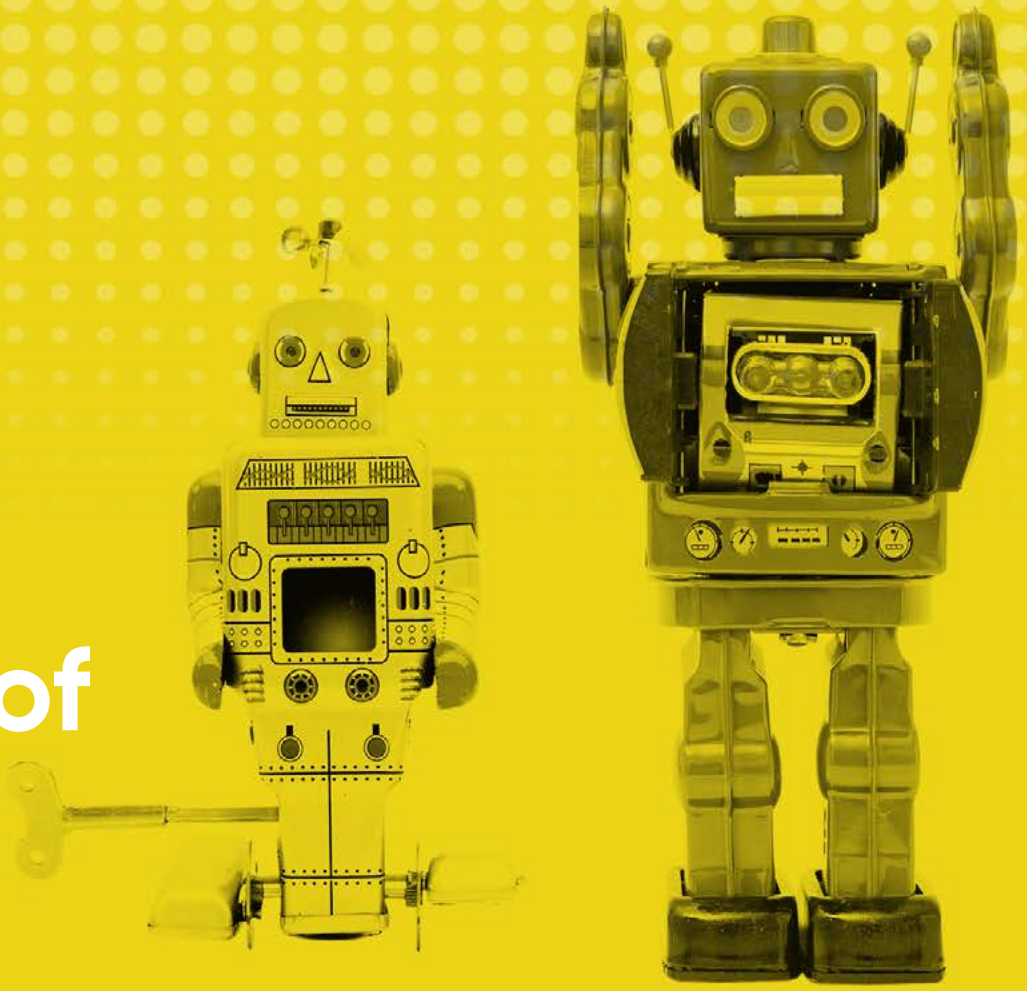
From AI to Gen Z: How to future-proof your business



Contents

- Introduction 3

Tomorrow's consumers **4**

- Gen Z vs Millennials 5

Engaging your audience **6**

- Influencer marketing 7
- User-generated content 8
- Native marketing 12

Future opportunites **14**

- Social media 15
- Google 18
- Artifical intelligence 22
- How can reviews help to future-proof my business? 24
- Are you ready to future-proof your business? 26

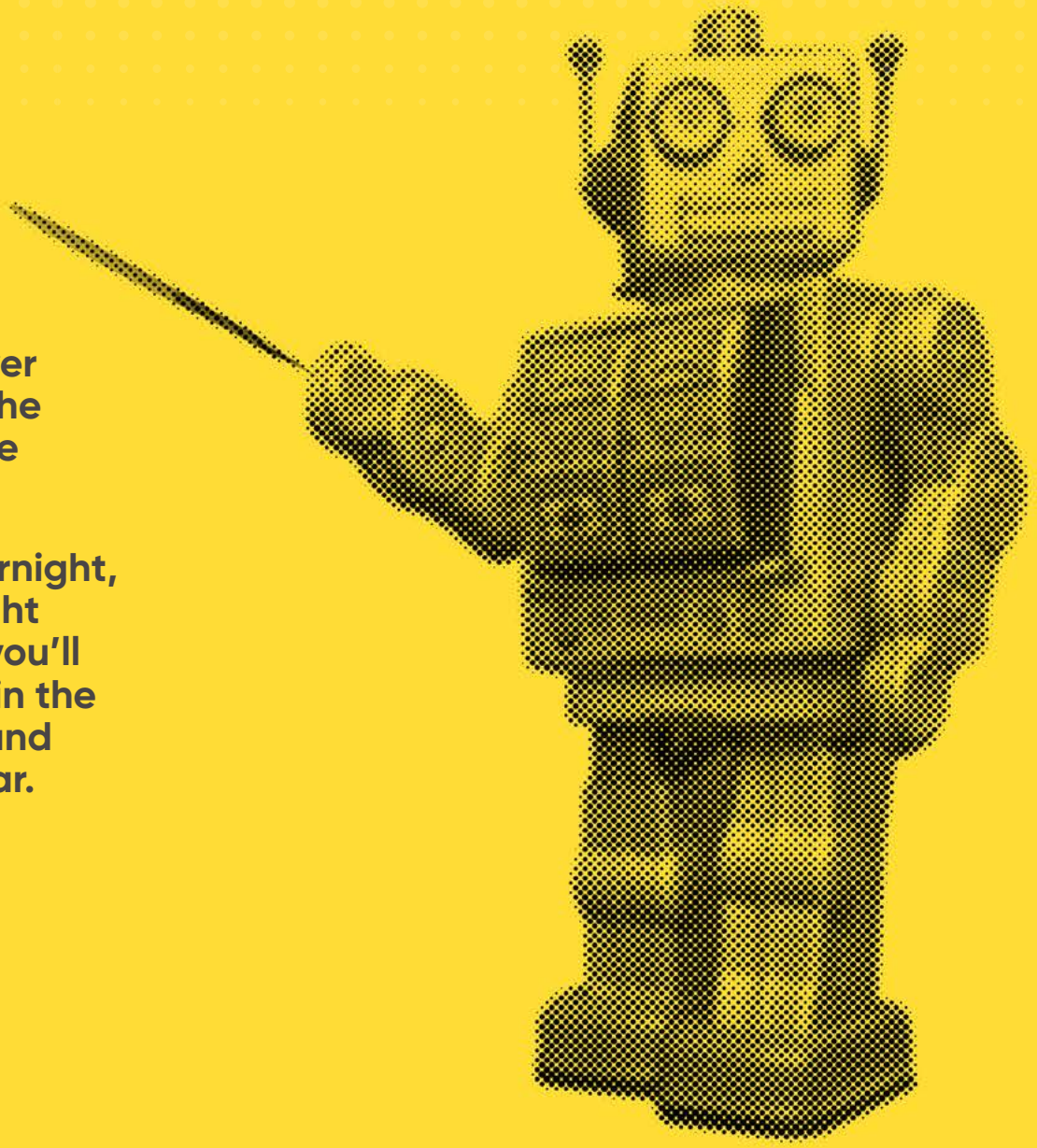


What you'll learn

No matter what industry you're in, nothing ever stands still. With a new type of customer on the horizon, you need to be prepared for what the future has in store.

We can't help future-proof your business overnight, but we can give you the knowledge and insight you need to start the process. In this eBook, you'll learn who you should be targeting (now and in the future), how you can engage that audience and the opportunities that should be on your radar.

Let's get started!





TOMORROW'S CONSUMERS

Who you'll be selling to

The first step to future-proofing your business is understanding your present and future audiences. You've probably read a fair few articles about Millennials and Gen Z, but there's a lot of misinformation out there. People often mistake the two, but they have less in common than you'd think! Here are some of the most obvious differences you need to consider.

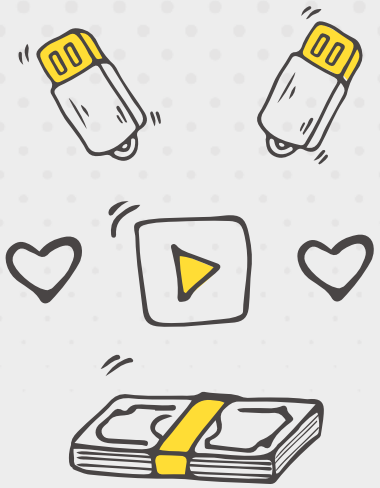


Millennials

(born between 1981 and 1996)

- Grew up with dial-up internet, non-smartphones and desktop computers
- Grew up in a healthy economy
- Brand loyal
- Use social media primarily to stay in touch with friends
- Pay close attention to online reviews
- Prefer to buy online







Gen Z

(born between 1997 and 2010)

- Have never known a world without the internet and mobile technology
- Less brand-focused, more trend-focused
- Grew up during a recession
- Conscious about sharing too much personal information
- Use social media to access fun, entertaining content
- Happy to share their opinions online



45% of Millennials prefer to buy online because they can compare products and prices - **BOXT**



40% of Gen Z shoppers give feedback often, compared with **35%** of Millennials **- Accenture**

ENGAGING YOUR AUDIENCE

So, you know who you are (or will be) targeting, but how do you get them to engage with your brand? It's time to tap into some top techniques for marketing to Millennials and Gen Z.

Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing is increasing in popularity. In case you're not familiar with the term, it involves partnering with someone who has a strong social media presence and is relevant to your audience, and then using them to endorse your brand.

Brands have been using celebrities to promote their products for years, but the growth of social media has redefined the notion of celebrity, and now anyone with a strong enough voice has the platform to build up a powerful and valuable following.



> "Millennials hold more confidence in influencers promoting brands than the brands themselves"
>
> - Fullscreen



What should I consider before I kick off my campaign with an influencer?

Despite the many benefits of influencer marketing, there are some things you need to think about before you get started:

The right fit

Take some time to research influencers. You'll need to find an influencer who is not only speaking to your target audience but is also aligned with the ethos and values of your brand.

Authenticity

Today's consumers are savvy and can be cynical when they know that influencers are working in collaboration with a brand. Use influencers who have a genuine love for your type of product or service, so that the content is as natural and authentic as possible.

Disclosure

All consumers want transparency, and this is no different when it comes to influencer marketing. Put guidelines in place to ensure that paid promotions are disclosed, and both the brand and influencer are open and honest about their partnerships.

What's the future of influencer marketing?

The rise of the micro-influencer

As the use of influencers becomes more popular, brands are eager to experiment with their collaborations. Enter the micro-influencer.



Micro-influencers have between 1,000 and 100,000 followers and are considered to be experts in their respective categories. Not only do they generate high engagement, they're considerably more cost-effective than influencers with millions of followers.

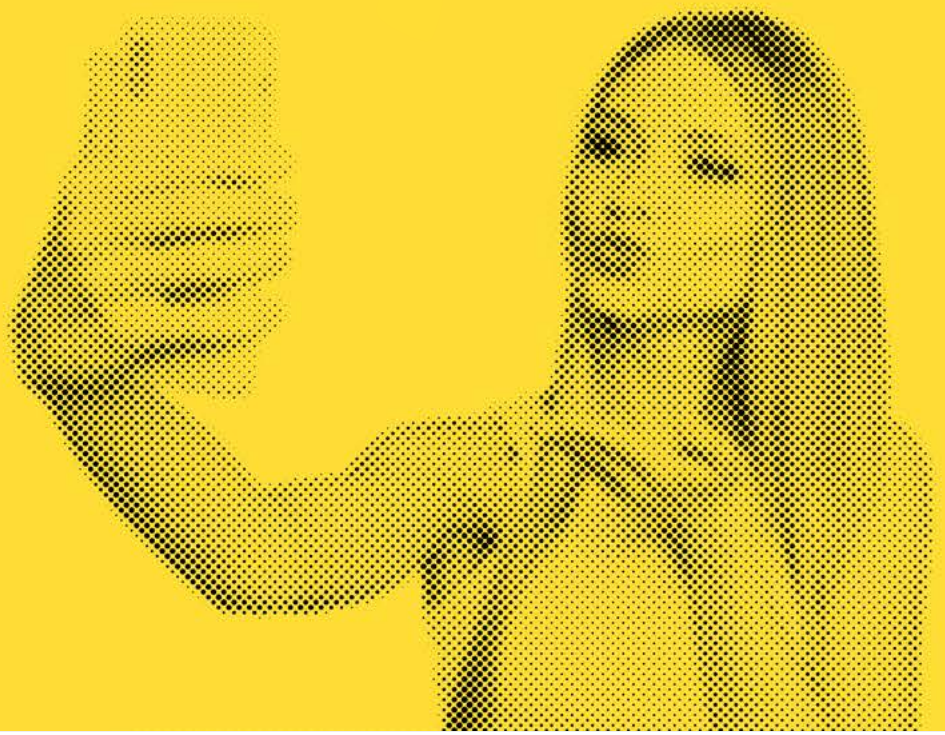
Unlike so-called 'celebrity influencers' with huge online followings, micro-influencers can appear much more relatable, so their opinions are seen as more trustworthy.

*Source: Cisco

**Source: Feefo 2018 Consumer Report

Creative content

Predictions show that video will represent 80% of all internet traffic by 2021*, so be prepared to get creative. Making video a part of your digital marketing strategy is a great way of grabbing your audiences' attention and gives influencers a platform to express exactly how they feel about your brand.



User-generated content

The world is switching on to the marketing gimmicks and picture-perfect images being used by brands to sell their products.

People are crying out for authentic, realistic depictions of products they can trust, and user-generated content might just be the answer. As simple as it sounds – encouraging your customers to create your marketing content is a great way to engage with your audience. Whether it's through sharing photos, videos or reviews, any of your customers can become part of your brand's mission, creating a loyal following and a stream of engaging content that future customers can buy into.



Why should I consider UGC for my business?

With Millennials and those ever-elusive kids from Gen Z spending their time flitting between devices and social media platforms, you need content that'll catch their eye and make them give a damn about what you've got to say.

UGC's greatest asset is that it's immediately relatable. Simply seeing similar people using and talking about a product resonates with a younger generation in a way that more traditional marketing techniques don't.



A smart UGC strategy can help your business:

- Increase brand loyalty with existing customers
- See higher brand engagement with UGC-created video
- Improve click-through rates by incorporating UGC in your digital ads

How can I use user-generated content in my marketing?

94% of consumers check reviews when looking for a product or service

– Feefo 2018 Consumer Report

Did you know?

47% of millennials trust UGC, whilst only **25%** trust content created by brands

– Olapic

Customer reviews

Collecting feedback from your customers is one of the simplest, but most effective forms of UGC and shows you're a brand that is willing to listen to and engage with its audience. The voice of your customer is an incredibly powerful tool to wield, as it reinforces your own messaging with independent opinions your customers can trust.

Exclusive competitions

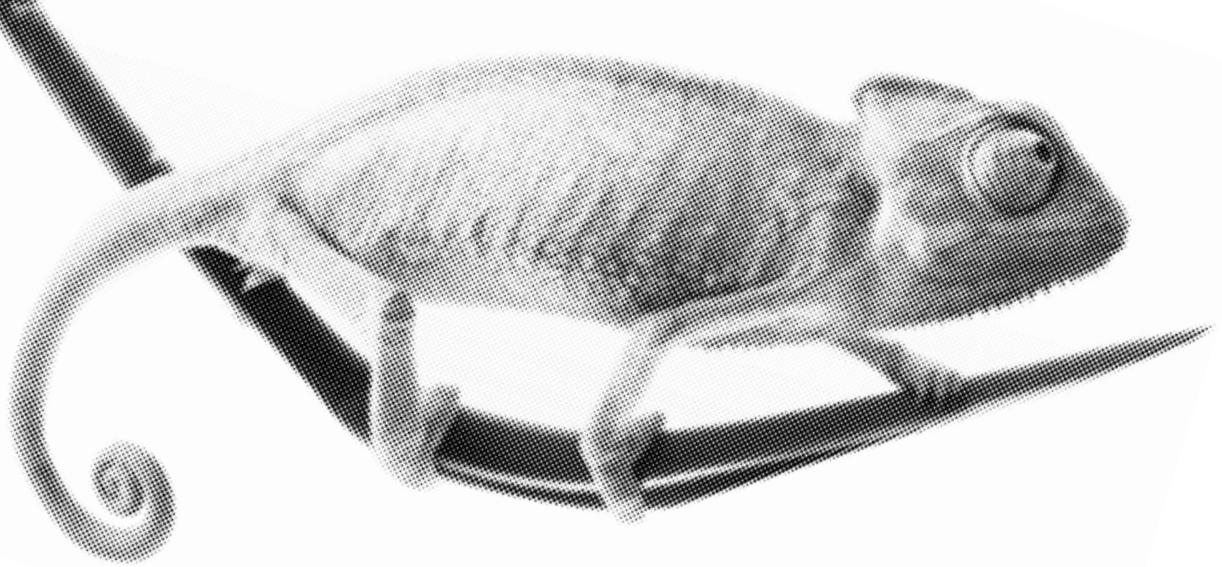
If you're looking for an easy way to kick-start your UGC strategy, then running a competition is your best bet. People love a freebie and enticing them in with the opportunity to win an exclusive prize won't cost your company a lot. It's a great way to create a buzz around your brand and encourage people to share pictures and videos you can use in future marketing efforts.

Social media

Social media is all about sharing experiences, so what better place to run a killer UGC campaign? Getting creative with custom hashtags or running fun challenges that match your brand's values is a brilliant way to encourage your audience to send you photos or videos of their experience with your product. As social media evolves, so will the opportunities to create increasingly engaging UCG campaigns.

Native marketing

Native marketing is inescapable, and experts believe it's going to play a huge part in shaping the future of digital marketing. Native marketing is seamless and unobtrusive paid advertising which, at first glance, doesn't look like advertising. Designed to fit perfectly with the content that surrounds it, native marketing could take the form of sponsored Instagram posts, promoted tweets, or even branded playlists on Spotify.



Should my brand go native?

In today's digital world, native marketing is not only enabling businesses to keep up with the ever-changing browsing behaviour of their consumers, it's also helping to put their content in front of the right people by targeting the most relevant audiences.

As consumers become less receptive to invasive advertising and their attention is harder to attract, brands are shifting their budgets towards the native approach.

*Source: Sharethrough

Businesses are quickly discovering the many benefits of these relevant, integrated ads:

→ Better performing ads

Research shows that **consumers look at native ads 53% more frequently than banner ads.*** Native ads are also particularly effective on mobile devices

→ Works across all channels

Native advertising isn't platform dependent, so it's ideal for multi-channel marketing

→ Good user experience

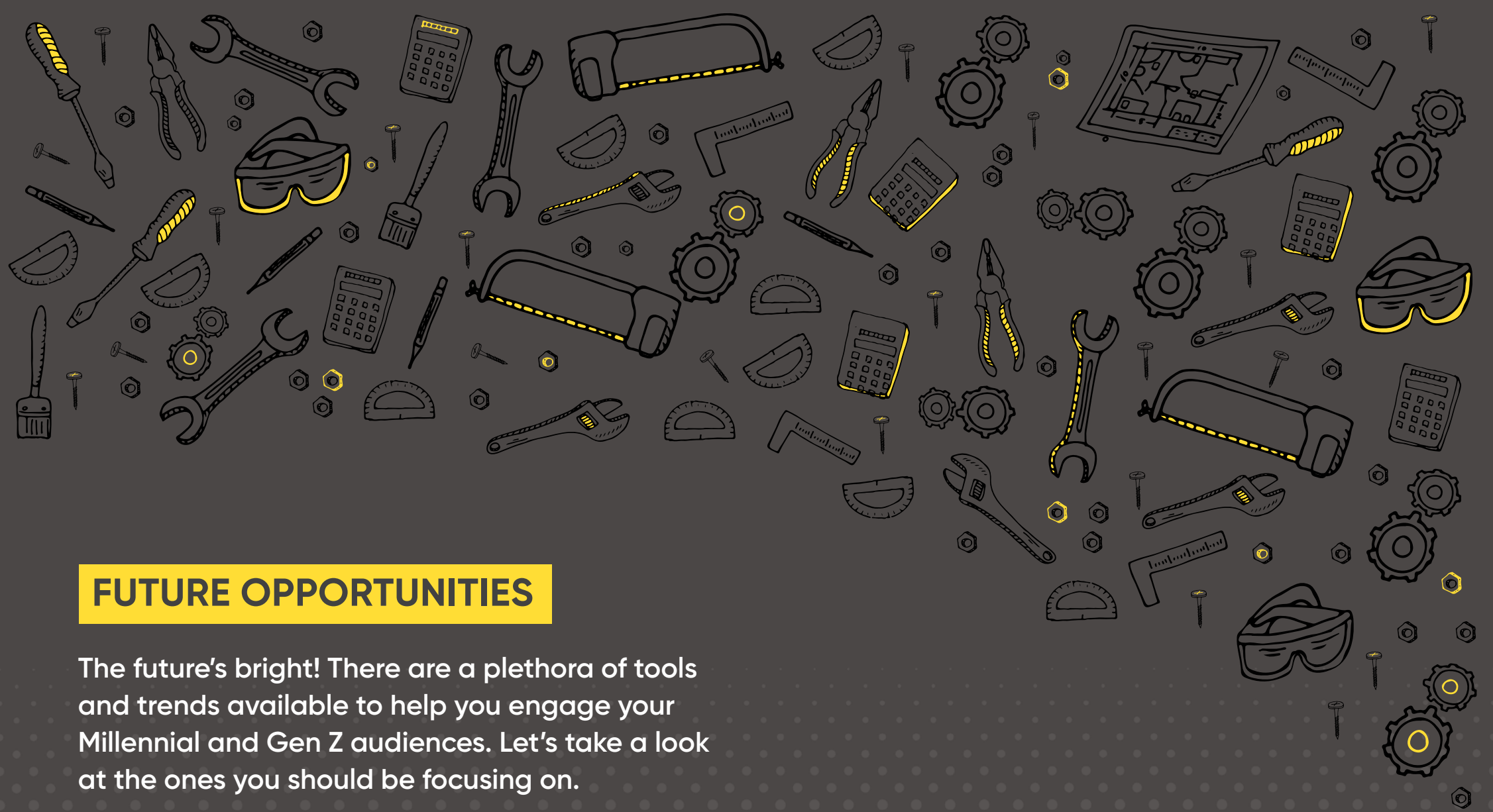
Unobtrusive content means a pleasant user experience

How do I get started?

So, you want to use native marketing as part of your next campaign? Here's how to get cracking:

- Identify the channels you want to appear on and consider how your content will appear on mobile as well as desktop
- It's all about quality when it comes to native marketing! Go above and beyond to create something that simply can't be ignored
- Once you have your ideas, look at current trending content to see how you can join the conversation
- Start with infographics. They're ideal for native marketing – digestible and entertaining!
- Consider video content. Videos can be placed on a number of social networks and aren't just engaging, they're also highly shareable





FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

The future's bright! There are a plethora of tools and trends available to help you engage your Millennial and Gen Z audiences. Let's take a look at the ones you should be focusing on.

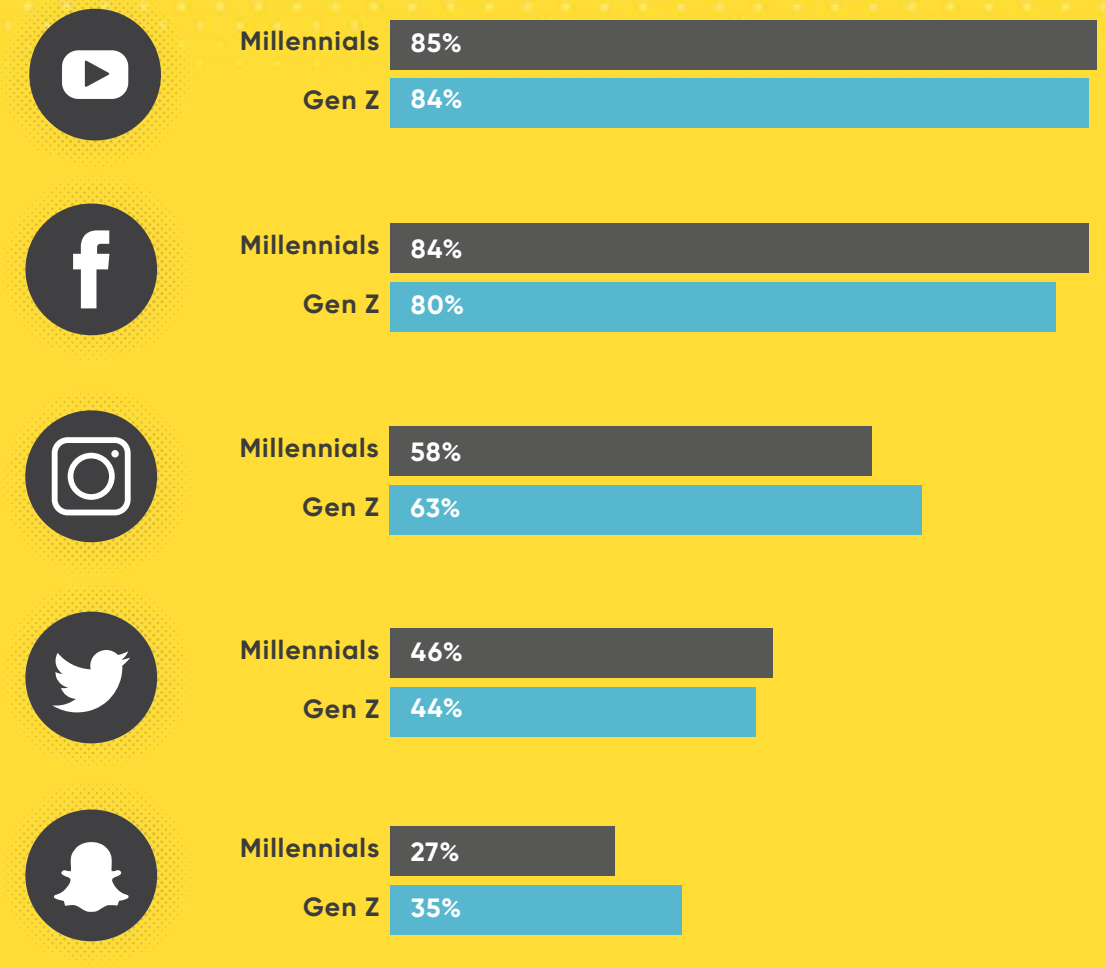
Social media

Being present on social media is no longer an option, it's a must. Shoppers expect you to be active and contactable via various channels, but which social platforms should you focus on?

Don't follow the crowd

Of course, there's little point in investing lots of time and money into Snapchat if it's not right for your brand, just because it's popular with younger audiences. Focus on the platforms which are right for you and attract your target audience.

Most popular social media platforms amongst Gen Z and Millennials



Source: Wearesocial

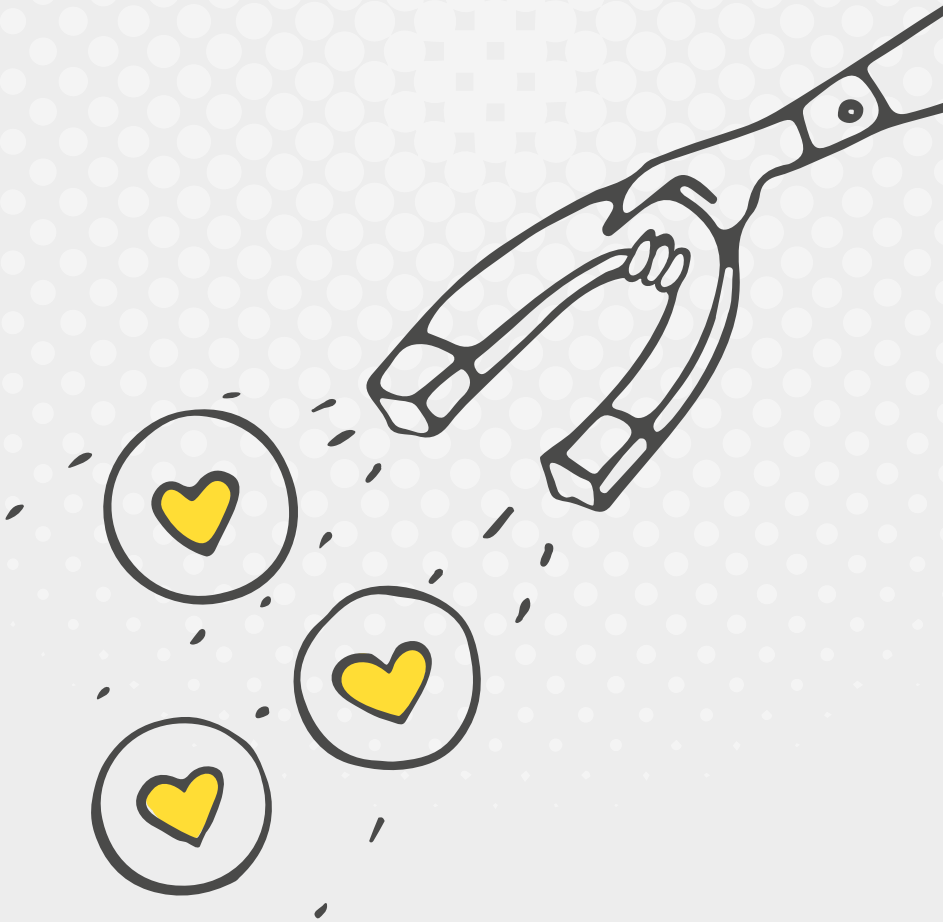
Are Gen Z logging off?

Growing up in an always-online, social media-heavy world has taken a toll on Gen Z. To escape the noise, they're filtering the content they see and taking themselves offline. **34% of Gen Z say they've quit social media for good and 64% are taking a break***, but it's not all bad news.

Gen Z still view social platforms as relevant and worthy of investment; **57% have purchased a product they saw because of an influencer** or celebrity, while just **23% have been driven to make a purchase following a recommendation** from a friend or follower.

* Source: All stats on this page are from Hill Holliday

How can you hang onto your Gen Z followers?



Be brief:

41% of Gen Z believe they are wasting too much time on social media, so get to the point quickly!

Keep it positive:

35% feel there is too much negativity on social media

Create engaging content:

26% say they aren't interested in the content being published on social media

Google

Are you really making the most of your online presence?

Having a kick-ass digital strategy is going to be crucial for businesses going forward. Millennials are using Google to find everything from local restaurants to a new job, so getting to grips with the world's largest search engine is a must.

To find out more, **download our Google DIY Tool Kit**



How can I use Google to future-proof my business?

- Verify your company through Google My Business
- Optimise your website for mobile
- Create targeted pay-per-click campaigns through Google Ads
- Localise your content to start appearing in ‘near me’ searches
- Master your SEO using Google Webmaster
- Sync up your Google reviews to give your customers a voice



Did you know?

84% of people say real reviews from customers are more important as a source of recommendations than those from friends and family

– Feefo 2018 Consumer Report

Are Google stars important?

In a word: Yes! Paid Google ads that include a seller rating can be a great way to improve your click-through rate. Having a strong star rating alongside your advert boosts shoppers' confidence in your brand – so make sure you're doing everything you can to improve your chance of having them appear.



How much should I be spending on PPC campaigns?

Committing a portion of your marketing budget to PPC will no longer be a choice for companies who want to stay ahead of the game, but how much you spend is entirely dependent on the nature of your business. Industry, company size and time commitments are just a few of the things that you need to factor in when calculating a suitable PPC budget. Investing time and resources into creating smarter campaigns and intelligent keyword research will reduce unnecessary ad spend and optimise your PPC performance to maximise ROI.



There are several requirements you need to meet for seller ratings to appear:

- A Google Ads campaign
- Collecting reviews through a source trusted by Google, such as Feefo
- A minimum of 100 unique reviews collected in the past 12 months
- An overall star rating of 3.5 or higher

If you're already collecting reviews with Feefo, get in touch with our PPC experts for a free audit and find out how we can get you on the road to PPC success. Email **PPC@feefo.com**

Artificial intelligence

Wherever you look, artificial intelligence is being adapted to make industries quicker and smarter. Tech trends often come and go without much lasting impact, but the robots have arrived and they're here to stay.

How can my industry use AI to become future-proof?

Retail

- Create tailored shopping experiences
- Predict consumer trends and behaviour
- Automate customer service with chatbots / inventory management

Recruitment

- Automate CV screening
- Build ideal candidate profiles
- Personalise job recommendations

Finance

- Improve security and fraud detection
- Tailor financial planning and advice
- Automate insurance underwriting



Travel

- Deliver tailored, data-driven hotel suggestions
- Automate travel assistants
- Offer dynamic room pricing

Automotive

- Track and analyse real-time driver behaviour
- Provide driverless and driver-assist cars
- Build bespoke finance packages

Property

- Predict house value variations
- Offer smart homes
- Personalise home and rental recommendations

Will AI replace my staff?

It doesn't have to. When used at its most effective, AI works alongside your existing team. Automation tools can take on more menial and time-consuming tasks, freeing up your employees to put their skills to better use on more demanding areas of the business.

How costly is adopting AI solutions?

Before investing any money, think carefully about what issues are affecting your business and shop around for the solution that works best for you. There are plenty of off-the-shelf products that can get you up and running straight away, but if you've got a little more cash at your disposal, then developing your own bespoke technology isn't out of the question.



> By 2021, investment in AI solutions will amount to $52.2 billion (£39.5 billion) in global spend.
>
> - IDC

How can reviews help to future-proof my business?

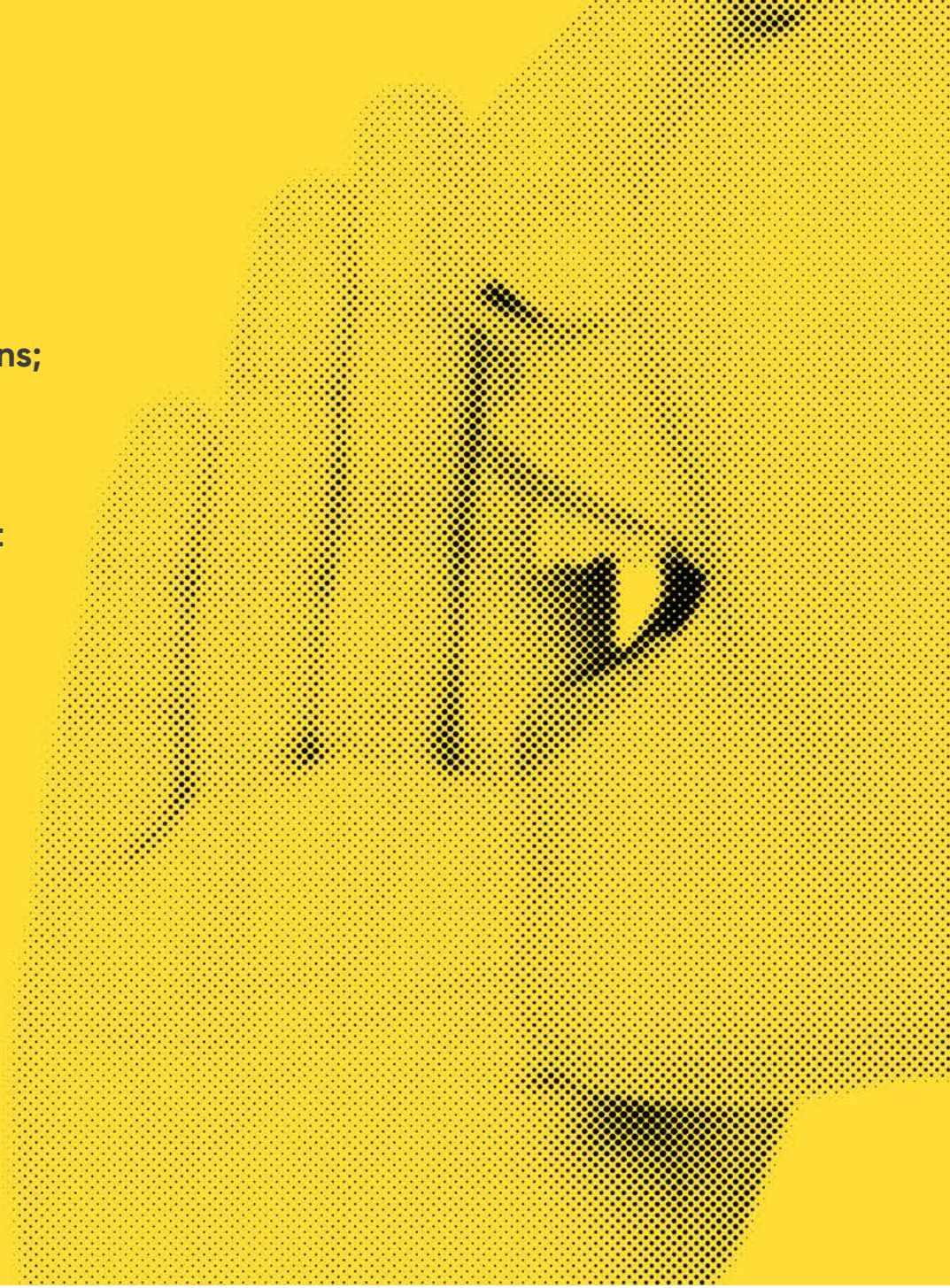
Both Gen Z and Millennials care about sharing their opinions; 40% of Gen Z shoppers leave feedback often, compared with 35% of Millennials*. Collecting (and responding to) this feedback doesn't just help make your audience feel appreciated, it can also increase trust in your brand, boost sales and give you valuable data insight!

Understand your customers

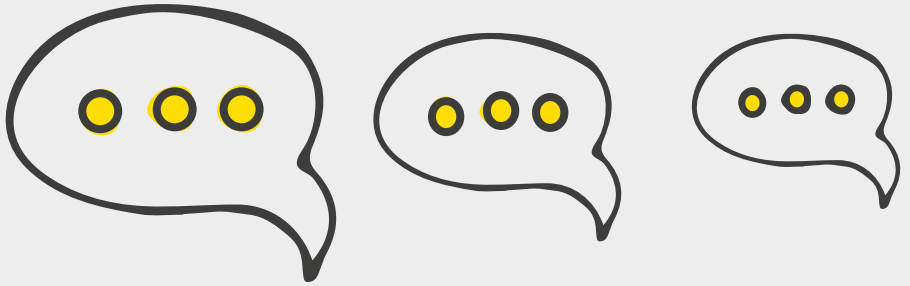
By listening to your customers' feedback, you can learn what they like and dislike about your brand, service, products and so much more! This helps you build up a better picture of who your audience is and what they want from your business and identify the topics and trends which matter to them most. Use this information to better tailor your marketing and customer experience.

Find out more about how Performance Profiling can help you make smarter business decisions

*Source: Accentre



How can I encourage my customers to leave feedback?



These days, when it comes to communicating with your customers, a 'one size fits all' approach just won't do. Adding a personal touch to the way you collect your feedback can make all the difference to your response rates – and more responses means more opportunity to make improvements to your business.

> Feefo's **Campaign Manager Tool** allows you to create multiple campaigns for different audiences at different stages of their journey.

Here's our advice on how to tailor your communications to give your consumers the personalised experience they're looking for:

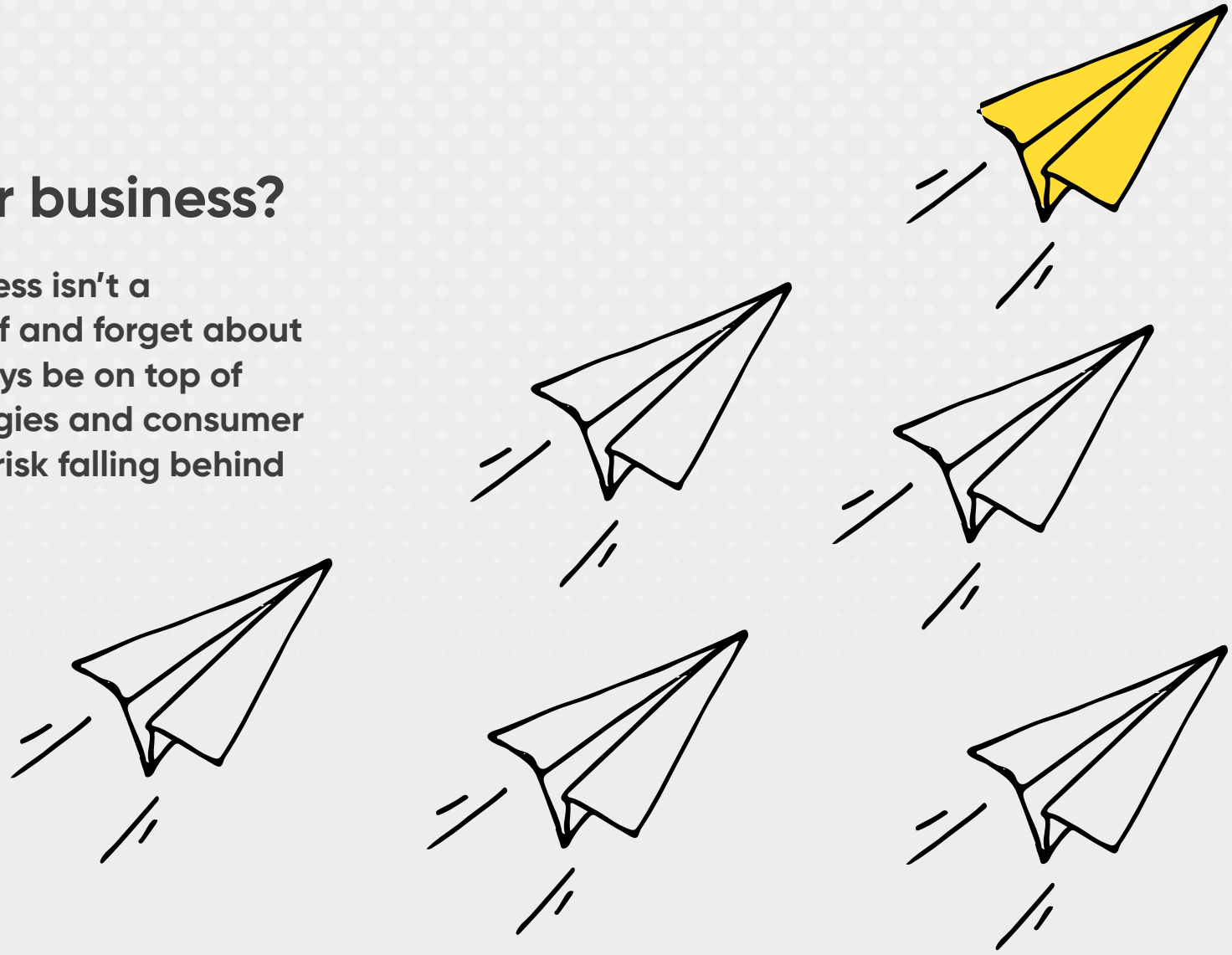
- **Customise your feedback request emails and feedback forms**
  Nothing gets deleted quicker than an email that's completely irrelevant with a dull subject line. Inject your brand's personality into the emails and tailor each field to make the request personal and relevant to your consumer and their purchase.

- **Use multiple campaigns**
  No customer journey is the same as another. Creating multiple campaigns to target different types of customer will give you the most relevant insights and help you to provide the best customer journey.

- **Use insights to develop targeted ad campaigns**
  Analysing reviews with AI technology can help you to identify your customers and what they care most about. These valuable insights enable you to develop targeted ad campaigns for each group, or even individual, so you can then adapt the tone of voice and messaging to suit who you're speaking to and make a real connection.

Are you ready to future-proof your business?

Future-proofing your business isn't a one-off task you can tick off and forget about for a while; it's vital to always be on top of upcoming trends, technologies and consumer audiences. Otherwise, you risk falling behind your competitors.



Here's what you need to do to start future-proofing your business:

- [ ] Understand who your audience is going to be
- [ ] Research potential influencers and start planning open and honest partnerships
- [ ] Encourage your customers to get involved with your brand
- [ ] Avoid invasive advertising and go native
- [ ] Don't be afraid to be an early adopter when it comes to social media
- [ ] Google is your friend! Make sure you're seen in search engine results
- [ ] Invest in AI to optimise your business processes
- [ ] Give Feefo a call to find out what genuine reviews can do for you business



Fancy a chat?

To find out more about Feefo, get in touch and our friendly team will be happy to help.



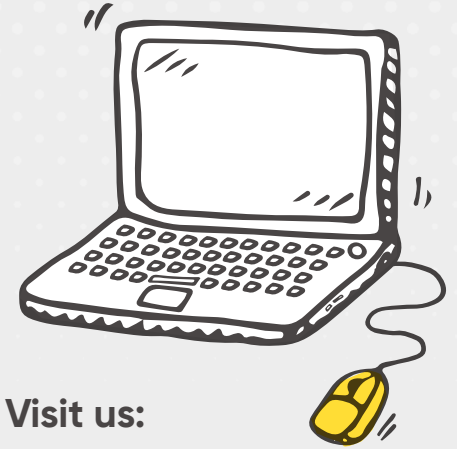
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