

# [Effects of facebook brand marketing on millennials](https://assignbuster.com/effects-of-facebook-brand-marketing-on-millennials/)

#### Exploringthe Effects of Brand Marketing via Facebook on Purchasing Behaviors ofMillennials

Millennials, also known asGeneration Y, typically refer to the population born from 1980 to 1994 (somesay 2000), almost all of whom have come into adulthood by today. Not only domillennials consist of more than 25% (75 million) of the U. S. population(Berger, 2016, p. 103), they also possess the tremendous annual purchasing powerof $200 billion (Solomon, 2015, par. 3). As millennials dominate the wholeconsumer population of the U. S., they have become the targets and chiefsubjects of analysis by marketers. Although some might argue that thecharacteristics of millennials are the general features exhibited by youngpeople, most scholars have agreed on the existence of cohort effects ofmillennials. Schawbel (2015) argued that they seem not to be influenced at allby advertising (par. 2), but in the meantime purchasing an enormous amount of similar“ in trend” merchandizes with their peers, including clothes, technologyproducts, food and et cetera. According to Walker (2008), a major question toask by marketers is, “ how do we square this marketing-resistant generation withanother point that the experts always make: that many members of Generation Ydemand the toniest designer clothes, the best cell phones, the most complexlattes?” (p. 103).

Millennials are too versatile to be analyzed easily, and part of thereason is that their multicultural identities have made them more complex thanthe generations before them. A Nielsen report published in 2017 shows that 42%of the millennial cohort population has multicultural heritage, or areambicultural (p. 3). With their multicultural heritage, along with being exposedto a diversity of cultures on a regular basis, millennials not only developed abroad, unique purchasing habit, but are also influencing the buying decisionsof their peers and family profoundly.

When making purchasing decisions, millennials pay a tremendous amount of time and attention choosing the brands that they align their own identities with. A study by the Keller Fay Group released in 2007 claimed that millennials have roughly 145 conversations about brands a week (versus the public average level of 71). Among these conversations, 77 brands are mentioned on average. In addition, brand mentions by millennials are three times as likely to be via digital media and 57% of them cites marketing or media material(p. 4) Consumer behaviors have conventionally been disseminated by television, radio and newspapers, but in the twenty-first century, social media has begun to replace traditional media’s enduring andinfluential role on millennials consumers. Like Uitz (2012) argued, this phenomenon puts forward both an opportunity and a challenge from a marketer’s perspective (p. 5).

Reacting to the rapid growth and prevalence of social media among millennials, marketers are tirelessly planting advertisements, brand profiles andsponsored contents onto platformssuch as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter to promote sales. According to Yaakop et al. , implementing content that is captivating and relevant drives millennial consumers to communicate with each other and advertise the information to their friends (p. 155). This process, also known as word-of-mouth (WOM), is not only the future of social media marketing communications, but also the key phenomenon that marketers are aiming to probe into.

Past researches have proven the crucialrole of Facebook to social media marketers. According to Raice (2012), customers spend between 3. 5 and 6 hours daily on Google, YouTube or Facebook, with Facebook having the most time spent at 6 hours average for the user(par. 4). Reacting to this astonishing time commitment, brands have investedheavily on Facebook advertising, trying to make their content seen and engagedby users. Advertising spending on Facebook has risen from 1. 87 billion to 3. 15billion in merely one year in 2010 (Advertising Age Staff, 2012). In his work, Eisenberg (2009) points out that surveys show that millennials spend more timeonline than they do with radio, television, and print, which helps explain whyadvertisers are so interested in online advertising and why the moneyadvertisers spend for online advertising has been growing so substantially(p. 103). Instead of banner ads, Facebook advertisements either appear on theside column of users’ news feed or in between two posts and usually includeimages of the merchandizes and purchase links. Nowadays, more and more Facebookadvertisements are strategically matched with the users’ search history onGoogle or online shopping sites by algorithm, in order to maximizeclick-through rate (CTR). Besides, more and more businesses are allocatinglarge budgets on the establishments and operations of brands Facebook pages, where users are able to stay up-to-date of discounts, new arrivals, eventsinformation and et cetera. As Jones et al. (2009) found, Millennials andyounger generations carry the internet with them and feel at a loss if nottuned in to what is happening with friends, celebrities, or favorite retailers(par. 7). Facebook is able to influence users’ purchase decisions by utilizingtheir social network – showing them which friends liked certain brands and whatbrands influencers and celebrities are currently liking.

While all the data points to millennials and Facebook as paramount andinseparable subjects of investigation, existing studies are lacking andunfruitful in providing a comprehensive theoretical viewpoint of Facebook beingutilized as a tool of social media marketing among millennials. Okazaki andTaylor (2013) reported that it was because it took time and was a cumulativeprocess to develop theoretical foundations (p. 58). Bolton et al. (2013) agreedand added that that few studies assessed whether there were differences withina separate cohort (p. 247). As discussed above, millennials have uniquepurchasing behaviors generated partly from their multicultural identities, andtherefore studies investigating millennials specifically are in need. Besides, Bolton et al. (2013) pointed out that past studies have focused chiefly onstudent population and overlooked the fact that a considerable percentage ofmillennials have entered the workspace and altered their purchasing behaviorsaccordingly (p. 247). Furthermore, past researches focused on attitudes towards Facebookmarketing have yielded different conclusions on the topic. Bannister et al.(2013) concluded that attitudes towards Facebook marketing communications werenegative or indifferent, whereas Chandra et al. (2012) found a significantlypositive behavioral propensity.

Consequently, this study seeks to explore the following researchquestions: Firstly, what is the attitude of millennials towards brand marketingvia Facebook? Secondly, what impact does brand marketing through Facebook haveon millennials intention-to-purchase? Thirdly, what effect does engagement withFacebook (time spent, level of activity, number of friends and public accountsfollowed) have on brand purchase decisions of millennials? Last but not least, what roles do demographic factors (race, gender and et cetera) play inmillennials’ brand purchases driven by Facebook brand marketing?

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