



The Generational

CONTENT

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Intro

As technology has evolved, so has the customer journey. **Consumers are tuning out many traditional marketing efforts in favor of channels that offer more valuable and relevant information.** Enter content marketing. This customer-centric strategy is one of the best ways to engage your audience and help them get to know, like, and trust your brand. The campaigns that rise above the noise in this increasingly crowded space are grounded in a deep understanding of their audience.

Content creators and strategists are in a unique position: **With more and more people online, they now have to publish content that resonates with multiple generations.** But does a Millennial male enjoy the same asset as a Baby Boomer or a Gen X female? Successful marketers realize their main goal is to create content that their audience will want to consume and share, so knowing the commonalities and distinctions among different generations are key to maximizing your efforts.



Millennials



Gen Xers



Baby Boomers

Methodology

In order to better understand each generation's content consumption habits, we surveyed over 1,200 people and segmented their responses into three groups: Millennials (born 1977–1995), Generation Xers (born 1965–1976), and Baby Boomers (born 1946–1964).

Our survey asked them to identify their preferences for over 15 different content types. We also asked for their preferences on long-form versus short-form content, what makes them read one article over another, and which publishing verticals they regularly engage (e.g., business, finance, entertainment).

We compared their responses and found unique similarities and differences in terms of which types of content each generation enjoys most. Here are five takeaways – and how to apply them to your campaigns.



Finding: Millennials Prefer Weekends

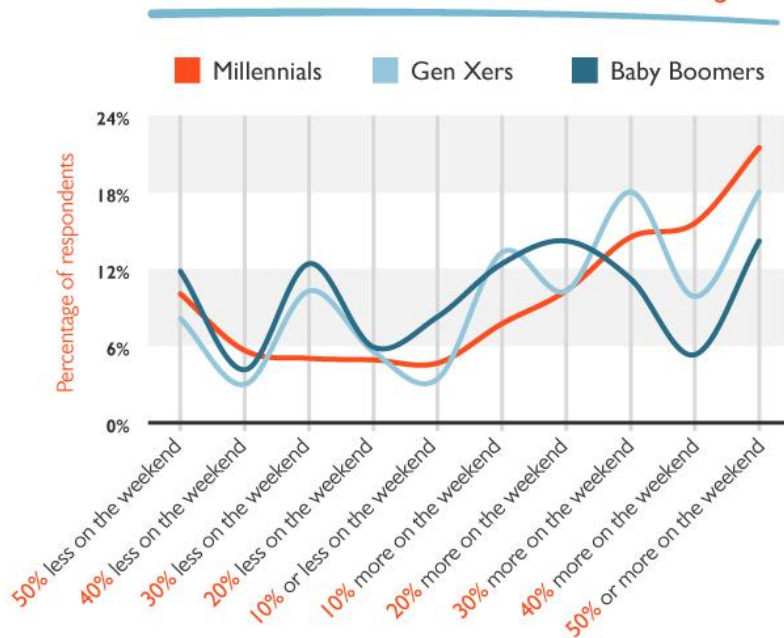
Most people consume content throughout the day across different devices, formats, and social media accounts. In order to optimize results for your client, you'll want to know exactly when your target audience is consuming the most content. Our results indicate a clear distinction between the three generations: **Baby Boomers prefer their content to be delivered during the week while Millennials save their content for the weekend; Gen Xers fall somewhere between the two.**

When asked about how much content they consume on the weekend, **only 14 percent of Baby Boomers consume 50 percent or more** of their content on Saturdays and Sundays compared with **over 20 percent of Millennials.**

In contrast, **about 12 percent of Baby Boomers consume 30 percent less** content on the weekend compared with a mere 5 percent of Millennials.

Tip: If a publisher asks for a preference regarding when your content is published, make sure you offer a day of the week that most closely aligns with your target audience's habits.

How much more/less content do you consume on the weekend versus on weekdays?



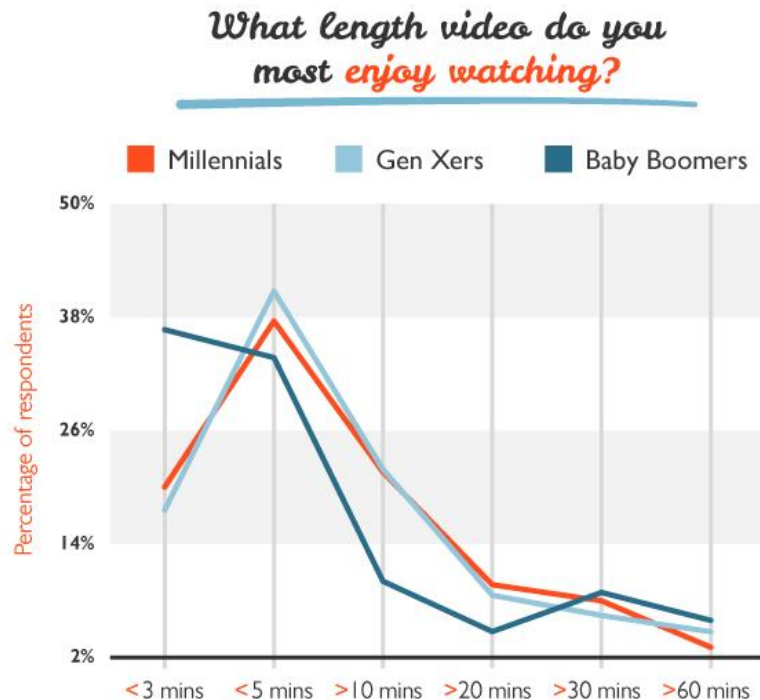
Finding: Keep it Short for Boomers

Marketers often obsess over how long a post should be and for good reason: You want to present as much data as possible without losing your audience's interest. And although there is no magical formula, our data indicate that **Baby Boomers are far less likely to be interested in longer content compared with younger generations.**

More and more marketers are turning to video because of its ease in presenting data in a visually appealing format. However, the length of a video can determine its success depending on your target audience.

More than 70 percent of Baby Boomers prefer videos to be five minutes or less; less than 60 percent of Gen Xers prefer a similar length. Over 20 percent of both Millennials and Gen Xers prefer a video longer than 10 minutes, compared with only 10 percent of Baby Boomers.

Tip: If you want your video to appeal to multiple generations, aim to keep it at five minutes or less.



Finding: Headlines Span Generations

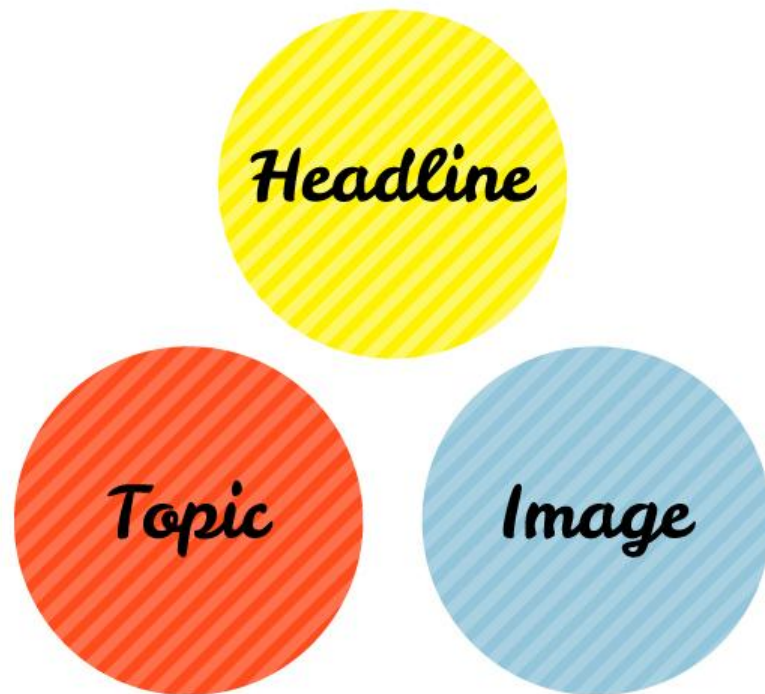
A headline can make or break a post. In fact, not only is it your first impression, but it offers readers quick insight into what the rest of the article is about. Our research indicates that it is the most important factor for all three generations in determining whether or not they want to read your feature.

Over 78 percent of all generations said that the headline was one of the most important factors in determining whether or not they wanted to read an article.

In fact, all three generations also agreed that the article topic and a dominant image were important factors, revealing that each generation had a similar top three.

One of the least popular factors for Baby Boomers was social engagement – less than 10 percent – while **Gen Xers and Millennials valued this more: 18 and 20 percent respectively.**

Tip: A headline is a huge factor that determines whether or not someone wants to read the rest of your content, so make sure it offers enough detail to let readers know what they can expect while also piquing their curiosity to learn more.



Generation

A lot of your content can fall under multiple verticals, and capitalizing on this is key if you want to maximize reach. Our research reveals that **different generations prefer different verticals**, so determining which high-performing verticals to pitch should be based on your target audience.

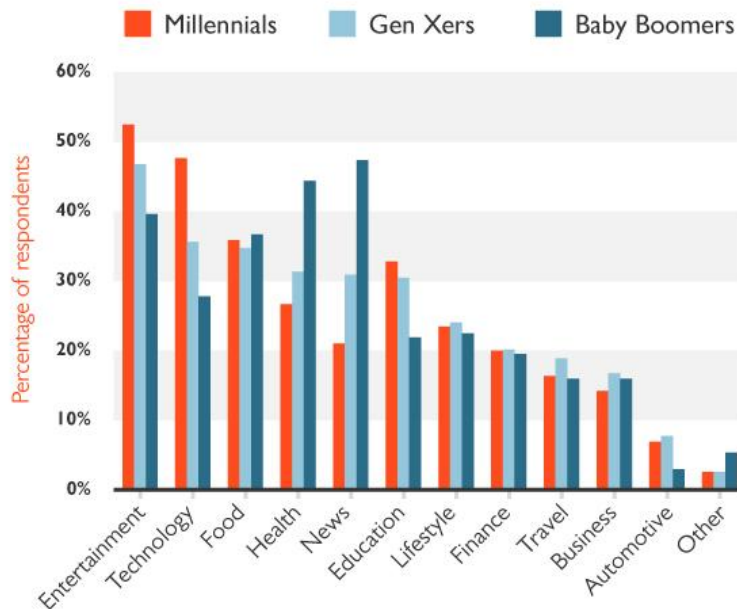
For example, Millennials are slightly more involved than both Gen Xers and Baby Boomers in three verticals: entertainment, technology, and education. **And Baby Boomers are engaged in health and news verticals significantly more than any other generation.**

Gen Xers are involved in five verticals more than any other generation – lifestyle, finance, travel, business, and automotive – although their lead is only a fraction of a percentage point more in a few instances.

A low-performing vertical for all generations? **Less than 10 percent of each generation engages in the automotive vertical.**

Tip: Pinpoint your target audience in order to help you determine which verticals to focus on during your promotions cycle.

In which 3 verticals are you most often engaged?



Finding: Preference for the Positive

“If it bleeds, it leads.” It’s a classic rule for any journalist, but is it truly what your audience wants? Our research indicates otherwise, with **respondents preferring to read good news over more depressing stories.**

Over 60 percent of each generation believe words such as “amazement,” “admiration,” and “joy” describe how they feel most often for the majority of the content they consume.

In contrast, **less than 20 percent of each generation** identifies feelings of “apprehension,” “sadness,” “anger,” or “disgust” with their preferred content.

An interesting note: Baby Boomers and Millennials share an affinity for news that elicits feelings of “surprise” and “amazement” while **Gen Xers prefer content they can “admire” or “trust.”**

Tip: If you want your content to resonate with multiple generations, make sure its main takeaway is something more lighthearted than disheartening.



By comparing how **different generations consume content** across a variety of platforms, channels, and devices, you can **focus your outreach efforts** to connect with the majority of your target and **shift your digital strategy when necessary** to maximize reach.



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