

GOOD FUTURES HORIZON SCAN GEN Z

MARCH 2023



FOREWORD

When you're thinking about your average donor, the odds are that aren't thinking about a teenager in sixth form or a twenty-something at the start of their career. Gen Z isn't the most charitable generation out there, and they aren't the bread and butter that drives income for most organisations. But as they start to age into adulthood, they do represent an untapped or underused potential future audience.

Born between 1997 and 2012 (or 1996 and 2010, depending on who you ask), Gen Z span from just 11 years old to 27 years, and represent about **15% of the UK population**. You may have seen them be referred to as digital natives, the Activist Generation, the Diverse Generation, Generation Sensible, and a hundred other nicknames they've accrued in the (almost) three decades that they've been around. Like any generation, they're shaped by what's happening in the world around them during their developmental stages: in their case, growing up with a smartphone in hand, the climate crisis inching towards a breaking point, and COVID lockdowns disrupting their education.

So what does that mean for Gen Z as charity supporters? They're still young, so they largely represent an incoming class of donors, and with their wallets squeezed from the cost of living crisis, they tend to give time over money. And whilst their donation dollars are mostly focussed on environment and mental health-focussed charities, that's not to say they're not invested in a variety of different causes.

We're also seeing the rising cost of living impact Gen Z donates their time: less frequently, as jobs become increasingly unstable and free time is slashed. In 2023, we're expecting to see an increase in micro-, remote or virtual volunteering roles vying for the little time that's left over.

Beyond Gen Z engagement with charity, as supporters, donors, or volunteers, we're also considering Gen Z's outlook on social action and whether they've earned their Activist Generation nickname; their lifestyle habits and mental health concerns; what they're like as employees and how to get the best out of them at work; their financial health and attitudes to saving and spending; which marketing tools

are essential to get them on board; and what's driving the Gen Z trends we're seeing.

With all that in mind, we hope that this Horizon Scan offers actionable insight for now, rather than later.

Eef Leurs

Good Futures Trend Analyst



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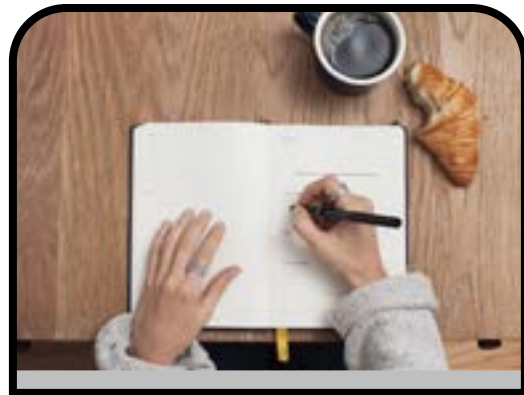
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Checklist

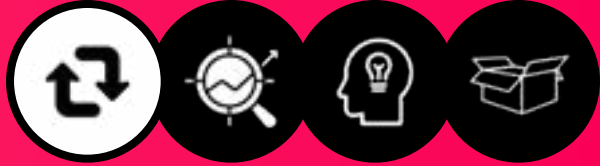


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**Workshop In A
Box**



AUDIENCE SEGMENTS: GEN-Z



ACTIVISTS

Stress Management

Financial Health

Happiness

Charity Support

Native To:

Origins:

Likes:

Charity:

Fact File:

GAMERS

Stress Management

Financial Health

Happiness

Charity Support

Native To:

Origins:

Likes:

Charity:

Fact File:

OVERWHELMED

Stress Management

Financial Health

Happiness

Charity Support

Native To:

Origins:

Likes:

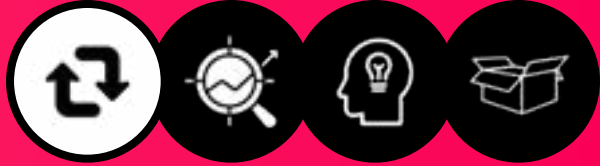
Charity:

Fact File:

Introducing our new audience segment tool: Character Cards. We've designed a set of Gen Z characters for you to workshop and ideate around, focussing on their views on charity, core needs, and general wellbeing and interests. We'll be intro-

ducing similar Character Card sets for all our future Horizon Scan audience insight pieces, so get workshopping! Access the downloadable version [here](#).

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS: GEN-Z



ACTIVISTS



Native To: Twitter and Instagram
Origins: Climate change, increased interconnectivity
Likes: Vegan food, Instagram infographics, ethical retail.
Charity: Climate-focussed, social justice, eg. XR, Amnesty, WaterAid
Fact File: This segment of Gen Z feels like their concerns aren't being heard - so they're taking matters into their own hands. Expect strong social values and a heavy focus on sustainability and inclusion.

GAMERS



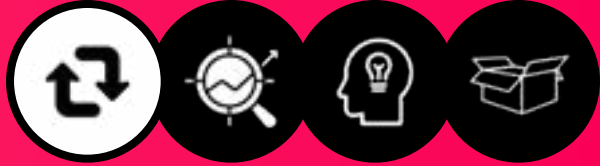
Native To: Reddit and YouTube
Origins: Digital nativity, the birth of streaming, online multiplayer games
Likes: Twitch, Discord, Roblox, Minecraft, Steam
Charity: Community-focussed, mental health causes, eg. British Red Cross, Calm and Crisis.
Fact File: These Gen Z gamers are looking for community and connection online, and are finding a new route to self care and mental health support in the process.

OVERWHELMED



Native To: Doomscrolling on all platforms
Origins: Permacrisis and financial anxiety
Likes: Pharmaceutical escape, UberEats, Netflix
Charity: Mental health causes, eg. Samaritans and Mind
Fact File: With all of the ongoing subsequent crises, it's not surprising that this subset of Gen Z feels overwhelmed by everything that's happening in the world. These Gen Zs are struggling with their mental health and feeling increasingly apathetic.

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS: GEN-Z



SPIRITUALISTS



Native To: Co-Star, TikTok, Depop
Origins: Polycrisis-driven coping mentality
Likes: Crystals, Astrology, Tarot Cards, Manifesting
Charity: Nature, animals, conservation. eg. The Woodland Trust and Celia Hammond

Fact File: These Gen Z spiritualists are connecting with alternative practices to cope with permacrisis; their version of a modern religion. Spiritualists experiment with witchcraft, crystals, astrology, lunar cycles, auras and energy to manifest their goals.

SENSIBLES



Native To: Instagram or Offline
Origins: The 2008 financial crisis, permacrisis, the cost of living crisis, the mental health crisis...
Likes: Low-ABV drinks and savings accounts
Charity: Health-related causes, eg. Cancer Research UK, and international development, eg. Unicef

Fact File: These responsible Gen-Zers don't smoke, drink, have sex, or take drugs. They're more cautious with money, and prefer movie night to a rave.

HYPEBEASTS



Native To: Instagram, Snapchat, StockX
Origins: Luxury-boom, increasing need for status as belonging
Likes: Prime Drink, Stussy, Nike, Swatch x Omega
Charity: Influencer-driven, eg. The Merky Foundation, or community-focussed, eg. Lives Not Knives

Fact File: This subset of Gen Z is driven by a need for belonging - and they're finding it through status and fan communities.

AUDIENCE SEGMENTS: GEN-Z



BARBIE-CORES



Native To: TikTok
Origins: Reclaiming hyper-femininity
Likes: Hyperfemininity, pink, Greta Gerwig's Barbie adaptation, Ice Spice
Charity: Gender and sexuality-empowerment focussed, eg. Pregnant Then Screwed or Mermaids
Fact File: Unlike most TikTok fads, barbie-core has transcended the trend cycle and become a movement for reclaiming hyperfemininity. Whether that's as a cis-woman or not.

HUSTLERS



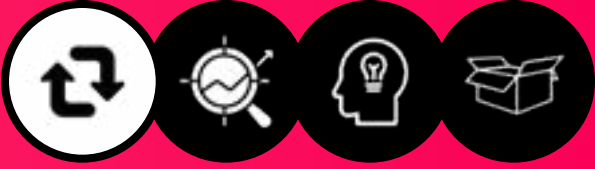
Native To: LinkedIn and TikTok
Origins: Cost of living crisis, grind culture, economic instability
Likes: Crypto, passive income, passion projects
Charity: Creating more opportunities in society, eg. Prince's Trust
Fact File: Gen Z Hustlers are the evolution of millennial grind culture - they have second jobs, not because they need the extra cash, but because they want to build their skills and diversify their resume.

CONSPIRACISTS



Native To: Reddit, YouTube, TikTok
Origins: Broken trust in established systems, algorithmic echo chambers
Likes: Libertarianism, anti-establishment groups and alternative news sources
Charity: Don't give to established charities
Fact File: These Gen Z conspiracy theorists have lost all trust in the system as it is and are turning to alternative news sources for information instead. They're difficult to reach, but still crave belonging.

LIFETIME TIMELINE



1998

- Google is launched

2001

- Images of the Twin Towers falling on 9/11 are seen around the world.

2004

- Facebook is invented
- Mean Girls is released

2007

- The first iPhone is sold
- Netflix branches into streaming

2008

- Spotify enters the scene
- The Dow Jones crashes

2010

- Instagram launches

2011

- Civil War breaks out in Syria
- Game of Thrones pilots

2017

- Grenfell Tower burns down
- The #MeToo movement takes off

2016

- Brits vote in favour of Brexit
- Trump is elected

2015

- The Olive Cook scandal rocks charities

2014

- Gay marriage is legalised across the UK

2012

- Tinder changes the dating game
- The Avengers assemble for the first time

2018

- New GDPR laws are launched
- The Windrush Scandal makes headlines

2019

- Extinction Rebellion park a pink boat in Oxford Circus

2020

- COVID-19 hits
- The murder of George Floyd sparks protests

2021

- Sarah Everard is killed
- TikTok hits 1B users
- Restrictions are lifted

2022

- Boris Johnson resigns
- The Queen dies
- Liz Truss resigns

2022 cont...

- Rishi Sunk takes over
- Mahsa Amini's death sparks riots in Iran

TRENDS



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The Gen Z Volunteer



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Activist Generation



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Zoomer Lifestyle



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Gen Z At Work



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Financial Health



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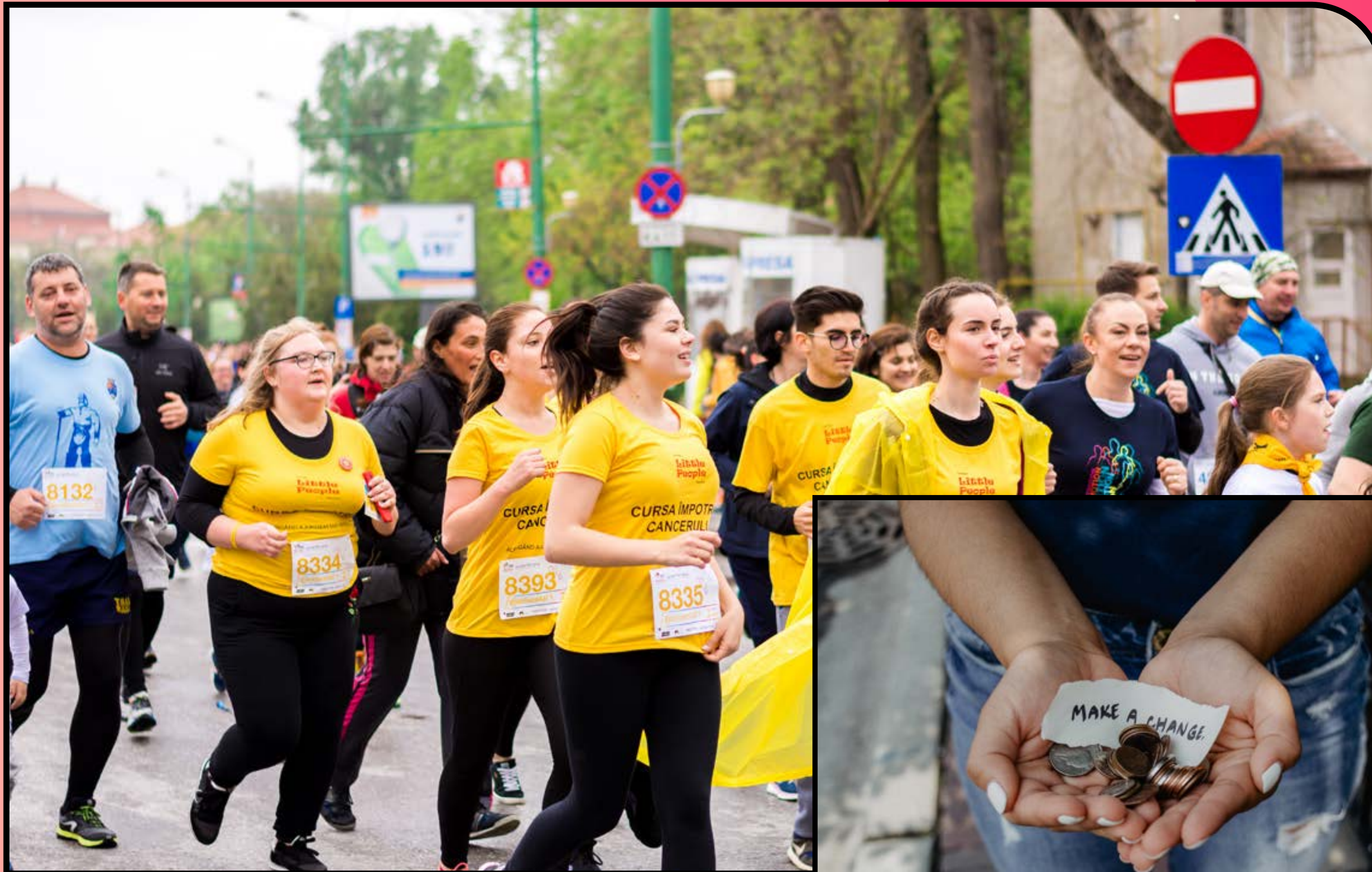
Marketing To Zoomers



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Trendwatch

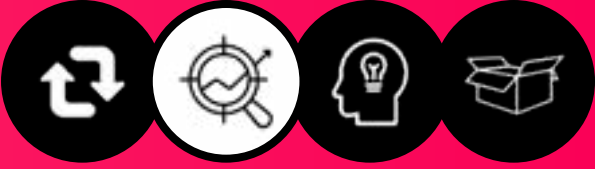
GEN Z AND CHARITY



Between the climate problem (literally) heating up, their mental health in steady decline, and no end in sight to the cost of living crisis, Gen Z has plenty of causes to care about. Similar to previous generations, they tend to give to causes that align with their values and beliefs, and match the current social zeitgeist.

But with charity donations **dropping dangerously low**, the question remains: how do we engage this new generation of donors? Gen Z tends to give proportionately less than their predecessors, with inflation squeezing their wallets and crisis fatigue hitting hard. The key to getting them on board anyways? Live online, be transparent, and speak up about the issues they care about.

GEN Z AND CHARITY



// Who Do They Support?

Growing up in a time of climate and economic crisis, with a new crisis hitting the news every other week, Gen Z is preoccupied with a serious amount of causes. But this is not to say they're not loyal to any of their chosen charities – Gen Z has **brand loyalty** across everything from retail to charity.

So what causes do they support? Overall, Gen Z's behaviour isn't too far off previous generation. They're **less likely to donate to hospitals and hospices** than Boomers, and **less likely to donate to animal welfare charities** than Gen X; but are **more likely** to donate to mental health organisations (**27% of Gen Zs** donated to mental health charities in 2020, versus 17% of 55+ year olds), and place great emphasis on **environmental causes**, supporting charities that focus on conservation, climate action, and sustainable living.

Climate change is the **number one concern for Gen Z** – as one of the generations that will spend the biggest proportion of their lifetimes dealing with the consequences, the importance of the environment risks **eclipsing their interest in other causes** and factors into all areas of their engagement. Essentially, they see the climate as everyone's responsibility, regardless of whether or not it's your organisation's mission. They expect to see sustainability



initiatives in place across the board, as well as maximum transparency about these.

Similar to previous generations, this boils down to the simple fact that they tend to donate to causes that align with their values and beliefs, and match the current zeitgeist.

Ultimately though, they give to the smallest variety of causes of any generation – only **2.2 charities per year** in comparison to the 4.5 that Boomers donate to. Don't sound the alarm bells just yet – it could very well be that this is down to their lower disposable income and the more limited selection of charity products focussing on building engagement over financial support.

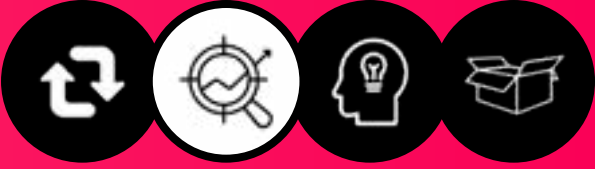
// Giving Behaviours

So the good news is that they're loyal donors, and that they're interested in a wide range of causes. The bad news is that they're also much less likely to be supporting charities in the first place. Only **20% of young people** are regular donors, in comparison to **38% of over 65s**. Of course, every generation has typically gotten more generous as they aged, likely related to increasing disposable income and job security, but the share of Gen Zs donating now is **proportionally lower than it has been for previous generations at the same age**. Even more concerning, the proportion of young people who don't give to charity at all is on the rise, increasing from **6% in 2020 to 9% in 2021**. So what's driving this change?

Firstly, the cost of living crisis is hitting hard. Gen Z is the **least financially stable generation**, and have the lowest disposable income to match.

Secondly; they're suffering from serious crisis fatigue. The seemingly never-ending wave of bad news in the media is **taking a toll on its consumers' collective headspace**. Slowly but surely, interest in important issues **is ticking downward**, as well as the number of Gen Zs interested in news and current affairs.

GEN Z AND CHARITY



“Young people have so much to gain from getting involved, helping them to learn new things, improve their health and wellbeing, and make life-long friends.”

– Linda Fenn, Head of Volunteering
British Heart Foundation

What does this mean for 2023? We'll likely a slimmer variety of causes Gen Z is willing to engage with. Which unfortunately means that the charity competition for Gen Z's empathy, support and money is increasing.

Lastly, we all know that trust in charities is generally low at the moment. But the future looks promising: Gen Z is **more trusting** than other generations are. The caveat is that charities need to earn that trust, through transparency, case studies, and impact stories and data.

// How To Reach A Young Donor

1. Live online, where they are. If your online presence isn't up to scratch, they're not going to find you, nor are they going to trust you.
2. Be more transparent: **40% of younger donors** do a significant amount of research before making a donation.
3. Create new ways to give that aren't just financial. **70% of younger donors** say they'd rather donate time than money. Start small, or accept in-kind donation materials.
4. Personalise your comms. Tap into the Gen Z-driven trend of personalisation to buy their loyalty.
5. Speak up. Gen Z tends to prefer charities that engage

in social activism and care about the **same social causes that they do.**

// Other Ways of Doing Good

Looking further ahead into the future, there is the question of whether or not younger audiences still see philanthropic giving as the best way to do good. In 2022, the average Gen Z-er listed 'buying an ethical product' as their third **most common way to get involved** (38% of them consider this to be philanthropy). Which begs the question: do donors now see buying purpose-branded products as counting towards their overall giving behaviour? And where does that leave charity income? ●



CASE STUDIES – GEN Z AND CHARITY



TikTok Success

The British Red Cross struck TikTok gold in 2020, with their **handwashing dance routines**. Since then, they've used the platform they've built up to highlight important issues on a wide variety of topics, ranging from vaccinations to refugees. In return, TikTok rewarded them with one of the first ever donation badges, letting them fundraise in app.

So What: Why does the BRC TikTok account stand out above the rest? It's got a good grasp of what Gen Z appreciates in a strong social media strategy. **According to their social media manager:** they have a lot of flexibility, and urge other charities to be more spontaneous with their posts.



Influencer Funding

Twitch streamer Hasan Piker (username: HasanAbi) recently fundraised over \$1M for the victims of the Turkey & Syria earthquakes. He made the appeal through social media, targeting his Gen Z-skewing audience. Within 15 minutes, the counter hit \$150K. On top of that, he's working on creating a streamlined process to allow foreign donors to easily fund international NGOs.

So What: Ever doubted the power of a social media influencer? Piker's appeal is a great example of the trust and power that an influencer can build up and translate into real-world good.



Gen Z Campaigning

In 2021, Mind launched the "Fight for the Right to Counselling" campaign aimed primarily at Gen Z (young people aged 18-25). Largely targeted the issue of long waiting times for counselling services in the UK, the charity used a range of tactics, including social media, shareable petitions, and influencer partnerships with Gen Z-loved celebrities like Declan McKenna and Gina Martin to pressure the UK government into taking action.

So What: The campaign was a resounding success, with the government committing to investing £500M in mental health services, including counselling, over the next three years. It's an excellent example of how charities can use their understanding of Gen Z to drive a campaign to fruition.

SO WHAT?



1// Engagement

How do you engage the Gen Z donor? Consider offering them ways to get involved that aren't just financial. It doesn't just have to be about taking action, their engagement could be focussed on becoming closer to the cause or learning more. Build up strong bonds with young supporters now, even if they aren't financially able to donate regularly.



2// To Speak Or Not To Speak

Charities are **self-censoring** about social issues, for fear of social, political, and financial backlash (**sometimes rightfully so**). But Gen Z appetite for **brands** and charities to speak up is **on the rise**. How are you balancing this difficult equation? Consider which audiences you're trying to appeal to and which statements feel authentic to your organisation.



3// Impact Case Studies

Impact shouldn't just be your annual report. Although they're a generation that does their research before donating, it has to be more engaging than ten pages of pure data. Remember, they grew up online, in a space where aesthetics are increasingly important and everything is gamified. Lean into your case studies and streamline your impact narrative.



4// Transparency, Transparency

Transparency is essential for drawing in Gen Z, and it shouldn't just be about your donations or impact narrative. It should also be about your green credentials and sustainability initiatives. Younger donors will want to know your organisation's wider values align with their own.



5// Irregular Donors

With wallets squeezed and incomes low, Gen Z will be irregular donors for now. So how do you build a relationship through irregular giving? Consider your communications, online presence, and brand visibility.

THE GEN Z VOLUNTEER



There's good news on the horizon: **1 in 6 young people** plan to start volunteering in 2023. And Gen Z are already proportionally the most generous generation when it comes to donating their time. But as work becomes more insecure, and their already lower salaries don't stretch as far as they used to, they're increasingly pressed for time.

We know that they want to be volunteering – so meet them halfway and make sure there's virtual, remote, or micro-volunteering opportunities available. It's the quickest way to get Gen Z on board, so expect to see an emphasis on flexible volunteering over the next years.

THE GEN Z VOLUNTEER

// Volunteering Behaviours

It's predicted that **1 in 6 young people plan to start volunteering** in 2023. However, currently volunteering opportunities are geared towards older audiences who may be looking for a different connection to a cause, or translation of their direct impact.

Gen Z are already (proportionally) **the most generous** in donating their time to charity, with 63% having volunteered for charity in some way. Unsurprising, because they aren't as financially stable as older generations. **70% of younger donors** say they'd rather donate time than money.

As work becomes increasingly insecure, with low pay and long hours, making life harder for the youngest members of the workforce. Most of them say that **busy schedules are their largest barrier** to volunteering. So how do we make sure to keep them coming, and that those new volunteers will actually come through?



// Microvolunteerism

Gen Z has already shown that they want to support the causes they care about, but they need help to be able to do so. They're looking for **flexible opportunities** to fit their schedules, especially during the ongoing cost of living crisis and instability of work, where their work schedules may not be as flexible as they'd hoped. This is where microvolunteerism comes in: the rise of one-off activities and tasks that can be completed on your volunteers' terms, making it easier for them to help out without committing large chunks of their limited and valuable time. Think of **Age UK's** online initiative to let volunteers write letters to older people who may be feeling isolated, or Crisis' opportunities to **review CVs** for people looking for work.

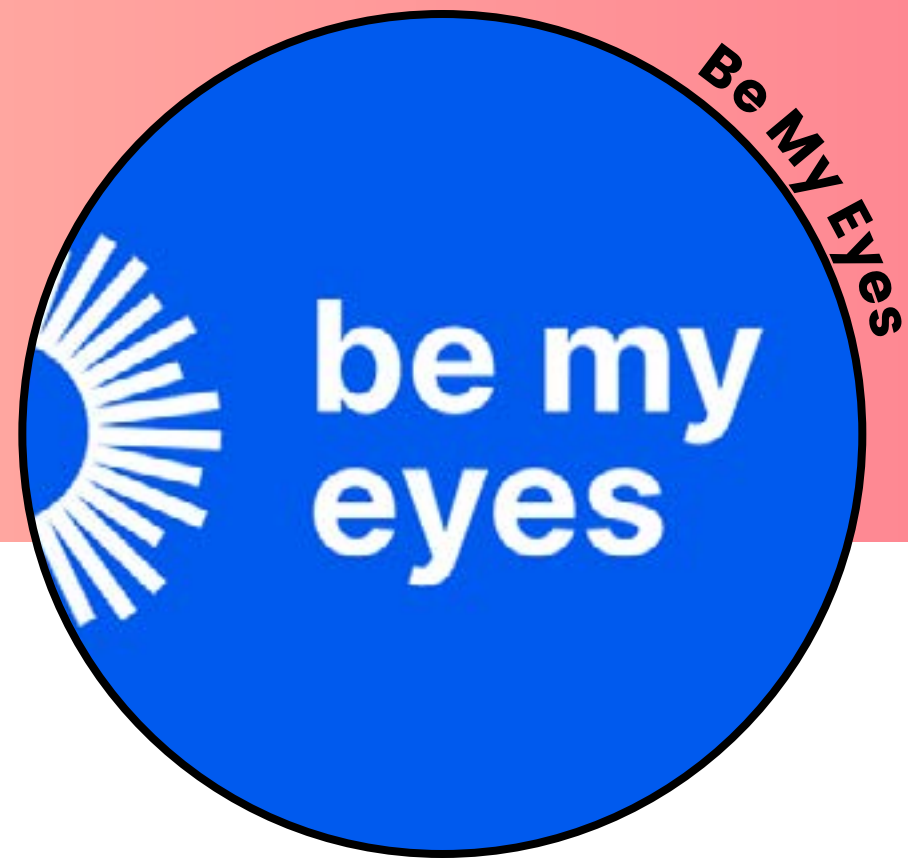
// Virtual and Remote

Alternatively, consider looking into virtual and remote volunteering opportunities, preferably with flexible scheduling. Post-COVID, **digital volunteering** has already been on the rise, with more and more volunteering roles being carried out digitally. This could be anything from online teaching, to editing, to phone counselling, translating, administrative tasks, graphic design, etc.



Essentially, the most important thing for young volunteers will be how flexible the volunteering roles can be. They're willing to donate time where they can, and want to support the causes they care about, but your organisation will have to make it as easy as possible for them. Drawing them in on their own terms, online, with maximum flexibility may be the quickest way to the Gen Z volunteer's heart. The drawback? It can be difficult to train for smaller roles, work can be inconsistent, and the guarantee that it'll get done is lower ●

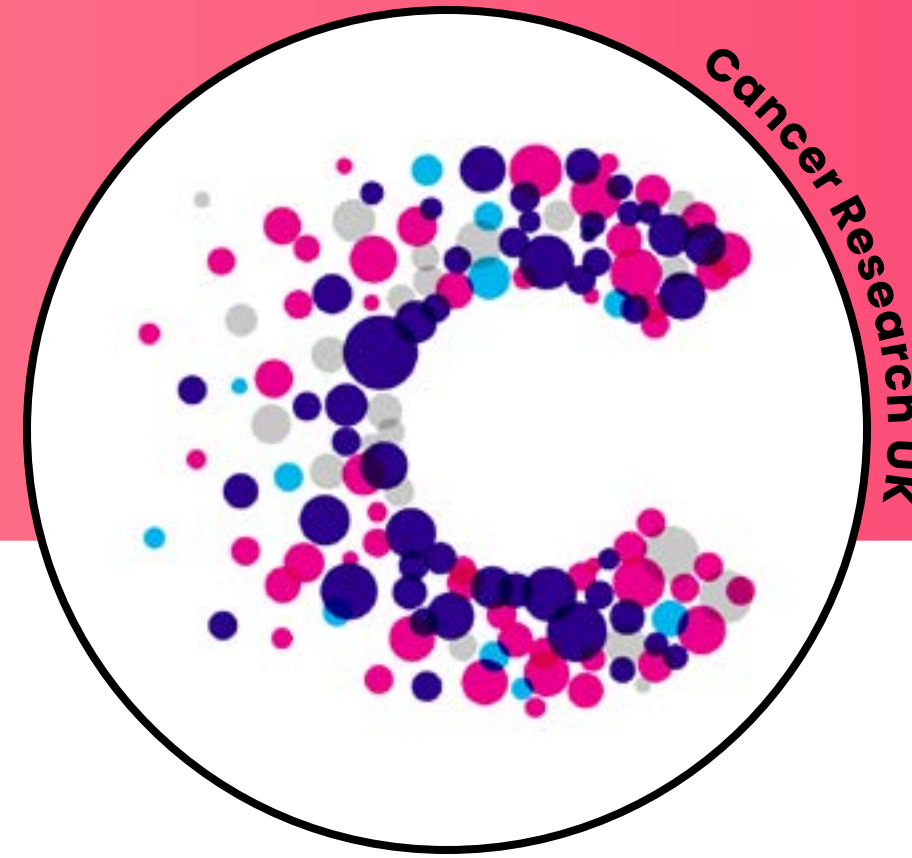
CASE STUDIES – THE GEN Z VOLUNTEER



Dedicated Micro-Volunteering

This Danish micro-volunteering platform connects volunteers around the world with its visually impaired users. Essentially, it does what it says on the tin. Via live video chat, or through photos, volunteers can clock in a few minutes a day to be the eyes of someone who needs it.

So What: The only flaw of the app so far has been that the number of volunteers that signed up (millions) **far outnumber the blind or low-vision people using it** (about 100,000). Clearly, the opportunity to do good with minimal commitment and maximum flexibility is working.



Remote Citizen Science

Cancer Research UK has been praised for their **“citizen science” approach to micro-volunteering**. They ran a series of projects allowing more than 500,000 global volunteers to research four different types of cancer, mostly through smartphone-based puzzle and adventure games. Ultimately, the projects produced more than 11 million new analyses.

So What: The charity understands that data-gathering, analysis and processing are all uniquely suited to flexible or micro-volunteering opportunities. Not only were they able to engage a serious amount of different people that they otherwise wouldn't have been able to, they also tapped into our smartphone-era love of gamified work.



Mass-Engagement Volunteering

In honour of King Charles' coronation, **The Big Helpout** is an initiative intended to encourage people who usually don't consider volunteering to offer up their time. Initially, the hope is for people to engage in micro-volunteering, one-off roles on the day of the coronation, with the wider aim of reframing how volunteering helps both local communities and the volunteers themselves.

So What: Engaging volunteers is difficult at the best of times. With the cost of living crisis coming for people's free time, the Big Helpout is hoping to reframe volunteering for everyone who wouldn't consider themselves right for volunteering, or who'd think that volunteering isn't right for their schedule or lifestyle. Hopefully, the long term effects will be widespread.

SO WHAT?



1// Live Where They Live

As the first generation of digital natives, the best place to find them is online. To engage Gen Z with your cause and impact narrative, you'll have to be online. Prioritise overhauling your digital strategy, consider which platforms fit your brand best, and dive in!

2// Micro-Volunteering

Are there any tasks in your organisation that could easily be outsourced to flexible volunteers? Think of small, low-commitment tasks that can be done by anyone, any time. Whether it's the behind-the-scenes admin or a part of your service, micro-volunteering could let you mobilise a new segment of Gen Z that's poor in time but rich in opportunity.



3// Remote Volunteering

The pandemic showed us all that significant chunks of our workday can be done online. Especially when it comes to admin, don't shy away from offering online-only volunteering opportunities. Every Zoomer in the UK has a laptop and a phone, so let's make use of that.



4// Digital Skills

Charities often feel like they're falling behind when it comes to technological capacity. The good news is: Gen Z don't just all have a laptop and a phone, they know how to use them too. Think of ways you could leverage the Gen Z digital savvy to transform your tech use, whether it's administrative, your website UX or your social strategy.

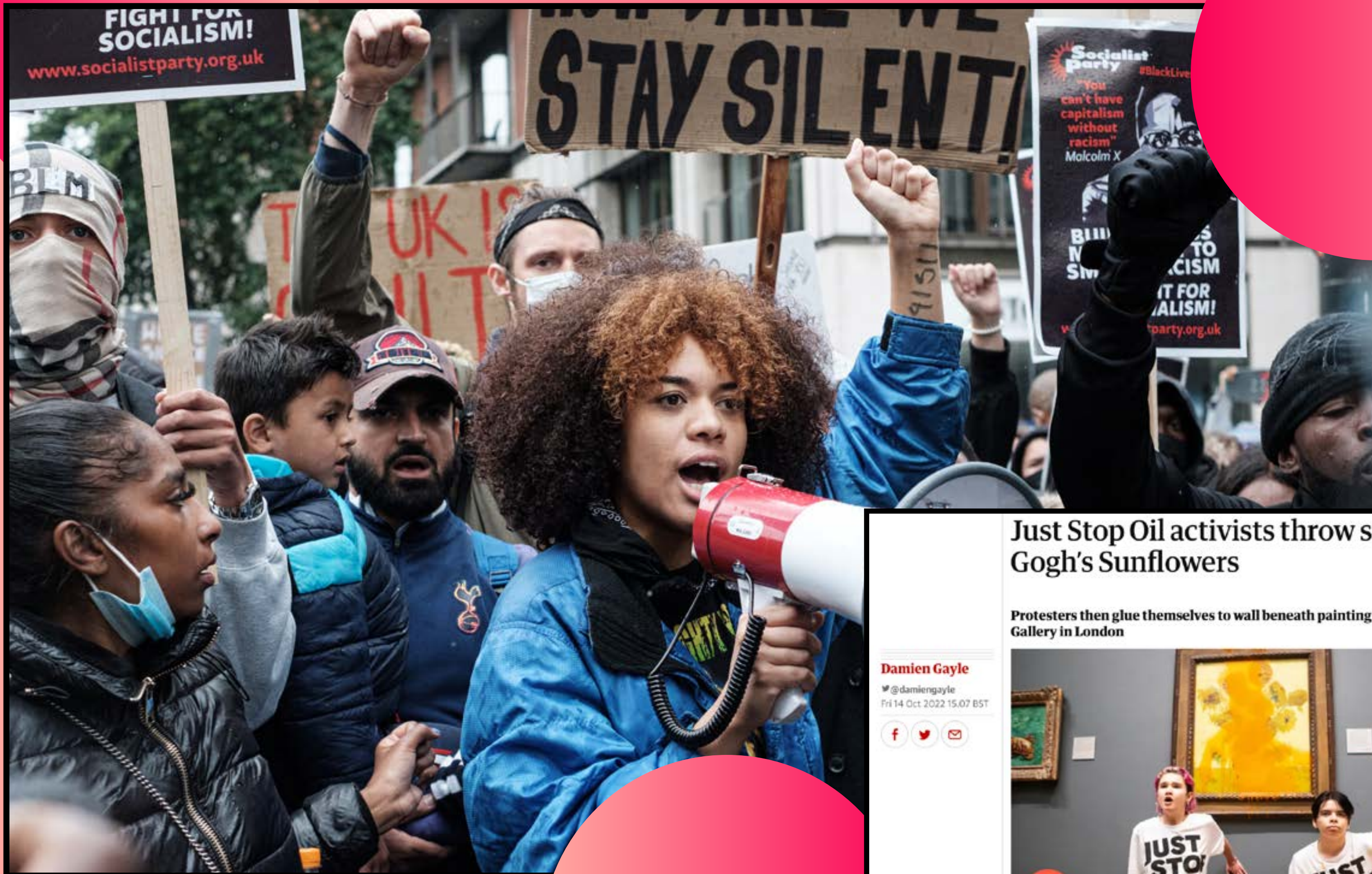


5// Community Building

Gen Z craves belonging and community, and are increasingly struggling to find it offline. Can you turn your volunteering opportunities into a way for Gen Z to find peer to peer connection? How do you use their common interest in your cause to build a community of volunteers?



ACTIVIST GENERATION



Gen Z has dealt with crisis after crisis during their formative years, and they're quickly losing faith in the designated institutions to make the change they want (or, when it comes to climate change, need) to see in their lifetimes. So they're taking matters into their own hands.

The bottom line is that they want to feel like their voices are being heard and listened to – they want to see the change they're driving. And with ultra-progressive attitudes towards social and political issues, high involvement rates, and the power of social media platforms behind them, they're a force to be reckoned with. But even if they think they know best – they may still need a helping hand when it comes to turning their opinions into practice.



ACTIVIST GENERATION



// Social Action

Also dubbed the activist generation, Gen Z has a reputation for their commitment to social action. Not only are **70% of them** involved with social or political causes, they've got the most **socially and politically progressive attitudes of any generation yet**. But this shouldn't come as a surprise; between growing up during the poly-crisis, coming of age at a tipping point of the climate crisis, and having unmediated online access to anything and everything happening in the world, Gen Z is **frustrated and disillusioned**. They're taking matters into their own hands.

So how do they take action? It varies from high-profile protests (notably, Extinction Rebellion and Just Stop Oil), to voting with their wallets (**26% of British schoolchildren** avoid buying products because of ethical concerns), to where they'll work (**37% of Gen Z** have rejected jobs due to personal ethics). To keep Gen Z audiences, organisations will have to be more transparent, more committed to sustainability and inclusion, and more engaged.

84% of Gen Z say addressing climate change is crucial.

// Climate Change

Climate change is still the **number one long-term concern** for Gen Z, and optimism is quickly slipping away. The potentially catastrophic consequences of climate change are coming into focus more and more clearly, fuelling anxiety and causing further disillusionment with the government. As it becomes increasingly urgent, it's also becoming increasingly apparent that the environment is everyone's responsibility – whether it's part of your organisation's mission or not, Gen Z will expect you to be on par with their sustainability expectations. And yet, there's a **disconnect between concern and action**.

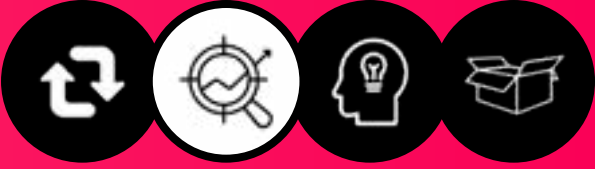
Surprisingly, Gen Z is **less likely to act on their climate concerns** than other generations – they don't minimise their waste as much, they don't reduce their energy usage, and they're by far the worst at recycling. But the biggest climate inconsistency lies with their shopping decisions. **95% of Gen Z** say they're willing to pay more for sustainable products, compared to about a third of the overall population, and yet they're the biggest consumers of ecologically damaging fast fashion. Whilst their intentions may be good, sustainable products are now simply too expensive to justify. With **less spending power at their disposal**, there's an opportunity for organisations to give Gen Z all the help they need in order to buy affordable, eco-friendly products.



// Inclusion

They're also the most **diverse generation in history**. They're more likely to identify as LGBTQ+ or disabled, and **less likely to be white**. So it's no surprise that they put a strong emphasis on belonging and inclusion. With young people growing up exposed to more and more identities and cultures, and living in more diverse communities than their parents, the demand for equal access opportunities and social inclusion is on the rise. For organisations, this means that the focus on **DEI and ESG isn't going anywhere** any time soon.

ACTIVIST GENERATION



// Stunt-Based Activism

And they're not dubbed the Activist Generation for their opinions alone – Gen Z is more likely than previous generations to **go on marches, sign petitions, or write to MPs**. But for many, it feels like there's insufficient returns and their voices aren't being heard. As a result, we've been seeing a shift towards more **dramatic activism**, particularly as pressure rises to act on the climate crisis. Expect to see more stunt-based activism in the coming year, with audacious actions to call attention to the cause. Think parking a pink boat in Oxford Circus for a week, or throwing Heinz soup at a Van Gogh painting.

43% of Gen Z say the internet makes them feel their voices matter.

// Social Media Activism

Gen Z voices also seem **louder and more urgent** than other generations' because they have more ways to find sources, disseminate information, and mobilise in digital

spaces. The bulk of Gen Z activism happens where they spend the majority of their time: online. In fact, **34% of 8-17 year olds** say the internet has inspired them to take action in recent years.

This type of activism took off during the **BLM movement in 2020**, which immediately laid bare both the pros and cons of social media activism. The good? It's fantastic for keeping people up to date, informing and educating, sharing resources and information. The bad? It's easier to identify and track activists, and misinformation spreads like wildfire •



CASE STUDIES – ACTIVIST GENERATION



Gen Z Campaigning

Wanjiku Gatheru is a great example of a Gen Z activist trailblazer. After founding the grassroots platform **Black Girl Environmentalist**, which is dedicated to an intergenerational community of black girls, women, and non-binary environmentalists, she's launched the Reclaiming Our Time Campaign to promote and solidify visibility for black climate activists.

So What: The 23 year old has single-handedly launched the biggest POC-focussed environmental campaign of all time. Her drive? It comes from a lack of representation in the social action we're already familiar with. Gen Z expects action to be intersectional in all that it does.



Inclusive Gaming

The Sims has recently announced it will be adding a series of **new, more inclusive, mods** for its iconic characters. These include top surgery scars, binders, hearing aids, and more.

So What: The game has already been quite successful at integrating inclusive features – players were able to mix and match masculine and feminine traits regardless of gender since 2018, and in 2022 they added a feature for choosing sexual orientations and pronouns – but this will be the first time they're adding such overt representation. No doubt that the game's younger Gen Z fans are rejoicing at the opportunity to make characters that better reflect the world around them.



Disruption Tactics

The climate group Just Stop Oil has been garnering **increasing amounts of media attention** in the past year. Of course, who could forget the now-iconic image of the Heinz soup being thrown at Van Gogh's Sunflowers? But this isn't the only sabotage they've organised – anything from zip-tying themselves to goalposts in the middle of Premier League matches to glueing themselves to The Last Supper, or blocking the road.

So What: What's noticeable about Just Stop Oil is that most of the images we see from their protests are populated with young people – these are the Gen Zs that know the clock is ticking on their futures and are desperately trying to call attention to the problem before it's too late.

SO WHAT?



1// Is It Right For You?

Activism isn't right for every charity. And speaking up can feel daunting at times. But there's hundreds of small ways of making a difference. Think about resharing petitions or infographics on social media, evaluating your employee policy to make sure it supports their activist endeavours, or clarifying your commitment to social action on your website.



2// You Don't Have To Do It Alone

No one is expecting you to be an expert when it comes to social issues outside of your scope. There are plenty of other outside organisations that will happily lend a hand, and can support you in making informed decisions.



3// Helping Gen Z Be Hands On

How are you helping Gen Z make the right decisions? Even though they've got the right ideas, they don't always know how to translate these into meaningful action. Is there a way you can educate them about or offer them the opportunities they want to see?



4// Take Care Of Your Activists

Crisis fatigue is hitting hard, and activism can be emotionally draining, especially if we don't see the fruits of our labour. How are you making sure your activists are well taken care of and supported?



5// Have A Strong DEI Programme

It has been said before, but DEI programmes aren't going anywhere. In fact, Gen Z is likely going through your inclusion policies with a fine-tooth comb, and they expect your standards to be up to scratch.

INTERVIEW WITH AN ACTIVIST



We speak to Amy O'Donnell, activist and full-time employee for Just Stop Oil, an environmental nonviolent civil resistance group.

How did you get into activism?

Amy O'Donnell: It was never a question for me. People ask "Well, how did you get into activism?" And I say, "Well, the Earth is dying. Obviously. I'm going to do something." Then the school strikes for climate started when I was 16/17, and this was the first mainstream activism that came in. I've never seen anything like it. I got extremely involved with that. And then Extinction Rebellion came to Galway, so I joined. We did a lot of fundraisers, marches, but it wasn't really going anywhere.

I eventually thought I'd go to the COP conference, because that's where the big decisions are getting made. But it's just an auditorium filled up with five hundred fossil fuel lobbyists shaking hands with political leaders, and no one's there to protect my future.

Is that what drove you into direct action?

Amy: So I decided not to go to college, and to go to London to get more involved with civil resistance groups. I ended up at a meeting with a group of people to start up a new group called Youth Climate. We went to this meeting and basically came up with Just Stop Oil. And at the end, there was the ask: to go to Essex in April and block six major oil terminals. That's how I got involved. Since then I've just never looked back.

Why you feel this is your responsibility?

Amy: I want to be on the right side of history where I did everything I could. Sometimes people just have to do something. And I know that you're right, it shouldn't be my responsibility. But I think that even if I do one talk and make one person more aware of it, I'm making a little bit of a change. And I think I'm very lucky to be white, and cisgender, and in the UK. So if I can get arrested and still get away with it, I'm going to use that. And then at least when I'm older, I can say that I did what I could.

Does it ever get too much? Do you feel like you get activist fatigue?

Amy: I've been struggling a lot. Someone in our community recently killed himself about three weeks ago. He was looking at a lot of time in prison. So yes, fatigue is very real. And you question yourself a lot as well, because you devote so much to this cause and is it even working? I'm 20 and I've given so much. And I've lost a lot to a cause that feels like we can't win.

There's also been a huge amount of hate online and in person, right?

Amy: People are angry. It's fine. But it's upsetting. Especially when we're doing roadblocks, of course you want to get to work and I can completely understand your anger. But you're the people who are going to be affected in the future. It's like if you're in a house and the fire alarm's going off, you don't think about how annoying the noise is, you just get out of the house. You see the house going up in flames, and you're happy that the fire alarm was there. So I understand the anger, but maybe think about why we're protesting.

Do you engage with environmental charities at all?

Amy: We don't really work with charities because there's still some of them are not great. It's still part of the same system. I'm not blaming them. We're very hands on, so I guess that kind of goes away from what those charities do, but we still support them. I do think there should be full transparency. With us as well, we show exactly where the funding comes from.

So say you were an environmental charity and you wanted to be able to help younger people take action, how could they help you?

I think information and training is a big thing. But it's really about connecting emotionally. We all know intellectually that the ice caps are melting, the polar bears are dying. But it's really about telling people about how it's going to affect their family. It's really good to think about what they will lose. We struggle a lot with individualism, thinking about me, me, me, but actually, it's your family that will suffer as well. But it's very hard, the big question will still be how we get people to actually take action •

ZOOMER LIFESTYLE



To put it simply: Gen Z isn't doing too great. Between the constant barrage of bad news, unlimited 24/7 access to content, and the lockdowns hitting them at crucial developmental stages, their mental health is in free fall. They're more risk-averse, anxious, and depressed than ever before.

The pressure is getting the better of them, so they're looking to new forms of self-care (embracing imperfect lifestyles) and connection (gaming).

ZOOMER LIFESTYLE



// Mental Health

Climate anxiety, war in Europe, the cost of living crisis, political instability, social divisions on the rise; the constant flow of bad news online is **taking its toll on Gen Z**. Pair that with an increasingly complicated world, increasing amounts of choices and unlimited content driving FOMO, half of Gen Z is stressed **all or most of the time**. They're also more **self-critical in school, university, and at work**, more likely to **attempt suicide**, and more far more likely to **show depressive symptoms**.

And, contrary to popular belief, they're also the **loneliest generation**. We tend to believe the stereotype of older people being most affected by feelings of loneli-



ness, but three times as many Zoomers always feel lonely as Boomers do. For many, **it's a developmental issue**. Growing up during lockdowns has led to isolation, anxiety, and a lack of motivation at a key stage in their lives – as they're growing up and ageing out of school, they'll need more support than ever to overcome these setbacks.

The challenge for organisations will be making sure that support services actually reach Gen Zs in need. Just **1 in 3** are comfortable talking about their mental health, and they're the least likely age group to report seeking **professional mental health treatment**. For the less financially stable Gen Z, the cost of living crisis is yet **another barrier to access**. Organisations will need to act quickly to avoid the stigma around mental health growing even further.

// Gen Z-ero Fun

Gen Z **drinks less, takes fewer drugs, doesn't smoke** and **has less sex** – which has earned them the nickname Generation Sensible. Reasons like cost, health-focus, environmental impact, and safety are all contributing factors, but more than anything, Gen Z feels like they're **under more pressure** to achieve bigger and better things than ever before. They're here to make the world a better place, not to have a good time.

In response, the market is shifting, with brands like



Heineken having **invested \$50M** into marketing their non-alcoholic range. And although this seems like a good thing for the overall health of the population, therapists warn that Gen Z could be missing out on a whole wealth of life experiences due to their **risk aversion**. Which in turn leads to even more social and professional anxiety, as well as self-esteem and relationship issues. But for now, expect more interest in events that promote sensible, healthy lifestyles.

ZOOMER LIFESTYLE



// The Future of Self Care

So Gen Z doesn't use partying as a coping mechanism to deal with polycrisis. Instead, they're turning to self-care. Most of their **stickiest brands are self-care brands**, with trends like elaborate shower routines and fancy skincare products **blowing up**. But unlike previous generations, Gen Z's interpretation of self-care isn't all health supplements, yoga, and juice cleanses. It's anything that makes you feel good, whether that's working out or eating junk food after a long shift. They're embracing **imperfect lifestyles** and trying to put less pressure on themselves.

// Gaming

A crucial part of Gen Z self-care is giving themselves the space and time to invest in their hobbies. Which brings us to gaming. Gen Z are still the biggest demographic in gaming, with about **87% of them** playing video games at least weekly. Mostly, they're drawn into gaming because they're **seeking connection**, positive social interaction, and a sense of belonging – which they find through multiplayer-, sandbox games, and gaming-focussed streaming and messaging platforms. Unlike their millennial predecessors, who **aren't opposed to a bit of gaming themselves**, Gen Z favours connection-based games like **Fortnite, Minecraft, and Roblox**. In fact, the social aspects of games are the **most important factor** when picking their next gaming obsession. And they don't just stop at the games themselves: about **44% of Gen Z** engage with games in other ways, like following gaming channels, podcasts, visiting online gaming communities, or attending gaming conventions.

But let's be honest: gaming has **a bit of a bad rep** when it comes to its long-term mental health impact (and yes, those are all individual links). But realistically, there's been **just as many**, if not more, studies disproving this idea as there are confirming it. With more and more young people becoming reliant on gaming for their personal connections, it's important to acknowledge the possible

benefits of gaming. From **combating loneliness**, to healthy brain stimulation, stress relief, coping mechanism development, and self-expression, there's a lot of good things that gaming could be bringing to the table. Between those benefits and its booming popularity among young people, it's time for organisations to tap into gaming as a potential avenue for fundraising, connecting supporters to their mission, raising awareness, and as a possible avenue towards supporting better mental health •

***i only worry about
three things***

***1. everything
that happened***



***2. everything that
is happening***

***3. everything that
will happen***



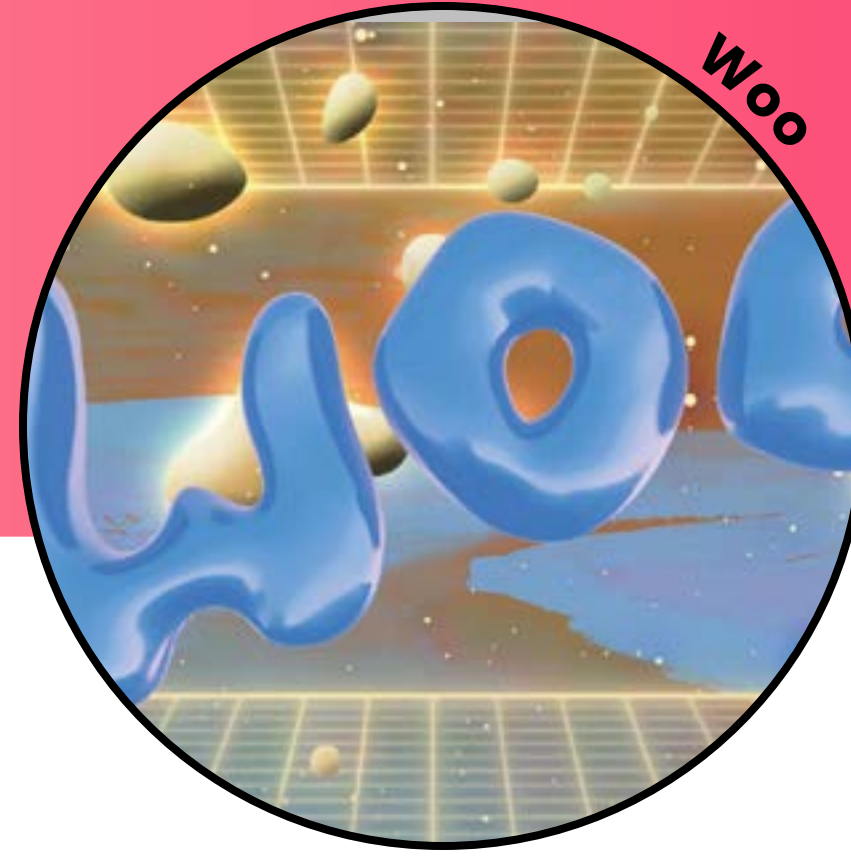
CASE STUDIES – ZOOMER LIFESTYLE



Responsible Fun

Caleño is a Bristol-based non-alcoholic drinks brand, one of many premium 0%ABV drinks to recently enter the market. Rather than get lost in the market, they've adopted a direct-to-consumer approach, and partnered with Gen-Z favourite brands, like speed-dating app Thursday.

So What: The brand clearly knows which generation is driving the teetotal market growth, and manages to tap into that through smart brand partnerships and colourful, exciting, and humorous marketing campaigns (many of which are run on TikTok).



Editorial Wellbeing

Backed by ITV, 2022 saw the launch of new media platform Woo, a combination of editorial wellness content and a well-being focused marketplace. All curated specifically for Gen Z. The youth-focussed platform is leading the conversation on alternative welfare (think CBD gummies, sexual wellness products and skincare cosmetics) and community-centred ways of nurturing our mental health.

So What: For a generation that's struggling with its mental health, and struggling to access the resources it needs, it's important to create interactive and inclusive resource hubs that cater to the specific needs and concerns of Gen Z. Woo does a great job of it.



Online Symptom Management

As symptoms of anxiety and depression skyrocket amongst Gen Z, so too do apps that seek to manage these symptoms. One of the more successful of these is SloMo, a digital app targeted directly at paranoia, which provides self-management tools for people to reclaim control of their lives. The app lets users visualise their thoughts and slow down the fast, spiralling thinking habits associated with paranoia.

So What: For much of Gen Z, therapy is a luxury that's far out of reach, especially in the midst of a cost of living crisis. Creating symptom-management platforms that are not only free, but also easily accessible in the day to day (in this case, as easy as clicking on an app), is crucial to reach and support Gen Z.

SO WHAT?



1// Gaming As An Income Generator

With more and more young people spending their free time gaming, consider how gaming can be an avenue towards fundraising; connecting supporters to your cause; raising awareness; and as a possible avenue towards supporting better mental health.



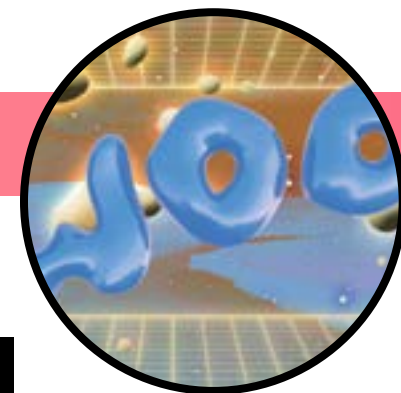
2// Help Them Find Connection

As the loneliest generation, Gen Z craves connection and community – help them find it. Whether your charity focusses on mental health and community or not, consider how you're creating a space for your supporters or service-users to come together and offer connection to each other.



3// Evolving Fund-raising Events

How do you evolve your fundraising events for a new generation? Are you incorporating Gen Z interests and needs into your events, and advertising them in the right places? Consider re-evaluating your tried and tested events for a new generation.



4// Gamifying Mental Health Services

With Gen Z mental health in an increasingly precarious position, consider revamping your services for the Zoomer generation. Gamified and community-driven services are sure to be a big hit in the coming years.



5// Self Care To Connection

With self care high on the agenda for these younger audiences, think about whether you can transform these new rituals or hobbies into a road to connection for your Gen Z supporters or service users.

GEN Z AT WORK



The Great Resignation has branded Gen Z as disloyal employees, but it comes down to them simply seeking out better opportunities. With 4 in 10 wanting to switch jobs within two years, retaining young talent is more important than ever. Good pay, work/life balance, and learning opportunities rank high on their list of priorities.

But Gen Z also wants jobs that align with their values and a commitment to sustainability. And with poor mental health affecting nearly half of them, expect to see more emphasis on introducing and refining workplace mental health benefits.



GEN Z AT WORK



// The Great Resignation

As The Great Resignation has been sweeping the UK, it has earned Gen Z a reputation of being disloyal employees. And there is a kernel of truth to that. **4 in 10 Gen Zs** would like to leave their jobs within two years, and roughly a third would do so without another job lined up. Essentially, they're finding that the benefits of staying in jobs for long periods of time are getting smaller, so they're moving around more quickly. Right now, Gen Z is beginning to enter the workforce, and will make up a big chunk of it in the future, so how do you retain these younger employees? We'll run you through the key interests of the Gen Z worker.

// Priorities

More than anything, **Gen Z wants good pay**. They're the most likely generation to report that the cost of living crisis is preventing them from having a good quality of life, mostly because their pay is **proportionally the lowest**. At the same time, they also value a good work/life balance, and strong learning opportunities.

// Values

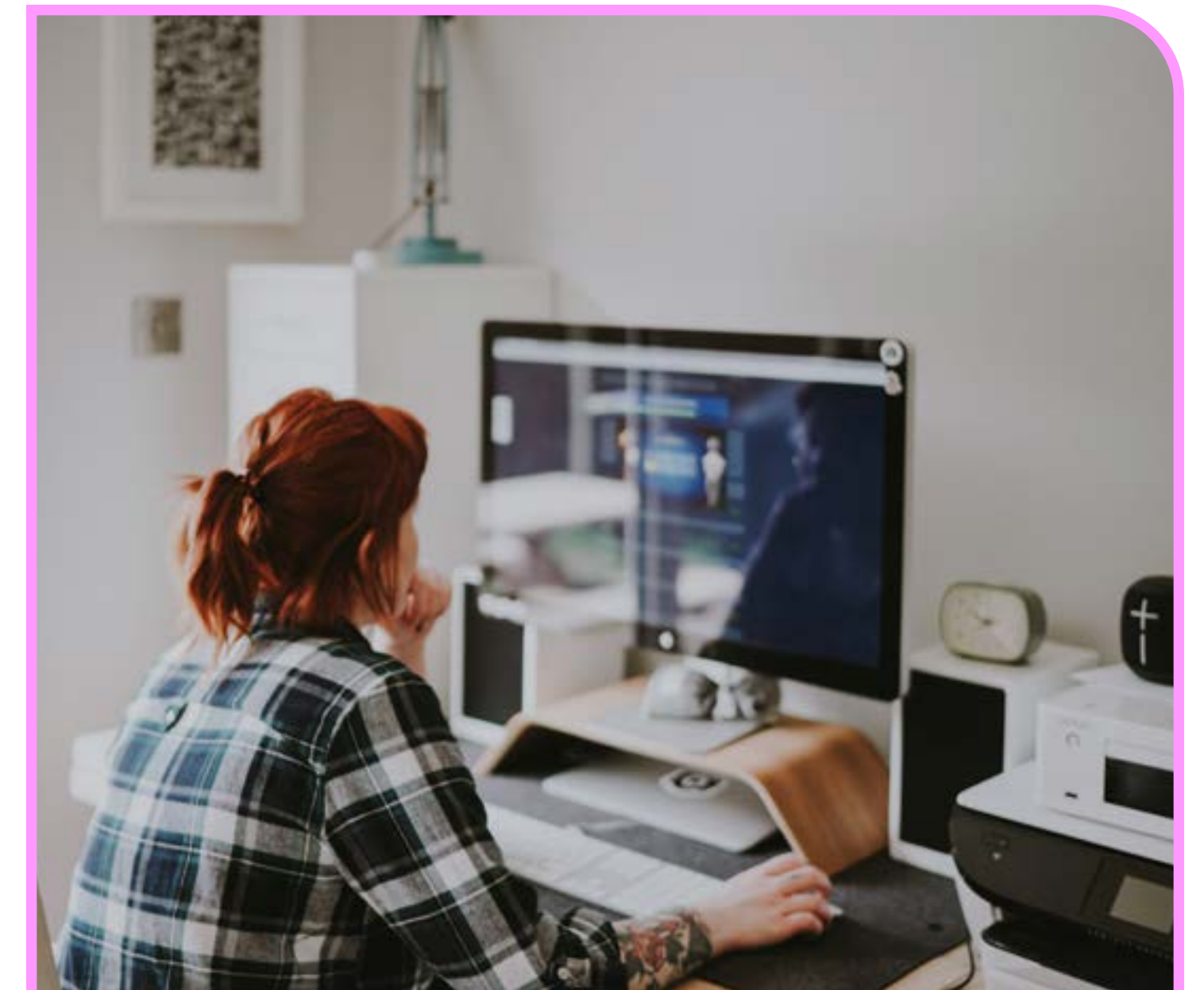
Unsurprisingly for Generation Activist, they want jobs that align with their values. **92% of them** want values and purpose from a company: in fact, those **who are satisfied with their employers' societal and environmental impact** are more likely to want to stay with their employer for more than 5 years. Right now, workplaces are slacking. Only 18% of Gen Zs believe their employers are strongly committed to fighting climate change, but as the Great Resignation continues, this will have to change.

2 in 5 Gen Zs say they've rejected a job because it didn't align with their values

They want visible climate actions that let employees get directly involved, like banning single-use plastics in the office, and providing training to help people make better environmental decisions. There's also an increasing demand for **good CSR opportunities**, which let employees give back via charity work or partnerships. As this demand rises, charities are perfectly positioned to help corporates deliver these opportunities.

// Flexibility

Almost **half of Gen Z** work remotely at least some of the time, with the vast majority saying this would be their ideal working environment. It frees up time to do other things, allows them to spend more time with their families, and saves money. On top of that, it helps them get the **personal autonomy** they so desperately crave. Which, incidentally, leads to improved efficiency and better wellbeing overall.



GEN Z AT WORK



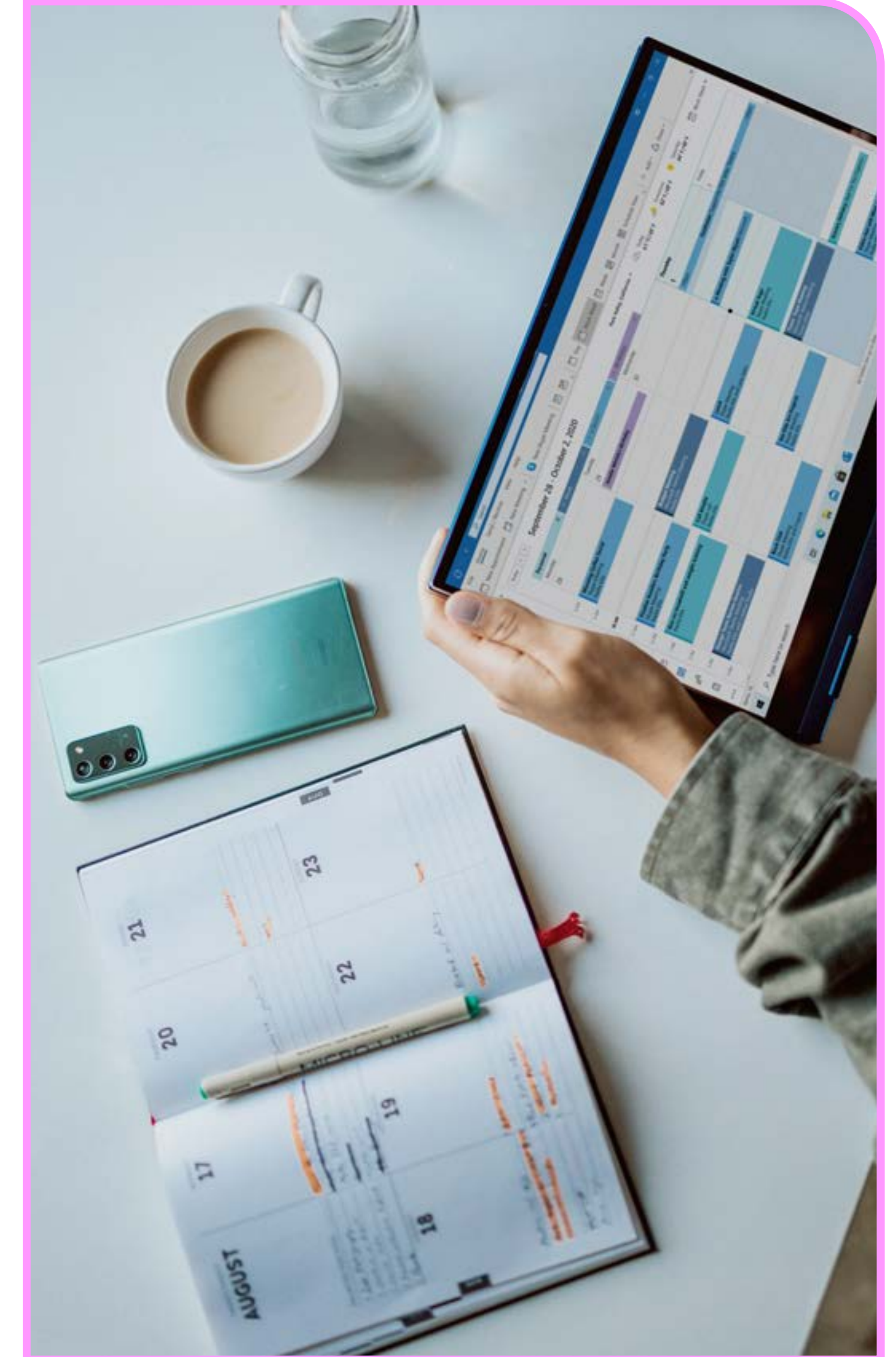
46% of Gen Zs say they feel burned out because of the intensity and demands of their working environments.

// Workplace Mental Health

Gen Z's poor mental health carries over to the workplace. **46% of Gen Zs** say they feel burned out because of the intensity and demands of their working environments, and **91% of 18-24 year olds** report being stressed at work frequently. In comparison, the whole working population's average is only 84%. After all, they are entering the job market during a highly **tumultuous time**. Expect to see more emphasis on workplace mental health benefits over the next year, specifically in terms of streamlining the ones that are already in place to maximise their impact.

// Salary Transparency

They also don't just want to be paid well – they want to know exactly what they're getting into. Overall, Gen Z won't even **apply to jobs if they don't have a salary** listed on the ad. As a group, they're leading the charge on **salary transparency**, although they still have a long way to go when it comes to being open about their salaries themselves. When it comes to the employer though, they value transparency in every aspect •



CASE STUDIES – GEN Z AT WORK



Voices In The Workplace

Gen-Z founded **research company dcdx** exists to help brands understand Generation Z. In order to do so, they understand that methods of the past can't be applied to generations of the future – and are therefore entirely Gen Z-run.

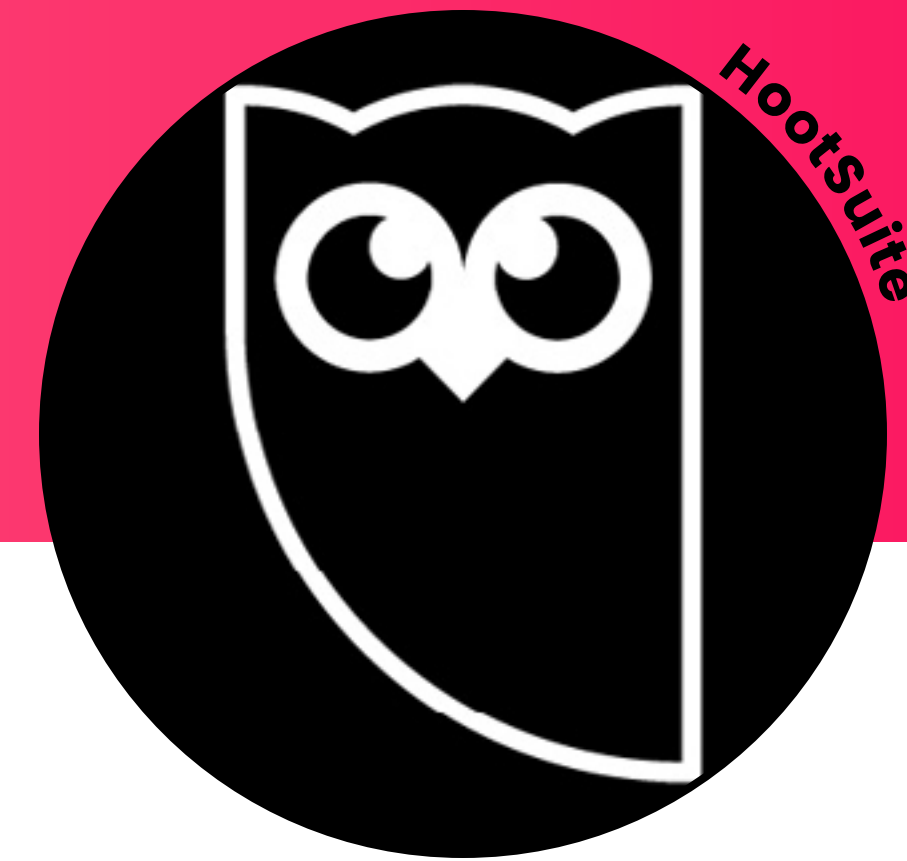
So What: Tapping into the popular Gen Z feeling that their voices aren't being heard, the company has decided to bring the voices of their generation to the centre of their business model. After all, Gen Z just wants to be heard, and who better to understand them than themselves?



Flexible Hours

Famous for its culture of belonging at work, companies can learn a lot from **Patagonia's structure and benefits**. They've got a serious emphasis on employee wellbeing, which includes paid leave to volunteer, paying bail for their employees who get arrested protesting for the environment, and have flexible, hybrid working.

So What: The priorities in our day-to-day lives are changing. Gen Z doesn't necessarily want to be stuck at a desk all day, nor do they want to work from 9 to 5 every day; they want to be given the freedom to fill in their own workdays, as well as dedicate time to the things that they're passionate about outside of work.



Gen Z Benefits

Hootsuite is a **social media management platform**, known for its commitment its young employees. They've even been named one of Canada's Top Employers for Young People. How did they get there? Flexible work arrangements, a serious amount of personal and professional development programmes including mentorship, training sessions, and tuition fee support, a strong DEI commitment, and more!

So What: It all comes down to identifying the priorities of Gen Z as a generation. They value a strong work life balance (and probably got used to it over COVID) – so let them work flexibly. They're motivated by social activism – so have your values incorporated into the culture. They're concerned about mental health in the workplace – introduce new wellness programmes.

SO WHAT?



1// Be Transparent in Job Listings

Gen Z want to know what they're getting into, and value transparency across all operations of a business or organisation. Many of them won't even apply to a position that doesn't list the starting salary – just post the pay and full benefits on the job listing to avoid missing out on valuable Gen Z talent.



2// Workplace Mental Health

With Gen Z mental health in freefall, they'll need a bit of support to be their most productive, efficient, and most importantly, healthy selves. What mental health initiatives do you have in place? How are you incorporating the needs of your staff into your mental health protocols?



3// Flexible Working

The pandemic has changed how we view the role of the office in working life. Gen Z values flexibility and remote opportunities – and whilst they crave the social and community aspects of the office, don't expect them to be there every day.



4// Strong Values

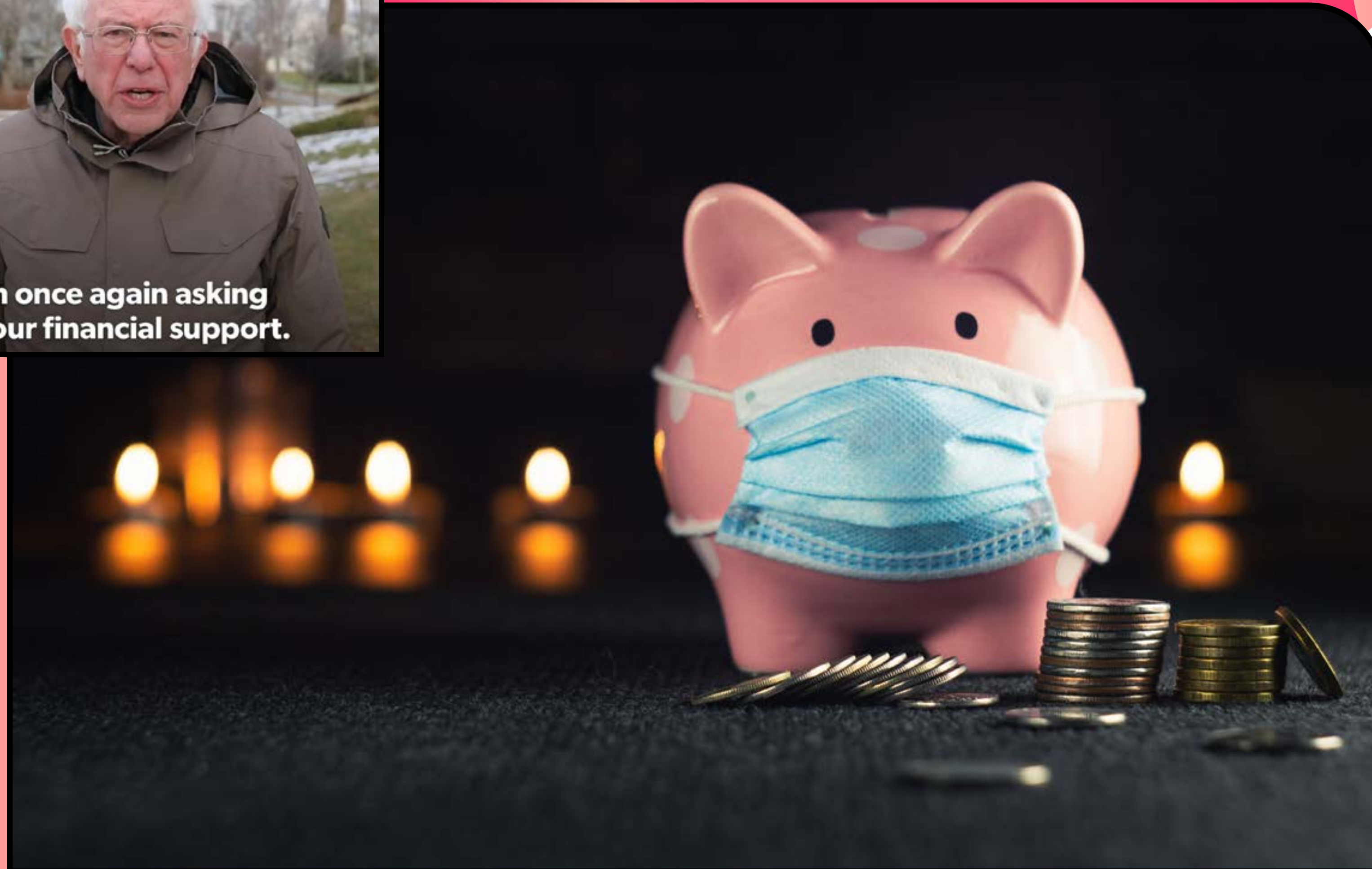
Alignment of values and purpose is important for the Activist Generation. With Gen Z's tendency to reject job offers if the company's values aren't up to scratch, it's important to be upfront and transparent about the purpose-driven work that you do. This can't simply be a statement on your website either – how are you making your values a reality?



5// Elevate Their Voices

Ultimately, Gen Z just want to be heard. Consider the hierarchical structure of your workplace, and find new ways to elevate the youngest voices in their organisation.

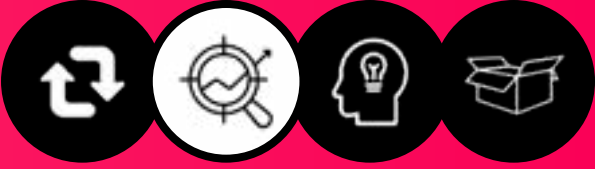
FINANCIAL HEALTH



Gen Z's finances aren't in great shape, with almost half living paycheck to paycheck and a quarter lacking confidence in their retirement prospects. Many of them are unable or unwilling to save, especially with the future being as uncertain as it is. Instead, they indulge in treat brain, tapping into unrestrained emotional spending and small moments of hedonism. Not great news for their wallets – they're often resorting to Buy Now, Pay Later services to support their shopping habits.

That's not to say they don't work hard – hustle culture is back in full swing. 43% of them have a second job to tap into their entrepreneurial potential and learn new skills.

FINANCIAL HEALTH



// Finance Snapshot

Overall, Gen Z's finances aren't in the best place. **Almost half of them** live paycheck to paycheck, and **about a quarter** aren't confident they'll be able to retire comfortably. Of course, they are only just starting to enter the workforce, and generally represent the lowest salaries in the job market, so it's logical that they would be the most impacted by the cost of living crisis and inflation. But it's deeper than that; they're **falling behind previous generations** when it comes to hitting essential milestones, like homeownership, or cracking salary brackets. So what trends are we seeing when it comes to Gen Z spending habits?

// Treat Brain

Generally, they're **unable to save**. Although there's a chunk of Sensibles that are carefully planning their finances for the impending apocalypse, the general mindset seems to be: "What's the point of saving if we don't know what the future holds?" Saving amongst younger generations is down significantly, but spending is staying high. In fact, 45% of Gen Z and millennials don't see a point in saving until things are back to normal. Why save for the (very uncertain, probably not great) future, when we could spend in the now?

Gen Z collectively suffer from treat brain - the lapse into unrestrained emotional spending. When the stresses of daily polycrisis get too much, the solution could be anything from going out for a three-course meal, buying the luxe skincare product you've been eyeing for the past month, or skipping the office coffee machine and buying the fancy flat white from the café instead. These little indulgences light up our brain's pleasure and reward centres with a hit of dopamine, and make it easier for us to get through the day.

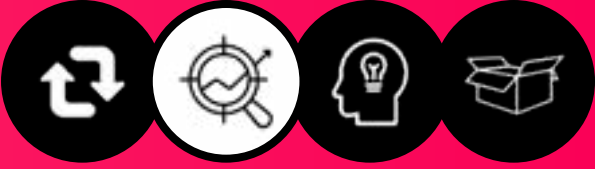
43% of Gen Z have a second part- or full-time paying job in addition to their primary job.

// Hustle Culture

"Gen Z has never worked for anything in their life." Popular online opinion is that Gen Z is **lazy**. The fact that they drove the Quiet Quitting phenomenon last year hasn't helped their case. But is this actually a fair representation? **43% of Gen Z** have a second part- or full-time paying job in addition to their primary job, and it's not just about the money. Gen Z is laser-focused on honing new skills and tapping into their entrepreneurial potential. Enter: Hustle Culture. Side-gigs could be anything from selling products online, consulting, running their own business, or social media influencing.

But today's hustle culture is defined **differently to those of previous generations**. It's no longer about working till you drop, it's characterised by **side hustles and passion projects** -

FINANCIAL HEALTH



Companies are going to have to be more flexible with letting Gen Z be over-employed and working odd hours. Or, they'll have to pay them more, because **many of Gen Z couldn't afford to quit hustle culture** even if they wanted to.

// BNPL

With inflation cutting into disposable incomes, people are **increasingly turning to credit** to buy themselves rewards. As spending continues to be high and overconsumption rages on, companies like Affirm, Afterpay and Klarna have boomed in popularity. From 2019 to 2022, the total value of BNPL loans originated in the US **grew more than 1000%**.

Almost half of all young people have used a BNPL service in the past twelve months. And in the US, almost **half of young users** have missed at least one payment. It seems out of character for a generation characterised as 'Generation Sensible,' but Gen Z loves Buy Now Pay Later. Whilst credit cards are a **huge no go for most of them**, they see no moral distinction between BNPL and debit, happily using it on anything from grocery shopping to luxury items. At the same time, Gen Z users have the **highest chance of defaulting their loans** or delinquency.

So can BNPL still be used for good? Some charities are

exploring the BNPL model for their retail shops, or even as a 'Donate Now, Pay Later' service. The question for charities will be whether or not they're able to mitigate the financial risks for younger donors when it comes to BNPL. On one hand, DNPL allows organisations to accommodate younger donors, but on the other, it comes with a reputation for fiscal irresponsibility. And, of course, Klarna has just reported **their biggest loss to date**. Is this the end of BNPL? For a deep dive into BNPL as a retail trend, check out our retail report **here** •



Almost half of all young people have used a BNPL service in the past twelve months.

CASE STUDIES – FINANCIAL HEALTH



Side Hustles

This Japanese trading house has introduced a new workplace perk: the **freedom to pursue side hustles**. They've lifted the ban on having secondary jobs, in addition to implementing remote work and flexible hours policies. Some of the suggested additional jobs? Working on a tech startup, becoming a YouTuber or artist, or coaching.

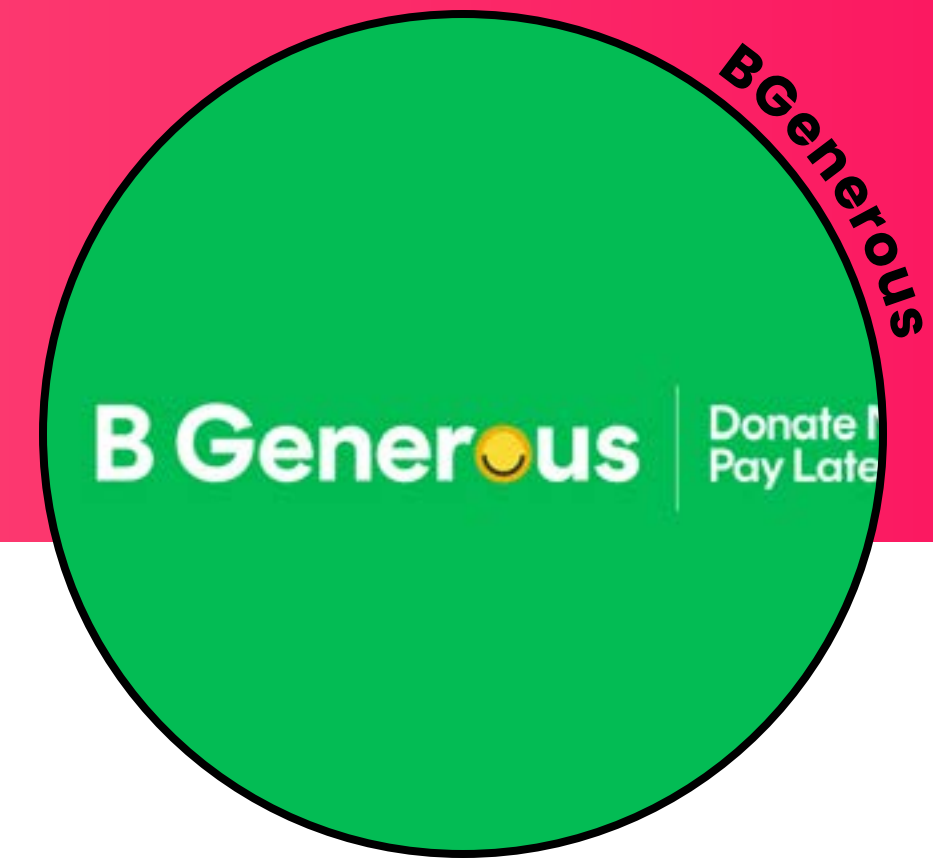
So What: Mitsui & Co's goal is to allow their employees to pursue both career development outside of their primary jobs, as well as new working styles. As the company's average employee is ageing up, they're doing their best to attract new Gen Z talent to their pipeline.



Gamified Savings

As the cost of living crisis continues to bite, **Monzo is making it easier to join a savings challenge**. Through a partnership with IFTTT, the app lets you connect your current account to over 500 other apps, and create linked instructions to send money into saving pots. For example, you could move a tenner into your rainy day pot every time your weather app predicts a drizzle, or £1 every time someone retweets you on Twitter.

So What: For a generation that loves gamified everything, turning saving into a challenge is the best way to save. Monzo, which already caters to a primarily younger audience, is making saving easy and accessible for Gen Z.



Buy Now, Donate Later

Fintech-for-good company B Generous has launched a first of its kind Donate Now, Pay Later product. The idea is that donors can make a charitable donation to a nonprofit organisation without paying any money at the point of donation, whilst the charity receives the money immediately. In the US, the average online donation in 2022 came to \$128, whilst the average DNPL donation came to \$470.67 – a 267% increase.

So What: The product holds the idea that people are, even through economic downturn, inherently generous. They just need a helping hand. Riffing off the rise of BNPL to meet younger donors in the middle, they've been very successful at securing new donors, increasing donation size, and decreasing fundraising pressures on charities themselves.

SO WHAT?



1// Help Them Save



More than previous generations, Gen Z is struggling to save – a potential financial time-bomb for when they grow up. How can you help your Gen Z supporters or service users to adopt better saving habits?

2// Moments of Hedonism



Growing up through polycrisis, Gen Z is craving small moments of hedonism in their day-to-day lives. How can you tap into this? How do you build bursts of serotonin into your fundraising events?

3// Second Jobs



Many of them have second jobs, either because they want to build up their skills, pursue their passion projects, or earn extra cash – let them. There's no reason their side hustles should impact their primary job, so consider changing the rules about multi-employment.

4// Financial Literacy



With the generation struggling to save and BNPL services quickly dragging them into credit, it's clear that Gen Z are lacking in financial literacy. How can you help them build up the necessary skills to allow them to be financially stable and secure in the future?

5// Flexible Giving



With their finances being as they are, most Gen Zs aren't in a position to be regular donors. So how are you encouraging flexible giving and connecting these irregular donors to your cause through limited interactions?

MARKETING TO ZOOMERS

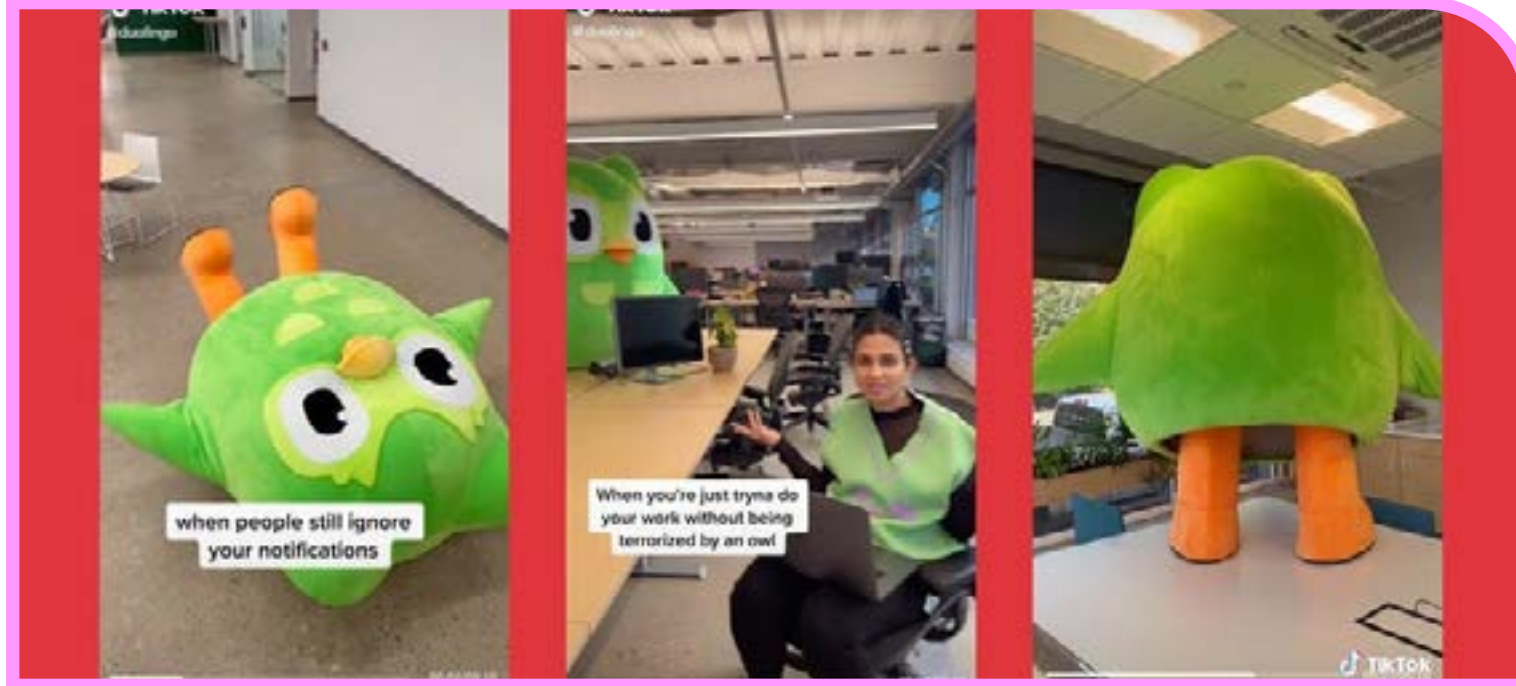


It goes without saying that social media marketing is at the core of marketing to Gen Z. But you already know that. So what do they want specifically?

Essentially, humour is key. With nearly half of this generation seeking out funny content online, incorporating humour into your marketing strategy can draw them in and give you an opportunity to educate and connect them to a cause. But it's not just about being funny – it's also about speaking their language, whether that's through memes or references to viral trends. Sounds simple enough, but the trick is to come off as authentic, with Gen Z craving genuine connections in all their online interactions. Bottom line: the key is to be real, relatable, and humorous.



MARKETING TO ZOOMERS



// Humour

Gen Z wants to make advertising fun again. Perhaps as a reflection of our increasingly fragmented world, humour in ads has been on a **steady decline** since the year 2000, essentially falling off a cliff after the financial crisis in 2008. But why is this? Mostly, brands are worried about offending, with **95% of business leaders** saying they're afraid to use humour in their customer interactions, or don't have the right tools or insights to do so successfully. But whilst that might have worked for the past 20 years, it's not going to fly with Gen Z. **Almost half of them** spend time online with the specific purpose of finding funny content, and when it comes to drawing in younger eyeballs, **humour is the best way to do so**. Consider it like a venus flytrap: use funny and memeable content to lure people in, and once they're there, use the opportunity to educate and connect them to your cause.

// Know Your Meme

It's not just about living where they are - they've also got their own language. Granted, it's tricky to get right and can seem immediately out of touch if done wrong, but it's the quickest way to Gen Z's heart (and their loyalty). This could encompass anything from **algospeak** (the slang that stems from creators avoiding their content being flagged by the algorithm), memes, or references to viral TikToks. Essentially, the ear-to-the-ground social strategy works best online. And hey, memes have already been incredibly successful in drawing **Gen Z attention to politics**, so why not apply the same principles to charity?

// Authenticity

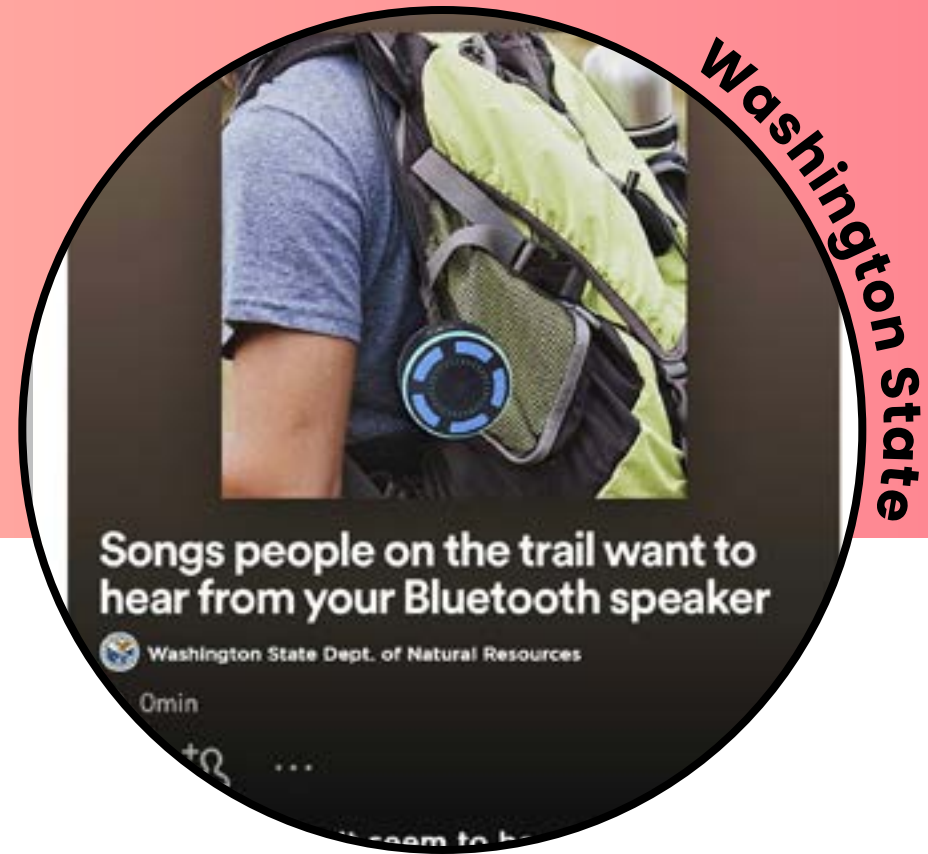
We've already established that Gen Z is tired of overly polished, perfected content. They're craving authenticity and genuine connection in their everyday lives, from the social media they consume to the brands they support. It's one of the reasons **TikTok is booming**. The dominant 'legacy' platforms, like Facebook and Instagram, are becoming too polished or user-unfriendly, with jumbled algorithms pushing influencer posts. Over the next few years, we'll see the rising popularity of apps that prioritise more authentic online interactions with the people that users choose to stay close to. Just look at the explo-

sive growth of BeReal, the photo sharing app that lets users upload one photo a day at random moments. Of course, the problem with marketing on these new platforms like BeReal is that one of their key assets is that they don't feature many ads. But where you can, it'll be crucial to be as authentic and 'real' as possible.

In the same vein, pick your influencers wisely. They tend to wield serious power over their followers, mostly because they've built genuine connections through repeated authentic interactions. For this reason: Gen Z prefers micro-influencers that exist in their own, smaller niches, not the big-name influencers that were popular five years ago.



CASE STUDIES – MARKETING TO ZOOMERS



Humourous Education

Looking for a good example of a brand's social media presence? Look no further than the **Washington State Department of Natural Resources' Twitter account**. Their strategy is essentially infotainment – they draw people in with something fun or flashy, then lock them in to learn something. With their tweets regularly getting over a hundred thousand likes, and thousands of retweets, it's clearly working for them.

So What: When considering humorous social media accounts like this, most brands and organisations tend to think “there's no way that this applies to my brand” or “this doesn't drive meaningful engagement”. Yet the Department's Twitter account has increased link clicks by a cool 1700%.



Ear-To-Ground Marketing

In 2022, Weetabix spared a national debate with their attention-grabbing **Beans on Bix campaign**, with a budget of just a few thousand pounds. To cut through the noise, Weetabix spent a serious amount of time on social media to figure out their place in the online discussion. In doing so, they found that ‘Weetabix n Tingz’ was already an active debate online, where people dreamt up weird combinations of flavours. Armed with that insight, they launched their own version online.

So What: The ear to the ground social strategy works wonders with Gen Z, especially when it comes to hopping on existing trends. Costing just £5k to execute, Weetabix leveraged humour, insight, and conviction to jump up their brand visibility.



Shining A Light

Media company Vice recently hit headlines for their hard hitting **Unfiltered History campaign**. The campaign encourages people to go to the British Museum to use Instagram filters and immersive audio to scan objects and unlock an AR experience about the origins of the pieces. The aim? Shedding light on how the vast majority of the British Museum's collection got there through colonial practices.

So What: The campaign balances the authenticity and need for social activism that Gen Z loves. Not only that, but they've also launched a 10-part podcast series – another thing which Gen Z loves.

SO WHAT?



1// Don't Be Scared of Humour

Humour can feel scary, hard to get right, or simply wrong for the brand. But it can be a great vehicle for connecting with younger generations, so don't be afraid to experiment with it! Try to involve Gen Z voices in your marketing strategy to see what type of humour lands with them.

2// Be Authentic

Gen Z is over the overly polished and perfect content. They're craving authenticity and genuine connection from the organisations they support. Enter TikTok, Twitter, and BeReal. Consider how you're engaging with your supporters, and how to drive authentic connection.



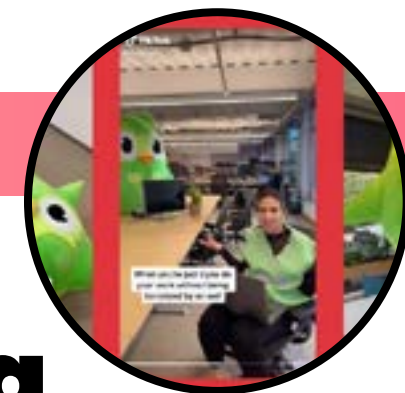
3// Play With Meme Culture

Like generations before them, Gen Z has developed their own language. From algospeak to TikToks, memes and online trends, speaking their language is a quick way to grab their attention. It may be a bit tricky to get right at first, but using it authentically is the fastest way to win their hearts and loyalty.



4// Zoomers Speaking To Zoomers

The best way to appeal to Gen Z humour, speak their language, and still feel authentic at the same time is to involve Gen Z in the marketing process themselves. They already feel like their voices aren't being heard enough, so elevate them!



5// Short-Form Media

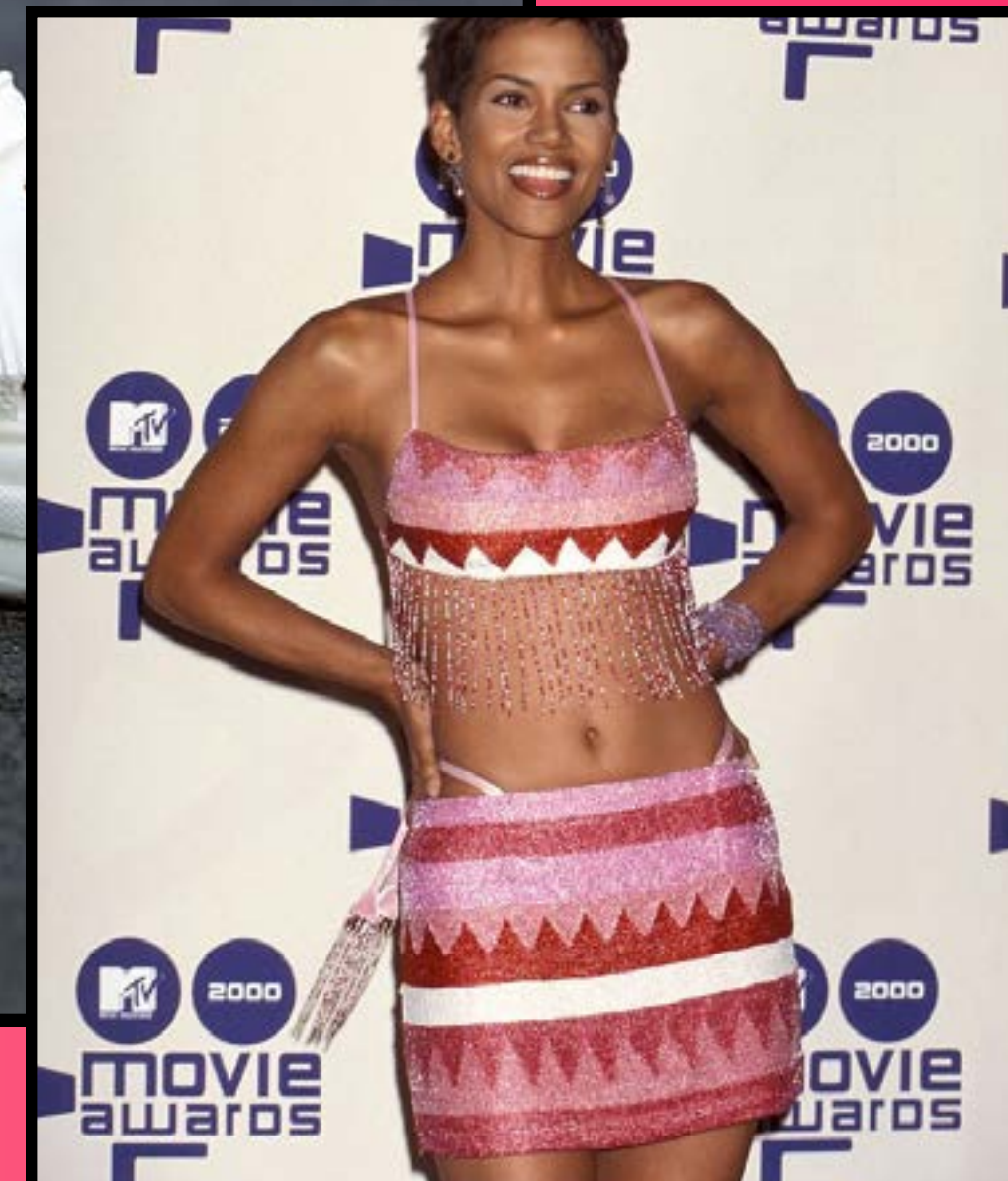
With the rise of TikTok, short-form storytelling has become the norm. Attention spans are in decline, and short and snappy headlines are in. Find out more about the future of short-form [here](#).



TREND TASTERS



With the trend cycle ever-accelerating, it can be hard to keep up with the increasingly rapid turnover of trends. But some of them have managed to beat the pattern and stay around for longer. So let's dive into some overarching trends that are sweeping Gen Z, and more importantly, consider the underlying wants and needs driving them.



TREND TASTERS

// Uglycore

Social media can be draining. Everything is airbrushed, streamlined, glossy, and just generally perfect. But that can have a serious toll on our mental health. Gen Z’s response? Uglycore. **Perfection fatigue** is driving a push back against the manufactured, clinical, minimalist aesthetic ushered in by millennials. Gen Z doesn’t want flawless, polished images, they want imperfections front and centre.

We can see this trend in action in clothes (**70% of 13–36 year olds** say that it’s cool to wear clothing that was once considered ugly), with the comeback of Crocs and Birkenstocks, but also in fashion, NFTs, art, architecture, Instagram, etc. We’re embracing more imperfect food, like the iconic **St John’s cassoulet**, and rejecting the visually uninteresting. Crucially, for organisations, this extends to **advertising and marketing**.



// Subversion

Driven by the same thirst for imperfections that drive Uglycore, Gen Z is a big fan of subversion. **Experimentation, creativity, and aesthetic innovation** are surefire ways to draw in younger audiences. Modern culture has been criticised for its lack of counter-culture and push-back, but this trend encapsulates all things anti-fashion, anti-society, and anti-consumerism. Think of the MSCHF red boots that recently went viral: they’re ridiculous and borderline unwearable, but Gen Z loves them for their eye-catching design and underlying message. Not unrelated: **body-horror is making a comeback**.

// Membership

As the loneliest generation, all Gen Z really wants is to find community and belonging. They want to be a part of something. Hence: they love all things collaboration and collectible, limited edition, special capsule. The harder it is to get, the better. A need for social approval is driving this trend, with some items becoming verifiable status symbols. For example, KSI and Logan Paul’s Prime energy drink has gone **viral in real life**, is sold out in every store, and is a status booster for anyone who can get their hands on it. And it doesn’t have to be a retail item – restaurants and experience-providers are increasingly **leaning into membership models**.



TREND TASTERS

// Luxury

Their income might be proportionally low, but their love for luxury isn't. Gen Z are now the **largest drivers of the luxury-goods market**, buying luxury items approximately **three to five years earlier** than millennials would have. Driven largely by treat brain thinking, more and more Gen Zs are living with their parents until later in life because of the cost of living, leaving them with the disposable income to **splurge on luxury**.

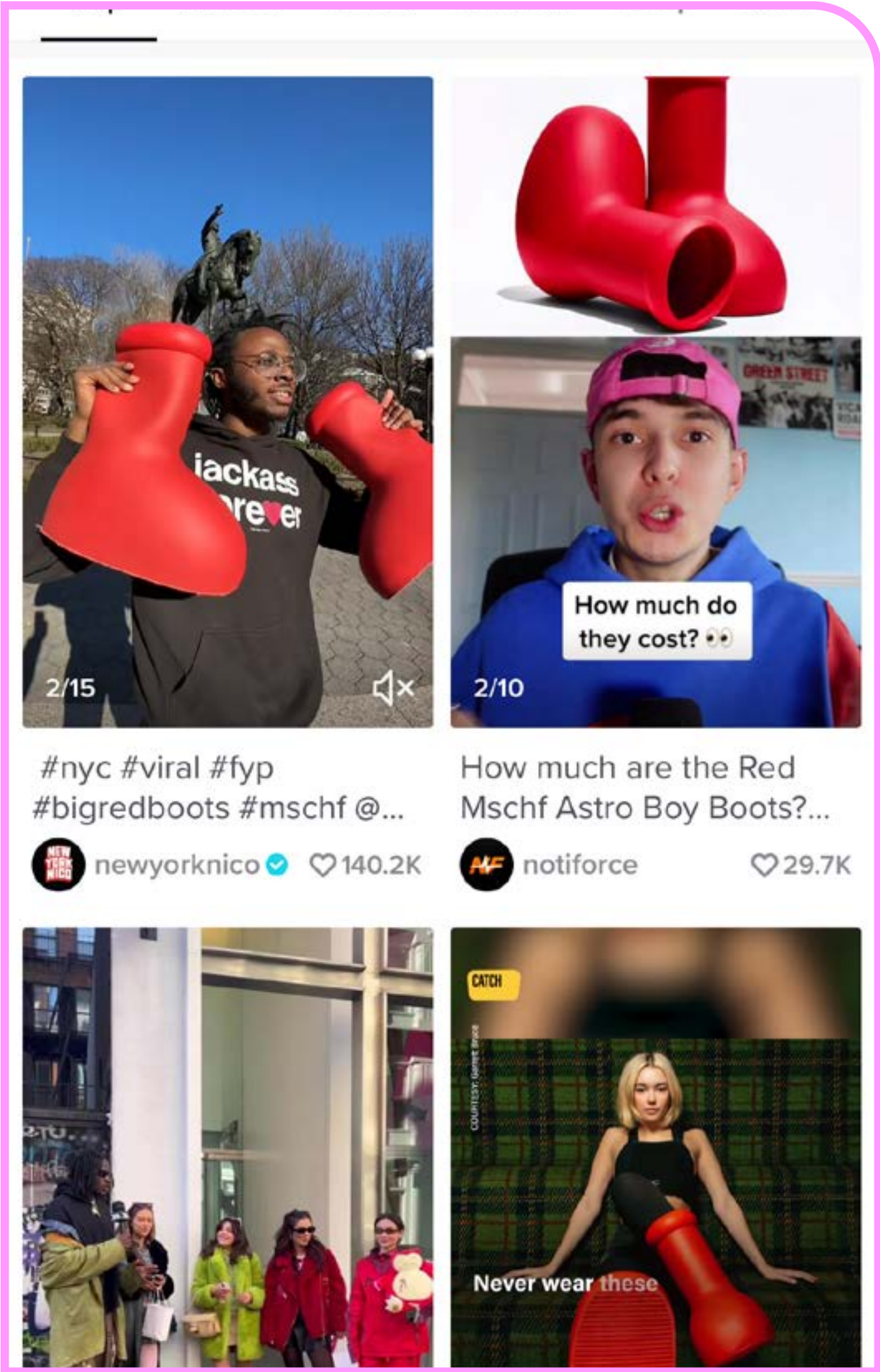
Despite rising inflation, luxury goods have been **largely immune** to soaring interest rates and squeezed household budgets. The fact that the luxury industry hasn't been shy about adopting **web3 and NFT technologies** is likely to popularise them even more amongst younger consumers.



// Y2K

Butterfly clips, velour sweatsuits, tinted sunglasses, baby tees, and all things bright pink. If you've spent **any time on TikTok** in the past year, you would have seen the comeback of Y2K fashion out in full force. TikTok typically has a hyper-fast trend cycle, pushing all kinds of micro-aesthetic trends out to its audiences, only for them to disappear a month later. For the purpose of this report, we've been careful not to reference any of these, because they'll probably be out of style by the time you're reading this. But Y2K has proven to be extremely pervasive, entirely transcending the typical TikTok trend cycle.

What's driving this early 2000s throwback? Nostalgia for better times, as well as the comeback and **reclaiming of hyper-femininity**.



CASE STUDIES – TREND ROUNDUP



Y2K Marketing

Buy Now Pay Later platform Klarna has **partnered with Paris Hilton** to jump back into Y2K. The visual of the ad draws on Y2K fashion trends, and even features Hilton saying a new spin on her iconic “That’s hot” catchphrase (in the ad, she says “that’s smooth” a combination of her catchphrase and Klarna’s slogan).

So what: The 2000s are back in a big way, as anyone on TikTok will know. Klarna’s jumping on the hype by partnering with one of the original influencers, a touchstone icon from the decade. Not only are they using her recognisability, they’re tapping into Gen Z trends to draw in new consumers.



Imperfect Products

Aesthetically Complex Pies is a newly launched sweet and savoury pie and snack service, specialising in ‘aesthetically adventurous’ food. Read: the pies are ugly. Really ugly. Per the website: the pies are for “when you need to nibble on something that matches your couch, [...] or oozes your favourite shade of your favourite yellow.”

So what: Ugly things (pardon me, aesthetically complex things) are having a resurgence. Too-pretty-to-eat sweet treats are out, misshapen and odd pies are in. Even the name speaks to the underlying behaviours here: we want to look at something interesting, complex, and authentic.



Shining A Light

We’re all familiar with Crocs, the clogs that debuted in 2002. After falling off the face of the earth for a few years, **they just posted record results for 2022**. First, they boomed in popularity during lockdown, as individuals wanted comfort at home. Then, they capitalised on this by doing high-visibility charity work, in part by donating thousands of shoes to medical personnel. And lastly, they doubled down on their pandemic-boom by leaning into uglycore and Gen Z meme marketing to secure their rebound popularity.

So what: The key to Crocs’ success is the unironic endorsement of Gen Z. The brand knows their niche, they know their market, and have mastered the art of tapping into it. For 2023, their marketing budget is **topping \$200M**, so expect to see more of the same.

SO WHAT?



1// Perfection Fatigue



Gen Z is tired of airbrushed minimalism and perfection. Expect the trends this coming year to reflect a need for more authenticity, imperfect marketing and products, and subversive pop culture. How do you incorporate this into your marketing, product offering, and communications strategy for the next year?

2// Community-Driven



They're also craving community – so how are you building a community of supporters or service-users, and engaging them in it? Consider the model of belonging you're using – check out our **Future of Community** report for more on this.

3// Be Bold



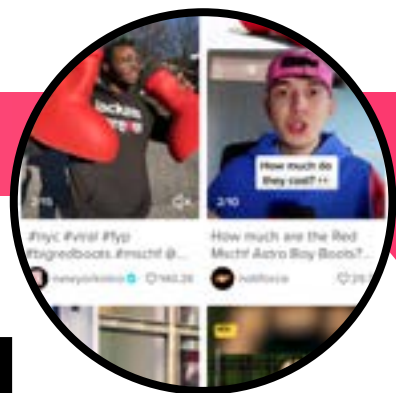
Take risks. Stand out from the crowd, and make bolder choices in your strategy – Gen Z will appreciate it. Not everything needs to land either, don't be afraid to experiment and fail fast where needed.

4// Medicinal Nostalgia



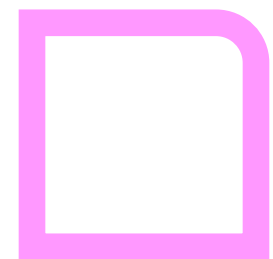
With polycrisis in full swing, audiences are craving throwbacks to sweeter times. Enter: medicinal nostalgia. Think of the Y2K boom, but also retro graphic design, vintage clothes and themed throwback events.

5// Know The Trend Cycle



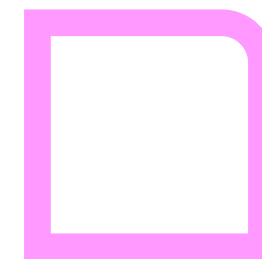
With the trend cycle accelerating at the pace that it is, it can be difficult to differentiate between micro- and macro-trends. When tapping into a trend, do your research, and try to identify the underlying behaviours before engaging with it.

CHECKLIST



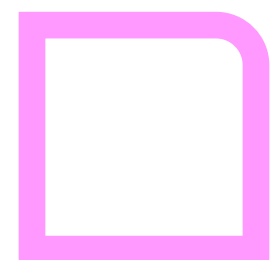
Evaluate Your Impact Narrative

Think about how your impact level can engage a generation that wants transparency, case studies, and connection. Need inspiration for how to tell your story to Gen Z? Dive into the work [Good Innovation's done with WaterAid](#) to create Global Annual Stories.



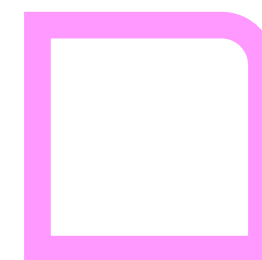
Make The Most of Micro-Volunteers

Consider which parts of your volunteering offer can be done by micro-, remote or virtual volunteerings. Check out [our work with OnHand](#) for a look at how GI can help you transform your volunteering offer.



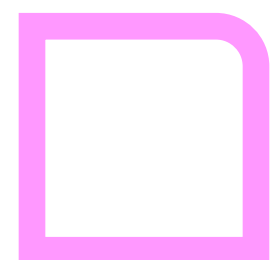
Elevate Young Employee Voices

How are you attracting, retaining, and making the most out of your Gen Z employees? Click [here](#) for a look at how Good Innovation could help you futureproof up your workplace culture.



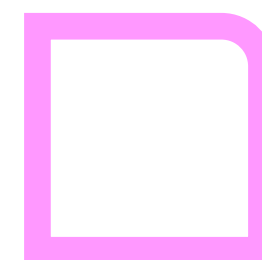
Tap Into Gen Z Humour

Engage younger audiences by incorporating humour into your marketing strategy. Not sure what's appropriate or will land? [Here's](#) how we helped NCT use audience insight to understand demographic and communication changes.



Fundraising For Zoomers

Update your fundraising events and keep your fundraising products fresh. Tap into Gen Z's lifestyle and needs to draw in a younger generation of donors. Have a chat with us about our recent work on gaming innovation for Zoomers by reaching out to Ryan [here](#)!



Help Them Connect

This generation is desperate for connection. Can you create a community where your young supporters or service users can find belonging? Consider looking at [GI's community-focussed work](#) for inspiration.

WORKSHOP IN A BOX



1

Exploring the Character Cards

Split into pairs and have each participant pick a character card. Try to bring the card to life within the context of your mission. What do they think about your charity? What does your charity think about your character? How could you best engage your character?

🕒 10 minutes

QUESTION

What do they think about your charity?

QUESTION

What does your charity think about them?

QUESTION

How could you engage them?

QUESTION

What do they think about your charity?

QUESTION

What does your charity think about them?

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How could you engage them?

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2

Refining the 'How Might We...'

Use the areas you picked prior to the workshop as stimulus to unpack a range of problems, opportunities and needs for your organisation. Articulate these as "How might we..." Work individually or in pairs to come up with as many HMW as possible. Share back your most promising statements after 10 minutes.

🕒 10 minutes

TREND 1

EXAMPLE

How might we connect irregular donors to our cause?

QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

TREND 2

EXAMPLE

How might we better support the financial stability of our young supporters?

QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

TREND 3

EXAMPLE

How might we incorporate Gen Z humour into our social strategy?

QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

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QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

QUESTION

How might we... [insert problem statement here?]

3

Fundraising Ideation in Paris

In your pairs, break out into your "duo brainstorm space" by fundraising brainstorming ideas and placing them into the template. Alternatively, silently brainstorm solo. Encourage people to go for quantity.

Pick one character card for the whole group to work on for 5 minutes. Then move onto the next audience segment. Use the HMW statements as start points for ideation.

🕒 20 minutes

Pair 1

Pair 2

Pair 3

Pair 4

Pair 5

Pair 6

Pair 7

Pair 8

4

Stretch and Build

Have everyone copy and paste their ideas into the "group sharing space" within the template and have the team silently read through them. As a team, sort and group them by themes. Discuss and answer any questions that arise. Encourage "Yes, and..." and build on the ideas of other people along the way.

🕒 15 minutes

To help you go from inspiration to action, we’ve created a handy ‘Workshop in a box’.

This toolkit will guide you through a 90 minute creative session, designed for 3-8 people.

This workshop is split into three parts:

1. Designed to help you quickly be able to articulate unique opportunities to engage Gen Z.
2. Helps you select the most promising

ideas and expand then in more detail.

3. Will help you prioritise which ideas to focus on, which ones might need a bit more thought, and which ones are (quite frankly) a bit crap.

Download the kit [here](#) or [visit the Mural](#).

CONTACT US

Want to discuss how you can use the horizon scan as an opportunity to innovate?

We're here to help.

Get in touch.

GoodFutures@goodinnovation.co.uk

Subscribe to Good Futures to access the full report **[here//](#)**