

A Health System Guide to

trajectory

Engaging Millennial Health Consumers

with Marketing Campaign Strategy



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Introduction





¹ WPP, BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands Report 2016

² Lindsay Drucker Mann, The Millennial Impact Study 2015, Goldman Sachs

³ The State of Consumer Healthcare: A Study of Patient Experience, GE Healthcare Camden Group, 2016

They're health conscious and fitness savvy¹. They're deeply committed to longevity, with more than 95 percent considering health management a primary concern and 83 percent willing to invest heavily in personal wellness services². With approximately 63 percent in a recent study³ describing themselves as currently in the market for a new healthcare provider, millennials (ages 18-35) may represent the "perfect storm" of immediate opportunity, buyer motivation, and long-term market potential for healthcare brands. Yet designing marketing campaigns for a generation fond of "debunking" brand claims and adept at avoiding online exposure to conventional ads is a potential minefield of failed messaging, lost ROI, and audience alienation.

Sidestepping the most obvious saboteurs of healthcare marketing – a lack of meaningful social presence, an over reliance on dated or unanchored metrics – is relatively simple for experienced marketers. Understanding millennial purchasing behaviors, however, requires a map of their complex, and often contradictory, thinking on wellness, healthcare, and the industry itself. This guide will help you understand key factors which motivate millennial consumers to engage with and ultimately choose a healthcare service provider.

A Millennial Selfie:

Who they say they are and
why they may ignore
your campaign



1. They're "All Good"

Millennials "self-define" healthcare, and this often minimizes the value of engagement with traditional medical services.

Millennials tend to believe that their maintenance of a positive mental state, intelligent food choices, and a reasonable work-life balance² are the principal determinants³ of sustained physical health and longevity, with healthcare basics like regular checkups with physicians seen as options, rather than necessities. Millennials define healthcare³ as a subset of wellness-oriented practices – which may include self-directed activities such as exercise and meditation – rather than exclusively institutionalized services. In 2015⁴, a study by The Cassandra Report showed that 80 percent of millennials were spending one-fourth of their disposable income on holistic wellness related products⁴ and services, such as acupuncture and yoga instruction, viewing their use as an alternative to visiting traditional healthcare providers. The success of your marketing strategy requires that your brand messaging complements, rather than detracts from, millennials' unconventional concept of wellness.

² Lindsay Drucker Mann, The Millennial Impact Study 2015, Goldman Sachs

³ The State of Consumer Healthcare: A Study of Patient Experience, GE Healthcare Camden Group, 2016

⁴ The Spring / Summer 2015 Cassandra Report: Mind, Body, Soul, Cassandra.co



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⁵
Harris Poll, "Millennials:
Extreme Expectations," May,
2016

2. They're "So Over It"

Millennials are brand skeptics, distrustful of positive claims made in traditional advertising and immune to marketers' bids to stoke brand trust through compelling copy.

For millennials, a campaign worthy of engagement⁵ is transactional; offering – in exchange for their attention – jargon-free, succinct information on goods and services with a clear line drawn between their unique lifestyle needs and a brand's value proposition. Legacy brand status matters far less to millennials than positive independent consumer reviews on social platforms, and most – 60 percent⁵ – are unmoved by celebrity or "expert" endorsements when choosing a healthcare service or healthcare-related products. Getting past your audience's native skepticism necessitates that the prerequisites of millennial campaign engagement – transparency, relevance, and informativeness – are at the core of every campaign, regardless of platform.

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3. They're already "phubbing" you on social platforms

If millennials ignore friends sitting next to them to post on Instagram, they're likely to ignore a poorly targeted mobile ad as well.

Traditional banner ads on social media – even those employing a catalogue of gimmicks such as the heavy use of generational colloquialisms—are unwelcome⁵, being viewed by millennials as intrusive and even “creepy” when used in concert with an ad retargeting campaign. This disdain for conventional ads has driven as many as 70 percent⁶ of millennials to download software ad-blockers to “phub” (ignore an interruption to focus on digital content) even the most interesting ad creative. A campaign that resonates will need to do more than blend seamlessly with social content; millennials want an enhancement to their user experience, one offering pertinent, evergreen information that lasts beyond its most-loved meme.

⁵ Harris Poll, “Millennials: Extreme Expectations,” May, 2016

⁶ Anatomy Media / EMarketer Survey “US Millennial Users Who Use an Ad Blocker,” July 2016.



70%
of millennials
download software
ad-blockers

Decoding Millennials: An identity primer



By 2025, seventy-five percent of the global workforce will have been born after 1981. Millennials will, as they settle into careers, transition into parenthood, and enter middle age, also stand as the world's largest – and primarily untapped – healthcare services consumer base. Decoding the patchwork of identities and values which drive millennial brand adoption will be a critical element of your health system's marketing strategy for the next two decades.

“Appealing to millennials is important for all brands, given their generation's size, power, and influence. But pandering to millennials can backfire; millennials don't like being patronized, and older customers don't like feeling abandoned.”

– Lily Pulitzer CEO Michelle Kelly in *The Harvard Business Review* article, “What Lily Pulitzer Learned About Marketing to Millennials,” March, 2016⁷

From inception to launch, a marketing strategy focused on millennials holds a particularly visceral form of risk for CMOs; unlike previous generations, conventional digital advertising is not only frequently ignored by the demographic, it is actively blocked using sophisticated software. This means that a campaign lead's skill in translating Big Data analytics into actionable insights relevant to millennials' perceived group iden-

tity and corresponding hierarchy of consumer needs will determine campaign ROI and the efficacy of long-term brand messaging.

“[Millennials] are a generation of researchers. The idea of not accepting ‘I don't know the answer,’ but instead researching how things work is very much a part of how Millennials behave.”

– Lindsay Drucker Mann, VP, Goldman Sachs at “Talks at GS: The Millennial Effect”⁸

Millennials are Healthcare Iconoclasts: Don't “Market,” Mirror

Millennials believe that they are overall healthier than GenXers and Baby Boomers, and attribute their projected longer life expectancy rates not to modern advances in healthcare, but to their understanding of the key components of healthy living. Accordingly, millennials align their healthcare service choices with their perceived identities as the chief arbiters of their personal wellness, viewing the thoughts of their social peers and consumer reviews online as the key influencer in their decision to engage with a brand. That willingness to engage, however, is tenuous. Millennials are confirmed healthcare service skeptics, with 54 percent consulting an internet health information website in an effort to “second guess” a potential diagnosis before

⁷ The Harvard Business Review, “What Lily Pulitzer Learned About Marketing to Millennials,” March 2016

⁸ Lindsay Drucker Mann, VP, Goldman Sachs at “Talks at GS: The Millennial Effect” (Podcast)



54%
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9
How Brands are Winning
Millennial Consumers," Gallup
Report, March 2016

10
"US Millennial Internet Users
Using Ad Blockers," Anatomy
Media, Fall 2016



43%
of millennials
don't trust their health-
care provider's recom-
mendations

visiting a doctor, and 43 percent admittedly "not trusting" their healthcare provider's recommendations at all. The most recent study by ZocDoc of millennial attitudes towards healthcare services suggests that for a significant number of millennials, their belief in their ability to determine their need to use a conventional healthcare service of any kind veers towards the extreme. A startling 28 percent stated that they would attempt to self-diagnose potentially cancerous lump on their necks, and 36 percent said that they would attempt to treat it - themselves.

Key Takeaway:

Millennials won't be swayed by a traditional marketing appeal which merely highlights a brand's ability to identify and fulfill a particular healthcare service need based on company legacy, resources, or standards of care. Your millennial audience may have to be persuaded that there's a need for the service at all, and they'll have to be made to believe that they've convinced themselves. A campaign attempting to find resonance with millennials should underscore, rather than challenge, their sense of mastery over their requirements for healthcare services. Emphasizing your audience's pre-existing understanding of their unique healthcare needs and their ability to "judge for themselves" the value of your brand based on provided facts will connect your campaign to a millennial's intrinsic need to make data-driven, independent choices.

"There is something about millennials that brands have an even harder time grasping - and, not surprisingly, it's in the digital details. Millennials' customer journey is highly influenced by technology, more so than for any other generation. They view the online experience through a different lens than other generations do, and they value it more."

- "How Brands Aren't Winning Millennial Consumers," Gallup Report, March 2016 ⁹.

"Ad blocking is the social norm among young millennials. People do not adopt regressive technology as they age (and) young millennials are the early tech adopters and evangelists."

- From the Anatomy Media study "US Millennial Internet Users Using Ad Blockers," Fall 2016 ¹⁰

Millennials are Social Technologists: Socialize, Don't Sell

Millennials are often described as "digital natives" and they are fiercely protective of their native turf- social media pages- especially when it comes to ads that seem irrelevant, or worse, banal. Millennials are social platform loyal, but

they rapidly adopt new social media outlets based on improved content sharing capabilities, less ponderous interactive functionality (remember Facebook's rout of MySpace?) and the platform's ability to shield them from ad formats that draw them out of cherished social moments. This means that although social platforms are where millennials spend several hours per day, an impactful campaign must ignite a social conversation around a relevant topic which promotes brand awareness, in addition to any traditional digital advertising method. Millennials are adept at creating their own content across multiple platforms using sophisticated marketing tactics – from hashtag promotion to launching twitter “swarms” – to amplify the reach of that content², millennial tech savvy on social media also means that marketers must invite the audience to campaign interactions which are competitive both in content and technical sophistication. That might include the creation of a campaign that solicits user-generated content or allowing social influencers to lead a brand-centered social listening campaign that initiates direct brand-consumer dialogs.

Key Takeaway:

Millennials don't want to be tracked, targeted, or showered with ads on their favorite social platforms, regardless of how innovative those ads are. They do, however, want engaging, creative content that's relevant and timely, and they'll take as much as you've got. Successful strategy, while taking into account millennials' extraordinary levels of social media engagement, doesn't simply retool trending content formats (think personalized Emojis) around campaign themes. Millennials' willingness to listen to healthcare brand messaging is dependent upon your campaign's immediate value proposition, not in reference to the brand itself, but to the content or ad experience being offered. Is your campaign using static banner ads on a video-centric social platform? It might be wise to incorporate dynamic visuals, such as gifs, into your banner strategy; offer millennials more, not less, of the content that they are already engaged with.

“Millennials have a really good BS sniffer. They know when you're not being true—always be transparent in advertising strategy.”

-Quinn Kilbury, Senior Brand Director, Heineken, in “Brand Purpose, Millennials, and the Epic Creative That Inspires Them,” MSL Group, Publicis, 2016¹¹

²
Lindsay Drucker Mann, The Millennial Impact Study 2015, Goldman Sachs

¹¹
“Brand Purpose, Millennials, and the Epic Creative That Inspires Them,” MSL Group, Publicis, 2016



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How Brands are Winning
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25%
of millennials
are considered "fully
engaged consumers"

Millennials are Brand Agnostics; Show, Don't Tell

While millennials are less brand-loyal than other generations, when they fall in love with a brand, it's a deep, lasting connection. Approximately 25 percent of 18- to 35-year-olds are considered "fully engaged consumers," viewing their chosen brand as an extension of their identities. According to a recent Gallup Poll ⁹, they willingly serve as brand ambassadors on social media, posting positive reviews and expressing their pleasure with the brand to their social circle. That love, however, can swiftly turn to potent, viral disdain; 75 percent of millennials state that a single negative customer service experience may cause them to stop using a formerly cherished brand and voice their unhappiness on social networks. Even millennials' continued patronage of an otherwise satisfactory healthcare service is highly variable based on the quality of consumer-brand digital interactions; when online experiences are not user-friendly and efficient, millennials will shift brand loyalties offline. This means that digital campaigns can make or break not only long-term marketing strategy and campaign ROI, but the brand itself.

Key Takeaway:

Millennials are a "seeing-is-believing" generation. Marketing to 18- to 35-year-olds means illustrating your brand's true value to your audience in your campaign, sans hyperbole or an over-reliance on "cool factor" ad creative. Whether a legacy brand or a relative newcomer to the industry, this also means that your strategy must have, at its core, a continuing, openly acknowledged effort to earn your audience's attention and business. Ad copy which touts "new and improved" services without providing context¹⁰ will fall flat with a demographic adept at publicly debunking advertised claims of high quality customer service on social media platforms. Highlight your brand's responsiveness to your audience's articulated service needs and underscore your company's willingness to evolve according to the requests of your consumer base. Millennials' first allegiance is to their personal wellness brand; a carefully crafted identity built around a sense of empowerment with respect to healthcare choices. That means that your audience won't give your brand's campaign – or your brand – a second chance at winning engagement simply out of loyalty. Design marketing strategy around elements that appeal to the millennial identity – campaign transparency, brand responsiveness, and value-focused interactivity.

Case Studies



There are few limits on accessibility in marketing to millennials. Their lifestyles often involve their communicating across multiple platforms while consuming or publishing digital content on several screens; they can, (with the significant exception of millennials who block ads at the browser), always be tracked, targeted, and presented with brand messaging. And yet millennials are the least likely to show interest in hearing from a brand on their most frequented social networks, smartphones, or entertainment websites. Healthcare services marketers must not only vie for the attention of millennials across numerous, content-rich platforms, but also overcome the native skepticism of a generation for which healthcare services are merely an optional component, rather than the foundation of long-term wellness.

The battle, of course, cannot be won – at least not cleanly, or using any conventional logic. The most recent global research⁹ on millennial engagement tells us that even if this generation can't be wooed by a pitch, it can still be captured by an idea.

Fight Dirty: Use Content to Attract from Content

Attempting to capture the attention of a generation raised with on-demand, premium content without offering a brand experience with high quality content attached – regardless of length

– is a fool's errand. The era in which emotive brand storytelling alone could bring a consumer to engagement is over; millennials tend to equate advertising with insincerity, and efforts to tug at heartstrings using brand lore will invariably backfire. A millennial is the chief storyteller in his or her social media world; find a place in that story as a narrator, highlighting the values and experiences that matter most to their generation.

Get Real: Use Social Media to Socialize Media

Many legacy brands⁹ like MasterCard found that non-fans had no interest, not surprisingly, in visiting their company's Facebook fanpages. However MasterCard's transformation of its legacy "Priceless" print, TV, DOOH, and online campaign into a millennial-focused user-generated content experience, with consumers recording their own MasterCard-sponsored adventures, was wildly successful, creating a surge in fanpage clicks and new customers. A new audience means creating a new conversation. Build a social media campaign that connects your brand's voice with that of your targeted consumer base; create a social dialog about a topic that engages them and then allow your users to discover your healthcare service as a facilitator of brand authenticity.

Get Friended: Just Listen

While millennials are often portrayed as being Pavlovian in their obedience to their generation's pop icons, statistically, their immediate social network and offline friends hold sway in almost 60 percent of their major life decisions. That means that as a marketer, making your brand as accessible and responsive as a virtual peer is a top priority. This means building a relationship with your consumers based on what they want, rather than what you are accustomed to offering. To do that, you'll need a social presence. Healthcare brands that aren't adept at social listening – the ability to identify and interpret the social signals that relate to buyer motivation – won't be able to engage, or even find their target audience online. Opening up your social and digital communication lines to actively solicit consumer interactions on the kinds of services or service enhancements that they are seeking may sound risky, but it will also sound like a potential partnership to your millennial audience.

The following 3 pages are some examples.



CASE STUDY 1

FCB Health's 2016 Contraceptive Campaign on Instagram: Mobile Brand Strategy

Instagram, with 600 million monthly users, has become a significant source of audience engagement and is increasingly used in healthcare marketing in order to target millennials. Not surprisingly, 90 percent of all Instagram users are 35 or younger, according to Brand Watch.

A recent example of Instagram healthcare marketing is FCB Health's brand strategy campaign for Teva's emergency contraception pill, Plan B-One Step.

This is a great example of segmented health care marketing. Millennials are the newest group to contraceptive use, skewing higher in unintended pregnancies, so the marketing goal was to address the lack of awareness of contraceptive product availability.

Their brand strategy succeeded for multiple reasons: it resonated, provided a clear purpose, made an emotional connection, and met millennials directly in their environment – in this instance, targeting their mobile Instagram feed.





CASE STUDY 2

BuzzFeed and President Obama

Here's a new classic in the marketing canon, a healthcare awareness video that boldly uses humor to connect with millennials: President Barack Obama teamed up with BuzzFeed Motion Pictures and created a video in February 2015 to reach out to millennials about healthcare coverage.

The video titled, "Things Everybody Does But Doesn't Talk About," stars President Obama and an average American millennial doing what they do when no one's around. This irresistible video promotes the website healthcare.org by shooting clips of President Obama rehearsing a speech about the enrollment deadline – in front of a mirror.

According to AdWeek, within the first eight hours, the Facebook video was viewed more than 10 million times.

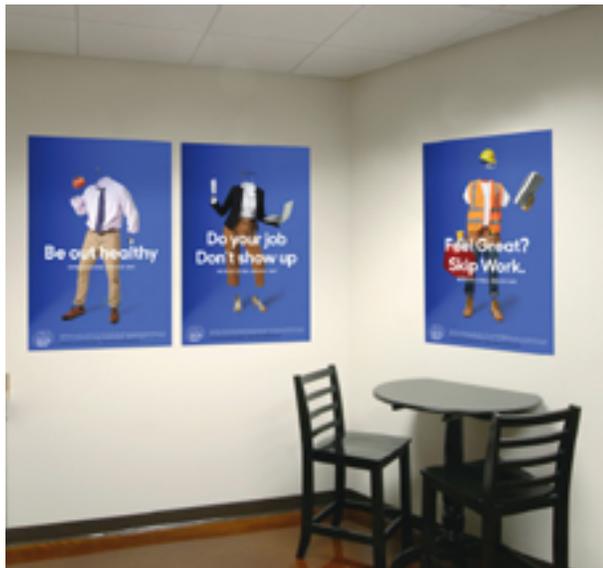
Millennials have traditionally had difficulties signing up for health insurance: cost is the biggest barrier, but it's also perception. Only 27 percent of millennials said they are very informed about the health insurance options available to them, while 35 percent consider themselves very informed about how to

prevent disease, an interesting paradox to keep in mind as you determine creative campaign strategy.

According to CNBC, when shopping for health insurance plans, about 66 percent of millennials said any premium at or about \$200 a month is unaffordable. That's consistent with findings from the past three years, according to the study. For some, even \$100 a month is a bit too high.

However, according to HealthInsurance.org, the percentage of uninsured millennials has declined to 11 percent, an all-time low for this demographic (based on a survey commissioned by the national non-profit Transamerica Center for Health Studies).

This is a great example of social media marketing for millennials utilizing both storytelling and humor. Is it light on information and relevance? Not exactly: it cleverly incorporates a call-to-action and a deadline for signing up for health insurance. The tone is scrappy, improvisational, and a little voyeuristic, which is spot-on in dealing with distractible, authority-wary millennials.



CASE STUDY

Millennials ZocDoc's "Unsick Day" (August 2016)

Taking time off from work because you're sick is something millennials try to avoid. Millennials are 31 percent more likely than their colleagues ages 35 and up (71 vs. 54 percent) to feel uncomfortable leaving work for preventive care appointments. In 2016, ZocDoc found a way to combat this issue and create a memorable advertising campaign pitched to millennials.

More of a PSA than an actual ad for ZocDoc, their campaign asks companies to establish an "Unsick Day" at the office.

ZocDoc found that 86 percent of Americans either delay or cancel routine doctor and dentist appointments due to work responsibilities, and in particular, 54 percent of millennials have delayed or avoided medical treatment due to costs.

The video combined good storytelling (cue the nostalgia for older millennials: kind of reminiscent of the 1990 romantic thriller, "Ghost"), and appealed to millennial healthcare values of transparency, convenience and preventative care.

Conclusion



“Millennials are a social, community-driven generation that values the voice of the individual. Millennials are also a demanding generation that wants a more balanced, healthy lifestyle, and they want to be more informed about companies, their products and their business practices. They value, even demand, connectivity, convenience and options that allow them to be in control. These core values and characteristics will remain the key influencers and drivers for how Millennials think, spend and act throughout their lifetimes.”

– Nielsen Global Survey Report, “The Keys to Unlocking the Millennial Mindset,” a findings summary of research on millennials from 2013-2016.

Conclusion

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s International Database, Millennials comprise 1.7 billion people – one-fourth of the world’s population – with 87 million residing in the United States. As a marketing strategist targeting millennials, your potential audience is immense, still growing, and as of yet underexploited. A mistake may impact your campaign and results for a few years, but a well-structured, impactful strategy will elevate brand recognition and drive positive ROI for a decade.

The ability to truly engage millennial health consumers can be difficult to do alone. Finding the right strategic partner can help you, your organization and your millennial audience, to live healthier, happier lives.



At *trajectory*, we believe that Healthcare marketing leaders have the power to shape:

- the changing attitudes of their millennial consumers
- partnerships that will supercharge their digital campaign strategy
- the millennial experience with healthcare – doing the basics brilliantly on mobile, social, and investigating new ways to engage
- best practices around disruptive technology (wearables, mobile trackers for health alerts, and new interactive tools)

trajectory

Who We Are. We're a branding and marketing agency focused on solving our client's business challenges, and are a certified WBE. Our primary focus areas are healthcare and consumer health + wellness, where we have a proven track record of success.

What We Do. We help clients accelerate growth today and plan for their opportunities tomorrow. Creating momentum for their brands, customers and organizations.

How We Do It. By bringing together strategy, planning, branding, communications, experience, digital, social media and content. Overlaying our M-Factors™ playbook for growing brands and business.

Why Us. Because we combine deep industry experience with new ways of looking at challenges and helping you see new possibilities to grow stronger and faster.

Engaging empowered millennial consumers starts with the right insights and strategies.

If you'd like to discuss your unique challenges, and how to develop the optimal marketing campaign strategy for your Health System, let's talk!

[Book a free consultation](#)

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Sources

- ¹ WPP', BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands Report 2016
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- ⁷ The Harvard Business Review, "What Lily Pulitzer Learned About Marketing to Millennials," March 2016
- ⁸ Lindsay Drucker Mann, VP, Goldman Sachs at "Talks at GS: The Millennial Effect" (podcast)
- ⁹ How Brands are Winning Millennial Consumers," Gallup Report, March 2016
- ¹⁰ "US Millennial Internet Users Using Ad Blockers," Anatomy Media, Fall 2016
- ¹¹ "Brand Purpose, Millennials, and the Epic Creative That Inspires Them," MSL Group, Publicis, 2016

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