

invision

EXECUTIVE FORUM

Perennials: Marketing with an Ageless Approach

As marketing professionals, we're often told that to effectively "know your audience," generation and age must be taken into consideration. But what if there was a different way to think about people and, by extension, brand audiences? As an industry leader in Audience Engagement and Omnichannel Marketing, Invision Communications understands that marketing is never as simple as Boomer vs Generation X. Instead, we implement an approach that caters to all generations, all at once. We call this reaching "The Perennials" or Ageless Marketing, and we consider it the future of strategic marketing.

Perennials give marketing professionals the opportunity to cater to brand audiences more effectively and efficiently. With one experiential installation or marketing campaign, we have the potential to reach a vast array of individuals with different ages, lifestyles, and priorities. This has become a necessity in our post-industrial economy as knowledge and technology change rapidly and consequently transform our audiences.

Perennials transcend the year they were born and are bound by far more compelling characteristics: passion, creativity, inclusivity, compassion, and an interest in current events and technology. How do we reach them?

Here are six takeaways to craft successful Ageless Marketing:

1 SHIFT THE NARRATIVE

To create effective Ageless Marketing, we must think of consumers as individuals, not as members of a generation. Instead, shift the narrative to focus on the humanity and common ground that binds us, not arbitrary terms like Millennial and Generation Z.

2 STOP THINKING THAT AGE EQUALS LIFESTYLE

It's a common assumption that the lifestyle of someone in their 40s differs vastly from someone in their 60s. However, many of the principles we use to think about aging are dated. Today, someone in their 60s or 70s enjoys much better physical and mental health than an individual of the same age in 1980. Today's consumers pursue their preferred lifestyle irrespective of age. Approach age and lifestyle with a blank slate and you might find new and innovative ways to market your brand.

3 OFFER MULTIPLE PATHWAYS INTO YOUR BRAND EXPERIENCE

It's important to get the "bang for your buck" in your brand experience. If you offer multiple pathways into your experience, you can expand your audience significantly. Consider implementing diverse learning styles, providing varied levels of understanding into your brand story, and catering to different levels of technological expertise. The more pathways into your brand experience, the less you exclude a potential audience member.

4 EXPLORE INTER-GENERATIONAL INFLUENCING

Don't discount the influence that parents or grandparents have on younger consumers. We call these "granfluencers" and they're lauded as a more authentic, trustworthy, and uplifting version of typical influencers. How can your brand leverage the wisdom and experience of "granfluencers," both online and in real life, to inspire young people?

5 IDENTIFY AND LEVERAGE POINTS OF CONTACT BETWEEN GENERATIONS

Brands can widen their audiences considerably by bridging gaps between generations rather than segmenting them. Take a page from The Perennials' book* and identify the aspects of your brand identity that transcend age. For example, an uplifting message that brings people together will inspire audiences from all generations.

6 BUILD A BRAND STORY AND PRODUCT PORTFOLIO THAT REMAINS RELEVANT AS PEOPLE AGE

To create effective Ageless Marketing, it's necessary to understand that people's interests, needs, and communication styles change as they grow older. However, products can be designed to serve the needs of a wide spectrum of age groups. Aim to create a brand story and product portfolio that can grow and evolve as your consumers age and you'll create opportunities for connection with multiple generations.

*The Perennials

The Megatrends Creating a Postgenerational Society

Author: Mauro F. Guillén