



Marketing to MILLENNIALS

It's key to embrace change if you want to keep current, writes **Deborah Mangum-Copelli.**

THERE'S AN ONGOING debate about Millennials and Generation Y. How can we capture their attention, market to them and keep them coming back for more? This most photographed and transparent group of consumers are now the largest living generation in Australia, the US and Europe. Born from 1980-1995, they continue to mature and evolve, and we will need to keep up with them, change our marketing strategies and tactics to entice this young and powerful growing audience.

Research has told us Millennials don't like, 'entry level' jobs or, 'paying their dues'. They can't buy housing, as they aren't saving; they prefer to spend on trendy status symbol 'things' or experiences. But at the same time, they have a very high social consciousness and are willing to volunteer for worthwhile causes and charities. This demographic is entrepreneurial, enthusiastic, tech-savvy and opportunistic. The most mobile generation in history, Millennials think and act globally, care more about, 'why' than the rules, like flexibility and short-term commitments, and will one day be running your business or their own. They reach out to others in their age group and love to, 'share' their brand choices and experiences.

Studies suggest that Baby Boomers and Gen Xers have anxiety about all of these rapid changes and how to manage Millennials, as well as how to position businesses successfully to market to this influential new client. We need to show more creativity, a personal approach to our communication and have better control of our messages on social media platforms.

Even though Millennials spend on a whim and on what they fancy, they are still aware of a budget, skeptical and underemployed. But as they grow up, earn more, have children and take on higher paying positions, they will shift and use those dollars freely.

So, here are some ideas to capture the attention of the modern Millennial and make your marketing efforts friendly to this dynamic group.

1. Socialise

On social media, make Millennials feel part of your in-group. Invite them to communicate with you and your business and brands. Have a meaningful conversation online and illicit participation from this audience.

- You must have a business Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and Snapchat at a minimum linked to your website.
- Engage your readers, ask them questions, get their opinions and post this on social media to start a dialogue.
- Social media monitoring tools are easily available and you need to use these and personally invite the authors talking about spa and salon trends and products so it increases your marketing reach.
- Consumers talk about their experiences after visiting your salons and spas, so be sure to talk back and answer them even if they've given you a negative critique. Social media monitoring tools can help you find out who's talking about your business.

2. Branding and self-expression are synonymous

- Millennials purchase based on their style and personality; they voice it by the way they look and act, where they go and who they spend time with.
- This generation will spend extra on a treatment or product if it reflects the image they wish to convey.
- Ask your GenY clients to share their photos, stories and ideas about your business on their own social media pages and be prepared to give them something back for doing so.

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3. Respect goes a long way

- Large and diverse, these consumers are super charged and connected; they grew up with the Internet.
- Avoid stereotypical marketing and engage with their uniqueness and difference.
- Millennials show gratitude toward businesses they can trust; they like Sephora, Lush, The Body Shop and Oxfam to name a few.

4. Experiences over things

- These trendsetters want to touch and feel, and become involved in the process of the experience; this is a great fit for salons and spas.
- As part of the sharing economy, this group likes to experience what they like with their friends.
- Hold workshops, lectures and demonstrations at your salon or spa; offer deals and contests with more experiences, get-togethers, nail parties and group bookings.

5. Millennials are native researchers

- They read the reviews, up to 10 sometimes more before they make a decision on where to go, or how to spend their money.
- Demonstrate your trustworthiness and expertise online by being ethically and professionally above board.

- Cover all the opinions of your clients online, especially the negative ones, address them head on. Check the reviews on Facebook, Google, Boost and other review sites.
- Offer your clients a giveaway for posting reviews online. You could also hold a contest for those that post and reward the winner.

6. Social media influencers can boost your salon or spa's popularity

- Your business becomes visible on social media networks by how creative your marketing campaign is, by offering unique opportunities or deals, and by social media influencers.
- Influencers are trusted people Millennials look up to and that you want to engage with to help share your business message and services. They help you expand your marketing reach to a wider audience.
- If a popular influencer mentions a product you promote at your salon or spa, you could get thousands of new clients from a single mention on their social media pages.
- Start by socialising and sharing the influencers you want and share their content, then offer your business or products for a review.
Transparency is paramount when marketing to the GenY, Millennial generation; they want to know what you're working on, or about to launch, and they want to help you get there. They want involvement in your process. You can create short videos and change them frequently on your website to

keep them checking in with you. You could create an inside circle and invite your GenY clients to participate in a brain sharing session.

We need to be wherever a Millennial is, thinking on our feet, connecting with them on their level using fun apps and texting. Allow your largest growing audience to be creative with you and add to your brand story to keep it real and in the present moment. Millennials like mentors, not instructors, so share your engaging journeys; show your mission and values in action through pictures, videos or cartoons. Just like any other demographic, GenY wants to learn, improve and embrace opportunities for themselves and their family and friends. If your marketing makes this audience think, feel and do something, then you are 'getting' it.



Keep your message authentic and personal with interaction and engagement, and your business and brand will be better understood. It goes without saying that delivering on your promise is essential; great customer service is equal with great marketing. Let your business voice be heard, seen, felt and experienced. If you're not already there, get onto Snapchat; it's the first daily social stop for this generation. Use an influencer if you can as your spokesperson, and if not, then use a Millennial in your family or among your friends who can represent your business and brand to become your Snapchat ambassador. And remember don't sell, tell your story, be genuine and build trust and engagement with your new, young and growing tribe of clients. ■

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