Gen Z as Consumers, Influencers, and Trendsetters

The State of Gen Z 2020

GenHQ.com
TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 | Welcome from the Study’s Authors
5 | Gen Z and COVID-19: A Generation Defining Moment
8 | Zconomy: How Gen Z Will Change the Future of Business—and What To Do About it
9 | State of Gen Z® Study Methodology
10 | State of Gen Z® 2020: Consumer and Trendsetter Findings
11 | How Does Gen Z Learn About New Brands?
12 | What Makes Gen Z Loyal to a Brand?
14 | How Does Gen Z Feel About Brands that Support Causes?
18 | What Does Gen Z Want in an Online Buying Experience?
19 | How Has COVID-19 Affected Gen Z Financially?
21 | State of Gen Z® 2020 Conclusions: Gen Z as Consumers and Trendsetters
22 | About The Center For Generational Kinetics
23 | Four Ways We Help You Solve Generational Challenges
24 | Contact Information and Copyright
Welcome from the Study’s Authors

Welcome to the State of Gen Z® 2020: Gen Z as Consumers, Influencers, and Trendsetters!

Now in the fifth year of our State of Gen Z® research series, the research team at The Center for Generational Kinetics (CGK) is excited to share with you the findings from our extensive national research study that explores Gen Z, also known as iGen, from a variety of vantage points. Unlocking the enormous potential of Gen Z as consumers and trendsetters is a passion for us—and has implications for brands of all sizes around the world.

As generational researchers, strategic advisors, and keynote speakers, we are on a mission to uncover and unlock the potential of Gen Z as customers, employees, and trendsetters.

This national study builds on more than 65 generational studies we’ve led on four continents. Our work has been featured in hundreds of media outlets, and our speaking, consulting, and research clients include many of the biggest brands and employers in the world. We love this work.

In addition to our research studies, we infuse our fifth annual State of Gen Z® report with our experience working with more than 100 clients per year to solve their generational challenges. This work gives us front line insights and extensive client data into what actually works across generations.

In this year’s State of Gen Z® consumer study, we included 1,007 members of Gen Z (ages 13-24) as well as 1,009 Millennials (ages 25-43) for comparison. These study participants were weighted to the U.S. Census for age, gender, geography, and ethnicity. Comparing Gen Z and Millennials is key, because we are seeing significant differences between these two generations as they impact businesses, industries, countries, politics, and emerging trends.
From our perspective, Gen Z is driving new behaviors as they further enter adulthood and emerge as a consumer force. In fact, after five years of leading the State of Gen Z® study, we’ve seen the oldest members of Gen Z go from age 19 to turning 25 years old!

Gen Z are now creating trends that ripple up and affect the behaviors and preferences of older generations of consumers around the world, from technology to entertainment and banking. In fact, the change, challenge, and opportunity Gen Z brings as consumers is only just beginning. We expect it will accelerate rapidly over the next three years. Gen Z will determine winners and losers when it comes to brands, marketplaces, and future growth—the key to success is taking the right steps now to grow with Gen Z.

After 10+ years of leading generational research, speaking, and advising, we are thrilled to release our latest Gen Z discoveries, stories, and solutions for leaders in our new book, *Zconomy: How Gen Z Will Change the Future of Business—and What To Do About It*. The book goes behind-the-scenes with Gen Z to view the world through their lens. It integrates our latest research and specific how-to for leaders to recruit, retain, motivate, and develop Gen Z as well as communicate with, market to, sell to, and build loyalty with this incredibly important generation of consumers. *Zconomy* was a #1 New Release on Amazon!

CGK is excited to share this year’s State of Gen Z® 2020 with you. To schedule a media interview about the national study and its findings, or to talk with our team about leading research, keynote speaking, or advisory work, contact our friendly office:

**Info@GenHQ.com | (512)-259-6877**

Thank you for your interest in Gen Z. This generation is poised to change the world!

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Denise Villa, PhD, CEO and Co-founder
Jason Dorsey, President
Jared Boucher, Lead Researcher

*To learn more about our custom generational research, keynote speaking, and consulting, please read Four Ways We Help You Solve Generational Challenges on page 23.*
GEN Z AND COVID-19: A GENERATION DEFINING MOMENT

At CGK, we study the Generation Defining Moments that shape each generation, including Gen Z, Millennials, Gen X, and Baby Boomers.

From our experience, the key to a Generation Defining Moment is that it must do two things:

1. **Take place at the right time in a generation’s coming of age experience.** The event or external influence needs to occur at a formative time in a generation’s coming of age experience, which is usually an age range from childhood through early adulthood. The key is the generation needs to be old enough to deeply experience the event while at the same be in a young enough life stage where it can significantly impact their views, beliefs, and attitude toward the world and future.

2. **Create a powerful, unforgettable emotional impact, usually tied to fear and uncertainty caused by the event and its aftermath.** These moments tend to make a generation feel vulnerable and look at the world differently than they did before, such as the way 9/11 impacted Millennials or how the JFK assassination affected Baby Boomers.

In our keynotes and virtual presentations, we talk about Generation Defining Moments as your “Where were you when...?” moments. During these generation-defining events, we remember exactly where we were, who we were with, and what we felt.

Based on our research at CGK, we believe the COVID-19 pandemic is the most formative Generation Defining Moment that has shaped Gen Z at this critical time in their transition into adulthood. Gen Z is already sharing the impact of COVID-19 in our research interviews about their schooling, work, money, health, family, and attitudes toward the future. We shared this with the media starting in March 2020.
For Gen Z, COVID-19 has upended almost every aspect of their life.

For younger members of Gen Z, they may no longer go to school with classmates, see their friends in-person, or work part-time jobs. Instead, they are confined to their home, with a parent or other family members, and trying to continue their education at a time when many schools do not have an effective distance learning program. These same Gen Zers are seeing their parents struggle financially, including job losses, inability to pay rent, and tension between adults as everyone deals with this new reality.

Gen Zers nearing the end of high school are seeing standardized testing canceled, uncertainty about college options, financial pressure, and limited or no ability to play competitive sports or drive new academic achievements that could change their future. Will they move out of their family’s home this year? If college is all online, how will they have a traditional college experience—and will it be worth the expense? While the COVID-19 experience can vary widely based on our interviews with Gen Zers from different socioeconomic, geographic, and other factors, the result continues to be a real question mark about what will happen after their senior year of high school.

Gen Zers we interview who are in college or deciding whether or not to attend college, are often experiencing a hybrid of the newly upended work and education reality. Some colleges and trade schools have moved quickly to cancel all on-campus classes and move to online learning while others are struggling under the weight and scale of the change—as well as the practical limitations of specific learning activities, such as scientific lab access. Adding to this mix is the unknown about whether or not colleges will refund room and board, whether international students who had to go home will be able to return, and the rapid change of having their freedom limited as they move back in with their family.

There is a lot for Gen Z college students to worry about besides just finishing their classes. Already, we saw the return to college in the Fall of 2020 to be a mixed message of “come to campus, but stay
in your dorms” to “attend the football
games, but bring your negative COVID-19
test results.” Add to this the uncertainty
around class cancellations, limited class
offerings, faculty, support staff, parents,
and Gen Z concerned about their safety (or
appearing not as concerned as popularized
in the news), and it’s easy to see why the
2020-2021 college year is so challenging,
confusing, and uncertain.

At the same time, Gen Zers who are in the
workforce are disproportionately in the
service industry, hourly workers, in entry-
level jobs, or young professionals typically
on the front end of their careers. As our
research showed, Gen Zers were more
likely to get laid off or furloughed as many
industries contracted, in addition to having
their wages reduced or job description
change. Gen Z can also suffer from the
“last hired, first fired” philosophy as well as having the
least established professional relationships. Put all
this together, and Gen Zers already in the workforce
are feeling a massive reset at exactly the time they
should be starting to build their independence
and self-reliance.

On top of Gen Z’s work and school impacts from
COVID-19, add all of these significant stressors:
the heavy external influence of daily death counts
and mortality rates, fear of losing their parents,
grandparents, or friends, and the endless social
media echoing how bad the world is around them.
It’s easy to see why COVID-19 is a Generation
Defining Moment for Gen Z—and the impact gets
deeper the longer the event is extended and the
more uncertainty, fear, and difficulty it creates.

In addition to COVID-19, we believe the social
justice protests of 2020 will be a Generation
Defining Moment for Gen Z. The generation has
already shifted their social cause list of priorities,
per our research, from climate change being #1 to
social justice being their most important social cause.
As this continues, we believe this could become a
Generation Defining Moment as well, and we will be
studying it closely.

We have several studies in the field and will be
launching many more to uncover the change this
pandemic and key issues, from unemployment to
social justice, have brought to how Gen Z thinks about
learning, work, brands, spending, relationships, family,
politics, technology, and much more. It’s in tough
times like these that getting accurate data can help
every generation understand what is going on, make
key decisions, come together, and shape the future.

We wish you, your family, and your colleagues the
best in health during these challenging times. We
will post our latest COVID-19 and Gen Z research on
GenHQ.com, along with the research we are leading
daily to see how every generation is navigating this
time as customers, employees, and neighbors.

With gratitude,

Denise Villa, PhD, CEO
Jason Dorsey, President
ARE YOU READY FOR GEN Z?

Did you know that Gen Z is already 24 years old? They are driving tremendous change, challenge, and opportunity for leaders. Gen Z is already the fastest growing generation of employees and the most important group of consumers and trendsetters.

In this #1 New Release on Amazon, Zconomy, you’ll learn the unexpected insights, hidden trends, and specific solutions to unlock the potential of this exciting generation as they transform employers, brands, and the world.

Zconomy is the Authoritative Guide:

» Based on 65+ generational studies
» Insights from 700+ enterprise clients
» Direct solutions from frontline leaders

Zconomy Helps You Solve These Challenges:

» Recruit, motivate, and retain Gen Z at this critical time
» Market to, sell to, and build Gen Z’s customer loyalty
» Leverage your own generational strengths for fast results

Order your copy now:

“Zconomy delivers the step-by-step solutions leaders need to understand Gen Z and take action right away.”
—Steve Cannon, Former CEO
Mercedes-Benz USA

“Zconomy is a must-read guide from the most authoritative voices on generational studies of our time.”
—Andrea Brimmer, Chief Marketing Officer
Ally Financial

Bestselling Generational Authors

Generational experts Jason Dorsey and Denise Villa, PhD, are passionate about unlocking the potential of every generation. They lead The Center for Generational Kinetics (CGK), the #1 generational research, advisory, and speaking firm in the world.

CGK has taken clients from last to first in employee retention and customer growth. They’ve been featured on 200+ TV shows from 60 Minutes to The Early Show.

Their clients range from Mercedes-Benz and Expedia to Hershey’s, HCA, Discover, and Univision. As keynote speakers, they’ve headlined events from Singapore to London and received over 1,000 standing ovations.
STATE OF GEN Z®
NATIONAL STUDY METHODOLOGY

To lead this fifth annual State of Gen Z® national research, The Center for Generational Kinetics (CGK) designed a custom 28-question Gen Z and Millennial study. The quantitative study was administered to 2,016 U.S. respondents ages 13-43, including 1,007 Gen Z (ages 13-24) and 1,009 Millennials (ages 24-43). The sample was weighted to the U.S. Census for age, region, gender, and ethnicity.

The national study was conducted online from July 17, 2020, to July 27, 2020. Figures are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. The margin of error is +/-3.1%.

COMPLETED BY 1,007 GEN Z PARTICIPANTS

49% MALE
51% FEMALE

14% AGES 13-15
44% AGES 16-18
25% AGES 19-21
17% AGES 22-24
INTRODUCTION

Uncovering Gen Z’s brand preferences and consumer trends has been a focus of our State of Gen Z® research for the past several years. In 2017, we found that 62% of Gen Z would rather spend their own money on products compared to experiences. In 2018, we found that 2/3 of Gen Z read three or more reviews before buying something with their own money. And in 2019, we found that almost half of Gen Z have not bought something they really wanted because the website was too hard to use.

In 2020, we’ve continued to explore Gen Z’s unique consumer perspective by asking them a series of key questions:

- How do you most often learn about new brands?
- What makes you loyal to a brand?
- How do you feel about brands that support specific social causes?
- What is most important to you in an online buying experience?
- How has COVID-19 affected you financially?

Each question yields multiple quantitative findings that reveal Gen Z’s unique consumer and financial footprint in our world today.
**How Does Gen Z Learn About New Brands?**

As digital natives, Gen Z is leading all generations when it comes to consuming online content. 97% of Gen Z are using some type of video streaming in a typical week, and 95% of Gen Z are on a social media app or website at least once a week (2019). What does this level of immersion mean when it comes to brand discovery and brand awareness? It turns out that although the majority of Gen Z are still learning about new brands, companies, and products primarily from their friends and family, YouTube ads and social media video ads are emerging as a unique hub for brand discovery.

**How Do You Most Often Learn About A New Brand, Company, or Product?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Family or Friends</th>
<th>YouTube Ads</th>
<th>Social Media Video Ads</th>
<th>Online Influencers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food or Restaurants</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment (shows, movies, events, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Technology (smartphone, tablet, connected device, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investing</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apparel (clothes, shoes, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 7 of the 8 consumer categories, Gen Z ranks YouTube ads as the second most common way they learn about new brands, companies, or products. Millennials, in comparison, do not rank YouTube ads in the top three ways they learn about new brands or products in any of the consumer categories. Clearly, the advertising power of YouTube is even more strongly connecting with and influencing Gen Z.
WHAT MAKES GEN Z LOYAL TO A BRAND?

Brand loyalty is a powerful force, and Gen Z has carved out their own unique purchase requirements that brand leaders need to know. Confirming what we’ve learned from our previous research, high quality and reasonable pricing most make Gen Z loyal to a brand or company. However, Gen Z men and women have differing top preferences when it comes to brand loyalty. Gen Z men feel significantly more loyal to high-quality brands compared to Gen Z women, while Gen Z women feel significantly more loyal to brands that are reasonably priced compared to Gen Z men. This key differentiator is critical for brand leaders when seeking to build loyalty with Gen Z men and women.

After quality and price, Gen Z begins to have distinctly different reasons for feeling loyal to a brand. Gen Z is statistically more likely than Millennials to feel loyal to a brand that matches their style, supports causes they agree with, and is cool and their friends like it. Each of these brand attributes proves much more essential to Gen Z’s loyalty compared to Millennials.

### MAKES GEN Z MEN FEEL LOYAL TO A BRAND OR COMPANY MORE THAN GEN Z WOMEN

- It’s high quality: 55% *
- It’s reasonably priced: 47%

### MAKES GEN Z WOMEN FEEL LOYAL TO A BRAND OR COMPANY MORE THAN GEN Z MEN

- It’s reasonably priced: 44%
- It’s high quality: 55% *

* represents a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level

### MAKES GEN Z FEEL LOYAL TO A BRAND OR COMPANY MORE THAN MILLENNIALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Gen Z</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It matches my style</td>
<td>39% *</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It supports causes that I agree with</td>
<td>31% *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s cool and my friends like it</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* represents a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level
Taking it one step beyond brand loyalty, we wanted to know the top attributes of a company that make Gen Z feel the most confident to buy from them. We found that companies with good online ratings and reviews make 62% of Gen Z feel confident to buy from them, more than any other attribute. Easy returns (58%) and recommendations from friends and family (56%) are also very important to Gen Z’s buying confidence. Interestingly, recommendations from online influencers and a strong social media presence lend the least amount of buying confidence from Gen Z.

**MAKES GEN Z FEEL CONFIDENT TO BUY FROM A BRAND OR COMPANY**
(TOP 2 BOX; CONFIDENT AND VERY CONFIDENT)

- Good online ratings and reviews: 62%
- Easy returns if I don't like it: 58%
- Recommendation from friends or family: 56%
- Friendly staff or employees: 55%
- Recommendation from an expert in the field: 53%
- Ability to try before I buy: 51%
- Great website: 50%
- Been around a long time: 46%
- Getting positive attention in traditional media: 45%
- Strong social media presence: 42%
- Recommendation from an online influencer: 40%

When controlling for gender, an interesting pattern emerges. Gen Z women dominated all six of the top confidence attributes we tested. Companies with good online ratings and reviews make 67% of Gen Z women feel confident to buy from them, compared to 56% of Gen Z men.

Across all attributes tested, Gen Z women average 4.7% more confidence to buy from a brand or company compared to Gen Z men. Brand leaders should not ignore this degree of gender difference in brand buying confidence within Gen Z.

**MAKES GEN Z FEEL CONFIDENT TO BUY FROM A BRAND OR COMPANY**
(TOP 2 BOX; CONFIDENT AND VERY CONFIDENT; TOP 6 OF 11)

- Good online ratings and reviews: 56% Gen Z men, 67% Gen Z women
- Easy returns if I don't like it: 54% Gen Z men, 62% Gen Z women
- Recommendation from friends or family: 51% Gen Z men, 60% Gen Z women
- Friendly staff or employees: 52% Gen Z men, 58% Gen Z women
- Recommendation from an expert in the field: 49% Gen Z men, 56% Gen Z women
- Ability to try before I buy: 47% Gen Z men, 55% Gen Z women

*represents a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level*
How Does Gen Z Feel About Brands That Support Causes?

Enormous changes have occurred in 2020 across the U.S., most significantly the COVID-19 pandemic and growing social justice unrest. In this context, we were compelled to dig deeper into the psyche of Gen Z to better understand what role brands can play for connecting with this generation now.

When asked how they react to a brand or company that supports each cause, Gen Z feels significantly more respect for companies that support a wide variety of social causes compared to Millennials. Gen Z most respects companies that support ending poverty and homelessness (51%), racial equality (51%), stopping human trafficking (50%), and ending hunger (50%).

Across all social causes tested, Gen Z respects companies that support a cause 3.6% more on average compared to Millennials.

Millennials feel an average of 7% more apathetic (“It doesn’t matter to me” or “It doesn’t change anything for me”) toward companies that support an important cause compared to Gen Z.

* represents a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Gen Z</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
<th><em>difference</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ending poverty and homelessness</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial equality</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopping human trafficking</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending hunger</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care availability</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing unemployment</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and inclusion</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addiction recovery</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing government corruption</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun control</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

©2020 The Center for Generational Kinetics, LLC. All rights reserved. Media usage permitted with proper attribution. GenHQ.com
Going further, Gen Z women feel significantly more respect for companies that support all social causes tested compared to Gen Z men. Gen Z women most respect companies that support racial equality (59%), ending hunger (57%), stopping human trafficking (56%), ending poverty and homelessness (55%), and gender equality (54%).

Gen Z women respect companies that support a social cause 10% more on average compared to Gen Z men across all social causes tested.

Not only does Gen Z respect companies more that support social causes, but they're also willing to spend more on products or services from companies that support these causes. According to the national study, Gen Z is 8% more willing than Millennials to spend more on a product or service if a company fully and publicly supports any of the 14 social causes we tested. Social causes that Gen Z is the most willing to spend more to support are ending hunger (70%), racial equality (69%), ending poverty and homelessness (68%), and stopping human trafficking (67%).

In addition, the national study uncovered that across all causes, Gen Z women are 7% more willing than Gen Z men to spend more on a product or service when a company fully and publicly supports it. Gen Z women are significantly more likely than Gen Z men to spend more if a company supports 9 of the 14 social causes, including ending hunger (74%),...
racial equality (73%), ending poverty and homelessness (73%), and stopping human trafficking (72%).

Now that we know that Gen Z is willing to spend more to support social causes, how much more are they willing to spend? According to the national study, on a $50 purchase, Gen Z is willing to spend an average of $14.45 more when a company or brand supports a social cause important to them. Gen Z is willing to spend the most to support ending hunger ($16.10 more), racial equality ($16.00 more), and stopping human trafficking ($15.60 more).

Although Millennials are also willing to spend an average of $10.59 more on a $50 purchase to support a cause, Gen Z is willing to spend $3.86 more than Millennials to show their support across all social causes. Gen Z women are willing to spend the most to support social causes they are passionate about. On a $50 purchase, Gen Z women are willing to spend an average of $15.25 more when a company or brand supports a social cause important to them, $1.75 more than Gen Z men.

Furthermore, the national study uncovered that across all causes, Gen Z women are 7% more willing than Gen Z men to spend more on a product or service when a company fully and publicly supports it.

**HOW MUCH MORE ARE YOU WILLING TO SPEND ON A $50 PURCHASE IF A COMPANY SUPPORTS EACH CAUSE?**
*(BY AVERAGE; ONLY INCLUDES THOSE THAT ARE WILLING TO SPEND MORE FOR EACH CAUSE)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Cause</th>
<th>Gen Z</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ending hunger</td>
<td>$16.10 *</td>
<td>$10.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial equality</td>
<td>$16.00 *</td>
<td>$10.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stopping human trafficking</td>
<td>$15.60 *</td>
<td>$10.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending poverty and homelessness</td>
<td>$15.10</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender equality</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care availability</td>
<td>$15.10</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$14.30 *</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>$14.30 *</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gun control</td>
<td>$13.80 *</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addiction recovery</td>
<td>$13.80 *</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and inclusion</td>
<td>$13.70</td>
<td>$9.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration reform</td>
<td>$13.30 *</td>
<td>$10.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing unemployment</td>
<td>$13.30 *</td>
<td>$9.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preventing government corruption</td>
<td>$13.00 *</td>
<td>$10.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* represents a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level
Gen Z women are significantly more likely than Gen Z men to spend more if a company supports 9 of the 14 social causes, including ending hunger (74%), racial equality (73%), ending poverty and homelessness (73%), and stopping human trafficking (72%).

Now that we know that Gen Z is willing to spend more to support social causes, how much more are they willing to spend? According to the national study, on a $50 purchase, Gen Z is willing to spend an average of $14.45 more.
WHAT DOES GEN Z WANT IN AN ONLINE BUYING EXPERIENCE?

As we advance into the buying process, we asked Gen Z what is most important to them about a company’s online experience when deciding whether or not to buy. According to the national study, the top considerations for Gen Z to buy online are: a company’s online experience has to be easy to navigate (43%), easy to check out and pay (36%), and have the ability to see ratings and reviews (35%).

The ability to view and compare products using online ratings and reviews continues to be a powerful purchase driver for Gen Z. According to our 2018 national study, the most important decision factors for Gen Z when trying a new brand are price (75%), ease of purchase (65%), and online ratings and reviews (57%). We also found that 78% of Gen Z says they use online ratings and reviews to decide to purchase an item, and 66% of Gen Z says they use online ratings and reviews to decide not to purchase an item (2017). Undoubtedly, if you want Gen Z to try your product or service, you must make ratings and reviews available and easy to access.

**Gen Z on Reviews:**

“If I discover a product through a YouTube review and that’s the first time I hear about it, then I have to go Google-Tube it and search for it on YouTube and see if other people are saying the same thing.”

—Gen Z Focus Group Participant
**How has COVID-19 Affected Gen Z Financially?**

Gen Z is now experiencing unprecedented economic changes during these difficult times. According to CGK’s recent study on the impact of COVID-19 by generation, Gen Z has been hit hardest financially by the pandemic, reporting much higher rates of borrowing money than older generations. In fact, 23% of Gen Z have borrowed money from family or friends in the past 30 days compared to 14% of Millennials and 5% of Gen X (Generational Consumer Insights and Financial Attitudes in a COVID-19 World, 2020).

To better understand these rapidly evolving financial trends, we wanted to explore Gen Z’s current stress levels across multiple financial situations and uncover where Gen Z is turning to for financial advice during COVID-19.

Since the start of COVID-19, over 1/3 of older Gen Z (18-24) are feeling stressed about saving money (36%), supporting their basic needs (35%), and dipping into their savings (34%). As lifestyle priorities are shifting and unemployment soaring, Gen Z is forced to reevaluate and adjust their financial priorities.

The financial burden caused by COVID-19 has disproportionally affected Gen Z and has forced many of them to seek financial help. Where is Gen Z going for trusted financial advice since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic? According to the national study, older Gen Z are significantly more likely to seek financial advice from friends, family, and YouTube during COVID-19 compared to Millennials. Gen Z are also significantly more likely than Millennials to look for financial advice on social media.

**Where Has Gen Z Gone for Financial Advice Since the Start of COVID-19 More Than Millennials?**

(ONLY 18+; N=1,551; RANKED #1/#2/#3; TOP 5 OF 9)

- **Parents**: 27% *
- **Friends**: 25%
- **YouTube**: 25% *
- **Social media**: 21% *
- **Bank or credit union associate**: 16%

* represents a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level

**43% of older Gen Z (18-24) have gotten behind on credit cards, rent, or other payments because of the pandemic.**
Gen Z men and women also have particular preferences for where they seek financial advice. Gen Z women are significantly more likely to turn to family and friends for financial advice during the pandemic. Meanwhile, Gen Z men rely significantly more on YouTube and financial apps.

Marketers, retailers, and brand leaders need to be aware of the breadth and depth of the financial changes taking place with Gen Z and their reaction to it. Gen Z now has a different perspective on their spending, saving, and financial future than only a short time ago. Understanding this perspective is key to understanding and connecting with this emerging consumer group during these trying times and into the future.

WHERE HAS GEN Z GONE FOR FINANCIAL ADVICE SINCE THE START OF COVID-19?
(GEN Z OVER 18 ONLY; 18-24; N=542; RANKED #1/#2/#3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Gen Z men</th>
<th>Gen Z women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>32% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td>28% *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank or credit union associate</td>
<td>19% *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax preparer (accountant, etc.)</td>
<td>11% *</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* represents a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level

46% OF OLDER GEN Z (18-24) HAVE BORROWED MONEY FROM A FRIEND OR FAMILY MEMBER SINCE THE PANDEMIC STARTED.
STATE OF GEN Z® 2020 CONCLUSIONS:
GEN Z AS CONSUMERS AND TRENDSSETTERS

Gen Z is here, and they are driving tremendous change, challenge, and opportunity. The brand leaders who invest the time to understand Gen Z now will have a **massive head start** in unlocking their exciting potential.

As we review The State of Gen Z® 2020 consumer study, five conclusions stand out:

1. Gen Z’s **top purchase influencers are friends and family**, but YouTube ads and social media video ads are emerging as key drivers.

2. Gen Z feels the most **loyal to brands that are high quality**, reasonably priced, match their style, and support causes with which they agree.

3. Gen Z is **significantly** more likely than older generations to respect and spend more money with **companies that support causes that are important to them**.

4. The most important factors for Gen Z when deciding whether or not to buy from a company online are an **easy to navigate website**, an easy to check out and pay experience, and ratings and reviews.

5. **Gen Z has been hit hard financially by COVID-19** and are turning to parents, friends, YouTube, and social media for financial advice since the start of the pandemic.

If you believe Gen Z is important to your future, whether you are a marketer, employer, educator, or parent, please check out **Zconomy: How Gen Z Will Change the Future of Business—and What to Do About It**. This bestselling book features all of CGK’s best Gen Z insights and solutions through a multi-generational lens for leaders to take action.

Go to [Zconomy.com](http://Zconomy.com) to buy the book and get three free video bonuses!
ABOUT
THE CENTER FOR GENERATIONAL KINETICS

The Center for Generational Kinetics (CGK) is the leading generational research, keynote speaking, and strategic advisory firm focused on Gen Z, Millennials, and solving cross-generational challenges. We’ve taken clients from last to first in employee retention and customer growth.

CGK’s team of generational researchers, strategists, and keynote speakers helps leaders around the world. We solve tough generational challenges such as helping leaders adapt to recruit, retain, and train Gen Z employees as well as how to engage, market, and sell to each generation of customer.

Each year, CGK works with more than 100 clients around the world. These clients range from car manufacturers and global hotel brands to venture capital firms, private equity, insurance companies, hospitals, CPG, and pioneering software firms.

CGK’s team is frequently quoted in the media about the effect of generational differences on everything from shopping and spending to parenting, work styles, marketing, and the impact of social media.

Learn more about The Center for Generational Kinetics and the study’s authors at GenHQ.com.

ZCONOMY:
How Gen Z Will Change the Future of Business—and What to Do About It

The most complete guide to Gen Z. Zconomy reveals exactly what leaders and marketers can do to unlock the potential of this important generation. The book is a #1 New Release on Amazon and ideal for employers, marketers, influencers, and parents!

Order your copy on Amazon and email your receipt to Z@GenHQ.com to receive three free video bonuses!
FOUR WAYS WE HELP YOU
SOLVE GENERATIONAL CHALLENGES

INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL KEYNOTES
Our professionally filmed, interactive virtual keynotes are packed with CGK's latest research and unexpected insights. From leadership meetings to global customer summits, we'll design an engaging program that aligns with your must-achieve outcomes. Each program is customized to your event, includes unique data, and is highly interactive. We've delivered virtual presentations to leaders in over 100 countries!

STRATEGIC ADVISORY WORK
We advise executive teams around the world on new ways to solve generational challenges to drive measurable results. Our strategic advisory work ranges from helping car manufacturers launch new vehicles to rethinking legacy CPG brands and informing investment strategies for private equity firms.

CUSTOM GENERATIONAL RESEARCH
We lead custom research that solves challenges for brands, leaders, and employers. Our team has worked in almost every industry and brings unparalleled research expertise and frontline experience, a rare combination.

Our findings are designed to drive immediate action. In addition to uncovering new and unexpected answers to your most important research questions, we can work with you to create reports, webinars, media tours and more to make you the research-based thought leader in your market.

HIGH-ENERGY WEBINARS
Our high-energy webinars are packed with “wow” insights and specific actions. We can deliver a webinar series to build excitement and momentum with customized branding and content perfect for your audience, including our brand new research specific to your goals. For executive groups, we can lead virtual roundtables or VIP research reveals.

CONTACT US TODAY
Let's set up an introductory phone call or video meeting to see how we can help. We look forward to hearing from you!

The Center for Generational Kinetics
+1 (512) 259-6877
Info@GenHQ.com

©2020 The Center for Generational Kinetics, LLC. All rights reserved. Media usage permitted with proper attribution. GenHQ.com