



PlanningPoint – What do we know about individuals in the Generation Z (Gen Z)

age group and what can be done to accommodate their preferences? The Pew

Research Center (2019) characterized Gen Z as individuals born between 1997 and 2012 making them ~11 to 26 years of age in 2023. Aperture Content Marketing (2022) identified five characteristics impacting decisions by Gen Z to enroll at a state/community college. Sample responses to accommodate the “Instant Generation’s” preferences are included.

Digitally Connected "Always On"

- 95% - 97% have smartphone access
- Peer opinions matter over parents
- 49% social media = news (2022 study) YouTube, TikTok, Daily Mail, BuzzFeed
- Experts at deciphering digital content
- Seek **personalized, authentic content** that *directly* addresses their inquiries

Worried About Finances

- Witnessed parents' financial troubles
- Affordability = top concern (67%) (2019 study)
- 70% see making money & career success as very important (2022 study)
- Highlight college cost-savings & ROI
- Highlight financial aid options

Most Ethnically Diverse

- 1 in 5 with at least 1 immigrant parent
- 1 in 3 live in single-parent households
- 52% see #BlackLivesMatter as major impact on their worldview (2022 study)
- Seek **diverse, welcoming and stable** setting
- Fair & equitable treatment matters

Health (Personal & Loved Ones)

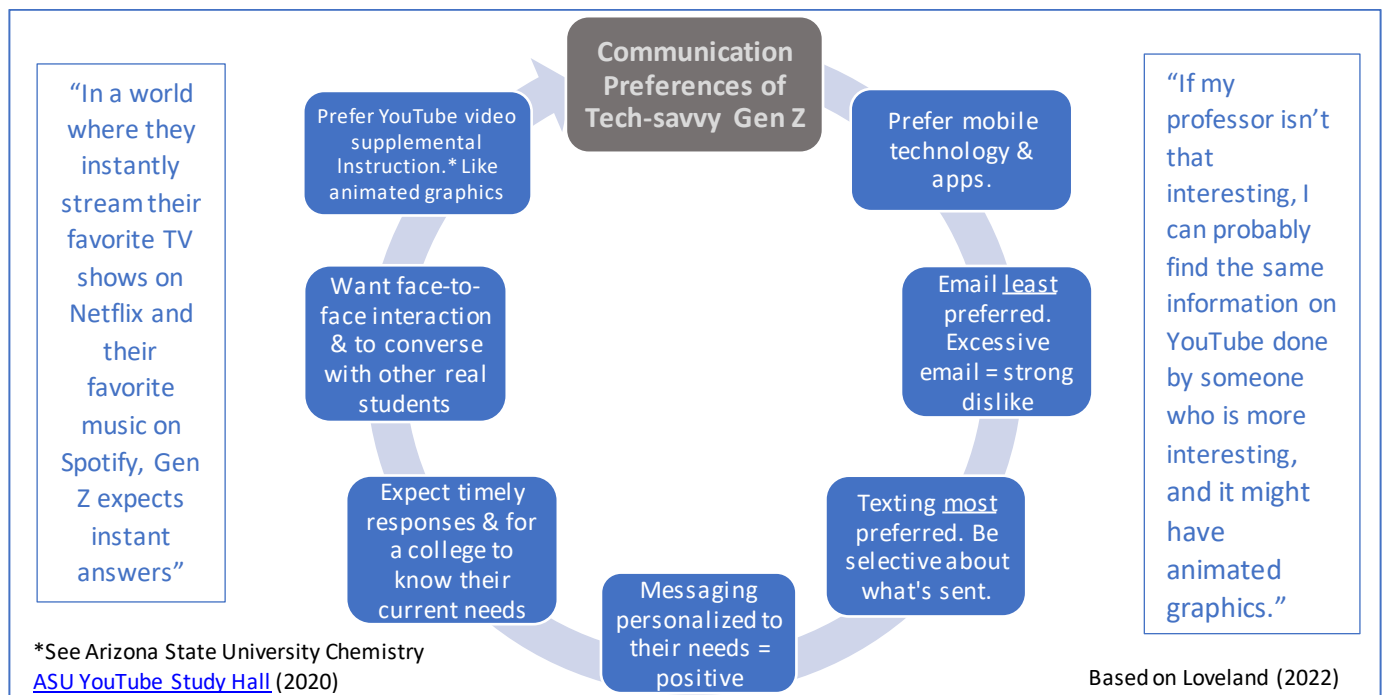
- Mental health 27% more likely to report as fair or poor (2021 APA Stress in America Report)
- Lower income Gen Z more stressed (2020 APA Stress in America survey)
- Train faculty, staff & students about improving mental health to retain
- Degree map = <stress & clarifies path
- 24/7 Tele-counseling availability

Passionate to Improve the World

- Serious about environmental, political and socio-economic problems (National Retail Federation & IBM)
- Declining trust in large institutions Neutrality on social issues=bad (2022 study)
- Interested in meaningful programs/ careers to help serve others + skills
- Entrepreneur training welcome as well as work based learning

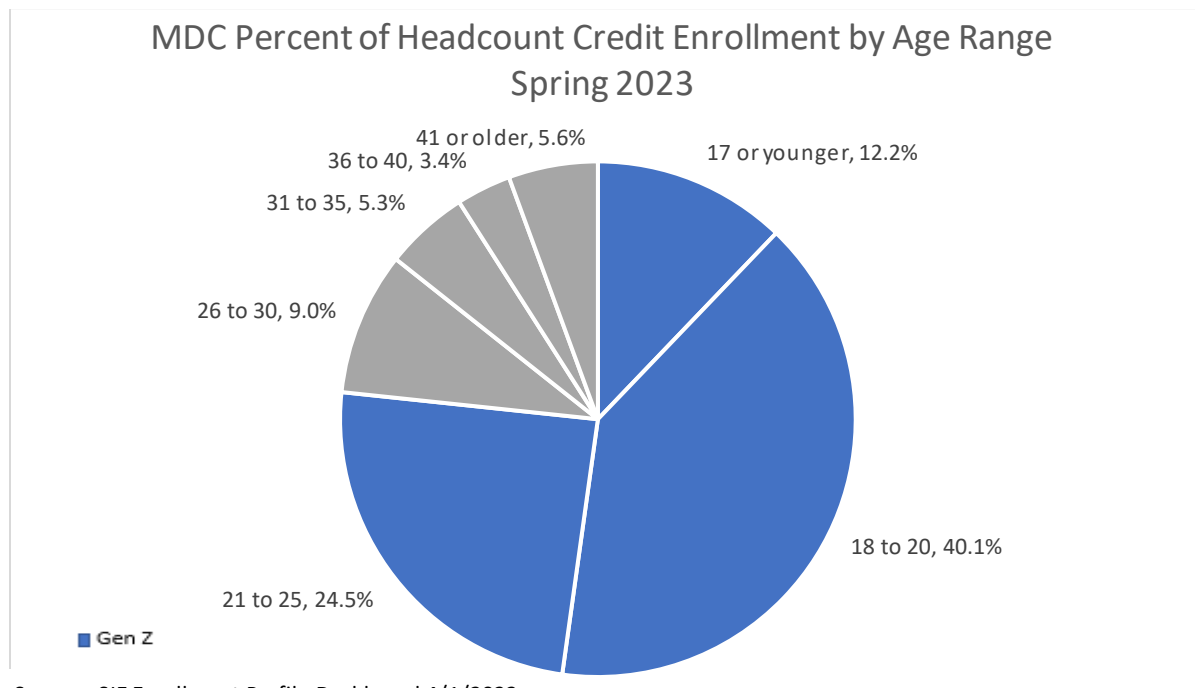
Based on Aperture Content Marketing (2022), Fromm (2021), Morning Consult, (2022) & Adam (2020)

Loveland (2022) described communications preferences among Gen Z students.



According to Pew (Vogel, et. al., 2022), Tik Tok has established itself as one of the top online platforms among members of the Gen Z generation. Recent concerns about Tik-Tok and college university bans on the app based on user data being sent to China are prompting institutions to seek alternative apps. Instagram is seen as the 2nd most popular Gen Z app and Tik-Tok content can easily be shifted to Instagram's vertical-video platform, Instagram Reels (Alonzo, 2023). YouTube and Redditt have added vertical-video to their platforms as well.

What portion of Miami Dade College credit students are part of Gen Z? In Spring 2023, about 3 out of 4 MDC students were aged 25 or younger (76.7%). Similarly, Gen Z aged students account for 78.7% of the credit hours generated at MDC in Spring 2023. Since Gen Z constitutes the primary age group of MDC students, addressing their preferences and concerns in redesigning recruitment efforts, course delivery, and other aspects of the student experience can pay dividends for enrollment and retention.



Questions for connecting with Gen Z. Fromm (2021) identified a series of questions service and content deliverers should ask themselves if they want to connect with Gen Z which have been tailored to MDC below. Authentically defining an organization's brand (Fromm 2020) & being consistent is important to Gen Z.

- **What can we learn from YouTube & TikTok (social media) to improve processes & content?** Outreach, retention, supplemental instruction, student learning & success? Use multiple digital and social media channels for marketing. . . Snapchat, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, etc.
- **What are we doing to earn and keep MDC's brand loyalists' trust?** Gen Z prefers more human and relatable approaches. More relationship oriented and less transactional. Gen X parents and Gen Z students are more distrustful of institutions. Campus safety is a concern.
- **What does MDC's brand stand for?** How have we set a social tone? Authentic actions?
- **How can we help Gen-Z get the MDC content they're after?** . . . Gen Z trains online algorithms (46%, Fromm 2021) to get the content they specifically want (using like,

comment, watch, share, etc.). Customized content tied to their preferences and available 24/7 is expected.

- **How can MDC be more upfront and transparent with Gen-Z consumers?** MDC's Why = Student Success. What's the return on investment? What's the value proposition and how do you deliver on it? (e.g., affordable, quality, life changing opportunities).

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Appendix

The Pew Research Center (2019) characterizes the following existing generations as being born during the time frame shown in parentheses

- **“Silent Generation (Born between 1928 and 1945)”** – This generation is relatively small, as factors such as the Great Depression of the 1930s and World War II in the early to mid-1940s limited the number of children people had. They are called “silent” because they tended to stay away from the public discourse of the time, such as the Vietnam War protests and the 1960s counterculture movement. They were often overshadowed in the media by a more vocal minority.
- **Baby Boomers (1946-64)** – This generation is named so because many of its members were born during the post-World War II period during which a spike in population growth occurred. Members are often considered independent, self-assured, competitive, and well as having a strong work ethic.
- **Generation X (1965-80)** – This generation was born during a time of shifting societal values, such as increased divorce rates and increased maternal participation in the workforce. As a result, members of this generation had less adult supervision compared to previous generations. Initially considered aimless and disaffected, members of this generation tend to be creative and entrepreneurial, effectively adopting rapid advances in technology.
- **Millennials (1981-96)** – Also known as Generation Y, this generation is named for the change to the new millennium that occurred around the time of their birth. They were born at a time of decreasing fertility rates around the world and tend to have fewer children than previous generations. They grew up in a time of increased internet usage and the introduction of mobile devices and social media. They also experienced significant work disruptions during the start of their working lives due the Great Recession which occurred between 2007 and 2009.
- **Generation Z – (1997-2012)** – This is the first generation to be born into a world with easy access to the internet and portable digital devices, and its members are often called “digital natives”. This “always on” dimension to their lives has led to some concerns regarding their behavior and attitudes, but the implications are still being determined. Generation Z Members have higher high school graduation rates and lower dropout rates than those who came before them and are more likely to be in college.”