

The AIM Blog

THE FIELD TESTER

BUSINESS

COMMUNITY
EVENTS
TECHNOLOGY

MARKETING

PRODUCT TRENDS

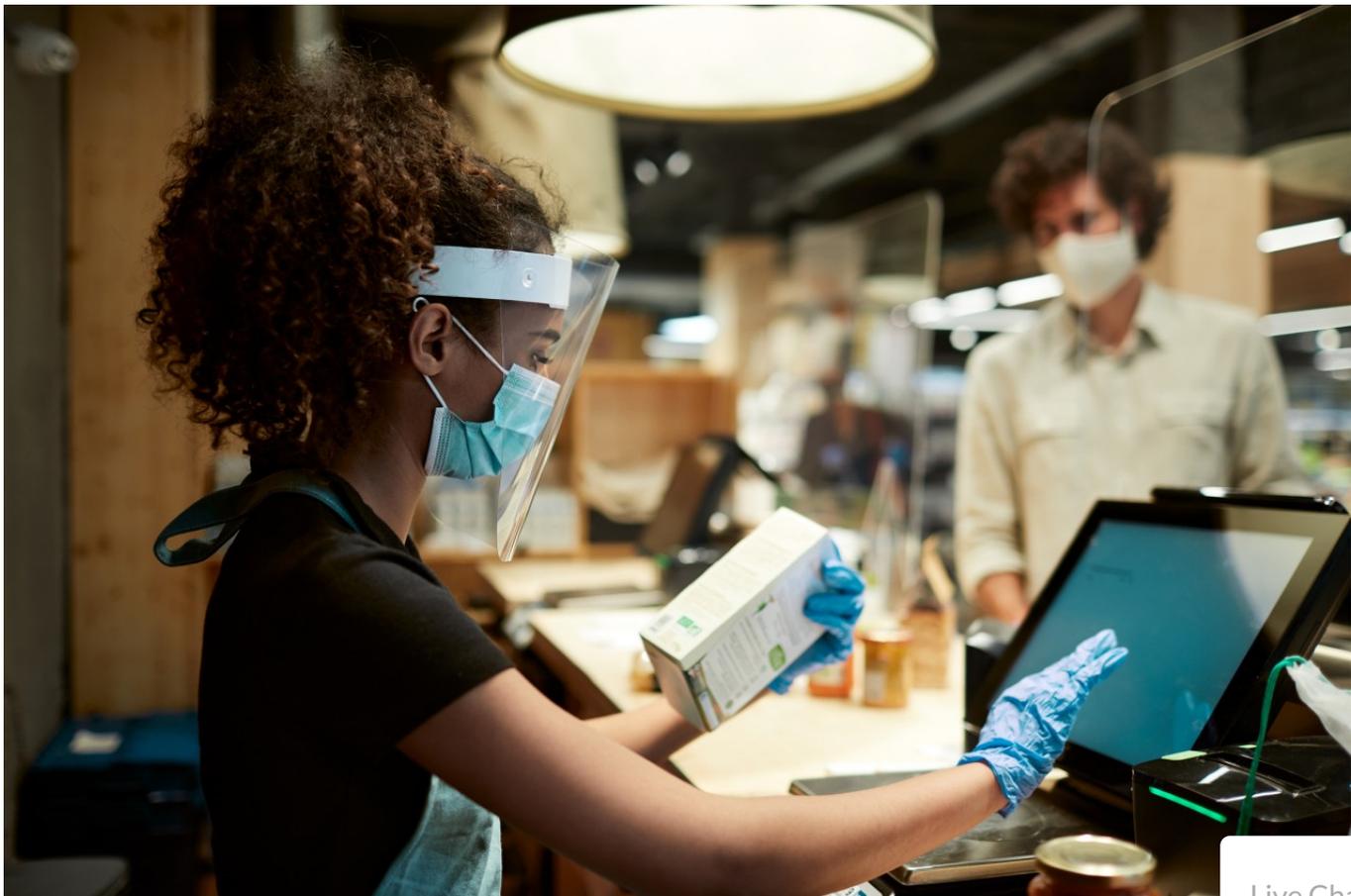
BUSINESS

MARKETING

[Edit Item](#)

Consumer Habits: A Sign of the Times

Take a deeper dive into consumer habits with this overview of the Millennial generation's spending and consumption habits – and what they mean for the future.



[Live Chat Online](#)

In our recent blog post [New Consumer Habits in Online Sales](#), we explored a large-

In our recent blog post, [New Consumer Habits in Online Sales](#), we explored a large scale overview of how shifting consumer demand during the pandemic is changing the way people acquire goods – yes, even promotional products – now and into the future. But what happens when we segment out the consumer market?

The Consumer Majority

As you may already know, the Millennial generation, also known as Gen Y, now makes up the largest consumer majority. This is particularly significant for the B2B environment as the largest share of business buyers, specifically, those who purchase marketing products, are now Millennials.

Many in our industry are confident in the balance they have struck in their business relationships with this generational group. Our industry has also done a great job in recent years recruiting and appropriately promoting those among this group to take on decision-making roles. But when looking at consumer shifts that might impact each of us moving beyond a COVID world, it would be remiss to not focus on this very large, very impactful group of buyers.

Millennial's Consumer Habits

To start, the Y Generation's consumer habits are unique in that each year marketers take more notice of their behavior. This continual study has highlighted some unusual and unassumed habits. For example, Gen Y prefers to consume at brick-and-mortar stores if the price for the good they are acquiring is over a certain threshold. This contradicts the consumer habits of older generations which research shows is quite the opposite. So, what is this price threshold? Well, it varies based on a percentage of income. As older segments of Gen Y are studied, the goods they are willing to buy exclusively online increase in cost.

In a recent study, it was found that [79.3 percent of Millennials](#) regularly shop online with apparel being the most frequently consumed through an e-commerce medium. But this doesn't give us the entire story. The same study wanted to know why so many Millennials decide to regularly purchase goods in this way. The obvious and most commonly suggested answer is habit, but certain anomalies specific to this group demonstrate something else.

For example, more than half of the purchases made by this group online are for someone other than themselves. This suggests that when in a situation of personal consumption, there is a preference to acquire physically. Also, as an important factor, the cost of shipping sways nearly 90 percent of consumers in this category. So, if shipping is a significant enough percentage of the total, alternative acquisition opportunities will be sought. The two most important factors of online consumption for Generation Y are price and convenience. If the price online is better than what they could find in the store, more times than not, they will purchase the goods using e-commerce, a trend that repeats among all generations. Time is also an important consideration, especially as this group

ages. The less time they have, the more convenience they seek out.

Implications for the Future

But how will the pandemic and the push to an online market affect future outcomes for this group? An increasing narrative among the younger generations pertains to value. But value no longer centers around cost. The valuation statement of the younger generations as consumers is about who they are purchasing from and why. If there is a significant reason for them to purchase away from the internet, then they will.

But who creates the compelling reason? Enter the critically important “story” phase of marketing. This is where sales goes well beyond selling. It’s giving people the opportunity to learn about the company and its products. If there is a reason to come into a store, or for that matter, a reason to not do business online, the story should demonstrate that. No longer can retailers expect to lure people with cost savings. Consumption will now be a demonstration of a compelling argument.

This has a perfect translation into our industry and how we approach a continually evolving market. Remember, it is not about assumptions. While the signs of the time point a certain direction, that sign is clearly not set in stone.

Related Articles

New Consumer Habits in Online Sales

Learn the latest on consumer spending habits in the world of online sales versus retail – and how businesses can best strategize given current consumer habits.

[SALES](#)

