

the necessary financing for those ideas, in addition to visiting schools to discover entrepreneurs.

6. They are tech innate

Gen-Z was born in the smartphone era, as such unlike the millennials who are generally able to navigate between two screens at the same time, they can navigate as many as five screens at the same time.

Furthermore, they are likely to join new social networks such as Whisper and Snapchat, rather than Facebook. This means that when targeting Gen-Z, brands need to integrate new social media platforms into their digital campaigns, or risk being seen as outdated and thus not in touch with the latest trends.

7. They are socially aware and active

Gen-Z is increasingly aware of social issues such as obesity, animal cruelty, climate change, woman and child abuse, amongst others. Therefore, they have seized the opportunity to find solutions in order to help eradicate these social issues in future. Brands targeting Gen-Z thus need to be more organic in their corporate social investment initiatives and strive to invest behind them because they believe in the cause – and not simply to polish their brand image.

In South Africa, we have seen the launch of an initiative called Repurpose Schoolbags. Started by two young women, this initiative is designed to recycle plastic in order to make children's schoolbags, fitted with a solar study light to assist children who live in communities without electricity to study at night. Initiatives such as these demonstrate not only the resourcefulness of Gen-Z, but also their desire to make a meaningful difference to society at large.

In closing, we need to remember that Gen-Z does not follow the established ways of life that previous generations have become accustomed to; they make their own rules and their own realities. They will change the way we look at the world, brands and ourselves. They will also change the strategic thinking of brands.

As such, brands will have to work with this new generation of consumers to stay relevant to the changing times in which they live. Lastly, brands will need to stay ahead of trends as well, so as to ensure ongoing understanding of this generation and its unique culture and values, in order to grow and evolve in the future.

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