

BRANDING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION:

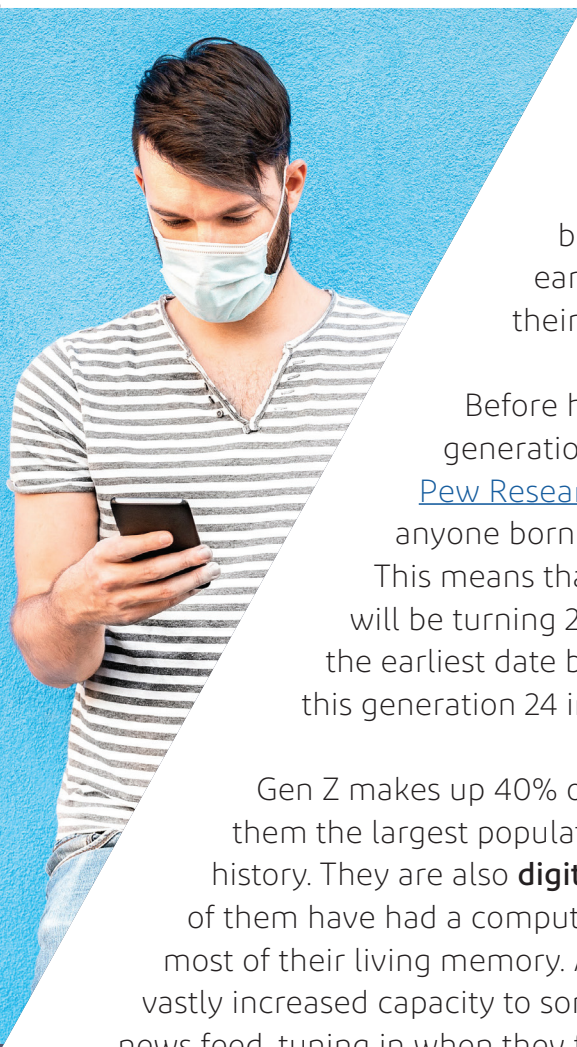
Marketing Strategies to Capture **GEN Z's** Attention



**Travel
Media**
GROUP

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Marketing Strategies to Capture Gen Z's Attention



Generation Z is a growing generation of consumers and an essential pool of guests for hotels to capture. Hoteliers need to be aware of how to market their business to attract this oncoming wave of consumers and plan for how to earn their loyalty and make them repeat guests. These travelers will be shaping the hospitality industry for the next decade. The earlier hoteliers can adapt their marketing strategy to get their attention, the greater the benefit will be down the road.

Before hoteliers can begin devising market strategies for this generation, it's important to define who it encompasses. The [Pew Research Center has announced](#) that they will consider anyone born between 1997 and 2012 part of Generation Z. This means that as of 2020, the oldest members of Gen Z will be turning 23. Other places such as [Business Insider](#) shift the earliest date back to 1996, however, making the oldest in this generation 24 in 2020.

Gen Z makes up 40% of the consumer population, making them the largest population of consumers in modern history. They are also **digital natives**, meaning that most of them have had a computer or access to the internet for most of their living memory. As digital natives, Gen Z has a vastly increased capacity to sort and filter information on a news feed, tuning in when they find something relevant to them, and scrolling past anything irrelevant.

In order for your hotel to stand out to these up-and-coming consumers, you have to take a genuine approach in marketing your property. Honesty, transparency, personality, and storytelling are aspects that your Gen Z guests appreciate seeing from brands posting on social media.



Establishing Values and Your Mission

Gen Z knows the power of their purchases.



A critical thing to understand about Generation Z is that they know the power of their purchases. Gen Z wants to put their money behind a company whose values they stand behind – something that was less of a focus for guests in the past. This is why it's crucial to make your hotel's mission crystal clear from the moment consumers load your profile.

Putting your values forward will resonate with guests whose views mirror your own, building an immediate sense of brand trust. For Gen Z as consumers, brand trust is second *only* to price. Gen Z wants to believe their hard-earned money will go to a business that will give back to their community somehow. Almost half of Gen Z believes that brands have a social responsibility and are three times as likely to believe that brands have a significant role in changing society.

Your hotel should establish what you believe in, and your content marketing should reflect that on every level because Gen Z expects you to have transparency and accountability. Gen Z is more likely to investigate all areas of a brand before committing to a purchase, and they will notice if your values are not upheld. If you make a promise to give back to the community and don't follow through, Gen Z will take note, and they'll capture that dishonesty and share it with their friends and families through their social channels. As a hotelier, this negative word of mouth will severely impact your reputation online – and you won't have much chance to respond right away, as you may not even be notified when the post goes up.

The Business of Belonging



Consider the images you're using – are you showing diverse families?

Your marketing strategy should be inclusive; practicing the business of belonging will only help you shine in the eyes of Generation Z. As a generation that has [a loneliness rate of 10% higher](#) than those before them, they crave a sense of community in their online spaces. To curate a loyal community, you may need to adjust your messaging to send the right message.

What does that mean? Every social media post your hotel shares sends a message to travelers, which they will interpret as either “you belong here” or “you don’t belong here.” Consider the images you’re using – are you showing diverse families? Are you using [inclusive language](#)? If you’ve posted a video, does it have subtitles or a transcript in the caption? Even seemingly small efforts like including image descriptions or captions in an additional language can significantly impact who feels like they belong at your hotel.

Ensuring that Generation Z feels like they belong at your hotel will help any of your promotional content feel more inviting, encouraging this young group of travelers to feel more inspired and comfortable with booking your property. However, there’s more you can do to help Gen Z travelers consider your hotel a go-to destination, and it starts with developing a clear voice.

How to Embrace Personality

Much of the advice that arises from how hotels and brands can embrace personality starts with learning how to be genuine. Trends come and go quickly, and many brands may have just been getting their footing with the minimalist content approach that appealed widely to millennials. However, Gen Z prefers bold content from brands unafraid to make waves. Even some levity in your captions can go a long way for this younger crowd of travelers.

As a generation who is exposed to over 10,000 marketing messages in a single day of being online, your hotel will need to put out diverse, unique content in order to capture their interest. In many cases, brands will try to use memes to connect with their audience. While [Sprout Social](#) has shared a useful resource for how to use memes and why they benefit brands, memes should be posted with caution. If you haven't built up your brand's voice to be more playful, then a meme could feel out of place or even confuse members of your audience that aren't as internet-savvy. Understanding your audience's sense of humor will help guide whether or not using trending internet content like memes is right for your hotel.

Embracing personality in your social posts starts with deciding on your hotel's unique voice. Generation Z likes to feel included and heard. The more genuine you can be in developing your hotel's story, the more likely you are to earn valuable engagement from Generation Z.

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Creating Content That Tells a Story

It all begins with understanding what content tells a story about your hotel.



With a finely-honed ability to filter information, Generation Z affords advertisers just **8 seconds** to convince them to continue paying attention. How can hoteliers maximize engagement with such a short amount of time to capture interest in the first place? It all begins with understanding what content tells a story about your hotel. When developing your social media content, try asking yourself the following questions:

- Is my hotel in a unique location?
- Is there a fun fact I can share about my hotel?
- What is our founding story?
- What stories from employees, visitors, or local partners align with our mission?
- What sets us apart from our competitors?

Once you establish the “what,” you’ll be able to move into the “how.” Each social media platform [demands a specific content type](#) to gain maximum engagement. When considering how you want to share aspects of your hotel, you’ll have to keep in mind what content performs best per platform.



On **Facebook**, videos are the best way to grab a viewer’s attention quickly and keep it. Live videos tend to get the most engagement; however, not many hoteliers have the time to give a live tour of their property. Photos are a great way to capture guest interest, and short, memorable captions will help encourage your audience to engage.



On **Twitter**, brevity is everything, as you only have 280 characters to retain users’ attention. Image-driven content is best, though according to [the American Press Institute](#), two primary reasons users go to Twitter are related to keeping up with the news. Posting local news related to your hotel on Twitter is an excellent way to gain interest. Following up this content with eye-catching visuals will further inspire travelers to book.



On **Instagram**, users are driven to profiles with hi-res, beautiful photography, or those that post inspirational quotes. Instagram is the ideal place for you to share positive reviews left by your guests. One important thing to note is that users cannot click links shared from your captions, so using link-shortening tools is one best practice. Instagram also has Stories, a way to make temporary posts for 24 hours that can include gifs, text, and a “swipe up” option to send users to a booking link or website for further information.



On **Pinterest**, image-driven inspiration is crucial for hooking potential guests onto your property. Attaching attractive images to booking links or your hotel’s [vanity website](#) can be a great way to ensure they’re thinking of your hotel when it’s time to make a reservation.

Crossing the generational gap with new marketing strategies can feel overwhelming at first. Understanding your target audience is critical to success, and learning about the expectations from the upcoming generation can help you build a strong content schedule. You’ll capture – and keep – the attention of younger travelers who want to see what your hotel has to offer.

**Get started today by visiting
trvl.media/social**



Sources

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