



Marketing to Generation X: six do's and don'ts

It's been over two decades since older members of the Gen X demographic entered the workforce. Now aged 35 to 51, this generation is moving in to places that the Baby Boom generation leaves behind. Like all generations, this one is influenced by key events that occurred during their lifetime. The Berlin wall came down, personal computers became mainstream, Three Mile Island melted and energy supplies were in crisis.

This two-part series published by [BizzyWeb](#) in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a fascinating look at what clicks with Gen X and what doesn't. The company specialises in web design, digital and email marketing and brand strategy. CEO, Dave Meyer is an award-winning communication professional with over 24 years experience in the profession and a full roster of clients happy to "Generate buzz without getting stung." Learn six dos and don'ts about marketing to Gen X below.

Poor Generation X. Wedged between the Baby Boomers and Millennials, Generation X frequently gets swept to the side. Which is a shame, because Gen Xers are the managers and entrepreneurs. In other words? They're the decision-makers.

These folks, aged 35-51, have a monumental influence on the market that isn't being tapped

into. Millennials are the trendy new market and Baby Boomers are the established audience, but Gen Xers are where the money is. Generation X may only be the third-largest generation, but they have the [largest spending power at 31% of all income dollars](#). Especially if you're a B2B business, you need to speak to Generation X – they're the ones who decide whether or not to purchase.

Marketing to Generation X is a bit tricky – most Xers grew up in the 80s/90s and are the line between the pre-and-post-digital world. What do you need to know to reach this powerful group?

DO: Provide lots of information and context

More so than any other generation, Gen Xers crave context. They lead the pack in terms of who writes and consumes reviews online. Before making a purchasing decision, they dig into every available resource they can find. Because Generation X straddles the line between digital and traditional media, Gen Xers look both online and offline to inform their purchasing decisions. Win them over with the information they need and they'll be loyal customers. According to a [study by eMarketer.com](#), almost 50% of Gen Xers are brand loyal. Bottom line? Give them plenty of information and you'll likely get a repeat customer in return.

DON'T: Beat around the bush

Gen Xers grew up in the angst-filled 90s

and have an excellent ability to sniff out BS. Plus, a majority of Gen Xers are managers or entrepreneurs and have the experience to call you to task. Give them the information they crave, but be authentic. Gen Xers understand value and they want to know what you can do for them. They have the money to spend, but they won't drop a cent unless they know it's a good investment. Skip the sales speak and be frank with them – they'll appreciate the honesty.

DO: Keep it personal

Most Gen Xers are now parents, and Generation X consumes media that reflects their values. [Nielsen](#) reports that both men and women of Generation X are drawn to TV Advertisements that showcase everyday life and real-world situations. Generation X women in particular enjoy sentimental ads that focus on family life. Appeal to Gen Xers by rooting conversations in real-world possibilities.

How can your product/service improve their life, or the lives of their children? Don't be afraid to sprinkle in some narrative selling – Gen Xers like to hear stories.

DON'T: Ignore social media

Millennials are often seen as the social-media obsessed generation, but Gen Xers are just as likely to engage with brands on social media. In fact, in some cases they are more likely to use social media. Gen Xers [on average spend more time on their mobile devices](#) using Facebook than Millennials or Baby Boomers. And when they use social media, they are [75% more likely](#)

[to talk about tech news and products/apps](#) than Millennials and Boomers. When marketing to Generation X, social media needs to be a part of your strategy.

DO: Use video

It's true: Gen Xers love video. They watch upwards of [32 hours of TV a week](#) and [45.8 Million Gen Xers watch digital videos](#). Video is a fantastic way to showcase your products/services in a creative, personal way. Appeal to Generation X with a real-world narrative, and seal the deal by outlining clear values.

DON'T: Send them to a bad website

Now you know that Gen Xers demand information, like personal touches and are active web users. Point them to an outdated, clunky or incomplete website and they'll turn right around and never look back. [73% of Gen Xers](#) made at least one online purchase in 2015 and eMarketer.com estimates that [75% will make at least one online purchase](#) in 2016. They are willing to shop online. Is your website ready for them?

Interested in tips about how to market to Millennials? Check out Jena's post, "[10 Commandments for Millennial Marketing](#)."



Jena Felsheim

Jena Felsheim is a Content Specialist at BizzyWeb with four years of marketing experience. She has worked in the higher education, non-profit and hospitality industries.

Her areas of specialty are social media marketing, content writing and email marketing. Jena holds a Magna Cum Laude Bachelor of Arts from Hamline University.