

A Guide to Building Websites for Millennials

Working with a lot of millennial business owners and new entrepreneurs, I've learned to prioritize certain things above others when it comes to serving them.



Millennials respond to demonstrations of obvious authenticity, like transparent pricing comparisons or talking about the ways your competitors are indeed a better choice for their needs.

Millennials respond to unique stories and causes that give their purchases a deeper meaning.



Millennials respond to aspects of personalization. Your product or service should be able to be customized to them or feel like it's personalized to them as much as possible.

Exuding authenticity will help you connect with millennials who are skeptical of anything that appears synthetic.

According to a Forbes article, "Authentic is defined as being true to one's personality, spirit or character." So if your average employee age is older, you don't have to pretend to be young, hip and trendy. Instead, play off the classic and trustworthy angle. Be true to the spirit of your company and your current realities.



An in-depth guide I put together on branding for millennials speaks to how millennials are hyper-connected, overstimulated and may be more attracted to simple branding. Rather than clinging to flashy ads, they may be persuaded more by a single story of a real customer who used your solution to great effect.

To help your brand build a story around a product or service, answer the following questions about your target market.

1. What are the specifics of their situation as it pertains to the solution you offer?
2. How did they use the solution to move beyond their challenges?
3. How will the solution benefit the good of the whole, rather than just the individual who applies it?

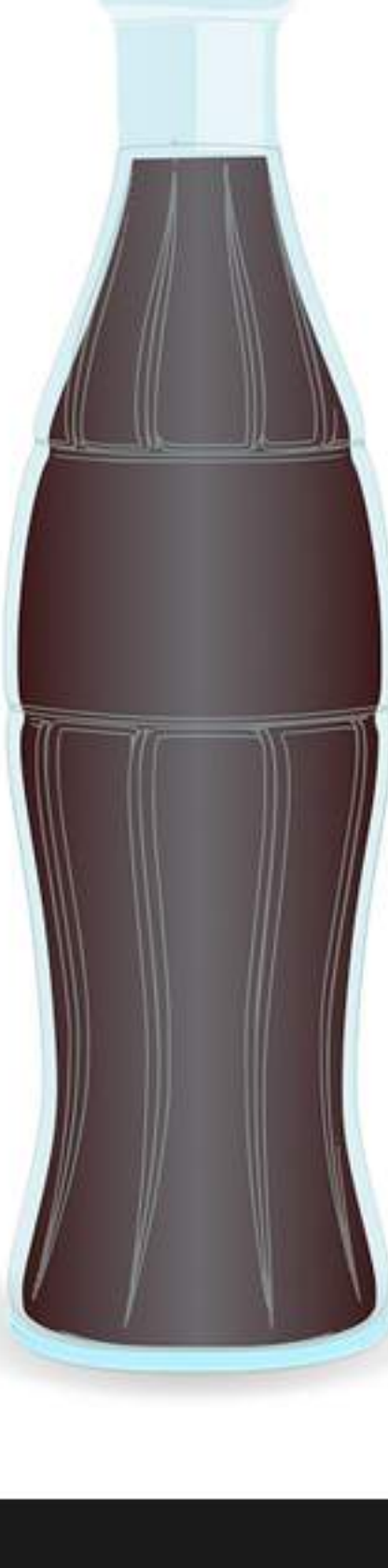
An AdAge article recently dropped the bombshell on brand marketers. It shows that just **over half (51%) of millennials have no real preference between private-label and national brands**, according to the study by Cadent Consulting Group. To be successful when reaching millennials, brands will need to adjust their marketing efforts.

How can you support a cause that makes sense from a business standpoint? It's not enough to haphazardly attach a "5% of all profits go to some unrelated organization" to your marketing assets.

A better choice is to consider making that donation with your organization's time, choosing a matter that you're both passionate about and makes sense in conjunction with the solution your company provides. For example, a luxury home builder could assist in building one Habitat for Humanity home each year, or a software company could build an application for the community, pro bono, that improves access to local recreational trails.



Using Personalization To Sell To Millennials



Personalization is expensive, but many companies find creative ways to bring personalization into their selling process without going broke. For example, Coke's recent marketing gimmick of putting names on Coke bottles: An insane amount of work went into the Share-a-Coke, but with 235,000 tweets from 111,000 fans using the #ShareaCoke hashtag and 150 million personalized bottles sold.

Now, with your product or service, you may need to use a different application, but the principle is consistent, regardless of the situation. Make the product or solution's marketing specific to them, and emphasize this personalization in the sales process.

Take a good, hard look at your customer base. How can you expand it with these principles or build some of these tactics into your selling process, even if millennials aren't square in the middle of your prime demographic just yet? Selling to millennials is becoming more and more important with each passing year.



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