

Engaging Millennials:

4 Realities + 4 Strategies

Illustrated through Taco Bell®'s Doritos® Locos Tacos Campaigns

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Millennials ... Toughest segment to engage



Who are Millennials?

Born in the 80s and 90s, Millennials are considered the key demographic for many forward-thinking brands and marketers. At 105 million strong, the Millennial generation is 20% larger than Gen X. With their combination of huge earning power and influence over their Baby Boomer parents, Millennials have the most indirect spending power of any segment – at approximately \$500 billion. They will spend about \$200 billion annually starting in 2017¹.

What do Millennials want?

Members of this highly social, interconnected segment want to express and share their opinions with their friends in new, interesting, and fun ways. Millennials want to use new technologies to engage with the world around them. They want to be heard and stay connected. They will vouch for the brands they believe in and recommend them to others, which makes them a critical component of your brand's sales strategy².

Our experience

Here are 4 Millennial behaviors we experienced first hand while working with Taco Bell and its agencies over the past 18 months as well as 4 strategies for engaging this complicated and critical segment.

4 Realities

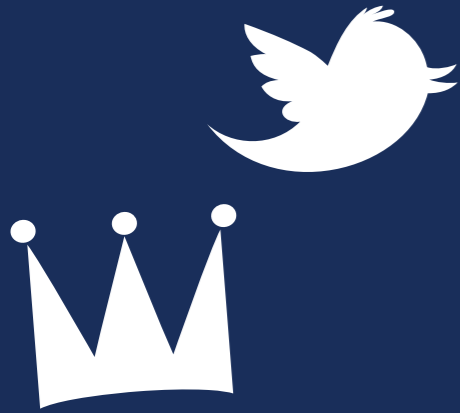
- (For the time being) Twitter is king
- Picture is worth 1,000 words
- Good hygiene is always required
- Expect omni-channel branded experiences

4 Strategies

- Maximize earned media through sharing
- Incorporate user-submitted photos
- Moderate well and moderate quickly
- One message managed across multiple channels



(For the time being) Twitter is king
but be ready for the next big thing



Reality:

Always wanting to contribute to the conversation, Millennials must be able to express themselves and often seek affirmation when making a purchasing decision³. They use social media to source peer opinions and farm important product or service insight. Right now, Twitter rules the Millennial demographic with 200 million active users who send 400 million tweets (average) per day⁴. However, Millennials are quick to adopt the ‘next big thing’ in social media, so Twitter should not rest on its success. Participation in “mature” platforms, like Facebook, is decreasing within this generation and new channels, like Snapchat, are seeing extraordinary growth⁵.

Strategy:

Allowing Millennials to express themselves within your brand experience is a powerful engagement tool. Those who participate may become ambassadors for your products and services. For existing multi-channel campaigns, brands should harness the long-tail of social sharing to achieve additional campaign lift. In addition to their Paid and Owned channels, marketers need to utilize social sharing in order to maximize Earned media. Every campaign touchpoint needs to be ‘sharable’ to maximize your customers’ enthusiasm for, and engagement with, your brand. Shareable digital content assures you the best lift, viral results, and a higher return on your marketing investment.

Aerva example:

For the 2012 #DoritosLocosTacos product launch, customer tweets were featured on digital billboards in New York and Los Angeles, as well as on TacoBell.com, Facebook and a campaign landing zone. Submitters received a Digital Keepsake showing their tweet in these high-profile out-of-home (OOH) destinations. By including buttons for forwarding, posting and tweeting, this digital content was easily sharable through social channels, which provided the campaign tremendous viral lift!





A picture is worth
1,000 words ...



Reality:

In the past few years, camera-equipped smartphones have become ubiquitous among US consumers. Instagram has become mainstream and gained the support of Facebook. TwitPic has made it simple to share user-generated content (UGC) such as photos and videos. Pictures are personal, expressive, interesting, artistic and integral to this group's culture of sharing. Photos are already the language of Millennials. Millennials, more than other generations, prefer media over text⁶. They would rather engage with pictures and videos instead of reading words off a page.

Strategy:

Harnessing Millennials' expressiveness, marketers should incorporate user-submitted photos (and even UGC videos) into their campaigns to maximize how frequently the content is shared and to receive additional campaign lift.

Aerva example:

After the 2012 #DoritosLocosTacos campaign, we saw the need to go beyond just Twitter for the next generation of Taco Bell's most successful product. In 2013, for Taco Bell® Cool Ranch Doritos® Locos Tacos product launch, Aerva built on the previous year's marketing program to include photos (along with Twitter and polling) to increase further self expression and, in turn, Millennial engagement.





Good hygiene
is always required ...



Reality:

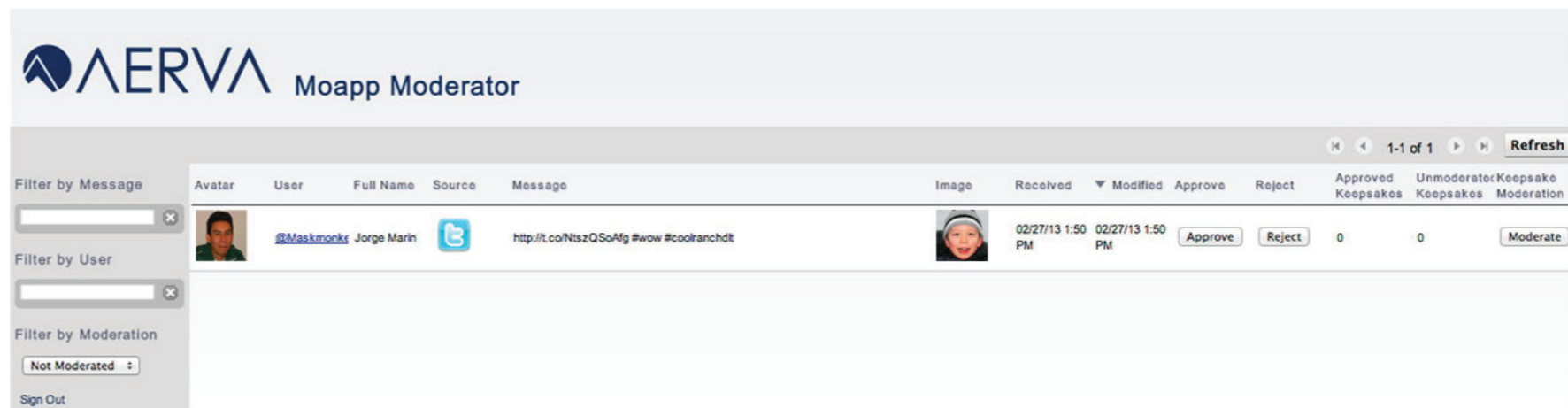
Millennials love sharing with the world the content that they create, which is why social networks and profiles have exploded in popularity. The ability to capture and share UGC is a tremendous opportunity that poses a **risk** and a greater **reward** to brands and marketers. The content and context of UGC can often be damaging to the brands without proper moderation. Additionally, this potentially damaging content can be posted to Earned media assets, seen in public through social channels and can lead to brand erosion among your fans, followers and prospective customers.

Strategy:

Because of this reality, marketers must be able to efficiently and effectively allow potential customers, fans and followers to engage their brand through UGC, but also protect their brand image. The trick to navigating these dangerous waters is in how you are able to moderate the UGC. We call this good hygiene. Moderation is critical to protecting the quality of the experience and your brand from unflattering, dangerous content being posted within your brand environment. Systems must be installed to safely and easily moderate in-bound UGC in a timely fashion.

Aerva example:

Aerva's social media/UGC integration platform has built-in automated moderation engines as well as a user-friendly moderation interface to allow brand marketers the ability to review and approve all UGC, along with avatars and handles incorporated in programs. This system protects the brand and provides almost instantaneous review and approve capabilities.





Expect omni-channel
branded experiences ...



Reality:

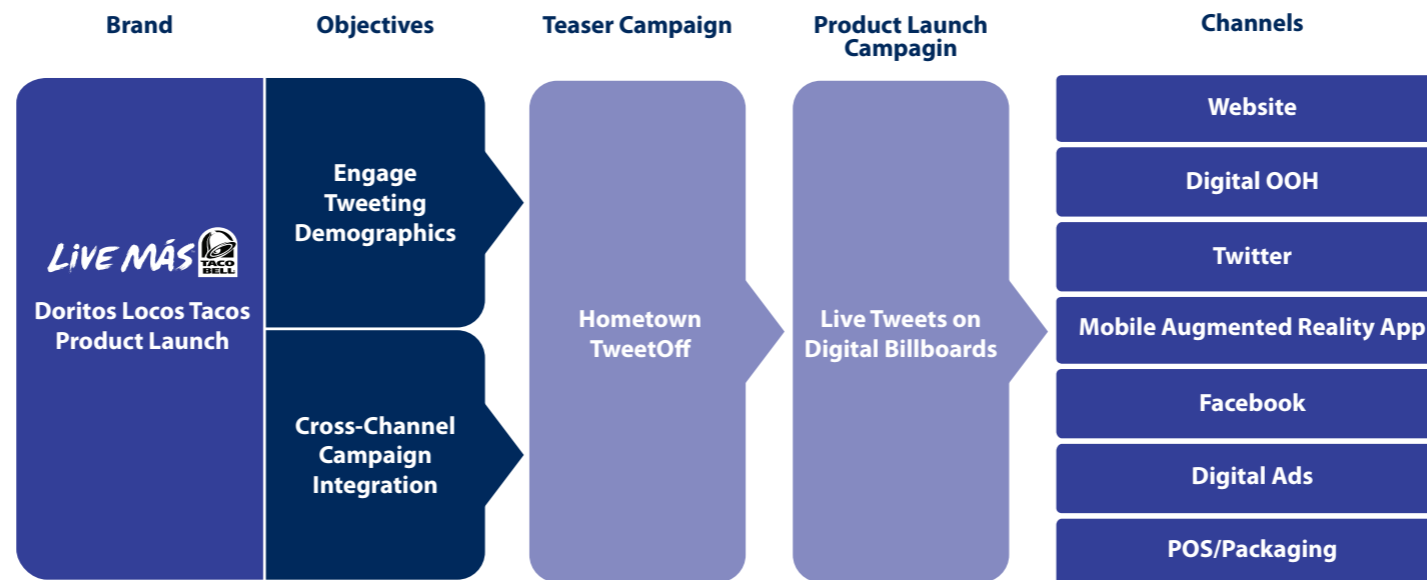
Millennials are constantly bombarded with information⁷. They engage in “media switching” between different channels (magazine, book, etc.) and platforms (smartphone, tablet, TV, etc.) up to 27 times per hour – that’s once every other minute!⁸ Brands, with entertaining, engaging, and interesting messages, that are delivered through omni-channel campaigns and create one-on-one interaction between their customers and their brand will succeed in capturing the attention of Millennials. This is done through the creative integration of Paid, Owned and Earned media channels.

Strategy:

Have one message, offer, and opportunity delivered to this audience through a combination of video, online, traditional, OOH, digital, WOM and social channels . . . in a clever and standout fashion that will reach this audience. The trick is to connect with them on their ‘1st, 2nd and 3rd screens’ with a cohesive program.

Aerva example:

Taco Bell’s #DoritosLocosTacos campaign leveraged Paid (DOOH, broadcast), Owned (in-store, POS, tacobell.com, Facebook fan page, YouTube) and Earned (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) - as well as Augmented Reality engagement - resulting in their most successful product launch campaign in history. Aerva’s platform played a central role in integrating the digital assets of this massive campaign and allowed for easy management and a consistent customer experience.



Summary



Millennials are the most critical demographic to most forward-thinking marketers. With the help of Aerva, Taco Bell has had tremendous success engaging this audience and establishing a direct relationship between their brand and their individual consumers through social media. The Locos Tacos campaigns illustrate that these realities and strategies, as well as others, are vitally important to successfully engaging the Millennial segment:

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Aerva's Solution for Effective (and Safe) Integration of Social Media with your Brand

Aerva's marketing software platform helps brands engage customers one-to-one by integrating social media, user-generated content, mobile interactivity and digital display networks (Digital Out of Home, place-based, enterprise-wide, web-based, etc.)

Top brands, and their agencies, partner with Aerva to effectively align their Paid, Owned and Earned media and to easily and safely manage their multi-channel campaigns' digital content.

To learn how Aerva can help your brand better engage your customers, please contact me at:



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Find us on:



Customer sampling



Endnotes

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¹ <http://adage.com/article/digitalnext/millennials-party-brand-terms/236444/>

² <http://barkleyus.com/millennials>

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³ <http://barkleyus.com/millennials>

⁴ <https://business.twitter.com/whos-twitter>

⁵ <http://www.wbur.org/2013/04/03/email-real-time-chat-on-point>

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⁶ <http://visit.bluewatertech.com/engaging-digital-consumers>

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⁷ <http://barkleyus.com/millennials>

⁸ <http://visit.bluewatertech.com/engaging-digital-consumers>