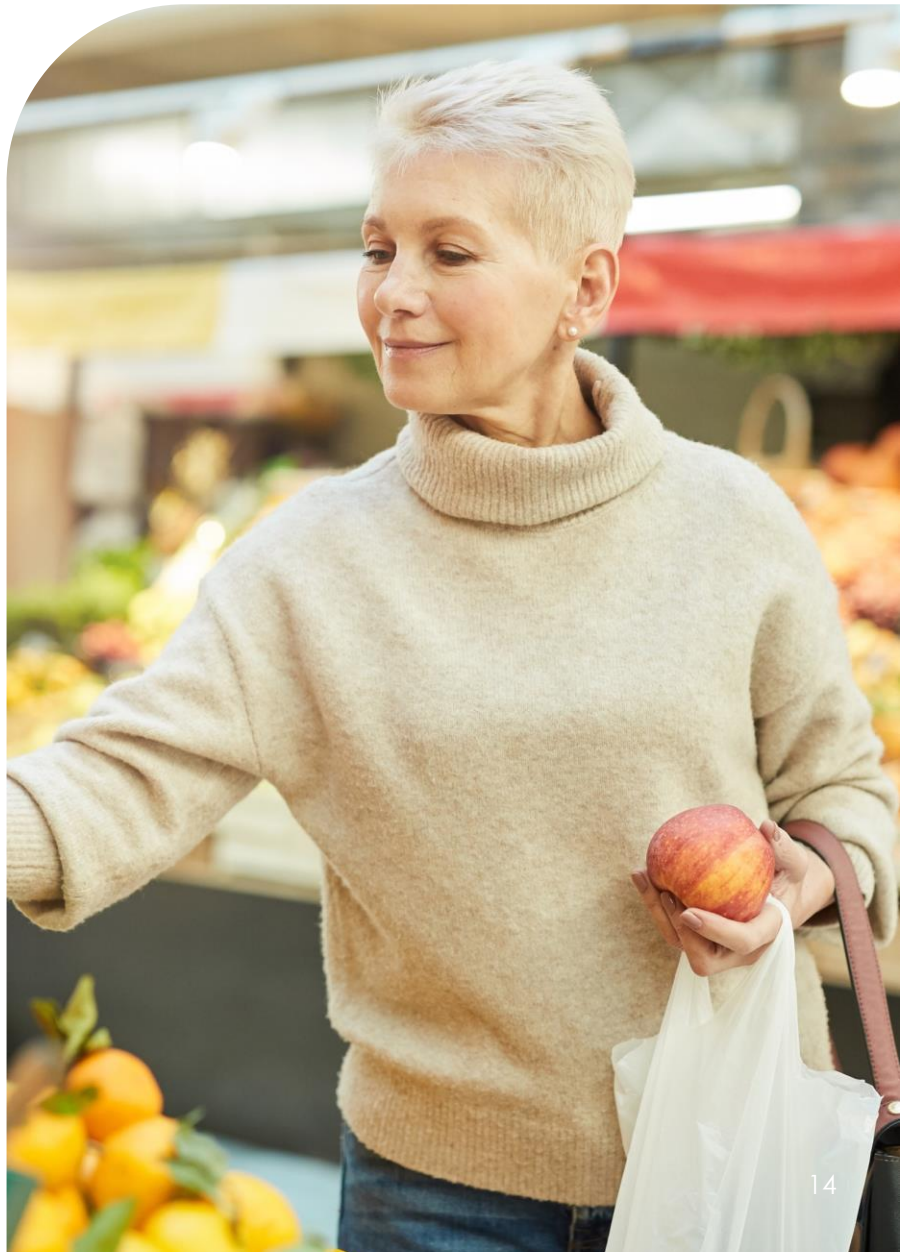
Another major difference is that social media and YouTube are not major factors as sources of product information for Gen Xers like they were for younger generations.

Where Does Gen X Shop?

The **top shopping destination for Gen X** is the same as it is for Gen Z and Millennials: **mass merchandisers** in the vein of Wal-Mart or Target (**88%**). Nearly 61% of Gen Xers cross-shop at mass merchandisers—making purchases both in-store and via websites or mobile apps on their phones. However, unlike the younger generations, **Gen X's second most-shopped at location is the grocery store (85%)**, with Amazon falling into third place (79%).

Another difference from younger generations is that **Gen X does a lot of shopping at the hardware/home improvement store (69%)**. Compare this to Gen Z, where less than half (40%) shopped at hardware stores and Millennials, where only 57% shopped.

There is another shopping channel that Gen X uses more than other generations: eBay. 33% of Gen Xers stated that they have used the shopping platform in the last year—making them more than twice as likely to shop there than Gen Z (16%). Meanwhile, Millennials fall in the middle at 26%.



What Kind of Communications Appeal to Gen X?

Gen X is overwhelmingly interested in **informational facts and figures** in communications both on company websites (79%) and on in-store displays (57%). This indicates a strong desire for objective and reliable information about the products they buy.



For social media communications, Gen Xers prefer humor/comedy (55%), informational facts and figures (53%), and inspirational/uplifting (52%). Emotional messaging has somewhat lower prioritization but remains popular.

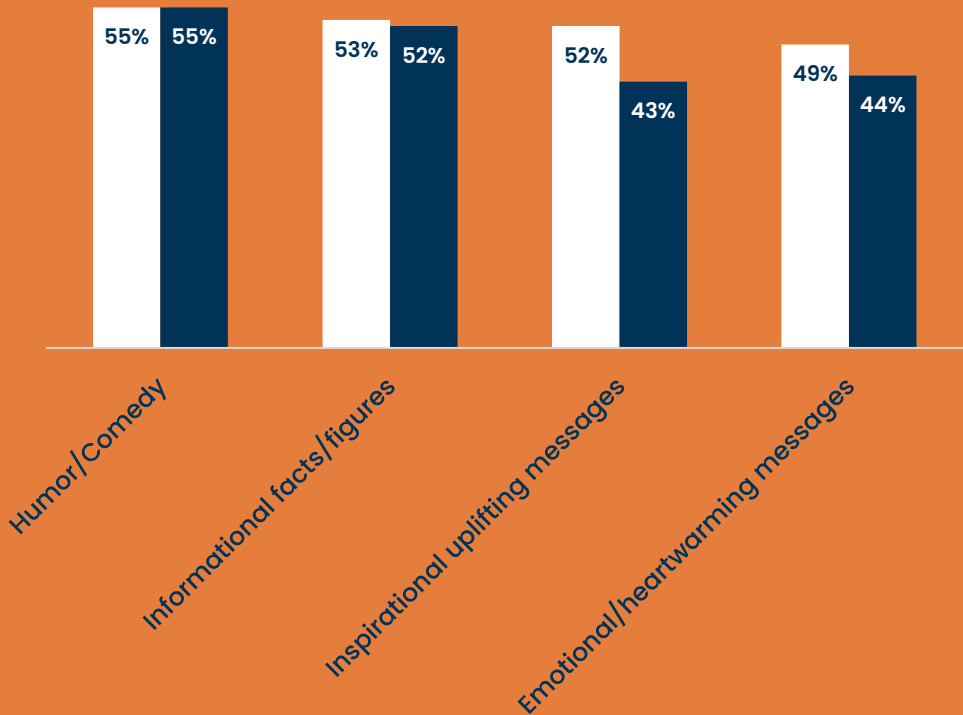


SOCIAL MEDIA

TV/STREAMING



Top Preferred Communication Approaches by Channel:



One thing that is different about Gen X compared to younger generations is that they reported a strong preference for information facts and figures in email communications (53%) and a somewhat lower rate of interest in explanations of what the brand stands for in emails (43%).



Shopper Insights by Generation:

Boomers+

Boomers are the oldest generation covered in the survey, consisting of all respondents 58 or more years young. These Baby Boomers were born in or before 1964—the year that saw the Beatles dominate music charts after appearing on the Ed Sullivan show.

What Motivates Boomers?

Boomers are either very close to retirement age or already there—despite the increasing average retirement age. They're especially aware of the importance of maintaining their physical and mental wellbeing. In fact, they're the only generation surveyed to prioritize eating healthy over indulging in food.

They are also the generation that most believes in the efficacy of taking vitamins, minerals, and other supplements to boost their health.



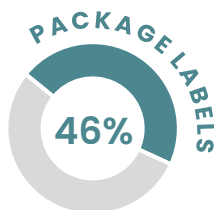
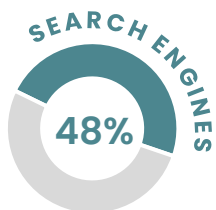
Attitude Statement	% of Boomers That Strongly or Somewhat Agree
I believe that supplements such as vitamins and minerals can make a difference in my health	81%
I like to stay active	79%
I like to explore and experience new things when I travel	75%
I am willing to spend money on higher-quality products	71%
I make time to take care of my mental health	71%
I like to travel somewhere at least once a year	71%
Brands should be authentic in their values and beliefs	70%
I am willing to spend money when it comes to travel	67%
I think that products that provide health benefits are worth spending money on	63%
I make a focus to eat healthy	62%

Boomers are strongly interested in travel and new experiences—and those already in retirement may have more time to engage in these activities than their younger counterparts. However, like Gen Xers, while the majority of Boomers are willing to spend money on travel, it's at a lower rate than Millennials or Gen Z.

This reflects a cost-consciousness among older travelers. Also, in the case of retired Boomers, the impact of living on a fixed income may play a role in their willingness to spend money on travel.

Where Do Boomers Get Information?

While many Boomers have adapted to the use of the internet to gather information about products and services, they are much more willing to rely on in-store displays and package labels as a primary source of information than any other generation surveyed.



Despite being less engaged with search engines overall than younger generations (and not being engaged with social media or YouTube), enough boomers use search engines to make search engine ads and the company website a viable communication channel for this generation of customers.

Where Do Boomers Shop?

Boomers strongly diverge from every previous generation by being the only one that doesn't have "mass merchandisers" as their #1 shopping location. Instead, 91% of boomers shop at the grocery store, while 88% shop at mass merchandisers. Boomers are also the most likely (78%) to shop at the home improvement store out of any generation of shoppers.

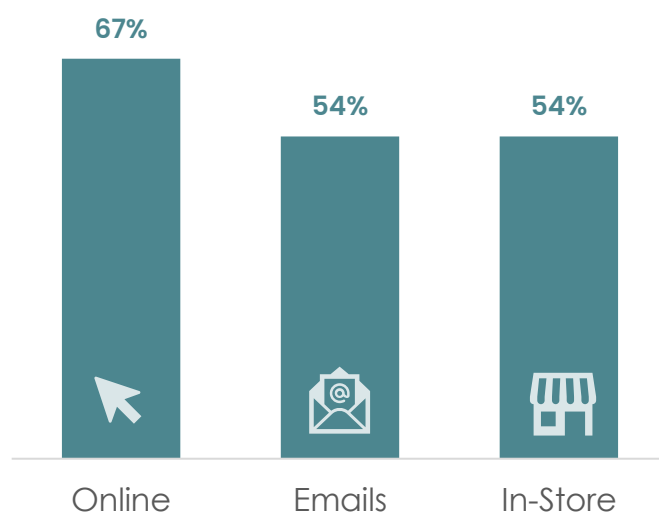
Many Boomers do engage in cross-shopping (buying in-store and online), but primarily with mass merchandisers like Target and Wal-Mart or with their home improvement store.



What Communications Appeal to Boomers?

Unlike other generations, Boomers don't appear to place a strong value on humorous communication approaches on any channel. When they expressed a preference for communication style, whether it be on websites, in-store displays, or emails, the majority of Boomers stated that they preferred to receive **informational facts/figures**.

Of all the generations surveyed, Boomers place the most consistent emphasis on objective data to make a purchase decision.



Can You Attract Multiple Generations with a Single Strategy?

Do you want to create an omnichannel strategy that applies to all generations? Considering how many motivations are shared by the majority of each generation, it's possible — though a campaign trying for such broad appeal would, naturally, have varying degrees of success with each generation.

The spectrum of shopping approaches gradually shifts from one generation to the next, with younger shoppers (Gen Z, Millennials) being more easily influenced by the opinions of reviewers and internet personalities on YouTube than their predecessors (Gen X, Boomers).

Also, younger shoppers are more likely to want an emotional connection with your brand's marketing. Meanwhile, older consumers are more likely to be interested in facts and figures rather than a heartfelt and uplifting story.

Humor is a consistent preference for every generation except for Boomers, who are primarily concerned with getting the facts.



Want Targeted Insights into Your Customers?

Do you need industry-specific insights that address what consumers in your particular market want?

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Our team can review information based on your industry's consumer segment to provide detailed insights that fuel your entire buyer's journey map. Get the data you need to generate real results.

