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Introduction From The President

GenZ are they the enfant terrible and a thorn in the side of the old world of work or are they the pioneering heralds of a new way in which multiple sectors can operate more effectively?

A great deal is written and debated about the attitudes and aspirations of Gen Z but are they really taking the old world with them into a new era or will they be a platform upon which a new world work paradigm is built? And what may be the implications of that for both the customer and employee experience?

What Gen Z expects as customers is already having an influence on organisational behaviour but how will things work out as Gen Z employees become increasingly responsible for managing and delivering the expectations of Gen Z customers? And what may come next as the ALPHAbet begins again?

Some of the current issues are discussed by Culture Monkey in their Kailash Ganesh report

10 Problems with Gen Z in the workplace: Understanding what motivates them



- *Picture a bustling office filled with the clickety-clack of keyboards, the hum of conversations, and the occasional ping of incoming emails. Amidst the sea of professionals, a new wave of leaders is rising, bringing fresh perspectives and an entirely different approach to work.*
- *They are Generation Z, the digital natives born between the mid-1990s and early 2000s, and they are transforming the workplace landscape like never before.*
- *Over the past few years, and since the onset of the global pandemic, the workplace has changed. Gen Z is projected to make up 27% of the global workforce by 2025 and has disrupted the status quo. With their unparalleled technological prowess and unique set of values, they bring both excitement and challenges to the workplace.*
- **10 Negative characteristics of Gen Z employees in the workplace**
- *While they are often praised for their digital fluency, adaptability, and passion for social causes, there are also negative characteristics that some Gen Z employees may exhibit in professional settings. Understanding these traits can help employers navigate the complexities of managing a multigenerational workforce effectively.*
- **Short attention span:** *Due to their exposure to constant stimuli and information overload, some Gen Z employees may struggle with maintaining focus on tasks for extended periods.*
- **Dependence on technology:** *While tech-savvy, Gen Z's heavy reliance on technology can sometimes lead to difficulties in adapting to environments where technology is limited or different systems are in place.*
- **Desire for instant gratification:** *Raised in an era of instant access to information and services, some Gen Z employees may struggle with patience and persistence in achieving long-term goals, preferring immediate results.*
- **Difficulty with face-to-face communication:** *Gen Z's preference for digital communication platforms may result in challenges when it comes to effective face-to-face communication and building interpersonal relationships in the workplace.*
- **Unrealistic career expectations:** *Some Gen Z employees may have overly ambitious career expectations, leading to dissatisfaction and disengagement when they encounter the realities of entry-level positions and the time it takes to climb the corporate ladder.*
- **Impatience with traditional work structures:** *Gen Z's desire for a more flexible and inclusive work environment may clash with traditional workplace hierarchies and processes, leading to tension and resistance to established norms.*

- **Lack of financial literacy:** *Despite their technological prowess, many Gen Z employees may lack essential financial literacy skills, such as budgeting and investing, which can impact their ability to manage their finances effectively and plan for the future.*
- **Over-reliance on feedback:** *While craving feedback is often seen as positive, some Gen Z employees may become overly dependent on constant reassurance and validation, leading to insecurity and self-doubt in the absence of immediate feedback.*
- **Disdain for repetitive tasks:** *Gen Z employees may struggle with repetitive tasks or routine responsibilities, seeking novelty and variety in their work assignments to stay engaged and motivated.*
- **Difficulty with resilience:** *Growing up in a time of economic uncertainty and rapid change, some Gen Z employees may exhibit lower levels of resilience and perseverance in the face of challenges or setbacks, potentially impacting their ability to bounce back from adversity in the workplace.*

It may be an over generalised analysis but as always workforce characteristics differ widely from individual to individual but the overall picture is one that has implications for both fellow employees and customers alike. So what are some strategies to address these issues. The report goes on to suggest.....

o effectively deal with problems with Gen Z in the workplace now, consider the following strategies:

1. Embrace technology

Gen Z is tech-savvy, so provide them with the latest tools and technologies to enhance their productivity and collaboration. Leverage digital platforms for communication, project management, and knowledge sharing.

2. Foster a flexible work environment

Gen Z values work-life balance. Offer flexible work arrangements, such as remote work options or flexible hours, to accommodate their needs and promote healthy work-life integration.

3. Provide clear growth opportunities

Gen Z seeks continuous learning and career advancement. Offer mentorship programs, training opportunities, and clear career progression paths to support their professional development and help them see a future within the organization.

4. Cultivate a diverse and inclusive culture

Create an environment that celebrates diversity and fosters inclusion. Encourage diverse perspectives and ensure everyone feels valued and respected. Implement inclusive policies and practices that address the needs of all employees.

5. Offer regular feedback and recognition

Gen Z craves feedback and appreciates recognition. Provide timely and constructive feedback to help them improve. Implement recognition programs that acknowledge their accomplishments and contributions.

6. Encourage collaboration and teamwork

Gen Z values collaboration and enjoys working in teams. Create opportunities for them to collaborate on projects, engage in cross-functional teams, and share their ideas and insights.

7. Emphasize purpose-driven work

Gen Z is motivated by meaningful work. Connect their roles to the organization's mission and purpose. Clearly communicate how their work contributes to larger goals and societal impact.

8. Encourage work-life blend

Instead of strict separation, support a work-life blend where personal and professional lives coexist harmoniously. Promote self-care, and mental and physical health issues, and well-being, and healthy work-life integration.

9. Fostering innovation

Gen Z embodies an entrepreneurial spirit. Encourage innovative thinking, allowing them to propose and implement new ideas, thereby tapping into their creative reservoir and amplifying their engagement.

10. Showcasing impact

Gen Z craves meaningful contributions. Articulate how their work directly influences the company's success, connecting the dots between their efforts and tangible outcomes to elevate their motivation.

By understanding and adapting to the needs and preferences of Gen Z workers, organizations can create a positive and engaging work environment that maximizes their potential and fosters their long-term commitment. By understanding and adapting to the needs and preferences of Gen Z workers, organizations can create a positive and engaging work environment that maximizes their potential and fosters their long-term commitment.

- So from the other side of the coin what is it that GenZ are expecting as a customers experience? EHL Insights the hopitatlity sector specialists propose the following in their article
- ***“Gen Z customer experience strategy - Dealing with younger generations”***



You have to be careful when making assumptions about customers based on generation-specific stereotypes, as there are exceptions to every rule. However, it's fair to say that Generation Z consumers - born between the mid-1990s and 2010 - have different customer experience expectations, including customer service strategy. And really, it's hardly surprising.

- *Generation Z is the first generation not to know a world without the internet. Their purchasing decisions are heavily influenced by social media. They favor a digital-first customer experience that is responsive and transparent, and they place a high value on ethical concerns when deciding which businesses to buy from.*
- *Gen Z consumers have high expectations. Having always had the conveniences that other generations have learned to enjoy over time, they are less impressed with current customer experiences than previous generations, with a 50% satisfaction rate compared to the 71% of their predecessors. However, they are highly influential, with the incoming generation driving change and setting the standards older generations soon come to expect.*

The truth is that organizations must work harder to deliver customer experiences that meet Gen Z expectations. But where should you start? Here's our guide, complete with real-life examples of successful customer experience strategies for Gen Z.

- **The future of customer service? Let them help themselves**
- One of the most significant generational shifts is the preference for self-service customer support (FAQ pages, chatbots, virtual assistants, etc.). A Gartner survey of over 6,000 consumers found that 38% of Gen Zs would stop trying to resolve a customer service issue if they couldn't do it themselves. That contrasts with just 11% of baby boomers, who would give up on an issue if they couldn't find a self-service solution. Gen Z's preference for self-service support has a profound impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. A staggering 52% of Gen Z consumers who could not resolve an issue in self-service would not buy from the company again, while 44% would say negative things about the company. This trend underscores the urgency for businesses to adapt to Gen Z's preferences.
- With that in mind, customer service leaders must work to provide resources that Gen Z can use to solve problems themselves. That includes multiple self-service touchpoints, such as an online knowledge base, useful FAQ pages, chatbots, virtual assistants, and product tutorials. Brands should also look for ways to seamlessly switch users from a self-service solution to an assisted service where the issues they're experiencing are more complex. Proactive live chat options and prompts to call an agent are both potential solutions.
- **Create more personalized experiences**
- Having been force-fed targeted ads, personalized content and recommendations, and custom playlists their whole lives, it's perhaps not surprising that Gen Z has a greater appetite than any other generation for customized experiences.
- Personalization is not just a trend for Gen Z, it's a key driver of brand loyalty. 41% of Gen Z are willing to give up their data in return for personalized experiences, 62% will pay extra, and 45% will leave a website if it doesn't provide personalized recommendations. Given these numbers, personalization should be a cornerstone of your customer experience strategy.
- Personalizing the customer experience can take different forms. You can provide tailored communications across your website, apps, and social media platforms to attract new customers and up-sell and cross-sell. You can also inject personalized elements into your customer support with personalized tips, follow-ups, and videos to help solve customer problems.

- **Gen Z attention span: Lean into video**
- Video was a nice-to-have rather than a business imperative until fairly recently, but the rise of Gen Z and its insatiable appetite for visual content is changing all that. People often cite that Gen Z has an attention span of just eight seconds, based on 2015 research from Microsoft. However, newer research shows they have no trouble concentrating on content they relate to and find interesting, such as Young Adult literature and deep dive videos. This tendency indicates that they are a good audience for easily digestible, short videos that can quickly and effectively tell stories, demonstrate products, share testimonials, and showcase a brand's personality and values.
- The platforms Gen Z favors for consuming video content include TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. Importantly, they spend more time watching videos on their smartphones, so any video content you create must be optimized for mobile devices to increase engagement and ensure a seamless viewing experience. The effectiveness of video content is backed up by the stats, with one survey finding that 70% of Gen Z find videos very useful when making purchasing decisions.
- Although visual content dominates, Gen Z consumers are discerning about what they watch. They value authenticity and transparency in their interactions with brands, with real customer stories and behind-the-scenes footage helping to strike the right chord. They also value brands that are transparent about their values and social responsibility initiatives and want to feel like they're part of a community.
- **Embracing Gen Z values and morals: Building authentic connections for lasting customer engagement**
- We've already touched on the importance of authenticity and values to Gen Z consumers. Their constant exposure to global issues makes them more discerning than previous generations when deciding how they spend their hard-earned money.
- Research suggests that Gen Z will walk away from brands that don't share their values, with 68% wanting to buy from companies that support a primary social cause. However, those values must be something the brand lives and breathes and doesn't merely pay lip service to. Suppose you want to showcase your company's approach to sustainability, inclusion, diversity, and environmental issues. In that case, you must actively show your customers how you engage in those areas and your work.
- Gen Z can be a goldmine of possibilities, but only if you switch your focus from 'how do we do things' to 'how do our consumers want things to be done.' By 'switching your focus', we mean shifting your perspective and priorities to align with Gen Z's preferences and expectations. Gen Z are uncompromising in their outlook, and if you don't give them what they want, they will go

- **So Is GENZ any good at delivering the quality of customer experience that Gen Z expects.?**
- There appears to be remarkably little research on this topic perhaps because it is earlyish days in the management careers of GenZ but there must be many already employed in customer interface employment.
- It is known that Gen Z
 - Has an aversion to using the telephone preferring text or social media instead
 - Has a preference for flexible/hybrid working arrangements and
 - Is very quick to learn technology skills

But there seems little work about on what Gen Z think and Gen Z as deliverers of a quality customer experience which is surprising considering the magnitude of the role that Gen Z is playing in global commerce.

A report by Robert Walters, a US-based recruitment agency, found that half of Gen Zers and Millennials were uncomfortable making business calls, and a staggering 59% just wanted to communicate via text and email.

According to the report, 59% of Generation Z and millennials (born between 1981 and 2012) prefer digital communication, whereas 50% are uncomfortable making business calls. This shift has resulted in “phone anxiety,” a phrase used to characterise the worry and concern that comes with making or answering calls.

While younger workers like the speed and efficiency of digital messaging, they perceive phone calls to be an inefficient use of time, with only 16% finding them productive.

A leading internet retail brand that switched off its telephony channel because it figured its target audience of 18-to-25-year-olds wasn't going to call.

[Millennials and Gen Zers hate using the phone — what does that mean for customer and employee experience? - Customer Experience Magazine](#)

A new study by The Times revealed that only 10% of Generation Z employees (ages 18-27) are interested in working full-time in the office, and more than half admit they feel less industrious than older generations.

[Gen Z employees push for less office time, embrace remote work - Customer Experience Magazine](#)

Clearly not every sector are able to make such an arrangement across the board. It is not possible for a bricklayer or airline pilot to work from home along with multiple other occupations that are unable to deliver a service to their customers without being physically present. As an aside it may be interesting to ponder if Gen Z chooses to avoid such occupations or enters them with reluctance, what might that mean for the quality of the customer and employee experience?

Fortunately, but unhappily not very illuminating AI has some viewpoint of the proficiency of GenZ to deliver a satisfactory customer experience. **Gemini was asked**

- **Are Gen Z any good at delivering a quality customer experience?**
- Whether Gen Z are any good at delivering a quality customer experience is a complex question with no simple yes or no answer. It depends on a variety of factors including the specific individual, their training, and the expectations of the customer.
- **Arguments for Gen Z being good at customer experience**
- *Tech Savy: Gen Z has grown up with technology and is comfortable using various digital channels, which can be an advantage in today's increasingly digital world.*
- *Adaptable: They are generally adaptable and quick learners, which can be valuable in a fast-paced customer service environment.*
- *Empathetic: Many Gen Z individuals are known for their empathy and understanding, which can help them connect with customers on a personal level.*
- *Diverse: Gen Z is the most diverse generation yet, and this diversity can be an asset in understanding and serving a wide range of customers.*
- **Arguments against Gen Z being good at customer experience:**
- *Lack of experience: Some Gen Z individuals may lack the experience and maturity needed to handle challenging customer interactions effectively.*
- *Communication style: Their communication style, often informal and reliant on digital channels, may not always be appropriate for all customer interactions.*
- *Perceived entitlement: Some Gen Z individuals may be perceived as entitled or lacking in patience, which can negatively impact customer interactions.* *Job hopping: Gen Z has a reputation for job hopping, which can lead to high turnover rates and inconsistency in customer service.*
- *Overall: It's important to remember that these are generalizations and individual experiences may vary. There are certainly Gen Z individuals who excel at customer service and those who struggle.*
- *The key is for businesses to provide adequate training and support to help Gen Z employees develop the skills and experience needed to deliver a quality customer experience.*
- *Additionally, businesses need to understand the unique characteristics and preferences of Gen Z customers in order to tailor their customer service approach accordingly. By doing so, they can leverage the strengths of Gen Z employees and create a positive customer experience for all.*

So what next, Is it already too late for GenZ ?What of GenAlpha and what expectations may they hold for the world of CX leadership?

Georgie Walsh Content Marketing Manager at GWI explores GenAlpha in their article **“7 Gen Alpha characteristics to know for 2025”**

Move over, Gen Z – it’s time for Generation Alpha to take center stage. Marketers everywhere have started to pay close attention to Gen Alpha’s characteristics, eager to understand tomorrow’s consumers today. So, what sets them apart? And how will Gen Alpha’s unique preferences and behaviors shape the future of marketing? Let’s dive into the seven key characteristics that define this generation and explore how brands can adapt to their evolving expectations.

Who are Gen Alpha?

Gen Alpha, born between 2010 and 2024, are the first generation to grow up with the internet as a constant. While their predecessors, Gen Z, were raised with the emergence of the internet, Gen Alpha have never known a world without it. So, how does this ongoing connectivity shape the way they experience the world? Read on to find out.

Top characteristics of Gen Alpha

1. Technology: They’re having an offline renaissance

Sure, Gen Alpha live and breathe technology. Unlike older generations who grew into the digital age, this generation has been immersed in tech from day one. But here’s the twist. Post-pandemic, many Gen Alpha kids are now spending more time offline. Since early 2023, the number of 8-15 year olds who meet friends after school is up 12%, while video gaming after school has dropped 6%. They might be tech natives, but they’re spending time away from screens.

2. Online spending: They’re confident consumers

From TikTok to Instagram, social media platforms aren’t just for entertainment – they’re Gen Alpha’s go-to shopping guides. Since 2023, there’s been an 11% rise in Gen Alpha using social media to find things they want to buy. And they’re quickly gaining confidence in making those purchases. The number of 12-15 year olds buying online has skyrocketed by 39% since 2021.

But it’s not just about buying – they’re also taking charge of their style, and kids who use social media for purchases are 39% more likely than average to make their own decisions on the clothes they wear. This is great news for brands like Adidas and Nike, who are seeing a new surge in interest from these young consumers. Adidas has seen a 14% boost in popularity with Gen Alpha since 2023, while interest in Nike and New Balance has grown by 18%, and Under Armour by an impressive 22%. It’s clear Gen Alpha’s a rising consumer force brands can’t afford to overlook.

3. Online privacy: They're learning how to stay safe online

Unlike previous generations who might have been guilty of oversharing (millennials – who could forget that single night out in 2011, immortalized in a Facebook album of 200+ blurry snaps?), Gen Alpha are far more reserved about what they post online. The number of 12-15 year olds who say they post everything they do on social media has dropped by 15% since 2021. And not only are they more cautious, but they're getting smarter about online safety too, with an 8% increase in the number of kids saying they know how to stay safe online.

So, why are Gen Alpha so privacy-savvy? Parental influence likely plays a big role. Fewer kids now have unsupervised access to devices, and the use of parental controls has jumped from 41% in 2021 to 48% in 2024. But what does this mean for brands? Having grown up with this influence, as consumers, Gen Alpha are likely to demand stronger data protection and privacy features. As true digital natives, they're more aware of data privacy issues and will gravitate toward brands that make safeguarding personal information a priority.

4. Brand interactions: They're calling the shots

Gen Alpha are becoming more independent in the way they interact with brands. Since 2021, the number of kids who say they choose which apps they download has increased by 11%, with a 12% rise in kids deciding what they eat. This means they're taking control of their choices at a younger age. For brands, this growing independence means it's no longer just about targeting parents – Gen Alpha are becoming important decision-makers in the household, and it's important to engage with them too.

5. Work: They're redefining education and careers

. Many Gen Alpha kids are looking up to influencers and self-starters who've made it big, without following the conventional route of higher education. Of the kids who say higher education isn't important, there's been an 11% increase in the number who watch influencer videos since 2021. And in the US, the value placed on college is waning, with only 39% of 12-15 year-olds saying it's important compared to 50% in 2021.

But this trend isn't universal. In countries like France, Singapore, Germany, and the UK, there's actually been a rise in girls gravitating toward science, with subjects like physics, chemistry, and biology gaining popularity since 2023. So while some Gen Alpha kids are exploring unconventional career paths, others are embracing traditional academic subjects, particularly in STEM fields. What's clear is Gen Alpha aren't following a one-size-fits-all route. They're forging new paths and redefining success on their own terms, so brands and educational institutions need to offer flexible opportunities to meet the aspirations of this generation.

6. Eco activism: They're prioritizing social issues over eco issues

It looks like Gen Alpha's passion for environmental issues might be cooling off a bit. While they still care about the planet, fewer kids are saying it's a top priority. In 2021, 34% said protecting the environment was important to them, but by 2024, that number dropped to 31%. Recycling is seeing a similar dip, suggesting that for this generation, other issues are coming into focus.

One of those issues? Empowerment and representation, especially for young women. Since early 2023, the number of girls who feel confident about speaking their minds on social media has grown by 18%, while boys have seen a 5% drop in confidence. The trend continues when it comes to being true to themselves online – with a 3% rise in the number of girls who say they can freely express their opinions, while boys saw a 13% decline.

Representation is also a bigger deal for girls, with 3% more saying it's important to see diverse people in TV shows and movies. For boys, though, this seems to be less of a priority, with 9% fewer saying they care about it compared to last year. Overall, girls are becoming more empowered and focused on inclusivity, while boys seem to be stepping back from these issues.

7. Media and film: They love a trip to the movies

Going to the cinema is a classic pastime for kids spanning generations, and it's no different for today's Gen Alpha. We've seen a 12% increase in American 12-15 year olds who say the movie theater is their favorite way to watch films – that's 27% now choosing the cinema over other options. But it's not just about the big screen. Gen Alpha are also streaming audio content more than ever. Since early 2022, the number of 12-15 year olds who listen to music at least once a week has jumped by 7%. Podcasts and audiobooks are also gaining popularity, with podcast listening up 12% and audiobooks seeing a 6% rise among this audience.

Finally, more kids are tuning into TV every day, with an 8% increase in daily watchers since 2022. So whether it's the cinema, streaming audio content, or traditional TV, Gen Alpha are fully immersed in media across all platforms.

Staying relevant with Gen Alpha

With these seven key characteristics defining Gen Alpha, it's clear today's kids are rewriting the rules of engagement. To stay relevant, brands need to align with the values that are important to the consumers of tomorrow. Here are our top tips:

Balance tech with real-life connections: While Gen Alpha are digitally immersed, they're also rediscovering offline experiences.

Prioritize data privacy: With a heightened awareness of online privacy, Gen Alpha expect brands to take data protection seriously.

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Prioritize data privacy: With a heightened awareness of online privacy, Gen Alpha expect brands to take data protection seriously.

Engage Gen Alpha directly: These young consumers are taking charge of their choices, and brands need to speak directly to them, not just their parents.

Show up on multiple media platforms: With Gen Alpha's media habits spanning movies, streaming services, podcasts, and TV, make sure your brand appears across a variety of these channels to stay top-of-mind.

So there you have it, Generation Alpha – the first of its kind, and determined to forge their own path.

<https://www.wuqi.com/blog/gen-alpha-characteristics>

Characteristics

- Mobile
- Global
- Visual
- Digital
- Social

Categories

Birth	From 2010	Leadership style	Inspirational
Social markers	Trump/ Brexit (2016)	Ideal leader	Co-creator
Iconic cars	Autonomous vehicles	Learning style	Virtual
Iconic toys	Fidget spinner	Influence/ Advice	Chatbots
Musical devices	Smart speakers	Marketing	In situ (in real time)

Source: McCrindle.

<https://www.iberdrola.com/en/alpha-generation>

The Last Word

Mixed up or tuned in Genz?

Seems that similarly to all the other preceding “Gens” they have a range of general demographic and behavioural traits that in essence are no better or worse than any who have come before just different to a greater or lesser degree. As ever within these broad brush classifications there will always be a wide range of sub divisions, some of which are avant-garde and others who prefer the traditions that have come before. In the baby boomers there were those who continued to prefer Frank Sinatra to Elvis Presley and others who cared for neither or both. It may seem the rate of change is quicker, but is it really?

Looking ahead, the gurus of the internet seem to suggest that a glance back over the shoulder may be helpful in understanding the needs of Gen Alpha who may be rediscovering a level of satisfaction in some traditional ways.

The answer is probably the same as it has always been. Understand the needs and expectations of your customers, know how your product or service meets those needs and expectations and deliver them in a manner which meets or exceeds such need and expectations through an employment strategy that ensures its people have the skills and motivation to take pride in a service quality performance of the highest professional standard.

As ever the response of customers of all “gens” will be the barometer by which success is measured.

Highly Recommended Reading

<https://www.culturemonkey.io/employee-engagement/problems-with-gen-z-in-the-workplace/>

Recommended Reading

<https://hospitalityinsights.ehl.edu/gen-z-customer-experience-strategy>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rKt9SSUUUM>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-explainers/what-is-gen-z>

<https://action.deloitte.com/insight/3375/its-not-a-stretch-gen-z-and-millennials-want-flexibility-and-balance>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/juliadhar/2024/09/18/gen-z-they-want-to-work-remotely-and-in-the-office/>

<https://www.stanford.edu/stories/2022/01/know-gen>

<https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/operations/our-insights/the-evolution-of-customer-care-ai-and-the-gen-z-effect>

<https://www.gwi.com/blog/gen-alpha-characteristics>

<https://www.iberdrola.com/talent/alpha-generation>