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Portrait: Ypulse Market researchers focus is helping brands get a handle on youth culture

By Lucia Moses

June 28 2012

Advertising & Branding

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Photo: Laura Barisonzi

S peccs
Who Jake Katz, general manager; Dan Coates, president
What Youth market research firm
Where New York offices

Dan Coates, president of **Ypulse**, is the first to admit that probing the lives and habits of



Teens turn from Facebook to fresher social-media sites

By Nick Foley, USA TODAY

Updated 3h 54m ago

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Facebook appears to have competition for teens' attention, and they're drifting to other social-media sites as evidence mounts that the growth of the world's largest social network is slowing.

Drawn to niche sites such as Foursquare and Tumblr, teens appear to be expanding beyond Facebook.

According to market research firm YPulse, 18% of teens prefer to "check in" on Foursquare instead of Facebook, and 10% say Pinterest is a better site for browsing.

"We're supportive of these websites growing, and the websites integrated with Facebook are more social because of it," said Malorie Lucich, communications manager for Facebook.

Paul Sakuma, AP

Flowers surround a sign outside of Facebook headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif.

COLUMN: [Ask Matt: Should I sell my Facebook shares?](#)

Facing mounting investor scrutiny after its disappointing IPO, Facebook is under pressure to report increased growth and revenue to [Wall Street](#).

But Facebook, which claims more than 900 million members, had 158 million unique visitors to its site in April, according to researcher ComScore, up just 5% from a year ago. That compares with year-over-year growth rates of 89% in April 2010.

More than eight years after Facebook's inception, its mass appeal has drawn older crowds who add their kids as Facebook friends. That development could be tarnishing the site's "cool factor" in the eyes of teens, said Jake Katz, chief architect at YPulse.

There are other reasons teens are divvying up their digital presence. It assures them more privacy, as well as new popularity among a smaller audience. Instagram, for example, features users' photos on its "Popular" page.

"There's a new flavor of gratification," that Facebook doesn't have, Katz said.

To meet rising mobile interests, where many teens surf the Internet and chat, the social giant has made strides to make its mobile app a crucial part of Facebook.

Facebook has sliced site functions into separate mobile apps such as Facebook Messenger and Facebook Pictures, a move that could appeal to teens, as online identities spread across multiple sites, Katz said.

Also, the social network is testing ways to allow those under 13, currently prohibited, to participate with parental supervision.

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The New Millennial Mindset Positive is as Positive Does

BY MELANIE SHREFFLER

The Internet is a dangerous place. When Millennials go online, they risk running into cyberbullies, identity thieves, trolls lurking in the comments sections.

Even on social media sites, where they're surrounded by "friends," they occasionally can feel harassed. And for all the social aspects of being online, the web can be a little narcissistic. Some people only seem interested in tweeting about what they're doing and only want to hear opinions in line with their own.

With so much negativity online, it was only a matter of time before Millennials got fed up and found a more positive space to spend their time. They're not abandoning their usual online haunts, but when they get tired of the "me-centric" webiverse, they take a timeout to get a little dose of happy.

Pin Your Interests

Pinterest, for all its other possibilities, is a place where people can interact on a social level without the fear of flaming. They come together around a shared interest — rather than self-interest — so there's little to criticize or make fun of. As a Ypulse Youth Advisory Board member explained to us recently, "my friend tells me she surfs Pinterest when she's bored with Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, and seeking salvation from the self-involved." Millennials know when they've had enough negativity and need a break.

Tired of Snarkiness

The desire for positivity extends beyond social media. Hello Giggles was designed as a destination for young women who are tired of the typical snarky girly sites. Its aim is to provide positive ideas and inspiration, and its no gossip rule reminds readers to be respectful of the community. For its fans, it's a place where they can just be themselves.

Good News

Then there are sites with the express goal of delivering a daily dose of good news. Positively Positive is earning a following for just that. From inspirational quotes to stories of survival to advice for happy relationships, there's not a negative word on the site. As the site's more than 1.5 million Facebook fans might say, what's not to "like" about a little positivity in one's newsfeed?

That these sites are rapidly growing, not only in audience but also in number, is proof that Millennials are looking for a different online experience. They want a reprieve from the challenges and difficulties of their day-to-day lives in which they are constantly reminded that the economy stinks, their job prospects are dismal and their futures uncertain.

Positive Spin

For marketers, it's time to represent the new Millennial mindset. Instead of ads that poke fun, produce ads that inspire. Instead of pointing out one's shortcomings, demonstrate that anything is possible...with a little positivity.



MELANIE SHREFFLER is Editor-in-Chief of Ypulse, a leading authority on youth for marketing, brand and media professionals. Before turning her attention to consumer behavior and marketing, she studied science and literature at Ohio State University. Melanie is immersed in the world of youth culture, studying trends in technology, media, fashion, and more. She regularly serves as an expert source on the Millennial generation for publications including: The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, USA Today, and industry publications. She lives, works, and finds adventure in New York City. Contact: www.ypulse.com

Ypulse

Ypulse: A Mid-Year Millennial Trend Check-In

June 12, 2012 | by Ypulse

Ypulse is always keeping an eye on shifting Gen Y attitudes and habits. Here are a few trends that take shape during the beginning of the year that are impacting youth media and marketing as young consumers continue to put their stamp on the world.

Fan Fiction Takes All Forms

Thanks to social media, Millennials have unprecedented access to actors, artists, and musicians. They feel a closeness to their favorite stars and believe that their support early on helps make their careers. That level of engagement has driven a rise in fan fiction. What once was a nerdy pastime is now the norm, and fan fiction goes well beyond creative writing.

Teens are still writing fan fiction stories, but now they're also creating videos of themselves acting out scenes from books and movies, crafting animations of their favorite stars in stories they devise, and recording covers of songs with their own twists to the music and lyrics. And Millennial stars and brands are embracing this form of co-creation - for example, Justin Bieber's team just announced a marketing plan for his new fragrance "Girlfriend" that includes a competition for fans to rewrite his song "Boyfriend" with new lyrics about being his girlfriend.

#YOLO

We started seeing Twitter posts tagged with #YOLO a few months ago. YOLO stands for "you only live once," and it is Millennials' response to the hand they've been dealt coming of age during a recession. It means that when they blow off a class to enjoy a sunny afternoon or stay out late with friends the night before a job interview, they're doing so because they want to savor the awesome experiences that come their way and dismiss the guilt they feel about it. Staring down an uncertain future and constant challenges,



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Ypulse

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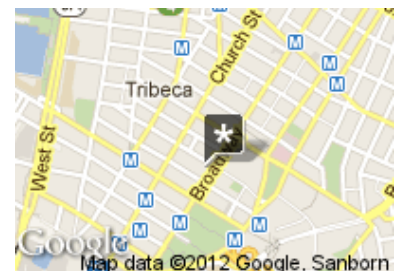
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they're choosing to live in the moment.

High-Low Budgeting

Young consumers are scraping by financially, but they're also buying luxury items. Their habit of high-low spending began in fashion (pairing cheap items with designer duds), but the trend has spread to all areas of their budgets. They'll fill their grocery basket with ramen noodles to save money, but they also buy expensive organic and artisan foods.

They'll play on their new iPad while hanging out on their worn out, hand-me-down sofa. Sacrificing on some items lets them afford a little luxury here and there. It's one way they're able to live the "you can have/be/do anything you want" life they were promised by their parents growing up, while still being responsible about their spending.

Movies Will Become More Social

Millennials watch TV with their phones or computers at hand, chatting with their friends and posting online about the shows they watch. It won't be long before they demand the same experience from films. They're already highly engaged with movies on social media, sharing trailers, posting reviews, and organizing group trips to the theater. And when favorite films air on TV, they often become trending topics on Twitter.

Millennials want to bring their social media habits into the theater during show time, too. After all, what's an amazing movie going experience if they can't tell all their friends about it while it's happening? It will just take a few theaters embracing the social movie experience to open the floodgates.

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TV networks try to connect with young, tech-savvy multitaskers

With kids watching less live TV, networks are coming up with new ways to reach young viewers on their smartphones, laptops and tablets

June 16, 2012 | By Dawn C. Chmielewski and Meg James, Los Angeles Times

Hollywood has a problem. He's Cole Chanin-Hassman, and he's 10.

Like many other kids his age, the Los Angeles fourth-grader counts among his entertainment tools his Xbox 360 game console, his Android phone and his computer.

The television is almost an afterthought. When Cole comes home from school, he turns on Cartoon Network's "Regular Show," but the characters on the TV screen compete for his attention with the world-building game "Minecraft" and a parade of YouTube videos on his computer.

"Sometimes, I'll kind of lift my head up a little bit and watch," Cole said. "But usually I'm just kind of listening to [the TV] and playing on my computer."

Cole's habits illustrate the enormous challenges that confront television networks fighting to remain viable and profitable in the digital age. They're losing viewers, and they know it.

In response, some cable channels are introducing shorter episodes to reach multi-tasking kids with shorter attention spans. They're bulking up online content to feed the ravenous appetites of younger users. And they're listening to social media conversations about their shows — in some cases even changing plot lines to suit audience tastes.

"The networks ... are all struggling with younger people," said Neil Howe, an authority on generations and president of the consulting firm LifeCourse Associates. "The big danger is whether [networks] will become gradually less relevant" and disappear from younger viewers' screens altogether.

America's 67 million baby boomers once commanded advertisers' attention because of their spending power and sheer number. But the prized demographic is now the millennial generation: the 98 million people ages 7 to 29. These digital natives represent nearly one-third of the U.S. population, and they're proving an elusive target for networks and advertisers to reach.

Viewers of all ages are recording TV shows and fast-forwarding through commercials. But the practice is almost reflexive for millennials: About 41% watch shows recorded earlier on their DVRs, according to a study from Boston Consulting Group and ad agency Barkley.

Millennials still watch television shows, but not always the old-fashioned way: lounging on a couch, remote control in hand, surfing through the channels. Increasingly, they're streaming episodes on their computers, or fetching shows delivered to the TV set via game consoles or other Internet-connected devices, according to a survey by youth research firm Ypulse. This disrupts the decades-old methods advertisers have relied on to reach consumers.

"One of the biggest reasons that online streaming of TV shows in particular has taken off like crazy is that networks are finally embracing the fact that this is where their audience is," said Melanie Shreffler, Ypulse editor in chief.

Younger viewers are avid fans. But networks are having trouble adapting to their fickle viewing habits.

Television networks such as the CW are at the nexus of the forces reshaping the entertainment industry. Launched six years ago, the CW initially approached its audience like any other television network — expecting viewers to tune in at appointed times to watch its shows.

They didn't. Instead they began watching episodes online, through illicit pirate sites. So the CW began offering such shows as "Gossip Girl" and "The Vampire Diaries" on the Internet within hours of an episode's TV airing. A new mobile application allows viewing on iPhones, iPads and Android and Kindle devices.

"This millennial generation is the 'I know what I want, when I want it and

how I want it,'" said Rick Haskins, the CW's executive vice president of marketing and digital programs. "You need to supply them the product, however they want to consume it."

Digital now accounts for 18% of the network's total viewing — a rate that has doubled within a year, Haskins said. The network's research found that 93% of viewers who streamed episodes had not watched them on TV — expanding the audience for its shows. The CW also worked with Nielsen and Google to provide demographic information about mobile audiences to make this audience more attractive to advertisers.

But meeting viewers on their own terms can be fraught with peril.

Nickelodeon saw its ratings drop this season by about 25% compared with last season. The plunge came after the network made more episodes of "SpongeBob SquarePants," "iCarly" and other shows available through Netflix so young children could watch old episodes through their game consoles and other Internet-

connected devices.

Top Viacom executives attributed the decline to several factors, including the difficulty of accurately measuring young viewers' behavior on so many screens. Nickelodeon is responding by rolling out 650 new episodes of programming in the upcoming season to woo back viewers.

Although competitors such as YouTube and Netflix can draw audiences away from television networks, these newcomers also can provide millions of viewers for TV shows — as well as provide fresh material for the networks to exploit. Nickelodeon and rival Cartoon Network have built shows around characters who won their fame online.

A regular series based on Lucas Cruikshank's squeaky-voiced, hyperactive character Fred joined the Nickelodeon lineup in January. Cartoon Network added the Annoying Orange to its programming. That show's debut last week delivered

2.6 million viewers, landing it first in the ratings for its time slot among children 2 to 14.

"It's the first time we're taking something that was already a hit online and bringing it to Cartoon Network," said Stuart Snyder, president of Turner Broadcasting System's animation division, which includes Cartoon Network.

Melissa McQuarter-Robinson, 14, is the kind of viewer the networks are struggling to reach. The Georgia high school student rarely watches TV shows as they air, and she considers her BlackBerry, HTC Evo phone and Sony tablet to be her primary screens. But as the ABC drama "Scandal" approached its season finale last month, Robinson became so enthralled that she had to see it live.

"I couldn't miss it," she said. "I was at home with my mom, watching it and commenting on it on Facebook."

Emily-Anne Rigal, an 18-year-old high school senior from Williamsburg, Va., is a voracious media consumer. A devotee of "The Ellen DeGeneres Show," "The Real Housewives of New York City" and "Celebrity Apprentice," Rigal scours the Internet for behind-the-scenes insights, video highlights and celebrity tweets, then broadcasts her discoveries on Facebook.

Rigal and Robinson illustrate millennials' desire for a 360-degree connection with their favorite shows, said Jess Weiner, a producer and media strategist who founded Parallax.

"Watching is not enough," Weiner said. "She needs a tri-level experience. She wants to be able to find out more details online about that character, go to Facebook to be able to talk with the other fans."

Media executives are embracing new technology to engage young viewers who are splitting their attention among multiple screens — often at the same time.

Microblogging service Twitter was just taking flight when the producers were adapting the popular "Pretty Little Liars" book series for Disney's ABC Family channel, which targets 14- to 34-year-olds.

"The fans started talking to us while we were shooting the show," said executive producer Marlene King. "Early on, we saw Twitter as a useful tool [to learn] what the book fans were expecting."

King and her staff joined the Twitter chatter. With new insight, the show's writers crafted plot lines to satisfy the desires of the show's most ardent fans. One couple who broke up in the books — Aria and Ezra — were so popular among the loyalists that they stayed together on the TV series.

King also found that viewers of the show, which returned June 5 for a third season, enjoy the communal aspect of watching the show live. When an original episode airs, she watches on TV and tweets along with the audience. The premiere episode of the new season became the most-commented-about cable show on social media in history, according to Bluefin Labs. The show sparked 534,000 tweets.

"This audience ... feels hugely empowered by social media," King said. "They are empowered to participate in the process, and they expect it."

That yearning for community represents hope for networks trying to remain relevant amid the rapid pace of technological change. This desire to come together harks to an earlier time, when the family would gather around the home's lone TV set.

"Millennials are returning to the idea that [TV viewing] is a common social experience," Howe said. "That could actually present a real opportunity for the networks."

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Tom Foremski: IMHO

Signs of a tech backlash by 'Millennials'

By Tom Foremski | June 19, 2012, 11:40am PDT

Summary: The more that marketers try to commercialize “Millennials” the more they are likely to start slipping away...

There's huge, sometimes obsessive interest in “Millennials” by the tech industry and marketers, but there are a lot of myths about how they behave online, and with each other. And there appears to be a tech backlash developing.

Melanie Shreffler, editor-in-chief of Ypulse, a youth market research firm, recently wrote a post titled: **“It's Possible There's Too Much Technology In Our Lives, Even For Millennials.”**

We're seeing a little backlash despite all the benefits because technology is becoming something of a creepy stalker.

We noticed this recently in two commercials, one for cable company Optimum in which young parents talk about how their baby was on Facebook before she was even born and how her first steps will be broadcast on YouTube.

In a separate commercial for a Samsung smart TV, a family hangs out in their living room using voice and gesture controls to operate their TV — at the end, the proud mother is wowed when her toddler learns to say, “Hi TV,” speaking to the set to turn it on.

Both commercials cross the creepy line when technology is no longer about enabling our lives but begins to feel like a living, breathing member of the family. Millennials are noticing their own interactions are often filtered through a screen, even when they're in the same room with their friends.

The backlash that Ms Shreffler describes seems very real given my anecdotal experiences with my kids and their friends.

When I look at my kids, just turned 18 year old daughter, and 24 year old son – and their friends, they aren't the share-everything, technophiles that you might expect them to be, or at least popular notions of those generations expect them to be like.

They are extremely careful about what they share online, and they don't jump on every consumer tech bandwagon there is, and they certainly do not believe everything they read online.

For example, my daughter chooses not to have a cell phone, she has a relatively new iMac and an iPod Touch, and is quite content. My son is very well equipped with tech stuff, new Macbook Pro, iPhone, etc, but doesn't share much at all online and can even go days without his phone. Their friends seem similar in their attitudes to tech.

And they certainly don't like the way commercial interests portray them in ads, or in the assumptions they make about them. And the more that marketers try to capture the essence of young people, in their seemingly clever ad campaigns, the more they will be pushed away.

That's just the way it is and no amount of market research and study can change that because to them it means that the mainstream has caught up with their sub-cultures and that it's time to move on.

Companies that try to be early in spotting and commercializing a youth sub-culture are engaged in a risky strategy. They might win some nods from peers, but in their target groups, they are far more likely to induce feelings of revulsion rather than "Like."

Older generations, such as mine, often seem to be far more obsessed with tech gadgets than younger generations; and can be very clueless about what they share online.

It often seems as if it's the older generations that are the wanna be "Millennials," as portrayed in the popular mindset, while the real ones are more like what we should be: healthily blasé and selective about tech, and hyper-aware about their online activities and privacy.

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Millennials Credo: “Branded” Is Bad

Remember a few years back when every teen, tween, and college student seemed to be covered head to toe in brands? Ed Hardy hats and tees, massive Abercrombie logos, and Juicy Couture’s signature gold lettering? We’re not seeing that so much anymore.

Sure, there are still Millennials who are fans of those brands but in general, Millennials aren’t broadcasting the brands they wear like they used to. During the recession, conspicuous brands went the way of conspicuous consumption. Students realized it was out of line to flaunt expensive brands when other students were struggling to make ends meet. Wasting money on trendy, flashy items wasn’t cool, particularly when they’d only spend a season or two in one’s closet (heirloom pieces like Louis Vuitton bags are a bit of a different story). Well-made basics, toned-down and even a little plain, became the trend in fashion.

Now that the economy is gradually rebounding and consumers are shopping again, they’re sticking with more traditional and less showy brands. “Generic brands” like Uniqlo and Joe Fresh are thriving precisely because they make basic clothing that holds up and because they keep their names off their products. A Uniqlo shirtdress looks a lot like a Madewell shirtdress minus a few details, and it costs a fraction of the price. Teens can still experiment with current cuts and styles, but can do so without breaking their budgets for the sake of a logo. That doesn’t mean young fashion has become boring. Layering basics in interesting ways or pairing relatively plain outfits with funky nail polish, an unexpected color of shoe, or a clever scarf allows them to add a touch of personality.

While fashion experimentation is part of growing up, Millennials aged 14-24 — both girls and guys — prefer to keep it simple. In fact, they most commonly refer to their [sense of style as simple, basic, and classic](#). More than two thirds of students say most of the clothes in their closets are pretty basic and over three quarters say they don’t need to spend a lot to look their best.

This trend toward simplicity isn’t only relevant to clothing brands. A glance at websites like Pinterest or Cool Hunter, apps like Do It Tomorrow and Simple Grocery List, and furniture stores like IKEA show that Millennials want to pare down other aspects of the lives too. After years of technology building and pushing their lives to a fever pitch, they’re looking for the calm in the storm, and brands that help them do that will win their favor.



Article Author: Melanie Shreffler

Melanie Shreffler is Editor-in-Chief of Ypulse, the leading authority on youth. Before turning her attention to consumer behavior and marketing, she studied both science and literature at The Ohio State University. These days, Melanie is immersed in the world of youth culture, studying trends in technology, media, fashion, and more. She regularly serves as an expert source on the Millennial generation for publications including The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, USA Today, and a variety of industry publications. She lives, works, and finds adventure in New York, NY.

Ypulse: Youths think AR apps as confusing, pointless as QR Codes

A new study published by Ypulse appears to show as much confusion surrounding mobile augmented reality technology as there is with QR Codes.

by [Helen Leggatt](#)

Augmented reality is a "futuristic media of the moment" according to Ypulse, yet even tech-savvy Millennials are having problems getting to grips with it.



Just 11% of high school and college students have ever used an augmented reality app. Of those that have used augmented reality apps just over a third (34%) think they're useful and easy to use and 26% think they're easy to use but not particularly helpful.

As with QR Codes, many young mobile users just don't see the point in augmented reality. Sure, it's clever and fun to use but without any real reward or value to the user the entire process can appear pointless.

However, more students think augmented reality apps are easier to use than QR Codes - 60% vs. 51%).

"That's likely because brands and companies that offer the apps have devoted a fair bit of their promotional efforts to explaining how to use AR, whereas retailers seemed to slap QR codes everywhere in the hopes that shoppers would figure them out," says Melanie Shreffler, Ypulse's editor-in-chief.

Late last year a survey by Archival of 500 students from college campuses across the US found little enthusiasm for QR Codes. The little black and white pixelated squares were largely ignored, even though 81% of students had a smartphone and 80% had previously seen a QR Code.

Difficulties arose because some believed all that was needed was a camera and were not aware that a third-party app was required. Many got bored with the process as it took too long and others didn't want to download the scanning app.

Tags: [augmented reality](#), [Millennials](#), [mobile apps](#), [mobile marketing](#), [mobile trends](#), [QR Codes](#), [research](#)

Trends For 2012 - Cord Cutting, Tablets Go Mass Market, Twitter Takes Over

expert column



Ypulse follows youth culture and media trends closely throughout the year and we're seeing some significant shifts in Gen Y attitudes and habits that will have an impact going into 2012 and beyond. Some of these trends, such as cord cutting, have been brewing for years and are just now becoming a reality, while others, such as students owning tablets, are the result of rapid technological innovations.

1. Music Ownership Is Over

Ownership will take a big step forward in becoming a thing of the past. Students have rapidly adopted platforms like Pandora and Spotify, making the need to own music, even in digital format, less important. In less than six months, Spotify has made it possible for music fans to get access to artists' complete collections online, on their tablets, and on their phones. It's easier than ever to carry around their favorite tunes, all organized and bookmarked, without needing to sync or upload songs to the cloud. To Gen Yers, it's no longer a question of whether they can find their favorite music online to listen to at their leisure; they *expect* to be able to do so.

And if they can't get the music they want through their subscription services, they'll find a way to get it, even if that means downloading it (gasp!) illegally. Moreover, bands that aren't present on Spotify — particularly those indie rock bands students like to "discover" — are missing a major free marketing opportunity via the service's integration with Facebook, which posts what users are listening to for their friends to see, like, and comment on...and sometimes to follow up on by checking out the artist themselves.

While this trend may water down the value of individual songs or albums, it adds value to live performances, which can't be substituted, as Jessica Robertson of MTV Hive pointed out to us recently. Shows also add to the personal connection fans feel with bands that they're forging thanks to bands' activity on social media.

2. Cable Nets Will Report Higher Numbers Of Cord Cutters

TV networks, particularly those aimed at Gen Yers, are trying hard not to go through the same digital piracy mess that the music industry went through. They're finally embracing streaming services. In the final months of 2011, we've seen The CW, Disney, and ABC Family partner with Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon to offer their content to subscribers, with little, if any, delay

following the show's original airing.

The nets realize that Millennials aren't going to subscribe to expensive cable services when they can get their TV online — and on their own schedules — for just a few bucks a month. What can cable companies offer that Millennials value? Internet access. That's one cord Millennials will never sever.

All this is not to say Millennials won't watch TV anymore. They'll make an effort to catch their favorite shows when they air on broadcast networks, because they know their friends will be talking about them on Facebook, Twitter, and more (even while the show airs). If their busy schedules get in the way — or if they air on a channel they don't have access to — they'll find the shows online rather than be left out of the conversation.

3. We'll See What Works In Mobile Shopping Tools

With half the population empowered with smartphones, marketers tried every means possible to assist and persuade consumers making purchases. From QR codes to apps to Facebook pages to text alerts, 2011 saw it all. In 2012, we're going to learn what actually works.

According to Ypulse's recent research into students' back-to-school shopping, new media isn't breaking through the clutter. Even tech-savvy Millennials can be stymied by slick QR codes. Surprisingly, they preferred classic flyers and newspaper inserts to Facebook pages. That doesn't mean marketing via new media is destined to fail, but it does mean marketers need to learn how to better communicate their messages in this space. Social media is about conversation; students don't like marketers to simply use Facebook or Twitter as a megaphone to tell them about products and deals; for them, the purpose of the site is to interact.

4. Students Will Be Toting Tablets

No, most students won't have an iPad, though they aspire to own one. The price tag is too high, and few have received one as a hand-me-down from their parents. Instead, they'll be the proud new owners of a Kindle Fire or Nook Tablet, which offer much of the same tablet functionality while fitting in the range of student's budgets. Plus, if they already own an e-reader, they can transfer their purchase history to their new tablet. We expect many students will be unwrapping these hybrid tablet/readers as gifts this December. They're not a substitute for an iPad, but they're a step in the right direction.

5. Twitter Takes Over

One of the first apps students will want on their tablet is Twitter. While Facebook is still the leader in social media, young people are increasingly using Twitter as a sort of social media filter. Millennials have been on Facebook for the majority of their teen lives, having amassed several hundred friends on the site — they've friended just about everyone, from random acquaintances to parents to brands.

They don't want to unfriend people (that's not nice), so they're turning to Twitter as a means to follow just the people and brands they actually care to hear from on a regular basis. Although the network is more open, it feels more private because they've managed their connections on Twitter, unlike their approach to Facebook. While this trend is starting small, it will gain steam as more Gen Yers join the network to be where their best friends are. Twitter

won't replace Facebook, but young people will spend more time with it because it fills a particular niche.

Gen Yers have also joined Google+, but only because it was the cool thing to do when the site launched. They thought the new network was full of possibility. But in fact, Google+ has failed to differentiate itself from Facebook, giving students little reason to invest their limited time in cultivating a presence there. Google+ isn't giving up, still adding new features, but as of now, it's fighting a losing battle. We're looking forward to seeing how things shake out in 2012!

Article Author: Melanie Shreffler

Melanie Shreffler is Editor-in-Chief of Ypulse, the leading authority on youth.

Before turning her attention to consumer behavior and marketing, she studied both science and literature at The Ohio State University. These days, Melanie is immersed in the world of youth culture, studying trends in technology, media, fashion, and more. She regularly serves as an expert source on the Millennial generation for publications including The New York Times, the Los Angeles Times, USA Today, and a variety of industry publications. She lives, works, and finds adventure in New York, NY.



Young People Chasing The Urban Lifestyle Are Settling In Smaller Cities

Jana Kasperkevic | May 24, 2012, 1:12 PM | 232 |

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Just yesterday we reported that the next trend in urbanization will revolve around small cities. It looks like millennials agree.

The majority of twenty-somethings are shying away from big splashy cities like New York, according to a new Ypulse survey. Nearly 60 percent prefer smaller digs—40 percent for small cities and 19 percent for the small town lifestyle.

The trend could also lead some businesses to rethink their choice in real estate. Less than year ago, millennials were credited with driving more corporations to relocate in urban areas, according to the The Brookings Institute.

Melanie Shreffer, editor-in-chief of Ypulse, points out that millennials have their eye on cities like Portland, Minneapolis, and Detroit. Bill Emerson, CEO of Quicken Loans, said that the company moved to Detroit because of that reason.

"There is an opportunity cost of not being in an urban environment. The youth of America, when they graduate, they're looking to go to an urban environment," Emerson told Laura Vanderkam of CNNMoney. "We believe that Detroit is a tremendous opportunity."

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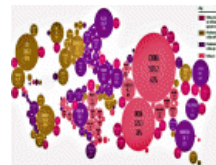


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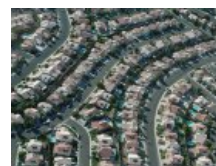
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Ypulse: A Mid-Year Millennial Trend Check-In

June 12, 2012 | by Ypulse

Ypulse is always keeping an eye on shifting Gen Y attitudes and habits. Here are a few trends that take shape during the beginning of the year that are impacting youth media and marketing as young consumers continue to put their stamp on the world.

Fan Fiction Takes All Forms

Thanks to social media, Millennials have unprecedented access to actors, artists, and musicians. They feel a closeness to their favorite stars and believe that their support early on helps make their careers. That level of engagement has driven a rise in fan fiction. What once was a nerdy pastime is now the norm, and fan fiction goes well beyond creative writing.

Teens are still writing fan fiction stories, but now they're also creating videos of themselves acting out scenes from books and movies, crafting animations of their favorite stars in stories they devise, and recording covers of songs with their own twists to the music and lyrics. And Millennial stars and brands are embracing this form of co-creation - for example, Justin Bieber's team just announced a marketing plan for his new fragrance "Girlfriend" that includes a competition for fans to rewrite his song "Boyfriend" with new lyrics about being his girlfriend.

#YOLO

We started seeing Twitter posts tagged with #YOLO a few months ago. YOLO stands for "you only live once," and it is Millennials' response to the hand they've been dealt coming of age during a recession. It means that when they blow off a class to enjoy a sunny afternoon or stay out late with friends the night before a job interview, they're doing so because they want to savor the awesome experiences that come their way and dismiss the guilt they feel about it. Staring down an uncertain future and constant challenges,



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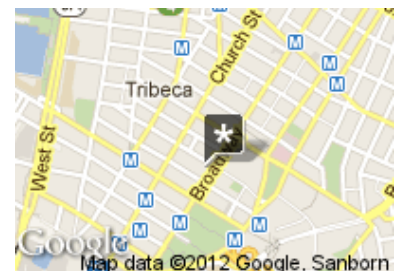
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they're choosing to live in the moment.

High-Low Budgeting

Young consumers are scraping by financially, but they're also buying luxury items. Their habit of high-low spending began in fashion (pairing cheap items with designer duds), but the trend has spread to all areas of their budgets. They'll fill their grocery basket with ramen noodles to save money, but they also buy expensive organic and artisan foods.

They'll play on their new iPad while hanging out on their worn out, hand-me-down sofa. Sacrificing on some items lets them afford a little luxury here and there. It's one way they're able to live the "you can have/be/do anything you want" life they were promised by their parents growing up, while still being responsible about their spending.

Movies Will Become More Social

Millennials watch TV with their phones or computers at hand, chatting with their friends and posting online about the shows they watch. It won't be long before they demand the same experience from films. They're already highly engaged with movies on social media, sharing trailers, posting reviews, and organizing group trips to the theater. And when favorite films air on TV, they often become trending topics on Twitter.

Millennials want to bring their social media habits into the theater during show time, too. After all, what's an amazing movie going experience if they can't tell all their friends about it while it's happening? It will just take a few theaters embracing the social movie experience to open the floodgates.

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Older Millennials Stream More TV Than Teens

APRIL 16, 2012

Adult millennials more likely to watch TV on a laptop or on a smartphone than their school-age counterparts

Millennial consumers over 18 stream more TV shows over the internet than younger members of their generation, research indicates.

Among high school and college students ages 18 to 30, 70% reported watching streamed TV in a typical week, while 66% watched programs on a regular TV set, according to a January poll by Ypulse. Among those ages 13 to 18, only 49% reported streaming television either to a computer or TV set on a weekly basis, while 76% said they watched TV on a regular set.

Older millennials were also more likely to stream TV on a smartphone or tablet, at 24%, vs. 16% of those between ages 13 and 18 who did so.

Methods for Watching TV Shows According to US High School and College Students, by Age, Jan 2012
% of respondents in each group

	13-17	18-30
On a regular TV	76%	66%
Streamed	49%	70%
—Streamed onto my computer	33%	59%
—Streamed onto my TV set via a gaming system (Xbox Live)	19%	21%
—Streamed onto my TV set via computer	8%	19%
—Streamed onto my TV set via a set-top box (Roku, Boxee)	6%	8%
On a DVD	30%	40%
Using video on demand	20%	20%
On a digital video recorder (PVR, TiVo)	19%	18%
Mobile (via mobile phone or tablet)	16%	24%
Downloaded onto my computer	15%	25%
On an internet-connected TV	10%	14%

Note: n=1,300

Source: Ypulse Research, "The Ypulse Report: Technology" as cited on company blog, March 5, 2012

138108

www.eMarketer.com

Why the disparity? Ypulse says people over 18 tend to own laptops and smartphones in greater numbers than their younger counterparts, which means they can catch their favorite shows flopped on a couch or curled up in bed, rather than being tied to the TV set or even a desktop PC. It's also easier to hook a laptop into a TV for streaming than it is a desktop. Plus, collegians and their contemporaries tend to be busier with school and work, so they snack on

TV when they have a free block of time. High school students, with their curfews and parental supervision, are more likely to be able to tune in when a show is actually broadcast on TV.

eMarketer also estimates greater percentages of older millennials are watching online video than teenagers.

US Online Video Viewer Share, by Age, 2010-2016

% of total

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
0-11	7.2%	7.5%	8.0%	8.4%	8.8%	9.2%	9.3%
12-17	12.7%	12.5%	12.3%	12.1%	11.9%	11.7%	11.6%
18-24	15.9%	15.7%	15.3%	14.8%	14.3%	13.9%	13.5%
25-34	19.9%	19.5%	19.2%	18.9%	18.6%	18.4%	18.5%
35-44	16.8%	16.7%	16.4%	16.3%	16.2%	16.1%	16.0%
45-54	16.1%	15.7%	15.5%	15.2%	14.9%	14.8%	14.8%
55-64	8.0%	8.7%	9.2%	9.6%	10.1%	10.2%	10.3%
65+	3.2%	3.7%	4.1%	4.6%	5.1%	5.6%	6.0%

Note: internet users who watch video content online via any device at least once per month; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Source: eMarketer, March 2012

137382

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By the end of 2012, for example, 15.3% of all online video viewers in the US will be between ages 18 to 24, while 12- to 17-year-olds will account for only 12.3% of the total.



Larissa Faw, Contributor

I write about workplace trends impacting Millennial women

FORBESWOMAN | 5/17/2012 @ 10:40AM | 224 views

Celebrity Millennials Flex Social Media Muscle For Money, Power

These days it doesn't take years of experience and a few grey hairs to be the most powerful person in the room. Sure, Jennifer Lopez, Oprah Winfrey, Tom Cruise, and Steven Spielberg all rank among the top 10 most powerful celebrities on Forbes Celebrity 100 List, but many of today's power players weren't even born when Spielberg's *E.T.* or Cruise's *Top Gun* debuted in movie theaters.



This year's Forbes Top 100 Celebrity List illustrates a shift of power among celebrities. The dynamics of what it means to have power and influence — based on media visibility in print, television, and social media, as well as financial earnings — benefits a younger generation. “Young artists are fueling their rampant fans bases with always-on access via digital and social media channels. As a result, their popularity and scale is growing globally at an unprecedented rate,” says Matt Britton of Mr Youth marketing agency. “Their empires [are] quickly eclipsing older generations of celebrities whom have been at it much longer.”

Six of this year's top 10 —Justin Bieber, Rihanna, Lady Gaga, Britney Spears, Kim Kardashian, and Katy Perry — all hail from the Millennial generation or younger. In 2011, only four Millennials — Lady Gaga, Justin Bieber, Taylor Swift, and LeBron James— made the top 10.

Social media mastery is key to ranking among the most powerful celebrities. It's not a coincidence that the ones with the most Twitter followers — Justin Bieber, Rihanna, and Lady Gaga — also top Forbes' list. By comparison, when a journalist asked Johnny Depp (No. 56) if he uses Twitter, he didn't even know what it was.

“In true, Millennial fashion, some young stars don't seem to mind sharing the details of their lives online. Fans feed off the constant stream of news they get from their idols, and when they don't hear from them for a while, fans start to wonder what's up and post requests for a tweet or status update just to feel that connection again,” says marketing analyst Melanie Shreffler of Ypulse.

Young celebrities, including Rihanna (No. 4), Khloe Kardashian Odom (No. 73), and Serena Williams (No. 77) are just a few young celebrities who regularly use social media, rather than traditional channels, to convey information and to dispel rumors. “Today’s young performers grew up in social media and really [understand the importance] of building a community. They aren’t afraid of making mistakes and are fearless. They know it is important to keep in touch,” says Warped Tour founder Kevin Lyman, who helped launch the careers of Katy Perry (No. 8) and Skrillex (No. 92).

Today’s young power players are “brands” rather than single-industry entertainers. Sandra Bullock (No. 55), Cameron Diaz (No. 59), and Tim Allen (No. 98) rank lower than multi-hyphenate and younger entertainers Rihanna (No. 4), Beyonce (No. 16), and Ryan Seacrest (No. 29). “Many young celebrities are making use of their unprecedented popularity to scale into other areas of business, vastly expanding their wealth,” says Britton.

It remains to be seen how young celebrities handle their power. “When you reach the top at such a young age and have all of these things, what do [young celebrities] do with it? Do they use it for good or will they mismanage it?” asks Lyman. Mr Youth’s Britton adds, “The word ‘power’ is a subjective dynamic. Since these young stars have direct and complete control over their audience they no longer have to rely on intermediaries to reach their base. If [Justin] Bieber wanted 100,000 people in [New York City's] Central Park in two hours, he could probably accomplish that with a few tweets. The power is really indeed in their hands.”

Perhaps Simon Cowell can seek advice on climbing the list next year now that Britney Spears is joining him on the reality show The X Factor. Her power lands her at No. 6 on the list, while Cowell only reaches the 18th spot.

This article is available online at:
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larissafaw/2012/05/17/celebrity-millennials-flex-social-media-muscle-for-money-and-power/>

Even teenagers don't care about AR apps and QR codes

Posted By [Frederic Lardinois](#) On February 2, 2012 @ 6:00 am In [Advertising & Marketing, Augmented Reality](#) | [No Comments](#)

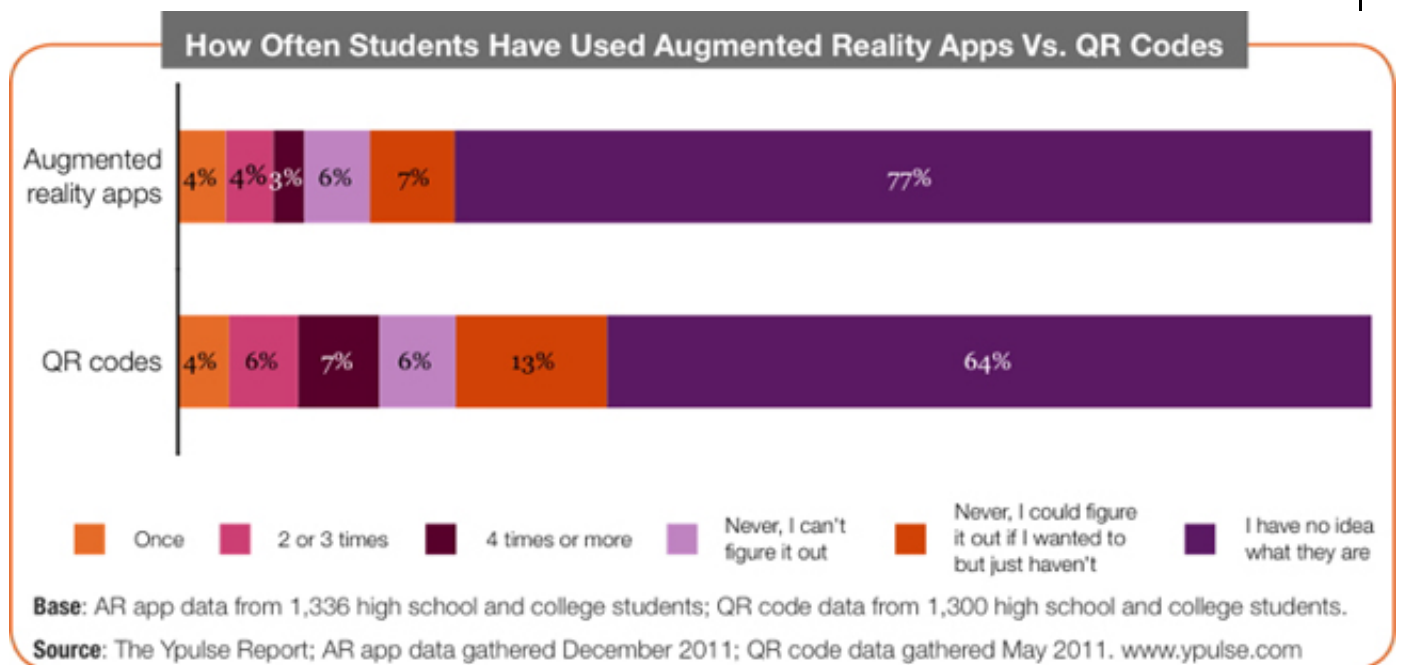
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Last year, it looked like augmented reality apps were on the cusp of becoming mainstream as numerous ad campaigns and mobile apps started to use the technology. The same goes for QR codes. For the most part though, neither has been able to go beyond being a gimmick yet and, according to a [new study by youth marketing and research firm Ypulse](#) ^[2], even the members of the tech-savvy [Millennial generation](#) ^[3] either have no idea what QR codes and augmented reality apps are or don't see any value in these technologies.



[4]

[According to Ypulse's survey](#), high school and college students are mostly ignorant about augmented reality and QR codes. Only three percent of Millennials have tried AR apps more than 4 times, though a bit more (seven percent) seem to use QR codes somewhat regularly. Mostly, though, the fact that only about 11% of high school and college students have ever used an AR app shows that there is still a lot of room for these services to grow, but only if they can provide some value to their users.

QR Codes: a solution in search of a problem

As Kevin Marks [pointed out](#) ^[5] just a few days ago, QR codes don't really solve any real-world problem. Some people use them in lieu of a URL, but most people can't identify what a QR code

actually is and those who can now have to pull out their phones, start an app and then hope the app can scan the code correctly. Few people think this is a worthwhile exercise.

AR Apps: easy to use but not useful

As for AR apps, the majority of those students who actually tried them thought they were easy to use (34%) but just weren't useful (53%). Indeed, the AR industry itself has, for the most part, relegated its products to novelty items that pop up little animations when users point their cameras at an ad or scan the horizon with their phones. There are clear technical limitations to what AR can do right now, especially until phones have the power to do real image recognition to the degree where AR can become more than just a video overlaid with crudely estimated guesses of where the next subway station might be.

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AR, QR – who cares?

Augmented reality apps don't impress in the real world



Augmented reality (AR) has become the futuristic media of the moment but many consumers, including young, tech-savvy Millennials, are having a hard time figuring it out. In fact, only 11 percent of high school and college students have ever used an AR app, according to Ypulse, a New York research company.

AR apps have to be interesting enough to get users to download them and they also need to be engaging enough to get users to come back to the apps again and again. But mostly, they have to work right the first time.

Among students who have used AR apps, 34 percent think they're easy and useful; 26 percent think they're easy but not useful; 18 percent think they're useful but not easy; and 9 percent think AR apps are neither useful nor easy to use. More students think AR apps are easier to use than think QR codes (60 percent vs. 51 percent, respectively).

www.ypulse.com



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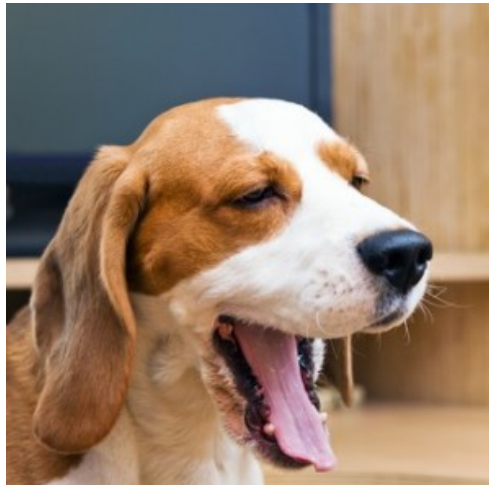
Are We Tired of Social Media?

Devon Glenn on June 19, 2012 3:38 PM

Is it just us, or is the blogosphere starting to sound curmudgeonly with reports of widespread social media fatigue? Maybe social media really isn't the revolution it's been made out to be. Or maybe the critics are talking about something else entirely.

Because social media users are starting to notice that the constant updating, awkward social interactions, and the ever-present glare of multiple screens are having a negative impact on their lives.

The trend doesn't appear to affect just the late adopters: even the younger generation of so-called tech natives is starting to feel the pain. Wrote YPulse editor in chief Melanie Shreffler:



Millennials are noticing their own interactions are often filtered through a screen, even when they're in the same room with their friends. The panelists at the Millennial Mega Mashup described a love/hate relationship with technology for that very reason. They even call their friends out when they see them staring at a screen instead of paying attention to the people they're with, but the behavior persists.

And it's not just conversations that are being lost. In a recent poll, 24 percent of people surveyed reported that they had missed an important life event while staring at a screen to try and document what was happening for their followers instead of taking it in with their own eyes. As our own Neil Vidyarthi points out, "the more that you're on Twitter talking about what you're doing, then the less that you're actually doing it."

These findings suggest that people of all ages are looking for a healthier balance between real-world and virtual activities in their daily lives.

Moving your personal life onto an increasingly public forum can be awkward. In 2010, a survey of 600 teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17 revealed that although Facebook was still the most popular site among people in this age group, one in five were not using the site as much as they used to. "Of the group that are saying goodbye to Facebook," wrote former Mashable writer Jennifer Van Grove, "45% have lost interest, 16% are leaving because their parents are there, 14% say there are 'too many adults/older people' and 13% are concerned about the privacy of their personal information."

Even today, some feel that social media platforms have yet to recreate or improve upon existing social behaviors. Richard MacManus at ReadWriteWeb noted that Pinterest, for example, has not "reimagined scrapbooking," as many analysts have claimed. The time-

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Social Media Jobs of the Day

honored tradition of filling cloth-bound books with treasured family photos is alive and well, according to many hobbyists. As for future innovators, "the lucrative scrapbook market is still ripe for reinvention in the mobile and social era," he added.

Before we throw our smartphones into the sea and declare the return of print, vinyl, and the art of talking through tin cans tied together with string, we have to ask ourselves: which kinds of social tools and other technology do we use in our daily lives that actually make them better? Which things still have room for improvement? What can we, the users, do to make social networking less exhausting and more fun? We'd love to hear your thoughts in the comments.

Image by [Igor Normann](#) via Shutterstock.

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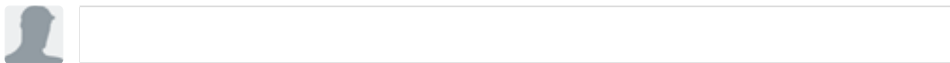
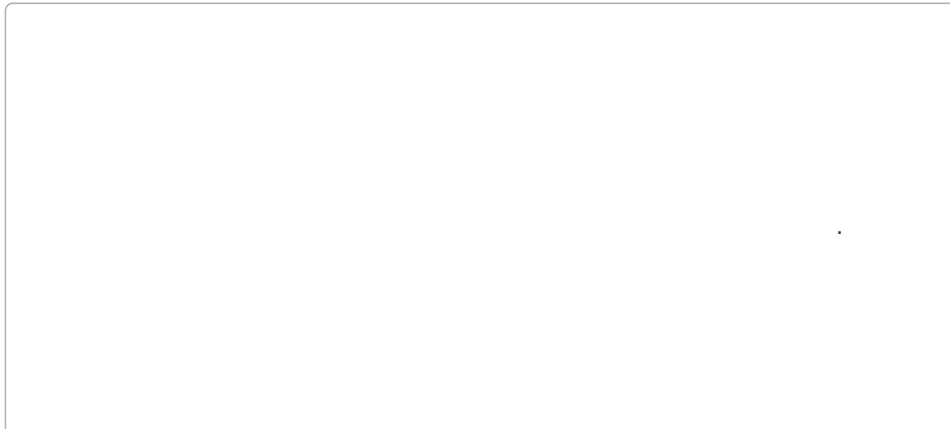
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Are Teens Embracing E-books?

The Digital Divide

By Karen Springen

Feb 20, 2012

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A recent PubTrak survey from R.R. Bowker indicated that teens remain reluctant when it comes to e-books. Accustomed to social media, they find that electronic stories have "too many restrictions," according to the report. But many industry players—agents, booksellers, publishers, and authors—are saying just the opposite: digital sales are booming for YA fiction.

As evidence, over the recent holiday season Barnes & Noble sold five times as many YA e-titles as print ones online, says Jim Hilt, v-p of e-books for the chain. And at Amazon, there was a similar trend: "YA e-books are growing even faster than e-books overall in the Kindle Store," Russ Grandinetti, v-p of Kindle Content, told *PW* in an e-mail.

As for the dreaded cannibalization of print, it does not appear to be happening in YA. "The whole pie grows," says Hilt. "There's a lot more evidence that users are going back and forth between digital and physical. People are now buying more books when they become digital readers. The key is to have the book available in all formats."

Publishers are waiting for new statistics coming out at the end of this month from Ypulse, the youth market research group, but they expect to see more signs of growth in teen e-commerce. In its February 2011 study, the company found that 10.7% of 14–24-year-old students owned e-readers, and just 6% owned tablets. With Amazon selling a rumored six million Kindles over the recent holiday season, Melanie Shreffler, editor-in-chief of Ypulse, confidently says, "It definitely went up."

Teenagers are a demographic perfectly poised to consume digital content. "They are on their devices all the time," says Cristina Gilbert, executive director of trade marketing and publicity for Bloomsbury. "They're so mobile, so digital. E-reading is an extension of how they live." And they are already old hands at accessing digital content—downloading movies, TV shows, and music. "Getting book content online is a natural for teens," says Andrew Smith, v-p and deputy publisher of Little, Brown Books for Young Readers.

And there is plenty of content out there. Hot print books—including Stephenie Meyer's *Twilight* saga, Rick Riordan's *Lightning Thief* series, and Suzanne Collins's *Hunger Games* trilogy—have become hot e-books. "The category just has a massive, huge catalogue to sell from, so inherently it's always going to sell more than what you'd see, say, in the picture book space," says Hilt. (Unlike YA titles,

picture books are almost exclusively bought by adults, who prefer print for the youngest of children.) "With big books, movie tie-ins, and more tech-savvy kids getting e-readers," Hilt says, "it's kind of a perfect storm." (The three *Hunger Games* titles are among B&N's top five bestselling e-books even before the March 23 release of what is expected to be a blockbuster movie.)

"Teens really do seek instant gratification," says Suzanne Murphy, v-p and publisher of books at Disney Publishing Worldwide. "They don't want to wait. They don't want to have to go to the store. They want it right away." And digital access is a boon to the impatient. "The time frame is so compressed with e-books," she says. "It allows us to be very opportunistic." For example, Disney quickly jumped on an e-version of *I Heart Vampires*, based on the popular TV series. E-sales already represent 20%–25% of total sales for the company's most popular authors, Murphy says. This year Disney plans to release about a dozen e-book originals.

Eagerness and technical capability easily translate into demand. Teens will head to the Web to get e-book versions of hardcovers not yet available in the U.S. For example, Bloomsbury made the e-book of Alyxandra Harvey's *Bleeding Hearts* available after fans expressed unhappiness that the hardcover would be available in the U.K. seven months before its U.S. release, says Bloomsbury's Gilbert.

Kids can read e-books on laptops or phones, but the e-reader makes it easier. "There still has to be an investment in the actual device before you start buying e-books," says agent Ginger Clark. Still,



"YA e-books are growing even faster than e-books overall in the Kindle Store."
—Russ Grandinetti

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Candlewick Prez Interviewed

"We consider digital editions to be simply another format": Candlewick president and publisher Karen Lotz.

What's in the ABC Best Books Catalog?

The ABA has released the list of the more than 200 titles included in this year's ABC Best Books for Children Catalog.

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Augmented Reality Goes Mainstream

Written on Dec 16, 2011 Author [Melanie Shreffler](#)

Adotas.com



ADOTAS – Last holiday season, QR codes, those pixelated packets of information, were everywhere. This season, they’re being out-shined by augmented reality (AR). AR is finally going mainstream, but is it really ready for the public? And are we ready for it?

Augmented reality consumer applications have been around for a while— about as long as QR codes — and now that a majority of Americans have smartphones to access the technology, it has the potential to take off. Notice we say “potential.”

Millennials are the tech-savviest generation yet, and even they are struggling with these new-fangled consumer enticements. There’s a learning curve. In the case of both QR codes and AR, the user first needs to download an app to his or her phone in order to read the images. Once they figure that out, they need to activate the app, focus on the particular image, and in the case of AR, the app will generate an overlay presenting information or entertainment over the phone’s camera image. For example, this season, Starbucks has winter images on its cups, and, using its AR app, coffee drinkers can bring the characters on the cup to life. Users can play with a friendly fox and watch ice skaters glide around their screens. It all sounds pretty cool, right? But AR apps and QR codes aren’t winning over consumers, though they are getting plenty of media attention.

The Tech Barrier

In both cases, the technology can be a barrier. Even when Millennials realize they need to have an app to access AR features, they don’t always want to take the time to find the app and download it to their phone unless they know the payoff will be worth it. If they do download it and it doesn’t work as expected, their frustration mounts, and they may avoid AR in the future. I’ve had issues with the Starbucks app — it tells me to hold the phone steadier (after drinking strong coffee!) or to place the cup in brighter lighting — all to just see an animated critter romp around my screen. I finally gave up after spending far too much time fiddling with the app. As a novelty, AR works to get customers interested (I don’t usually go to Starbucks, but wanted to test out the app), but there’s a danger that the user experience will fall flat and fail to improve one’s impression of the brand in the end.

It will take more than novelty for Millennials to bother to use AR on a regular basis.

Some Making Progress — Macy’s and Chobani

Some companies are making strides in the right direction. Macy’s, which has also made extensive use of QR codes, launched an AR program this year tied to the popular holiday children’s story “Yes, Virginia.” When shoppers are in the store, they can use the app to let kids interact with animated characters from the story. But Macy’s took it a step further, building in a mechanism to let users snap photos of the kids with Virginia, not only to have a memento of the experience, but also to then send the pictures as a holiday ecards to family and friends.

Chobani yogurt launched an AR app at the same time it introduced its new kid-oriented line, Chobani Champions. Using the Champlify app, the product lid activates special AR games. But it’s not a one-off

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Millennials spend most of their waking moments glued to one screen or another, but music still occupies most of their media time.

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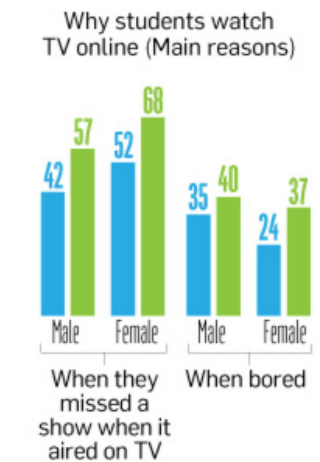
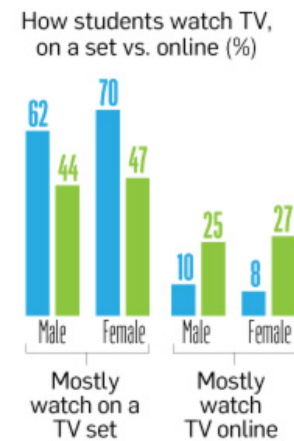
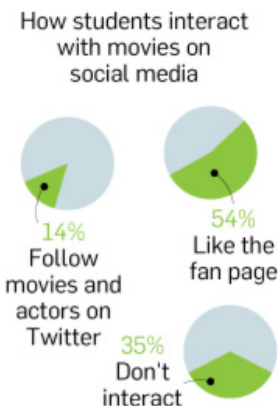
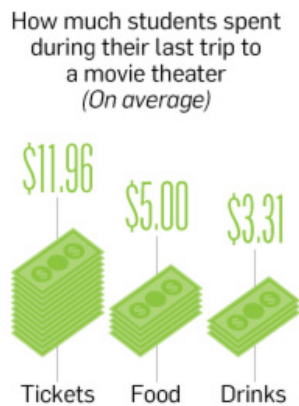
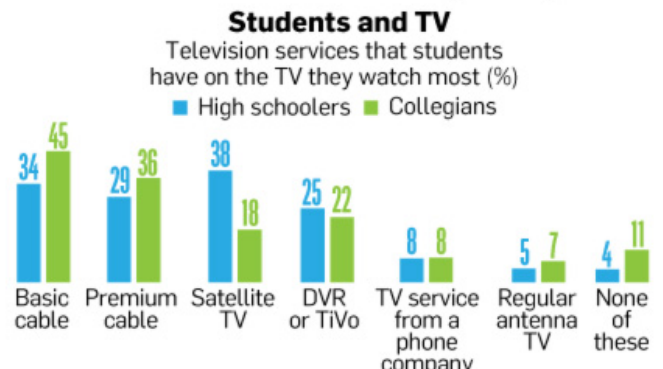
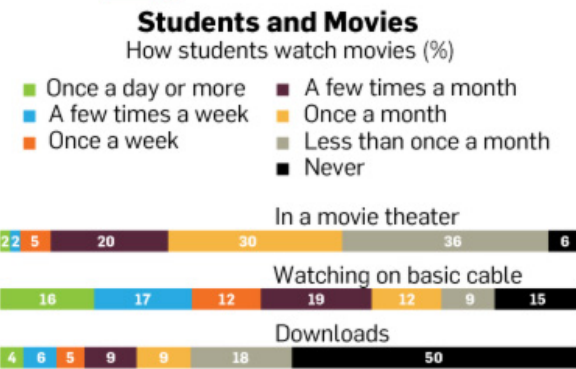
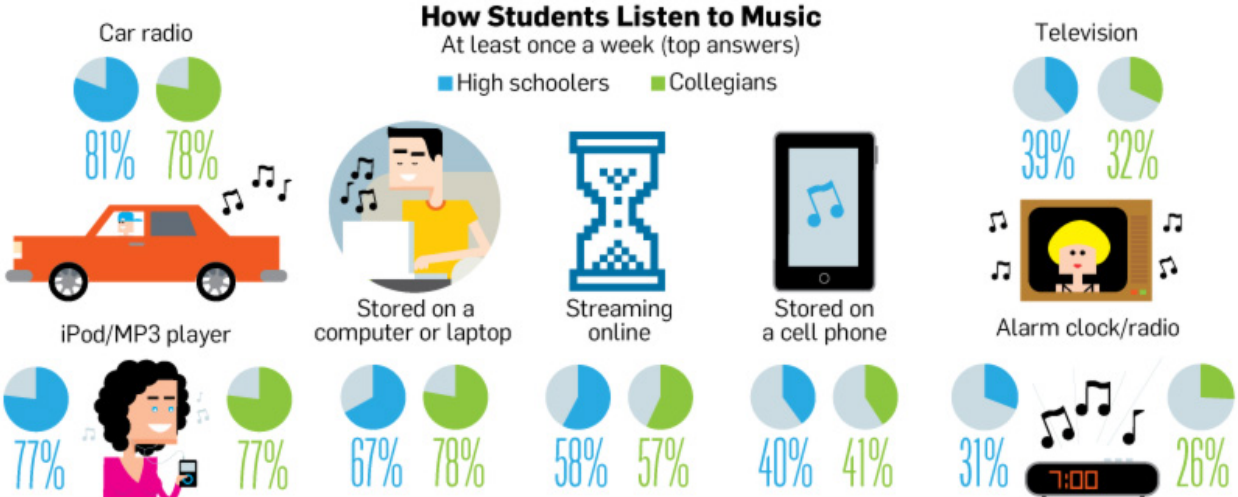
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By **Melanie Shreffler** Friday, Dec. 9, 2011

AR Apps Are The New QR Codes

Last holiday season, QR codes, those pixilated packets of information, were everywhere. This season, they're being out-shined by augmented reality (AR). AR is finally going mainstream, but is it ready for the public? And are we ready for it?? Augmented reality consumer applications have been around for a while— about as long as QR codes — and now that a majority of Americans have smartphones to access the technology, it has the potential to take off. Notice we say “potential.”

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Some companies are making strides in the right direction. Macy's, which has also made extensive use of QR codes, launched an AR program this year tied to the popular holiday newspaper editorial, “Yes, Virginia.” When shoppers are in the store, they can use the



app to let kids interact with animated characters from the story. But Macy's took it a step further, building in a mechanism to let the users snap photos of the kids with Virginia, not only to have a memento of the experience but also to then send the pictures as a holiday e-card to family and friends.

Chobani yogurt launched an AR app at the same time it introduced its new kid-oriented line, Chobani Champions. Using the Champlify app, the product lid activates special AR games. But it's not a one-off experience; kids can play the AR games to earn points and trophies, and the app has other fun activities that take advantage of smartphone technology that kids can do without needing a yogurt lid or AR, which means they can play anytime. It's that sort of thoughtfully planned app that users will keep on their phones and come back to, rather than deleting it once the novelty has worn off.

When Millennials adopt new technology, they need to see how it fits in to their lives to make things more convenient or more fun. Social media made it easier to connect with friends, streaming video lets them enjoy entertainment on their own schedules, but in most instances, AR has yet to prove its usefulness. Apps like LocalScope and Layar that are designed to help users find nearby points of interest are more difficult to use than Yelp. Most AR apps designed for entertainment are, so far, very limited, and nowhere near as fun as the regular games and videos available for smartphones.

AR will draw Millennials' attention based on the curiosity factor alone and can help build brand awareness, but brands need to put AR to work more wisely if they want deeper, more enduring engagement with customers.

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Melanie Shreffler is editor-in-chief at Ypulse.

2-for-1



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Why Teens Opt for Unique Nails

2011-12-16 | 03:22

By [Melanie Shreffler](#)
YPulse

Not too long ago, I found myself in a room with dozens of teen girls, and one of the first things I notice about these bright young women was how many were wearing funky nail polish. From crackle polish to nail art, very few of the girls had bare nails or were wearing plain polish.

The nail art trend has been around for a while, but it really took over this year, with nail "technology" kicking into high gear. At the typical drug store, girls can now find everything from professional manicurists along side DIY tutorials. A quick search for "nail art" on YouTube brings up thousands of how-to videos.

With all these ideas and guides to help them to nail glory, teen girls are fully embracing the fad.

At the heart of this trend with teens is the desire for self-expression. It's a fun, funky way to display their personalities and be a little rebellious at the same time. And it's rebellion that won't get them in trouble with mom and dad, unlike, perhaps, Manic Panic hair color or tattoos. It's a temporary style decision that's easily reversible.

The nail art trend is also perfect for teens to try on different personas; they can go from wild child to boho chic in seconds. We've seen in our research that girls' teen years are a key time for style exploration, and this nail trend is another element of that. Plus, it doesn't cost as much as a new wardrobe to fit one's new style, and it's just as easy to change nail designs as it is to change clothes.

What's more, it's accessible to all girls. Most nail polishes and products only cost a few bucks. And many of the current trends make it easy to get nail style regardless of one's artistic skills. To get the cool crackle look, all a girl needs is a top coat. Magnetic polish gives nails a futuristic wave design just by holding a magnet over nails. Peel-and-stick "polish" is a fool-proof way to get the perfect leopard, lace, or checkered nails. And of course for those who want something truly unique and sophisticated, there's always the local nail salon.

With options limited only by girls' creativity, and with new nail polish gimmicks undoubtedly on the horizon, we don't see an end to this trend for a while. Now if you'll excuse me, I suddenly feel the need for a manicure...

About the Author

Melanie Shreffler is editor-in-chief of YPulse, the leading authority on youth. YPulse studies the opinions and behavior of tweens, teens, collegians and young adults in order to provide news, commentary, events, research and strategy for marketing, brand and media professionals.

More info: [Melanie Shreffler](#), Tel: (646) 597-6726, ext. 306;
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For Millennials, TV just isn't that important

Nearly three quarters could imagine life without television

By **Diego Vasquez**

Dec 1, 2011

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*These days a majority of college students do their TV watching on something other than a TV set. A new study from Ypulse, a youth-focused research firm, finds that only 46 percent of college students watch TV on a television set most of the time. The rest are watching online or via a tablet or mobile device. That's a huge change in a short period of time, considering networks began streaming their shows just five years ago. These new viewing options would seem tailor-made for college kids, who have grown up in households with DVRs and prefer to set their own schedule for the bulk of their TV viewing. But the study also found that college kids don't consider TV as vital as other forms of media. While more than 80 percent said they can't live without music, less than a third said they couldn't live without TV. **Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief at Ypulse, talks to Media Life about how college kids watch TV, how viewing patterns change from high school to college, and why music is so important to them.***

What did you find most interesting or most surprising about this report?

We knew that music matters to young people, but that 83 percent said they could not imagine life without music compared to 28 percent who feel the same way about TV shows just how integral music is to their lives and how secondary TV has become--more on that in a bit.

That's not to say they don't watch TV, but how they're watching is changing. Perhaps the most surprising finding, as much as they enjoy

the freedom of streaming video, is that they're not cord cutters, they're just scaling back their cable services.

They tune in for their favorite shows when they first air because they don't want to be left out of the conversation that's inevitably going on via social media. That's why they're also usually online while watching TV, so they can talk to their friends about the show and other things via Facebook, Twitter and GetGlue.

We found that college students spend an average of 15 hours and 30 minutes a day with media. They devote the greatest part of their day, two hours and 12 minutes, listening to music, compared to one hour and 24 minutes spent watching TV. They spend more time with social media and studying than with TV.

Finally, with all the focus on 3D movies, we also found it interesting that few students — 17 percent of college guys and 14 percent of college girls — say a film being shown in 3D affects their desire to see it.

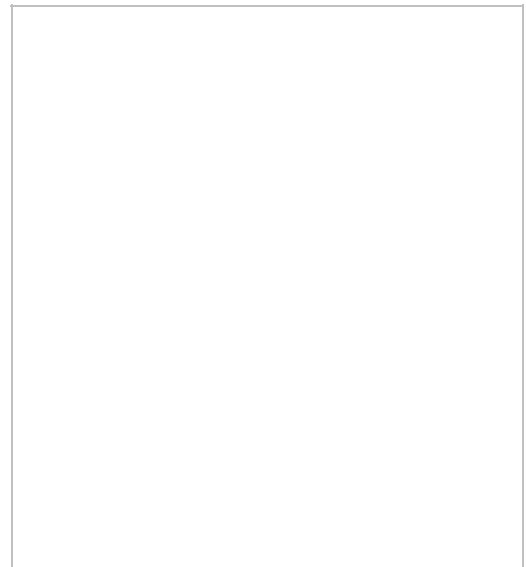


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What can media buyers and planners take from it?

To reach Millennials, you have to be where they are. Everywhere that they are.

That means that if they're watching streaming video, you have to advertise on streaming video; if they're listening to online radio, you have to be on online radio; if they watch TV, you have to advertise on TV, etc. Hitting them in every medium with messages that are unique but support messages in other media is the most effective.

Young adults are used to picking and choosing how they receive advertising from brands. Some prefer to follow brands via Twitter, some prefer email, some prefer video ads. Advertising in as many appropriate media as possible ensures reaching them in the way they want to be reached.

Why do such a large percentage of college students watch TV online?

College students have busy schedules — night classes, going out on weeknights, studying for exams and writing papers — which take them away from primetime TV viewing. Their social lives and schoolwork take precedent over catching a TV show because they know they can watch it later online (legally or illegally).

How much has that percentage grown over the past few years and why?

In 2009, we found that 73 percent of collegians and 60 percent of

high-schoolers watched TV online. In 2011, those proportions had grown to 86 percent of collegians and 67 percent of high-schoolers. Coincidentally, watching TV shows via streaming is growing among older adults, too, according to Pew Research.

More Millennials are watching streaming video because content providers are finally making more shows available legally. Millennial-oriented networks like The CW and ABC Family have recently signed deals to make programming available online via Netflix, Hulu and Amazon.

It's also easier to stream video to a decent screen. For those who don't want to deal with having a special streaming box or to hook a computer into a TV, they can stream shows directly from their videogame consoles. For example, Microsoft Xbox offers a significant amount of programming from a variety of TV networks, including Bravo and Syfy, as well as Netflix.

Do college students' TV habits change when they get to school - i.e., are they watching TV more on traditional screens at home and then switch to online in college?

College students' viewing habits change by necessity of their more hectic schedules. They're less likely to be home to watch shows — if they are, it's because they've carefully planned their day to accommodate the show, something they're only willing to do for their favorite programs. They most commonly say the reason they watch TV shows online is because they missed it when it originally aired.

High-schoolers living at home are less likely to watch streaming video because their schedules aren't as demanding. They turn to streaming for TV shows they missed, but also when they're not interested in anything else on TV. It's as much about having expanded choices of what to watch as being busy.

Why is music something more of these young viewers can't live without than TV?

Music plays a key role in self-discovery and defining one's identity

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music plays a key role in self-discovery and defining one's identity, which most young people are grappling with in their teens and 20s. They embrace music that they feel reflects their taste and personality. TV isn't as much about exploring self-identity--I don't know too many real-life teen vampires!

Music is also ingrained in their daily lives. Every young person has their own soundtrack [and] they take it with them wherever they go — on their commute, while waiting for class to start, while running errands. They are passionate about it and share and discuss it with friends.

TV is more passive entertainment — they don't pick what shows are on TV, but they have full control of what's on their iPod.

How much of college students' viewing habits can be attributed to their financial restraints?

Financial issues don't come into play as much until students graduate and move into their own apartments. That's when they start paying their own cable bills and realize how expensive it can be to have a package with all the premium channels. While they're in school, cable is often provided in their dorms, or their parents cover the costs. Only 11 percent pay their full cable bill themselves.

When their university provides their cable service, it generally doesn't include DVR, which they have likely become accustomed to at home. That drives their need to find another way to watch shows they missed, and streaming video fills that role nicely.

Is there a particular genre that college students favor for television? Do they watch more broadcast or cable?

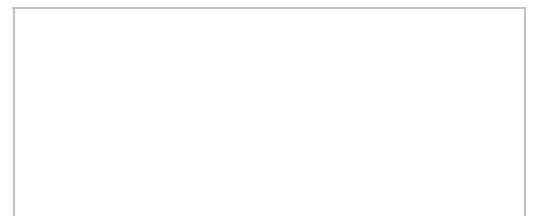
We didn't ask whether students watch more broadcast or more cable TV, but we did ask about their favorite channels.

College guys' and girls' favorite networks are cable channels, but broadcast networks aren't far behind. Comedy Central, ESPN, Fox, Discovery Channel and TBS are guys' top channels, and girls name ABC Family, MTV, ABC, Fox and Food Network as their favorites.

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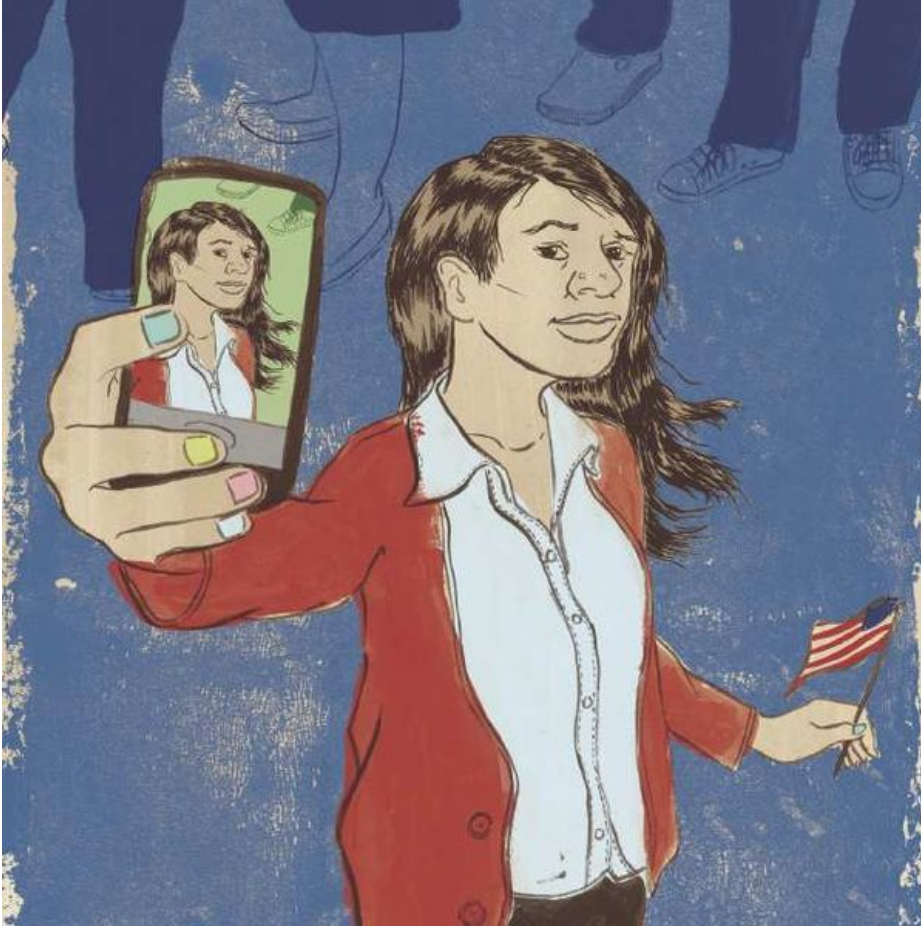


Opinion L.A.

OBSERVATIONS AND PROVOCATIONS
FROM THE TIMES' OPINION STAFF

Redefining the Millennials: Lazy? Try enterprising, creative, resilient [The conversation]

November 18, 2011 | 9:14 pm



Millennials, of which I am a member, have gotten a bad rap. We've been accused of being lazy, self-indulgent, coddled, narcissistic and distracted by too much technology. And though we may possess *some* of those characteristics *some* of the time, the critics have largely missed the mark.

A new crop of articles should surely change that perspective. I hope. Many of us born between the late '70s and mid-'90s spent our childhoods training and preparing for successful careers. As the first half of our generation knows all too well, though, the real world hasn't been as kind to us as it was to our predecessors. But while the unemployment rate and the constant reminder that we're the first generation to have it worse than our parents are among today's dream-crushers, certainly we haven't been rendered paralyzed. Some would even argue that we're living in the golden age of creativity and the entrepreneur. Here's the latest conversation ...

Lazy? Hardly. Here's [Catherine Rampell in the New York Times](#):

Generation Y -- or Millennials, the Facebook Generation or whatever you want to call today's cohort of young people -- has been accused of being the laziest generation ever. They feel entitled and are coddled, disrespectful, narcissistic and impatient, say authors of books like "The Dumbest Generation" and "Generation Me." [...]

"I don't think this is a generation of slackers," said Carl Van Horn, a labor economist at Rutgers. "This image of the kid who goes off and skis in Colorado, I don't think that's the correct image. Today's young people are very focused on trying to work hard and to get ahead." [...]

Perhaps most important, many of the behaviors that older generations interpret as laziness may actually enhance young people's productivity, say researchers who study Generation Y.

In fact, Millennial women are burning out by 30, [writes Larissa Faw on Forbes](#), exhausted by the seemingly endless goal of "having it all."

It seems relaxation is something Millennial women have never experienced. One reason that women are burning out early in their careers is that they have simply reached their breaking point after spending their childhoods developing well-rounded resumes. "These women worked like crazy in school, and in college, and then they get into the workforce and they are exhausted," says Melanie Shreffler of the youth marketing blog Ypulse. [...]

Many are turning to therapists and prescription medicines, as well as explore alternative remedies, including acupuncture, yoga, and even psychics.

Speaking of having it all: The micro-generation nestled between Gen X and Gen Y not only wants to have it all, but the feeling is exacerbated by opposing wills. [Here's Slate's Doree Shafrir](#) pop cultural take:

But what seemed to be the best moniker for our micro-generation [anyone born between his inauguration in January 1977 and Reagan's in January 1981] was a [Teen Vogue editor's](#) suggestion:

"Generation Catalano." Jared Leto's Jordan Catalano was a main character in the 1994-95 ABC series [My So-Called Life](#), a show that starred Claire Danes as Angela Chase, a high school sophomore struggling with the thing that teenagers will struggle with as long as there are high schools: who she is. "People are always saying you should be yourself, like yourself is this definite thing, like a toaster. Like you know what it is even," she says in a voice-over in a midseason episode. [...]

Claire Danes' Angela -- and [Heathers'](#) Veronica Sawyer and [Freaks and Geeks'](#) Lindsay Weir -- also fall into a trope of television and film that's an especially apt representation of Generation Catalano (or at least those of us who were white and from the suburbs): the girl who doesn't know where exactly she fits in, because she's smart (full disclosure: the struggle Lindsay has over whether to stay on the Mathletes hit a little too close to home), wants to be popular, and has to leave her old, dorky friends behind.

And there is the fear that despite wanting to have it all, we'll actually end up with less than the generations before us. Here's Robert Hiltonsmith in the [American Prospect](#) on "[Generation Y bother](#)."

Why is this recession different from other sharp downturns? The standard economic indicators fail to tell the whole story. Yes, unemployment rates for young people [remain](#) at the record-high levels they hit at the Great Recession's peak in 2007, but this is typical for young workers, who tend to be the last group that recovers after a recession -- and tend to feel its effects far after the economy has rebounded. The young baby boomers who bore the brunt of the 1981-1982 recession had lower earnings even 15 years after the economy recovered, and during that downturn the economy only lost half as many jobs as during the Great Recession. For youth entering the workforce today, not [only] has the sour economy delayed their careers; they are entering a workforce that offers historically low wages and, unlike their parents, they're coming in with massive amounts of student-loan debt. [...]

Millennials' parents, the Baby Boomers, were able to buy their first homes and start their careers and families in their late teens and early 20s, right out of high school or college, with little or no debt. They had jobs with good benefits, and often had traditional pensions, which made saving for retirement easier. The jobs Millennials are taking today don't typically come with a traditional pension, forcing them to shoulder nearly the entire burden of saving for retirement themselves.

These fears are echoed in Noreen Malone's brilliant New York magazine article, "[The Kids Are Actually Sort of Alright](#)," which really gets to the heart of how Millennials are navigating -- and *surviving* -- the disappointment by recalibrating their expectations, holding on to their sense of optimism and possibly turning this era into the golden age of creativity. (Believe it or not, this is a short excerpt from the piece, which is really worth reading in its entirety.)

Our generation is the product of two long-term social experiments conducted by our parents. The first sought to create little hyperachievers encouraged to explore our interests and talents, so long as that could be spun for maximum effect on a college application. (I would like to take this forum to at last admit that my co-secretaryship of the math club had nothing to do with any passion for numbers and much to do with the extra-credit points.) In the second experiment, which was a reaction to their own distant moms and dads, our parents tried to see how much self-confidence they could pack into us, like so many overstuffed microfibre love seats, and accordingly we were awarded clip-art Certificates of Participation just for showing up. [...]

"All the articles in the newspaper say that investing in an IRA now means I'll have hundreds of thousands of extra dollars down the road, so I should just scrimp and save," [Lael Goodman] says. "But I can't scrimp and save because I'm doing that just to afford housing and groceries. So I'm screwed now, unable to enjoy young adulthood in the way that I feel I was promised, and screwed for the future." [...]

If you look at the people on the left who have painted the darkest picture of what the economic downturn means, they're a generation ahead: Matt Taibbi, for one, or Ken Layne, the publisher of [Wonkette](#), whose ironized blog prose mixes strangely with his incredibly bleak reading of the economy and culture. (Layne told me, in an e-mail of ambiguous sincerity, that the main advice he would give a recent graduate was to own only what would fit in a backpack and keep a current passport always on hand.) They are unabashedly, feverishly upset. Their words practically sweat clammy. Our generation tends to prefer our dystopian news -- delivered with the impish smile of a Jon Stewart. (I turn the channel when it's time for scowling, ranting Lewis Black.) Reared to sponge up positive reinforcement that requires only a positive attitude as a buy-in, we are just not that into anger. [...]

I'm one of those young people always calling themselves lucky: I've been employed throughout the downturn, in the industry that I wanted to work in. But at my old job, there were several rounds of layoffs. The first robbed me of my cubicle mate, the last (which came after I'd left) hit veteran colleagues at the top of their games. Watching that, I decided to never count on career stability and have tried to be less defined by my work. Some of my friends have recalibrated as well. "I look at the people in positions of authority in my office and see the stress and pressure they are under," says one. She has lowered the bar beyond which satisfaction supposedly waits. "It makes me think, *Well, maybe I don't have to be in charge*. Maybe I'll be

okay with just keeping afloat rather than making a splash." [...]

It's part of the American way to get a lot of self-worth from your job. Meanwhile, one of the reasons there aren't enough of those jobs out there is that America no longer makes enough stuff. Young people feel that void, intrinsically. Making stuff is what got us smiles from our parents and top billing in refrigerator art galleries. And since we are, as a generation, more addicted to positive reinforcement than any before us, and because we have learned firsthand the futility of finding that affirmation through our employers, we have returned to our stuff-making ways, via pursuits easily mocked: the modern-day pickling, the obsessive Etsying, the flower-arranging classes, the knitting resurgence, the Kickstarter funds for art projects of no potential commercial value. The millions upon millions who upload footage of themselves singing or dancing or talking about the news to YouTube. Of course, funny videos and adorable hand-sewn ikat pillows aren't the only kind of stuff that people are making as a way of coping with harsh economic realities -- meth, for instance, comes to mind. But putting aside those darker enterprises, this is a golden age for creativity and knowledge for their own sakes. Our pastimes have become our expressions of mastery, a substitute for the all-consuming career.

And many of the Millennials are turning that creative spirit into entrepreneurial opportunities, writes William Deresiewicz in the New York Times, which dubs us "[Generation Sell](#)."

The millennial affect is the affect of the salesman. Consider the other side of the equation, the Millennials' characteristic social form. Here's what I see around me, in the city and the culture: food carts, 20-somethings selling wallets made from recycled plastic bags, boutique pickle companies, techie start-ups, Kickstarter, urban-farming supply stores and bottled water that wants to save the planet.

Today's ideal social form is not the commune or the movement or even the individual creator as such; it's the small business. Every artistic or moral aspiration -- music, food, good works, what have you -- is expressed in those terms. [...]

Because this isn't only them. The small business is the idealized social form of our time. Our culture hero is not the artist or reformer, not the saint or scientist, but the entrepreneur. (Think of Steve Jobs, our new deity.) Autonomy, adventure, imagination: entrepreneurship comprehends all this and more for us. The characteristic art form of our age may be the business plan.

AND that, I think, is the real meaning of the Millennial affect -- which is, like the entrepreneurial ideal, essentially everyone's now. Today's polite, pleasant personality is, above all, a commercial personality. It is the salesman's smile and hearty handshake, because the customer is always right and you should always keep the customer happy. If you want to get ahead, said Benjamin Franklin, the original business guru, make yourself pleasing to others.

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--Alexandra Le Tellier

Illustration by Daniel Fishel / For The Times

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Another Sign QR Codes Don't Appeal to the Young

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Marketers are eagerly embracing QR codes as a sexy new channel through which to engage younger customers, as any number of examples will show.

However, the emerging research does not support the assumption on the part of many marketers that QR codes are a favored tech application for the younger crowd.

A study by Ypulse found that fewer than one in five students have ever used them and nearly two thirds of students have no idea what they are. Some 6% have seen them but can't figure out how to use them. Now, a new study bolsters these findings, Geekosystem reports.

It says that marketing firm Archirival found that only 21% of college students it surveyed have successfully scanned a QR code before, and 75% said they don't plan on scanning one in the future.

Older, Male

So which group does find this technology appealing? comScore says that the people more likely to scan a QR code are male (60.5% of code scanning audience), skew toward ages 18-34 (53.4 percent) and have a household income of \$100,000 or above (36.1 percent).

They also are more likely to scan codes found in newspapers/magazines and on product packaging — and do so while at home or in a store.

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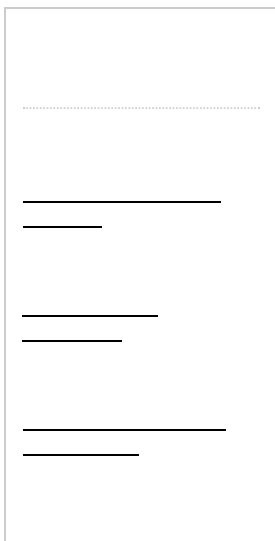
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The Teen, The Tweet, And The Governor: Social Media Lessons From The Emma Sullivan Fiasco

BY DAVID ZAX Mon Nov 28, 2011

What happens when a teenager tells a governor he “#blowsalot” on Twitter? Here are four lessons on teens, social media, and politics from the Emma Sullivan affair.



The whole thing blew up pretty quickly; it blew over just as fast. Last week, Emma Sullivan, a Kansas teenager, [wrote a nasty tweet](#) about her governor, from the back of a crowd of students that had gathered to meet him. “Just made mean comments at gov brownback and told him he sucked, in person #heblowsalot,” she tweeted. As political commentary goes, it wasn’t the most elevated (it also wasn’t true: she hadn’t criticized him to his face). But both the governor’s office and Sullivan’s school reacted quickly, with the latter demanding she write a letter of apology. On Monday, Sullivan held her ground, refusing to write the letter and citing her right to free speech. By the time the afternoon rolled around, the governor himself apologized--[via Facebook](#): “My staff over-reacted to this tweet, and for that I apologize. Freedom of speech is among our most treasured freedoms.”

This story may have turned out to be a minor tiff, rather than the epic showdown between teen and governor some had hoped for. Even so, there are a number of lessons to be drawn from the funny Kansan encounter between 18-year-old Emma Sullivan and Governor Sam Brownback, and about the emerging ways a generation weaned on social media is participating in politics.

1. Teens are using social media to engage politically.

“I do think that social media has helped Millennials become more politically aware, and some more politically active,” [Melanie Shreffler](#), editor-in-chief of [Ypulse](#), a “guide to youth” for marketers, tells *Fast Company*. She thinks that Sullivan’s casual criticism of the governor is mirrored, in a somewhat more serious manner, in the various ways teens have become involved in the Occupy Wall Street movement. Shreffler visited Zuccotti Park last month to interview youths who were assembling there. Many of the young people had learned of the movement online and had come by the park to see what it was about; only some of them would go on to lend their full support. “Social media may be the starting point--they hear about an issue online from a friend and then take it upon themselves to learn more--but it’s not enough to activate them in a cause.” Still, it can keep the flames of dissent alive, she adds, by “reminding them of what they can do to further the cause.”

[Chally Kacelnik](#), a 21-year-old Australian journalist who has written about teenage bloggers, agrees. "There's a widespread and false idea that teens are politically apathetic," she says. "Social media like Twitter are helping to push that established youth political engagement further, enabling activists to connect, quickly share information, and organize in real time and across the world."

A stray tweet like Sullivan's is relatively low-stakes, when measured against some of the digital activity of politically minded teenagers abroad. A dissident Syrian teen blogger [recently went to jail](#), on "charges of revealing information to a foreign country."

2. Social media can be a more effective way to reach politicians than traditional methods.

Because of Twitter's relative novelty and its perceived influence, politicians are monitoring it very closely. Sullivan's tweet, as you will have noticed, did not include Brownback's Twitter handle (and therefore wouldn't have shown up in his Twitter mentions); it was a tweet directed only to her 65 or so followers at the time. And yet someone from the governor's office tasked with monitoring social media mentions got hold of the tweet and responded to it. Twitter has become a sort of [all-purpose customer service line](#) (for politicians as well as for businesses, it seems), in which you may garner a faster or stronger response than via traditional channels. "While Emma's way of expressing her displeasure with the governor may seem disrespectful," says Shreffler, "I have little doubt that it was more effective in opening a line of communication with the governor than if she'd simply sent a letter expressing her opinion."

3. Politicians and brands should treat teens like adults (even if they don't always behave like them).

The reason the governor's office emerges so badly from this affair is that it treated Sullivan like some snot-nosed brat, pettily ungrateful for the time the governor deigned to spend with her Youth in Government program. Brownback's people and Sullivan's school mistook political criticism (Sullivan particularly loathes Brownback's decision to cut state arts funding) for the gripes of yet another thankless teen. "That's the telling part," says Kacelnik, who was recently a teenaged political blogger herself. "She was asked to perform what reads like a kid's punishment for bad behavior, and the Governor didn't even contact her directly to ask for one, as would have been respectful."

Shreffler agrees, adding that brands could learn from Brownback's overreaction: "My advice would be not to ignore or talk down to Millennials when they express dissent; instead, reach out and ask them about their opinions and where they come from," she says.

Kacelnik, for her part, sees Brownback's reaction as part of a larger Internet-wide bias against the opinions of teens. "On the Internet, teen producers of content are often treated with a great deal of contempt," she says. "Their opinions are dismissed and belittled, to the extent that many avoid talking about their age online so as to be taken as seriously as their older opinion-making peers."

She thinks that Brownback's decision to apologize via Facebook was insufficient: "An older person would be much more likely to have been addressed and apologized to directly, especially after having been treated like a naughty child."

4. It's tough juggling Twitter punditry and high school.

For other teens out there looking for insta-punditry, be careful what you wish for. *Fast Company* reached out to Emma Sullivan this morning to request an interview. "Unfortunately, I am at school today and after school I am fully booked for interviews today," she emailed. ("School has gone well so far," she wrote in a few hours later, though she added, "There have been some harsh things said by other students.")

By the time of this writing, Sullivan had acquired over 11,500 Twitter followers, up from last week's 65. Here's hoping those 11,500 new listeners are just as interested in Justin Bieber and the Twilight movies--representative subjects of Sullivan's tweets, prior to her politicization--as they are in mildly foulmouthed political commentary.

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[Image: [@emmakate988](#)

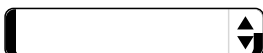
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In uncertain times, Millennials click back to the '90s

By Craig Wilson, USA TODAY

Updated 11h 4m ago

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So here's the deal.

You're what they call a "Millennial," born after 1980 and now roughly between your tweens and your 30s. There are 101 million of you, the largest generation now alive.

INTERACTIVE: [Test your '90s music recall](#)

You're well-educated but, in this bad economy, you're more than likely unemployed. If you are employed, you're underemployed, itching to contribute to an organization that doesn't quite understand how much you have to offer. Really! You *know* you are far more tech-savvy than your boss. She knows it, too.

You're restless, ready to change the world, ready to be the next [Mark Zuckerberg](#), co-founder of Facebook. And most likely, you're also living back home with the folks. Oddly enough, you don't mind. Neither do they.

Millennials are often thought of as spoiled. Some have dubbed you the "Babyed Boom." But your babying days

By Jack Gruber, USA TODAY

Isaac, left, Zac and Taylor Hanson are best known for their 1997 hit song 'MMMBop,' which earned them three Grammy nominations.

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are over, as anyone watching the job market can easily see.

So how are you spending a good portion of your time in these "doubled-up households," aka Mom and Dad's place? Reminiscing. Looking back to the '90s.

Yes, the '90s are the newest "good old days." This summer, some of your favorite TV shows began airing again on cable. *Beavis and Butt-Head* returns to [MTV](#) on

Thursday (10 p.m. ET/PT), but with updates. For instance, the famous duo will now be watching *Jersey Shore*.

MTV executive Van Toffler hopes the dozen half-hour episodes will appeal to old and new fans alike, with many of the latter familiar with *Beavis* from online snippets and TV reruns.

"We're going through a period of what we call 'instant nostalgia,' where it kind of goes back no further than the mid-'90s," Toffler says. He cites the resurrection of other '90s staples, including *Pop Up Video* on sister network [VH1](#).

MTV2 also revived *120 Minutes*, premiering two new episodes this summer. And another old friend, Barney, is making a big comeback in retail. Yes, Barney.

Some of the best-selling items this fall at novelty retailers, including [Spencer Gifts](#) nationwide, are based on the purple dinosaur of Millennials' youth: T-shirts, caps, socks and blankets, as well as an adult-sized Halloween costume.

"The kids of yesterday are looking for positive and fun reinforcement right now. Barney was the first friend they connected to," says Stacey Reiner, vice president of licensing for HIT Entertainment Global Brands. Sales are already "doing well," and restocking requests are coming from retailers daily, she says. "Everyone knows Barney. He makes them feel good."

Nickelodeon shows of yore

And why not? There's not much for Millennials to look forward to, which has made nostalgia for the last decade of the 20th century a growing cottage industry of late.

"They feel very stuck right now," says Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief at Ypulse, a marketing firm that studies Millennials. "They're an optimistic generation. They're at that age when they think things will get better. But in the meantime, they're like a deer in the headlights. They can get a job that is beneath them or bide their time, go back to their parents' house."

So what they are doing, more and more, is watching what they used to watch in their adolescence. Nickelodeon's TeenNick is more than happy to share.

Every unemployed Millennial can now jump into bed at midnight and watch "The '90s Are All That," the channel's programming block featuring series from a decade ago. The comedy and cartoon reruns began airing in July. Nickelodeon was motivated by Facebook fan pages asking for the shows to return, along with chat on Twitter.

[Clarissa Explains It All](#), [Doug](#) and [Kenan & Kel](#) all came out of retirement.

"There was an audience out there just waiting for this, and they showed up immediately to watch," says Keith Dawkins, TeenNick general manager. "Now they talk about it, they tweet about it. We'll keep responding to what the audience is asking for."

When the '90s shows launched, TeenNick ratings for that time period soared, posting double-digit increases over 2010. The shows have averaged a 50% ratings increase among viewers 18 to 34.

Such escapism is understandable.

Gallery: This week at the movies



See which movies are in theaters now, and read what USA TODAY's movie critic has to say about them.

[LIFE: Movies](#)

"There's no doubt about it, they are stressed. ... (There's) pressure to be smarter in school, funnier on Facebook, more creative in fashion, more self-actualized in their career choice, all in an economy that basically (stinks)," says Nick Shore, MTV's senior vice president of strategic consumer insights and marketing. "We are definitely seeing a backlash, a 'newstalgia' for a recent past — that never actually existed — where things were simpler, choices were fewer, and technology was in its infancy."

It works for them. Mom and Dad are down the hall, and the Millennials fall asleep feeling secure, as if they're 13 again, dreaming of their flower-patterned leggings and Lunchables.

"They don't look upon their parents as inhibitors," Shreffler says. "They look upon their parents as friends. It's a different time now."

Good thing, too. According to the Census, 5.9 million young adults (ages 25 to 34) resided in their parents' homes this spring, compared with 4.7 million before the recession.

About one in eight older Millennials (22 and up) say they've "boomeranged" back to a parent's home because of the economy, according to Pew Research.

Susie Cook Parker's son, Justin, 24, moved back in with her (and his grandparents!) this summer after he lost his job in [West Virginia](#). He brought along his wife to his mom's house in Wilmington, N.C.

"It's been an adjustment for everyone, but not an unpleasant experience, really," says Parker, who runs an insurance agency, where she hopes her son will work once he gets licensed. "I'm happy that I have the resources to help him jump into a new career."

Low expectations for jobs

Not that it's always rosy in Millennial land.

Humor writer Gordon Kirkland's unemployed son, Mike, 31, a computer programmer, has moved back home to Vancouver, [British Columbia](#).

"He is either making a lot or none, and we are in one of the 'none' periods," Kirkland says. "When (wife) Diane was pregnant with him, she always wanted me to put my hand on her belly to feel him move. I'm still waiting for him to move."

Doug Helman and Alexandra DeArmon are in no hurry.

Helman, 22, is a recent graduate of [Tufts University](#) in international studies, unemployed and thinking about law school. He did regional theater in Dallas over the summer. He knows the lay of the land.

"Everyone's expectations are extremely low right now," says Helman, who is living in [New Jersey](#) with his parents. "I'm sending out résumés, but you know you'll only get one response out of 25. At this point, you're just looking for someone who knows someone."

His frame of mind? "I'm not quite pessimistic yet. I'm still hopeful."

He concedes that he watches the late-night TV shows of his youth, but "I'd be nostalgic for the '90s even if things were good. Isn't every generation nostalgic for its youth?"

DeArmon graduated from the [University of Maryland](#) two years ago and has tried her hand at everything from bagel maker ("dream job") to yoga teacher. She works in a bike rental/repair shop in Washington and says she couldn't be happier.

"My life plan right now is to start an urban hiking/day hiking company targeted at women, kind of a holistic life coach/personal training-type thing where I go on hikes and walks with people," says DeArmon, 23, who lives "comfortably" in a group house after stints residing with her parents.

"I don't have quite as much angst as some of my peers because I was a theater major, so I never expected to ever make a whole bunch of money or have a traditional 9-to-5 office job. ... For the time being, this new life goal is giving me something to work on, learning about business, trying to draw up a plan."

Still, she's into all things '90s. "I love waxing nostalgic about elementary school and all the awesome music, movies, TV," she says. "Backstreet Boys! 'N Sync! Hanson! The Spice Girls! La Bouche! En Vogue!"

Resilience will win out

Millennials are like kids in a candy shop.

"This is the first generation that has had instant personal access to the entire history of pop culture," says MTV's Shore. "We see them re-appropriating and remixing elements of virtually every decade. (Tom) Cruise in *Cocktail*, '80s Ray-Bans with a [Zelda Fitzgerald](#) haircut and Japanese manga-style shoes of the future. They're working their way through the catalog and have stopped for a while on the '90s. That particular island hasn't been plundered so wildly, yet."

But can this kind of behavior last forever? Is there an end in sight for Millennials? When will they move on?

Historian and demographer [Neil Howe](#), who came up with the term "Millennials" in his 1991 book *Generations*, concedes that times are indeed bad for this generation.

"They're getting hurt more than anyone else since no one is retiring," he says. "It's quite a remarkable time."

But Howe, who is also a founder of LifeCourse Associates, a consulting group that studies societal and generational trends, has faith in his Millennials, citing the generation's "can-do" attitude and its tendency to go with the flow.

"They tend to be very far-sighted in response to these kinds of challenges. They'll come through it just fine."

Contributing: Gary Levin and Bill Keveney

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Youth Insight: Students Check in to Cool Locales Online

September 14, 2011 | Levent OZLER

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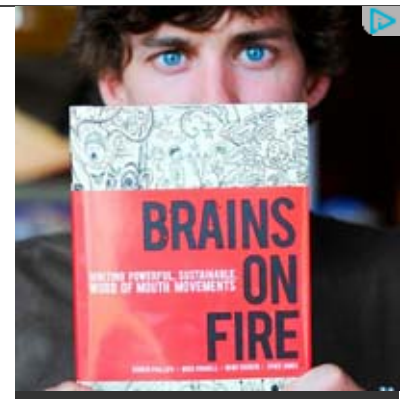
Checking in on social media sites is becoming common for young users. Four in 10 students (40%) have ever checked in via social media, with high school students slightly (45%) more likely than their college elders to have done so, according to Ypulse the leading authority on youth culture and marketing.

"It is a minority of young social media users who have done so, but the numbers are significant, particularly in comparison to the mere 4% of all adults who have checked in via social sites, according to Pew Research," said Ypulse editor-in-chief Melanie Shreffler.

Among the students who have ever checked in online, they've done so at:

- Events other than concerts (67%);
- Movies (64%);
- Restaurants other than fast food places (63%);
- Concerts (62%);
- Retailers (52%);
- Friends' or families' homes (47%);
- Their own home (45%);
- Fast food restaurants (45%); and
- Online while watching TV, ie checking in to a show (32%).









"What Millennials post online is their social currency," said Ypulse's Shreffler, "A check in at the sold-out concert, hot night spot, or cool store ups their social street cred and shows others they part of the latest trend. Checking in is yet another way to share what they're into. Millennials don't worry about privacy in the process -they're comfortable sharing their



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‘90s Nostalgia is Totally Awesome

By Christine Birkner, staff writer
cbirkner@ama.org

If you’re still reeling from the fact that oldies stations now feature ‘80s music, you might want to sit down before reading this next part: The 1990s have become fodder for nostalgia marketing.



Clarissa Explains It All
Image courtesy of Nickelodeon

To target millennials—the generation of consumers who primarily spent their formative years in the 1990s—some marketers are banking on the idea that nostalgia for the era of scrunchies, crop tops and grunge music is “all that and a bag of chips.” In July, New York-based Viacom International Inc.’s Nickelodeon launched a midnight to 2 a.m. block of programming called “The ‘90s are All That,” which includes hit shows from the decade such as *Kenan & Kel*, *All That* and *Clarissa Explains It All*, and ratings among viewers 18 to 34 for that time slot grew 850% from the channel’s previous time-period average, according to The Nielsen Co. Sister network MTV is jumping on the ‘90s nostalgia bandwagon as well with a retooled version of *Beavis and Butthead*, which will begin airing Oct. 27.

Nostalgia marketing often experiences a resurgence

when the economy is faltering and consumers want to be reminded of better times. Right now millennials, generally defined as ranging in age from 15 to 34, are a

particularly nostalgic generation because many in the younger end of the demographic are having difficulty entering the workforce in a down economy, experts say.

“[Millennials] are not finding jobs. They’re not getting the jobs they want. They’re really struggling trying to get their place in the world. In the meantime, they’re reverting to a time when they were younger that they felt safer, more secure, much happier. **That’s why the nostalgia angle is working so well with them,**” says Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief of Ypulse, the media arm of Youth Pulse Inc., a New York-based consultancy and market research firm that covers tweens, teens and young adults.

While the content might hark back to “simpler times,” the distribution and promotion strategies shouldn’t. According to a study by Kansas City, Mo.-based marketing agency Barkley, millennials consume 42% of their TV shows online and 70% of millennials feel more excited when their friends agreed with them about entertainment preferences. To that end, viewers can watch full episodes of the “‘90s Are All That” programming block on Nickelodeon’s website, and fans can share clips with friends or discuss and vote on their favorite episodes on Facebook and Twitter.

"Nostalgia is great, but you have to allow for content creation, online participation and social media sharing," says Jeff Fromm, senior vice president of sales, marketing and innovation at Barkley. "Millennials want to be engaged and be co-marketers. Traditional television is not a great fit for them relative to the way it might have been for older generations, but [we] can reinvent that and say, 'How can we engage them online?'"

Shreffler agrees. "Millennials are absolutely not shy about sharing their opinion. They will tell you exactly what they want, and it's up to marketers to listen. More than any other generation, they ... want to collaborate with companies and let them know exactly what they like and don't like. They want a forum to tell the brand what they think and how they feel, and they absolutely expect to hear back," she says.

Nostalgia marketing resonates across generations because most consumers want to feel the security, safety and happiness from their younger days, says Matt Britton, CEO and founder of New York-based marketing agency Mr. Youth. "Nostalgia is a way to a consumer's heart because it reminds them of a more innocent time. And if a brand can connect to that experience or a media company can leverage content from those days, it's going to strike a chord with consumers."

For more on nostalgia marketing, read "Believe in Yesterday," available at www.MarketPower.com/marketingnews.

WORKING THE CAMPUS BEAT

Students are dusting off their books and looking to spend money again after having stuffed their wallets during their summer break. The latest report from YPulse (www.YPulse.com), a New York-based Millennial/Gen-Y market research and consulting firm, has a few insights on fashion-loving students' buying habits and how your tenants could make the most of their patronage. The report was drawn from 1,300 interviews conducted among members of the firm's SurveyU panel, which comprises both male and female high school and college students.

The first thing we learned from YPulse is that whatever hunch we might have about students and shopping doesn't always match what's really going on in stores and online. One surprising fact was that college guys were the ones spending the most on average per shopping trip. They spent \$99.25 per trip, compared to \$89.15 for high school

boys, \$79.58 for high school girls and \$78.52 for college gals. However, college gals led the pack in monthly spending, with an aggregate bill of \$139.46. That was ahead of high school girls (\$124.96), college guys (\$111.49) and high school boys (\$65.82). From a relatively young



YPulse TARGETS

- High School Males
- High School Females
- College Males
- College Females

age, it seems, young men are drawn to (and perhaps conditioned to like) fewer but bigger shopping sprees than young women are.

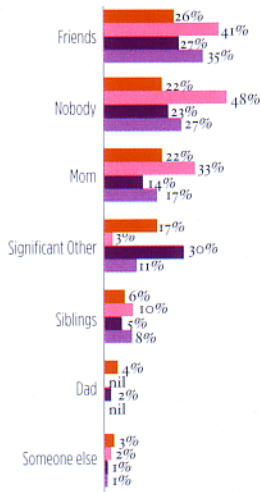
Those figures give marketers an idea of the level of discretionary income students have and how the money gets spread, but where the study truly gets interesting is in

tracking how those young consumers shop, what influences their buying decisions and brand allegiances, and which tools they use most online or at the point of sale. Below is a snapshot of some of the YPulse findings.

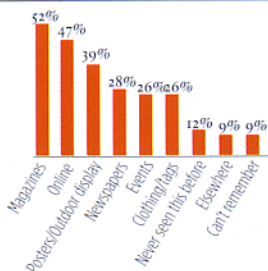
For more information, visit: <http://Research.Ypulse.com>.

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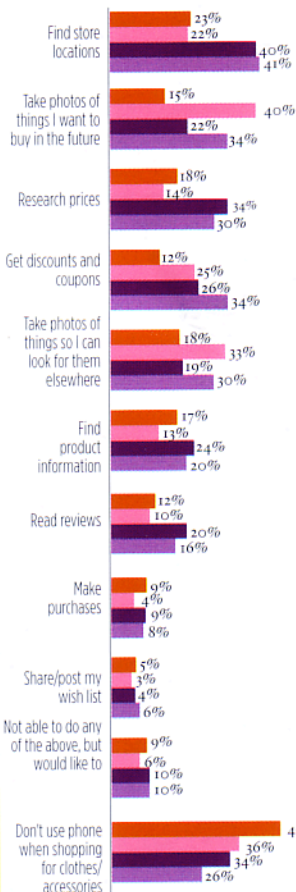
Here's a look at who students like to take along when shopping for fashions.



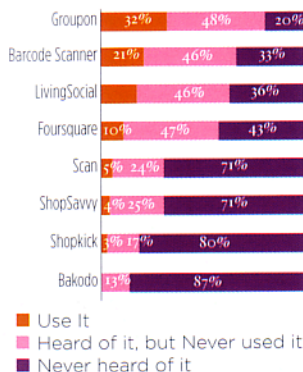
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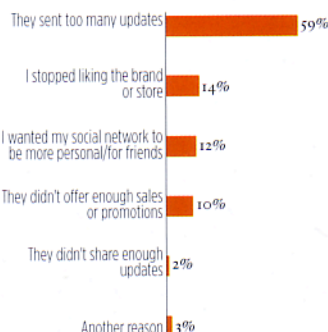


SAVE THAT APP



STAR TODAY, GONE TOMORROW

Why brands lose favor with students on social networks



Engage:GenY

Millennials' Open Source Attitude

Melanie Shreffler, Sep 09, 2011 06:46 AM

Not a day goes by that we don't see some evidence of Millennials' collaborative nature, whether when we're researching an answer to a tech problem (thank you, Android developer forums!) or just listening to music (the song Matt & Kim, Soulja Boy, and Andrew W.K. did for Converse). Perhaps because they came of age in the most connected time in history, Millennials share freely and help others every chance they get.

Why? To help others also helps them, both directly and indirectly. Collaborating with others builds a network of peers they can turn to when they need help. Moreover, by adding to the world's collective knowledge -- à la Wikipedia for example -- they are helping make the world a better place, which is important to Millennials. Getting credit is enough compensation for their efforts; they want to be known as the person who solved a problem or answered a question or told their friends about the next big thing.

Millennials' collaborative nature is important for marketers and advertisers to consider when reaching out to them. Here are a few examples:

They want to be the first to discover new things and share them with their friends. When Millennials find out about something new, they don't hoard that knowledge as a competitive advantage; they pass it on, not only to friends, but to anyone who might find it useful. This is reason enough for brands to be active on social networks and sharing information with fans. Telling them first about products or announcements helps Millennials maintain their role as an "in-the-know expert" and makes them feel special when they can share information about their favorite brands.

They're individuals, but appreciate the wisdom and opinions of the collective. This is the paradox of Millennials; they want to be seen as unique, but they're more than willing to learn from others. They adopt new opinions, styles, slang -- whatever they find useful -- and blend it with what they already know and do.

Because they're so willing to share and learn, Millennials don't easily fit into common youth stereotypes -- athlete, drama club kid, computer geek, etc. -- rather, they're a blend of many of these types. The athlete can also be a hipster; the trendy girl can also be a computer geek. Addressing Millennials based on a singular interest or attitude ignores a large part of who they are. The Converse collaboration is a great example, blending the sounds of indie rockers, a rapper, and a metal act; Millennials wouldn't limit themselves to listening to just one of those genres because they can find something of interest in each.

They share with marketers and brands they care about, and want to see that their advice is being heard. Young consumers aren't shy about sharing their opinions because they want to help their favorite brands be even better. But simply speaking up isn't enough for this group. They want evidence they're getting through. That can be as simple as replying to the comments they post on Facebook (which they expect, by the way).

What's more, sharing is a two-way street, which makes Millennials skeptical of brands that don't share with them. They'll avoid companies that are secretive or seem shady in their marketing practices. Millennials' expect companies to be as open to sharing as they are.

Social Media: Who is checking in?



“Check In” refers to a social interaction between students and customers with companies/ brands/ retailers. A research study done by YPULSE concluded that younger students-high school students, are more likely to Check In via social media than college students. ‘Four out of 10 (40%) college students have checked in via social media. High school students were slightly higher by 5% percentage . Though a low percentage of college students Check In, “the numbers are significant, particularly in comparison to the mere 4% of all adults who have Checked In

via social sites, according to Pew Research,’ said Ypulse editor-in-chief Melanie Shreffler.”

Students, who often Check In, do so when they’re not in front of a computer. More students check in via social media while they are out and about; 67% at concerts, 64% at the movies, 63% while at restaurant or non- fast food places, and 52% at retailers or while shopping. Social Media travels and allows these students to share and talk with their friends and family about where they are and what they are doing.

Sharing too much information for some may be a huge concern, however, for these students, privacy is not a big issue. Ypulse’s Shreffler stated that “they’re comfortable sharing their whereabouts and don’t mind marketers using that information to better understand them.” The information begin shared allows brands and retailers to take note of their target audience. The brands and retailers encourage students to participate by rewarding them, offering them exclusive discounts and rewards. This is a win-win situation. If you want to receive free or discounted stuff , ‘Check In’ .

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September 6, 2011

Millennials in America: How They Spent Their Summer

By: **Melanie Shreffler**

High school and college students are heading back to classes, but the past two months have consisted of a lot of time off with family, a fair amount of work, and a little bit of romance, according to surveys by Ypulse, a leading authority on youth.

Vacation

Three out of five (61%) high school and college students took a trip during their summer break. For most students, vacations are family time, with 64% of those taking a trip with family, 40% traveling with friends, and 26% traveling with a significant other. Vacations change slightly as students get older; while 84% of high school students traveled with their families, 29% of college students traveled with a significant other.

Work

Despite a soft economy, two-thirds of students (66%) worked this summer. Of those who did land a job, most worked part-time (54%), full-time (34%), as a paid intern (16%), or as an unpaid intern (9%). Determined to keep their academic edge, nearly a third of students (29%) took summer classes. As is typical of this "do something" generation, nearly one in five (18%) volunteered this summer, a number matched by those who didn't work, didn't take classes, and didn't volunteer (18%).

Escaping the Heat

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, July 2011 was the fourth warmest on record in the United States and students escaped the heat by hitting the water. Nearly two thirds of students hit the beach this summer (64%), while more than half of students (57%) hit the pool and more than a third (38%) visited a water park.

Healthy Skin is In

Escaping the effects of the sun are on the minds of Millennials, with one in six (17%) wearing SPF 50 or higher, a quarter (27%) wearing sunscreen at SPF levels between 30 and 50, and nearly one in five (18%) wearing sunscreen at SPF levels between 15 and 30. Slightly more than a third of students (34%) did not typically use sunscreen this summer.

Summer Lovin'

Millennials are much more conservative than the generation that preceded them, as evidenced by their tendency toward stable, long-term relationships. More than a third of students (35%) continued their long-term relationship into the summer, while less than one in ten started a relationship this summer (8%) or experienced a summer fling (7%). More than half of students (51%) are not currently in a relationship, with slightly less than a quarter wishing they were (24%) and slightly more than a quarter not interested in summer romance (27%).

Methodology

The results of this research are drawn from 1,326 interviews conducted among members of the SurveyU panel between July 14 and July 25, 2011. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have registered to participate in surveys for SurveyU, a Ypulse-owned online research panel. Quotas were established based on gender, state, class year, and race. The data have been weighted using National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data to reflect the demographic composition of U.S. high school and college students.

Because the sample is based on those who initially self-selected for participation in the panel rather than a probability sample, no estimates of sampling error can be calculated. All sample surveys and polls may be

About the Author

[Melanie Shreffler](#)

Melanie Shreffler is Editor of Ypulse, the leading authority on youth. *Ypulse Insights* is a full-service, data-driven consultancy and market research firm and *Ypulse Media* has developed a unique platform for youth media and marketing professionals, producing an award-winning [website](#), a daily email newsletter (the Ypulse Daily Update), a Twitter [feed](#), and the annual Youth Marketing Mega Mashup conference, produced in partnership with IIR.

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Friday, August 12, 2011


Mobile Commerce - 17% of students have scanned QR codes with their smartphones - Internet Retailer

Of students who have scanned QR codes, 52% found the QR code in a magazine, 44% on a poster or outdoor display, 39% on an in-store display, 28% in a newspaper, 26% at an event, and 26% on a product tag. Respondents could choose more than one answer.

“We think of teens and college students as being so tech-savvy that they can figure out anything, but QR codes have them somewhat baffled,” says Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief of Ypulse. “Considering that QR codes direct users to online information, brands and retailers should also provide consumers with simple URLs, which don’t require a learning curve, to make sure everyone can access the information they want to share.”The Ypulse findings that only 17% of students have used QR codes, however, are in contrast to other recent 2-D bar code studies. (QR is the most popular 2-D bar code format, but there are others, notably Microsoft Corp.’s Tag.)

The difference may be in the devices in hand. Research firms have found that younger consumers are more likely to have a feature phone—the less-powerful predecessor to the smartphone—than a smartphone, later graduating to a smartphone. Feature phones are less likely to run apps or facilitate code scanning. So many in the 64% in the Ypulse study who don’t know what a QR code is may be unaware because QR codes are not relevant to their devices.

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August 17, 2011

Editors Face Teen Angst

By AMY WICKS

NEW YORK — Magazine newsstand sales were revealed last week by the Audit Bureau of Circulations and the numbers were bleak. Editors are desperate to engage the younger generation — those tweeters, Facebookers, text messagers and Web surfers who will ensure that titles have a future beyond the Baby Boomers. But what do they have to offer this prized demographic? More pictures of Lady Gaga or Kim Kardashian?

Been there, done that.

What about the cover of the magazine?

For the Aug. 18 issue of Rolling Stone, nearly 2 million people visited the magazine's Web site as part of an "American Idol"-style contest to choose who would appear on the cover. The winner was an unknown band from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada. In addition to the cover, the winning band, The Sheepdogs, was promised a contract with Atlantic Records and a performance on "Late Night with Jimmy Fallon."

The Sheepdogs are now living the rock 'n' roll dream. A few weeks before winning the contest, they were deep in debt and on the cusp of calling it quits. As of Monday, the shaggy-haired foursome had two albums rated in the top five albums on iTunes in Canada and had bumped Adele off the number one album chart there.

"It was a leap of faith," admitted Nathan Brackett, Rolling Stone's deputy managing editor. Editors are already thinking about next year's contest (provided, that is, that this first iteration doesn't fall completely flat at the newsstand).

Only a fraction of Rolling Stone's print readership of 1.5 million (which, coincidentally, was around the number of votes cast) visits the Web site, said Brackett, so the contest presented an opportunity to cultivate a larger following among a younger demographic. This is especially vital since most of the visitors to rollingstone.com aren't typing it into their browser — most are led to the site from Google or social networking sites such as Facebook.

"This had a big appeal to young consumers," said Matt Mastrangelo, publisher of Rolling Stone, adding that the print title increased 17 percent on the newsstand during the first half of the year. "Music and entertainment are used as social currency in their peer group so any company that wants to engage young people in an authentic way — this is a way to do it."

The program generated over 1 billion media impressions, he claimed.

Rolling Stone's willingness to give up the most valuable asset it has — the cover — shows what lengths magazines are stretching to these days in their attempts to lure a younger audience both online and in print. And it isn't the only one willing to make the sacrifice. Seventeen is as well.

The magazine's October cover is currently up for grabs, but it won't go to Selena Gomez, Blake Lively or

another actress from ABC Family's "Pretty Little Liars." The most coveted spot in that issue will go to the Girl Next Door.

Editor in chief Ann Shoket said more than 35,000 readers visited seventeen.com to enter the "Pretty Amazing Real Girl Cover Contest" and 167,000 votes have been logged for a field that has been narrowed down to five girls. A glimpse at the finalists: Zoe, a 19-year-old from Chicago, designs and sells her own clothing and has met President Obama; Ann, a Texas native, is a published photographer; Shannon, 21, is a race car driver who wants to be the first female to win the Indy 500; Lauren, from California, is a budding filmmaker, and Nina, from New Jersey, travels the country giving presentations on cyber bullying.

The winner will be revealed during a special that will air on MTV at the end of August. "The way these girls are reading magazines, they demand that there be an online level of digital ingenuity at a level never experienced before," said Shoket. "It's thrilling because I have to be quick on my feet."

Seventeen.com at press time had 2.16 million uniques, 246,362 Twitter followers and 937,882 "likes" on Facebook — yet the magazine still saw its newsstand sales fall 13 percent during the first half.

The magazine is known for its oversize intern program (25 of them are roaming the halls right now) so Shoket has a focus group at arms length. "This is the new generation of readers," she said. "Our biggest competitor is everything else that's vying for her time. Where I talk to them is less important than how I talk to them. We need to meet them wherever they are in their lives."

Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief of Ypulse, said Generation Y wants to be courted as much as possible. "When you ask for feedback you get their interest and you'll also gain their loyalty as well. They will come back in the future and become your advocate. I met one of the real girls that's going for the cover of Seventeen last week. She was just glowing with the idea that she had a shot at the cover."

She said unlike older readers, the younger demographic doesn't mind paying for content online — although few magazines charge for it. "They would prefer it to be free but they won't freak out about it," Shreffler contended.

Shreffler added that teens and young women are still reading magazines, but in a different way. "They are not going to spend hours poring over a hard copy," she said. "They want the information they need and be entertained, so apps are a smart way to do that. It's digital and on the go."

Any day now, Teen Vogue is launching a Snapshot app based on the popular back page of the magazine. Glamour just launched its Friends and Fans app and had 25,000 snaps in the first 24 hours of its September newsstand date of Aug. 2. The app allows smartphones to uncover discount shopping codes, reveals free prizes and leads to exclusive videos with celebrities. Kardashian, for example, garnered 60 comments per second during her chat.

And while editor in chief Cindi Leive doesn't have any plans to kick Kardashian (her best seller in the first half) off an upcoming cover and in favor of some fresh-faced reader from Oklahoma, she did recently send a stylist and photographer to the University of Virginia for a "real girl" shoot. A long line of young women showed up, after hearing about it on Facebook and Twitter.

"It's a totally different ball game now," said Leive, about leading a brand such as Glamour, which fell 17 percent on the newsstand during the first half. "It's 1,000 percent different than it used to be. You're not

17% of students have scanned QR codes with their smartphones

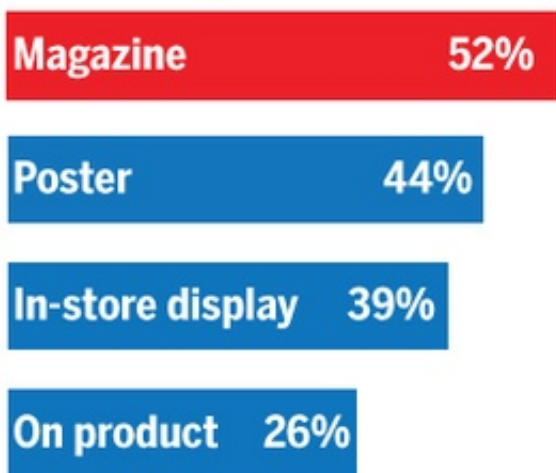
But 64% don't know what a QR code is, a new survey finds.

[Bill Siwicki](#)

Managing Editor, Mobile Commerce

Topics: [2-D](#), [2-D bar codes](#), [m-commerce](#), [Mobile](#), [mobile commerce](#), [QR](#), [QR codes](#), [young shoppers](#), [Ypulse](#)

Where Students Have Used QR Codes



Usually it's the young that are first to adopt new technologies. If that's the case with [QR codes](#), then the two-dimensional codes that link the physical world to the online realm have a ways to go.

64% of high school and college students in a survey by youth media and marketing firm Ypulse say they have no idea what a QR code is. Of the 36% familiar with the little black-and-white squares that are increasingly appearing on signs, ads and product packages, only 17% have scanned them: 4% have scanned a QR code once, 6% two or three times, and 7% four or more times. 6% of the 1,300 survey respondents say they are aware of the technology but have not scanned because they cannot figure out how to do it. 13% say they are aware of the codes but have never scanned them, and that they could figure out how to use the codes but don't want to.

Of those students who have used [QR codes](#), the majority find them helpful. 42% of survey respondents say the codes are easy to use and useful, 13% say they're useful but not easy, and 9% say they're easy but not useful. 5% of survey respondents say QR codes are neither easy nor useful and 31% say they don't know enough about QR codes to make a judgment.

Of students who have scanned QR codes, 52% found the QR code in a magazine, 44% on a poster or outdoor display, 39% on an in-store display, 28% in a newspaper, 26% at an event, and 26% on a product tag.

Respondents could choose more than one answer.

“We think of teens and college students as being so tech-savvy that they can figure out anything, but QR codes have them somewhat baffled,” says Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief of Ypulse. “Considering that QR codes direct users to online information, brands and retailers should also provide consumers with simple URLs, which don’t require a learning curve, to make sure everyone can access the information they want to share.” The Ypulse findings that only 17% of students have used QR codes, however, are in contrast to other recent 2-D bar code studies. (QR is the most popular 2-D bar code format, but there are others, notably Microsoft Corp.’s Tag.)

24% of smartphone owners report having scanned a 2-D bar code to obtain more information about a product, business or event, according to the June 2011 Mobile Dependence Day Report by ExactTarget, an e-mail and mobile messaging technology provider. And 32% of smartphone owners say they have used a 2-D bar code, according to a survey by MGH, a web and mobile marketing firm.

The difference may be in the devices in hand. Research firms have found that [younger consumers](#) are more likely to have a feature phone—the less-powerful predecessor to the smartphone—than a smartphone, later graduating to a smartphone. Feature phones are less likely to run apps or facilitate code scanning. So many in the 64% in the Ypulse study who don’t know what a QR code is may be unaware because QR codes are not relevant to their devices.



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QR Codes and Cherries? Maybe Not, According to comScore

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Three weeks ago Domex Superfresh Growers introduced two-pound cherry bags and clam shells with QR codes printed on each package. Since then the retailer has tracked 2,000 hits to its mobile website via scans of the QR codes. The company has learned much about its customer base as a result, says Loren Queen, marketing and communications manager.

"The highest numbers of hits have come from the Far East by a significant percentage followed by the Pacific Northwest, Canada and the West Coast of the United States." The codes on Superfresh Growers cherry packages lead consumers to the Superfresh Growers mobile website where they can access information about different varieties, nutrition facts and receive answers to frequently asked questions

But Rich, Young Males Use QR Codes, Not Teenagers

Marketers are always eager for data about their customers, and increasingly they are realizing much can be gleaned from a QR code campaign. At the same time, the industry is also studying who exactly is most apt to take the trouble of scanning a QR code. Interestingly, some - but not all - of the latest data about QR code use suggests groceries, typically a woman's purchase, may not be the best product to sport such technology.

comScore reports that the people more likely to scan a QR code are male (60.5% of code scanning audience), skew toward ages 18-34 (53.4 percent) and have a household income of \$100,000 or above (36.1 percent). They also are more likely to scan codes found in newspapers/magazines and on product packaging — and do so while at home or in a store.

Another study, by Ypulse, meanwhile finds that younger people are not so likely to take the trouble. Fewer than one in five students have ever used them and nearly two thirds of students have no idea what they are. Some 6% have seen them but can't figure out how to use them. "We think of teens and college students as being so tech savvy that they can figure out anything, but QR codes have them somewhat baffled," said Melanie Shreffler, editor-in-chief of Ypulse.

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Even Tech Savvy Teens Can Get Confused

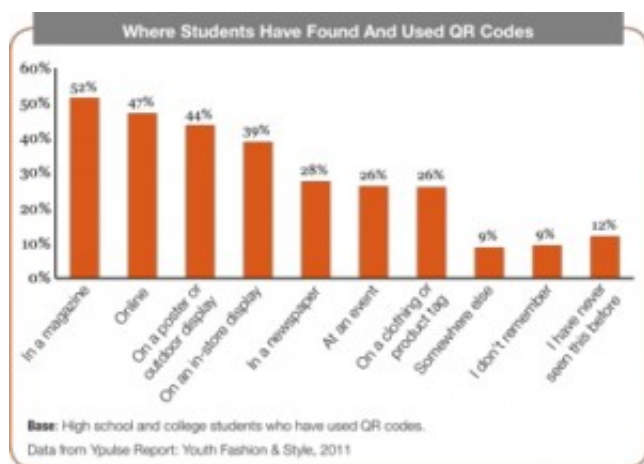


Do you know what **QR codes** are? QR codes are those funky pixilated square graphics that are showing up everywhere these days: in magazines, on product packaging, on books, and in ads. The question that people want answered is do they work?

Though QR codes have been around for several years, fewer than one in five students have ever used them. **Ypulse** is the leading authority on youth culture. According to Ypulse, nearly two thirds of students have no idea what they are, and some 6% have seen them but can't figure out how to use them. I'll have to admit, I'm a student and didn't know what QR codes were before writing this article....

"We think of teens and college students as being so tech savvy that they can figure out anything, but QR codes have them somewhat baffled,"

said **Melanie Shreffler**, editor-in-chief of Ypulse. Even among those who have heard of QR codes, only 42% think they're easy and useful. Some 13% think they are useful, but not easy to use, while another 9% think they are easy to access but not useful. On the other hand, students are using daily deal apps, such as **Groupon** or **Living Social**. I am a Groupon user. The vast majority have heard of the apps, and more than a third of students have used them. Students like the apps because they feature discounts on stores and brands they already like (60%) and help them find out about deals (54%).



<http://www.socialtechpop.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/QRcode-usage.000011.jpg>

Moreover, these apps are particularly well suited to the needs and interests of young shoppers. College students (21%) like them because the apps keep them informed about what's going on in their community, which is especially important to living away from home for the first time. They're also a great way to get guys into shopping; 26% of high-school and college-aged guys like daily deal apps because they make life feel more like a game.

Facebook comments:

Survey: 83 Percent Of Young Shoppers Can't Handle QR Codes

Written by Evan Schuman

August 17th, 2011



Given the current retail fascination with QR codes—with recent trials at Tesco on subway walls, Macy's on products, American Express on beer cans and eBay on practically everything—it stands to reason those little boxed lines are doing rather well.

A recent credible survey, however, found that not only are most younger consumers oblivious to what QR codes are, but the many who *do* know what they are can't get them to function. In short, 83 percent of the 1,300 14- to 24-year-olds surveyed couldn't access a QR code regardless of how good the offer was. Looks like some people skipped an important step in product rollout.

That news is pretty bad, given the strong mobile interest—or general high-tech and experimentation comfort level—of that demographic. If they're confused or apathetic, the numbers won't likely get better as surveys examine consumers in their 30s, 40s, 50s, 60s and beyond. This particular survey was conducted between May 20 and May 30 by Youth Pulse (a.k.a., YPulse), which tracks marketing trends among the 14- to-24-year-old segment.

The survey breakdowns also hold little optimism. Some 64 percent said they had no idea what a QR code was, even when shown a picture of it. That picture part negates the possibility that they knew what QR codes were and had to use them but simply didn't recognize the name.

On top of that 64 percent who had no idea about CR codes, 6 percent "have seen them but can't figure out how to use them" and another 13 percent "haven't used them, but say they could figure out how to use them if they wanted to." That's a total of 83 percent. As for the remaining 17 percent, 4 percent have used a CR code once, 6 percent have used one two to three times and 7 percent have used it four or more times.

"I think the confusion for those who can't figure out how to use them is that they don't realize they need an app to read the code and, even if they do, they may not know the images are called QR codes in order to search for a QR code reader app," said Melanie Shreffler, the Editor-in-Chief for Ypulse. "When I first learned of QR codes a few years ago, a friend was trying to tell me what they are, and she said you just need to snap a picture of the image with your phone and voila. I asked how my phone's camera would know what to do with that weird image. She thought for a minute and said 'I have no idea, but somehow it must.' I tried it and obviously it didn't work. Eventually I went online and did a little research about how to use QR codes. I think that same scenario is probably happening for other users who are just learning about QR codes."

Shreffler's speculation is frighteningly likely. The problem here is best illustrated by the Macy's experiment, where almost no signage and even less training of store associates pretty much left customers to figure it out on their own.

Much of the work needs to be done by marketing, with customer and store associate education and then lots of signage to remind people of the process. Industry pressure can encourage phones to ship with QR software already installed. If we're lucky, it could even be set to auto-launch when it sees the proper image.

Until that happens, no one should be surprised when QR experiments deliver disappointing results.



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August 11, 2011

Daily Deal Apps Gaining Traction Among Millennials

By LISA LOCKWOOD

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Coupon giant Groupon offers an array of daily deals. Photo By Courtesy Photo

LAUNCH SLIDESHOW

As college and high school students head back to school, marketers can learn from their buying habits.

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According to a new study by Ypulse Inc., an authority on teens, college students and young adults, students are embracing daily deal apps, such as Groupon and Living Social. Conducting 1,300 interviews with an online panel of U.S. high school and college students, the Ypulse report found that the vast majority have heard of the deal apps, and more than a third have used them. The survey revealed that 32 percent of the students have used Groupon; 21 percent have used Barcode Scanner; 18 percent have engaged in Living Social, and 10 percent have used Foursquare. The students said they like the apps because they feature discounts on stores and brands they already like (60 percent) and help them find out about deals (54 percent).

College students also said the apps are well suited to their needs. Twenty-one percent of those surveyed revealed they like these apps because they keep them informed about what's going on in their community, which is particularly important if they're living away from home for the first time. They're also viewed as a great vehicle to get guys into shopping. Twenty-six percent of high school and college-aged students, in fact, said they like daily deal apps because they make shopping fun and seem more like a game. The daily deal apps, with limited-time deals that shoppers have to act on quickly, often compete with colleges' and universities' long-established deal networks for students that encourage them to support neighborhood businesses (ie., cheap movie tickets, deals on food, nearby clothing boutiques), the report said. "The challenge is to break through the clutter and entice them with the right products and services," according to the report.

Michael Wood, senior vice president of TRU, a Chicago-based full-service research firm specializing in young people, agreed with the Ypulse survey's results, saying that in the last year it has also seen increased interest in these daily deal apps and communities. "I think the interfaces are simple and easy to use, and there is no obligation. You sign up and get a deal. Living Social provides things to do that are fun. There are social activities, dining experiences, things they have never been exposed to, and things were always too expensive. It almost allows them to have these experiences without feeling guilty." He said his firm has also done studies that have shown that twentysomethings originally gravitated toward these sites, and now it's aged down a bit.

The Ypulse survey also revealed fewer than 20 percent of college and high school students have ever used QR codes, the pixelated square graphics that show up on magazines, product packaging, books and ads. In fact, nearly two-thirds of students have no idea what they are, and some 6 percent replied that they've seen them but can't figure out how to use them. "We think of teens and college students as being so tech savvy that they can figure out anything, but QR codes have them somewhat baffled," said Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief of Ypulse.

Other findings in the Ypulse report reveal that Millennials are likely to use their mobile phones to compare products and prices, to save pictures of items for future research and to find deals from local businesses using apps. In fact, only 33 percent of students don't use their phones when shopping. Multicultural students are the sweet spot for mobile shopping, according to the survey. "Black, Hispanic, and Asian students are less likely than white students to say they don't use their phones for shopping," according to the survey.

Twenty-eight percent of those surveyed use their cell phones to get discounts and coupons, a number expected to increase as more daily deal-oriented Web sites and companies enter the market, the report said. At present, college students, blacks and Hispanics are most likely to take advantage of receiving deals on their phones, according to the report. Some 23 percent get deals via discount codes delivered to their phones.

As for spending patterns of the Millennial generation, the survey showed that college-aged students spend more than high school-aged students on fashion.

Not surprisingly, the survey found that girls shop more often than guys, but guys spend more per shopping trip than girls do (\$94 versus \$81). As for monthly spending, girls top guys, \$137 versus \$99.

The Ypulse report also found that 27 percent of black students shop once a week or more often, compared with 17 percent of students overall. Black and Hispanic students spend the most money per trip, but Asian students spend the most per month. White students spend the least money on fashion, and are most likely to shop once or twice a season or less often, according to the report. Specifically, whites spend \$81.41 per shopping trip; Asians spend \$85.58; blacks spend \$91.51, and Latinos spend the most at \$98.20, according to the survey.


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news

Asian American Teenagers Spend More on Back-to-School Clothes Than Any Other Group, According to a New Survey

By LAUREN SHERMAN Wednesday, Jul 20, 2011 / 11:54 AM



Cute shirt, Lane. Is that Equipment?

Throw the stereotypes out the window. At least when it comes to [teenagers](#) and their [shopping habits](#).

Asian American teens spend an average \$140.97 per month on fashion, the most of any ethnic group, while white teenagers spend the least amount (\$111.58). Latinos spend the most per trip—\$98.20—while again, whites spend the least (\$81.41).

That's according to a new survey released by online market research [Y Pulse](#), which taps its community of around 80,000 13 to 30 year olds to conduct surveys like this. The results of this particular report were drawn from 1,300 interviews with teenagers and college students conducted online between May 20 and May 30, 2011.

Other interesting figures: College

STUDENTS SPENDING ON SHOPPING	Asian	Black	Latino	White
Per trip	\$85.58	\$91.51	\$98.20	\$81.41
Per month	\$140.97	\$137.37	\$132.96	\$111.58

Base: 1300 high school and college students.

females spend more on average per month—\$139.46—than college males, high school males and high school females. But college males spend the most per trip (\$99.25). Presumably this means that guys are spending more on single items (ie sneakers, jeans) and girls are spending less on lots of stuff (at...you know...H&M, Forever 21).

Oh, and nearly 1 in 5 of those surveyed prefer shopping with their moms than anyone else. But of course they do: She's the one with the credit card.

So we guess some stereotypes still hold true. Does any of this surprise you?

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In Youth Marketing, More Is More

by **Melanie Shreffler, Editor, Ypulse**

With the explosion of new media in the past decade, youth marketing took off on tangents in all directions. We tried social marketing, experiential marketing, flash mobs, street teams... But to reach youth in the ways they want to be reached, marketers need to be doing all that and more.

In submissions received for this year's [GennY awards](#), we saw participants actively combining efforts of traditional media with social, grassroots, experiential, and online campaigns in order to let tweens, teens, and collegians interact with brands on their terms and on their turf, whenever and however they want.

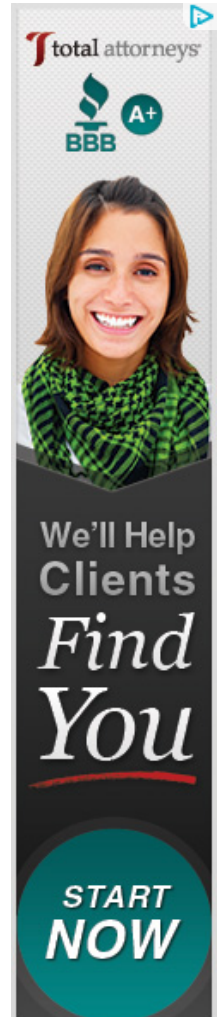
Here's a few examples:



MTV's "A Thin Line" campaign, the [2011 GennY Award winner](#), leveraged the network's massive traditional media reach with two PSAs, and tied that to a strong social media presence and online tools that allowed fans and users to take ownership of the project (another key aspect of reaching today's youth). The "Draw Your Line" tool turned over control of the campaign to students, allowing them to say when bullying crosses the line and share their stories about what they've done to stop it.



The NBA and Geppetto Group, finalists in the Sports category, covered all their media bases with their NBA Hoop Troop campaign. The program includes a mall tour, live events during NBA All-Star Week, TV ads, a print magazine, an online game, online videos, and more. Kids can take ownership of the game, literally, designing their own fantasy NBA arena online with custom additions and upgrades. The game's blend of fantasy and reality allows kids to be silly, test boundaries, and even a little mischievous as they play and share their game.



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Finalists in the Grassroots category, Mountain Dew and Motive got fans involved with a mock election to allow them to decide the newest flavor in the Mountain Dew line. The DEWmocracy Flavor Campaign was designed around a continuous cycle of online and offline engagement. Offline, campaign rallies took the form of skate competitions, poster shows, basement gaming parties and more. Online, each flavor campaign had a microsite with live chat capability, a dedicated Twitter account and a Facebook page. The fans who joined the campaign offline could get more online and vice versa.

WattPad and ChooseCo, finalists in the Social Media category, also took advantage of an active online community to launch ChooseCo's new YA line called "Adventures of You." WattPad users are writers (and aspiring writers) who share their work on the site and read others' work. The launch campaign was designed as a contest around the first book in the line, *Fabulous Terrible*. As chapters were released online, fans were challenged to pick up the cliffhanger and write the next three pages of the novel. Not only did they discuss the book on the WattPad site, they also shared it on other social networks. The novel's author also got involved, posting and tweeting about the novel and interacting with readers to maintain interest between chapter releases. As fans became involved, they shared their favorite and least favorite aspects of the novel, giving the publisher valuable feedback for future releases.

We learned from the Ypulse GennY Award finalists that simple campaigns don't work anymore; marketing to this generation needs to be multifaceted. Giving Millennials a variety of ways to interact with a brand keeps them engaged and entertained, and giving them a voice or a choice lets them know their opinions matter.

The Author



Youth Pulse Inc is the leading authority on teens, collegians and young adults for marketing, brand, and media professionals, providing news, commentary, events, research and strategy. Our integrated youth insights platform is comprised of our web site (www.ypulse.com), our daily newsletter (subscribe.ypulse.com), our annual conference

(mashup.ypulse.com) and a proprietary online marketing research community (www.surveyu.com) of more than 80,000 13 to 30 year olds. Ypulse leverages these capabilities to offer insights, resources, and community to those who work with and market to youth — and who wish to communicate with them in an authentic and effective manner.

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Not Befitting a Democracy



Elizabeth Lippman for The New York Times

By ALEX WILLIAMS Published: July 6, 2011

MICHAEL WILLIAMS, who runs A Continuous Lean, a men's style blog, ditched his Timex when he got his first cellphone in 2001.

Enlarge This Image



Peter DaSilva for The New York Times

ANALOG LOVE Andy Greenblatt of Watchismo, an online retailer that has seen more interest from a generation of men who rely on their cellphones for the time.

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Tyler Thoreson, the head of men's editorial for Gilt Man, the flash sale Web site, often kept his forgettable watches stashed in a drawer.

And Eddy Chai, an owner of Odin New York, a downtown men's boutique, gave up wearing watches regularly in his mid-20s, when he outgrew his Casio.

But after going watch-free for much of the last decade, the three men — all in their 30s and considered style influencers — are turning back time. Mr. Thoreson, 38, is shopping for a vintage gold IWC with a white dial or a Rolex GMT-Master. Mr. Chai, 38, has been wearing a vintage Rolex, loosely dangling around his wrist, "not as a timepiece, but as a piece of jewelry," he said.

And Mr. Williams, 32, splurged on three watches: an IWC

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Elizabeth Lippman for The New York Times
Benjamin Clymer is the executive editor of Hodinkee, a watch-aficionado site.

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Yana Paskova for The New York Times
Matthew Hranek wears his 1968 Rolex Submariner.

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Deidre Schoo for The New York Times
Michael Williams wearing his IWC Portuguese.

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Portuguese, a Rolex GMT-Master II and an Omega Speedmaster, also known as the “moon watch,” since that is what Apollo astronauts wore.

“The men’s-wear set has recently rediscovered the joy of proper mechanical timepieces,” Mr. Williams said. “Right now there is no clearer indication of cool than wearing a watch. If it was your grandfather’s bubbleback Rolex, even better.”

As recently as a half-decade ago, time seemed to be running out for the wristwatch. With cellphones, iPods and other clock-equipped devices becoming ubiquitous, armchair sociologists were writing off the wristwatch as an antique, joining VHS tapes, Walkman players and pocket calculators on the slag heap of outmoded gadgets.

The wristwatch “may be going the way of the abacus,” declared a news article in The Sacramento Bee in 2006. The Times of London had it “going the same way as the sundial.” The Boston Globe, in a 2005 lifestyle feature, was more definitive: “Anyone who needs to know the time these days would be wise to ask someone over the age of 30. To most young people, the wristwatch is an obsolete artifact.”

Or, not.

The “sundial” of the wrist is experiencing an uptick among members of the supposed lost generation, particularly by heritage-macho types in their 20s and 30s who are drawn to the wristwatch’s retro appeal, just as they have seized on straight razors, selvedge denim and vintage vinyl.

“It’s an understated statement about your station in life, your taste level,” Mr. Thoreson said.

He got a taste of the pent-up demand last fall, when Gilt organized a high-end vintage watch sale with Benjamin Clymer, 28, who runs an online magazine for watch enthusiasts called [Hodinkee.com](#). (Mr. Clymer, a former UBS manager, said his site attracts 250,000 unique visitors a month, more than half of them under 40.)

Fourteen of the 17 watches, with an average price of \$4,800, sold in the first six hours. Gilt now holds a watch sale every month. “In certain circles,” Mr. Thoreson said, “if you don’t have a substantial timepiece with some pedigree, you feel like you’re missing out on something.”

To be fair, the doomsayers were not entirely wrong. Few people actually need a watch to tell time anymore.

Melanie Shreffler, editor in chief of [Ypulse](#), a Web site and market research company that tracks youth trends, observed, “even the high school and college students who wear watches usually pull out their cellphones to check the time.”

But that’s the point. A watch these days may strike some



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Yana Paskova for The New York Times

people as an impractical, frivolous and often costly way to express individual style. But that is just another way of saying that it's fashion.

“Considering how casual most people dress on a day-to-day basis, a glamorous watch is one of the few accessories that can be at once sporty, luxurious and utilitarian,” the designer Michael Kors wrote in an e-mail. Mr. Kors has a line of oversize chronographs, manufactured by Fossil, that is popular among women (they are a current must-have accessory among under-30 fashion assistant types in Manhattan).

For a generation raised on Game Boys, however, the appeal seems to go a little deeper than just a desire for another fashion accessory. In a world surrounded by ever-glowing LCD screens, there's an analog chic to wearing a mechanical instrument.

“A cool machine that is all moving parts has got to be intrinsically interesting to someone born into this generation, because there's just nothing like that in their life,” said Mitch Greenblatt, a founder, with his brother, Andy, of [Watchismo](#), a California online retailer of design-forward watches.

Increasingly popular these days, Mr. Greenblatt added, are so-called skeleton watches that have clear cases to show the whirring gears. “You want to see the parts moving,” he said.

Steven Alan, a designer who carries a curated selection of vintage watches in three of his boutiques, compared it to the techno-lust for McIntosh stereos with vacuum tubes. “Having some analog component in your life is refreshing,” he said. “I've noticed there are a lot of people shooting with film recently. People like that return to things that are very tactile.”

Indeed, a certain intimacy develops between the wearer and the mechanical watch that requires winding. “A mechanical watch relies on you as much as you rely on it,” Mr. Clymer said, with a hint of paternal affection. “Without you, it dies.”

The retro appeal also plays into the resurgence of heritage brands like Red Wing boots or Filson bags. Putting on a vintage Rolex “shows you're interested in craft and well-made things,” said Matthew Hranek, a New York photographer who runs a men's lifestyle blog, [the William Brown Project](#), which celebrates vintage watches. “It's the same thing if you're wearing a pair of Alden shoes or go down to Beretta to buy a field coat and shotgun.”

Big retailers are trading on the nostalgia. J. Crew markets a line of simple, traditional Timexes (a brand not long ago associated with drugstores) as a heritage staple, the accessory that ties the whole Bobby Kennedy-does-Williamsburg J. Crew look together. “Timex brings a smile to your face,” said Frank Muijtjens, the head of men's design at J. Crew. “We all grew up wearing Timex.”

American Apparel is making a similar push with retro watches of a more recent vintage, betting that Generation Y consumers who were too young to remember when V.J.s ruled MTV will covet the Casios and Seikos from that era. The clothing chain started selling watches last December, when Dov Charney, its founder, had a hunch, perhaps after seeing old digital Casios embraced by the Brooklyn Flea set.

“Something inside me said, ‘Kids are going to love this object,’ ” said Mr. Charney, speaking by telephone from Seoul, South Korea, where he said he was shopping for dead-stock Japanese timepieces. The watches are now showcased in store windows nationwide.

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Asian-American teens 'spend most on shopping a month than any other ethnic group'

By ANI | ANI – Fri, Jul 22, 2011 7:43 PM IST

New York, July 22 (ANI): It's no secret that young people love to shop. However, a new survey has revealed that Asian-American teens spend the most on fashion per month than any other ethnic group.

In a recent poll of 1,300 teenagers and college students, **online marketing group YPulse found** that Asian Americans dole out an average 140.97 dollars each month on clothes, according to Fashionista.

White teenagers spend the least amount, forking up only 111.58 dollars per month, reports the New York Daily News.

When it comes to spending per trip, Latinos drop the most cash, spending on average 98.20 dollars per shopping spree.

College women spend the most in general, averaging 139.46 dollars while shopping per month, while college males are more willing to spend their money all at once, dropping an average 99.25 dollars per trip. (ANI)