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SOCIAL MEDIA: GENERATIONAL TRENDS AND STRATEGIES

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, social media has become a critical part of how businesses interact with their customers. It offers plenty of ways to engage, advertise to the target markets, and share meaningful content. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and LinkedIn help brands reach a diverse range of people, from the digitally native Generation Z (Gen Z) to Millennials who mix experience with technology, and the more traditional Generation X (Gen X). However, to truly make an impact, companies need to understand what each generation wants and how they behave online. Creating content that's tailored and based on real data helps build trust, engage people, and encourage them to take action. Since social media changes rapidly, businesses must remain flexible, collaborating with influencers, using smarter ads, and constantly adjusting to what their audience expects. In essence, by paying close attention to these generational trends, companies can strengthen their presence and maintain it over time.

SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS, GENERATIONS, AND STRATEGIES

Businesses that seek to perform on social media in 2025 must understand how different generations use these platforms. Take Generation Alpha (born 2010–2024), for example, they have grown up with technology surrounding them and favor video apps. Studies by Cropink (2025) revealed that 93% of them watch YouTube and 85% use TikTok for quick, fun videos. Thus, brands seeking to connect should focus on making engaging, visually rich content. Meanwhile, Gen Z (1997–2010) values honesty and stories told through images and videos. Their favorite platforms include Instagram (65%), YouTube (68%), and TikTok (75%). Almost half of them even use these apps instead of traditional search engines, which changes how companies need to reach them. Moreover, Millennials (1981–1996) often use social media for both personal and work reasons. They mostly socialize on Facebook (67%), Instagram, and LinkedIn. At the same time, older generations like Gen X (1965–1980) and Baby Boomers (1946–1964) tend to prefer platforms they are familiar with, such as Facebook and YouTube. For instance, 74% of Gen X and half of Baby Boomers still use Facebook regularly, while 70% of Gen X and 60% of Boomers watch YouTube (ClearVoice, 2025). These groups usually prefer clear, simple content and respond well to more traditional marketing styles.

Furthermore, social media is crucial for service providers seeking to share success stories, testimonials, and helpful content that foster trust and visibility (Tuten & Solomon, 2021). Trust is built through authentic engagement, and visibility is enhanced through strategic content dissemination. When companies interact personally and offer content that feels relevant, they can build stronger bonds with and visibility. Additionally, influencers play a vital role here as well. They help brands reach more people through real, relatable content that sparks genuine interest and positive word-of-mouth online (Delbaere et al., 2021). In addition, targeted ads enable businesses to aim their campaigns at the right audience, which often yields better results (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2022). This is attributable to the fact that targeted advertising uses data such as demographics, interests, and suitable social media platforms to reach people who are more likely to respond positively. Accordingly, by focusing on a specific group rather than a broad audience, businesses can reduce wasted ad spend and increase the chances of generating leads, sales, or other desired outcomes. Knowing how different generations prefer to use social media is essential. Millennials and Gen Z like visually exciting platforms like Instagram and TikTok, while Gen X and Baby Boomers tend to favor relationship-focused and informative content on Facebook and LinkedIn (Karaarslan & Nacar, 2024). Therefore, by matching their approach to these preferences and focusing on trust and education, businesses can boost engagement, build loyalty, and thrive.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, social media marketing performs best when companies understand how different generations think and behave online. From Generation Alpha's love for videos to Gen Z's desire for honest storytelling, and the more fact-driven, relationship-focused content preferred by Millennials, Gen X, and Baby Boomers, the key is adapting strategies to fit each group. Using personalized content, influencer partnerships, and smart advertising tools helps brands build trust, connect with audiences, and increase sales. As social media keeps evolving, companies must stay flexible and responsive to these changes, as it will be critical for success. In essence, brands that excel will engage more people, create loyal customers, and secure their place in the future of social media platforms.

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