

# The **Connected** Generation.

12 of the digital youth trends you need to know  
about in 2017.



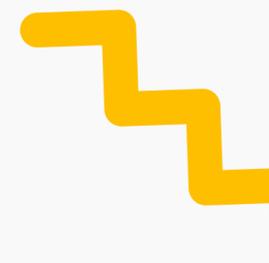


# MEET THE CONNECTED GENERATION.

This new wave of individuals, born 1980 – 2000, are changing the shape of business faster than ever before. So if you have any interest in owning a stake in the digital realm, you should get to know its future leaders better.

In the UK alone there are over 16 million millennials consuming digital media on a daily basis. Unlike any generation before them, they are constantly connected, acting as sponges to innumerable information. This is the Connected Generation - the heir to the throne of the digital kingdom, bringing with them a whole new way of thinking, doing and consuming.

**To help you make sense of it all, here are our 12 future digital youth trends you should know about, so that you can stay ahead of the game.**



# 1. TRADITIONAL ADVERTISING IS DEAD.

**FROM 2010 – 2015, GLOBAL AD BLOCKER USAGE WENT UP FROM 21 MILLION TO 198 MILLION.**

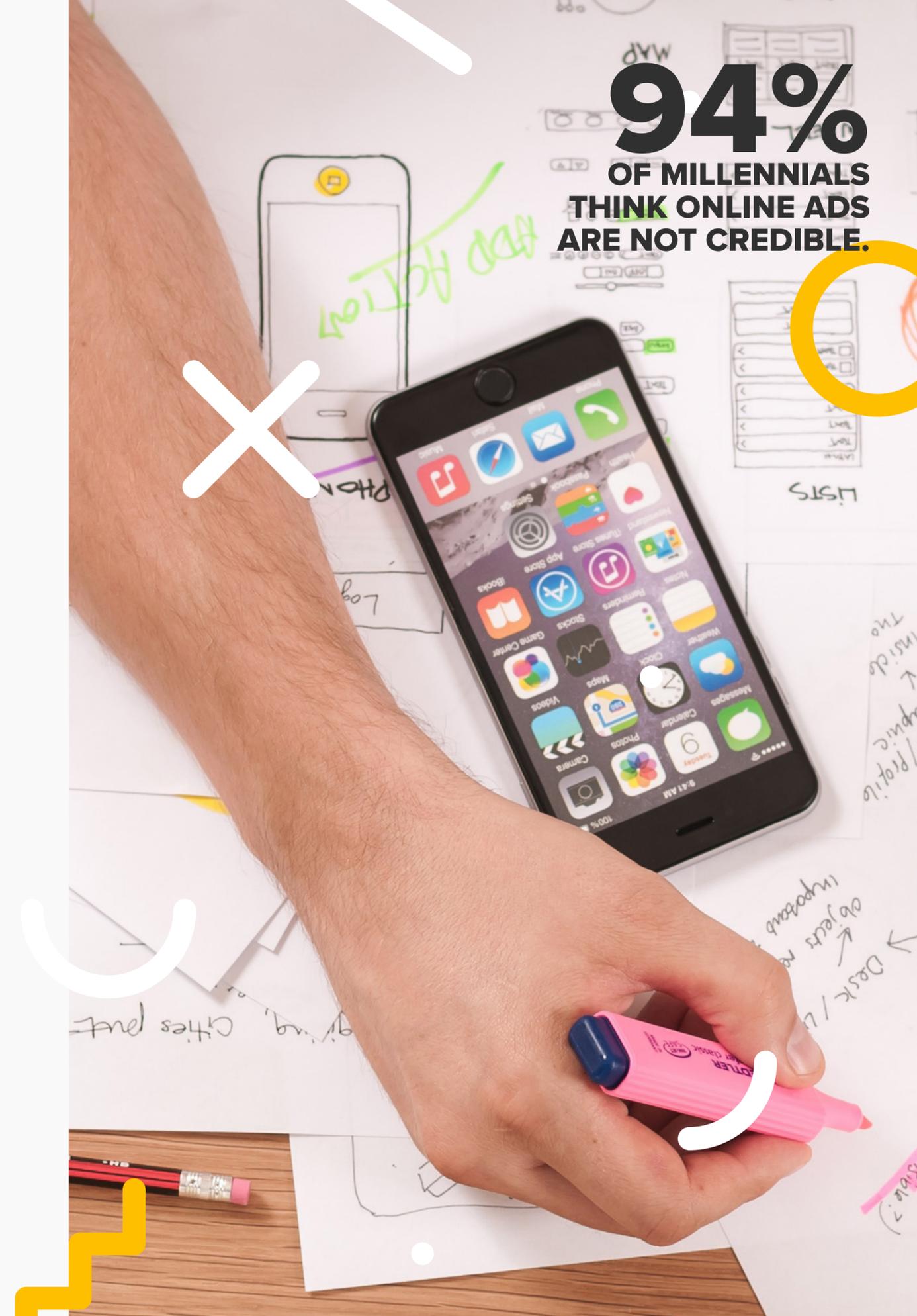
Over the last five years we have seen the rise of influencer marketing, helping brands build credible partnerships that are authentic and grow long-term relationships. According to AdWeek, a survey last year “Found that only 6% of millennials believe that online ads are credible.” They find their heroes on social media platforms.

Terms such as ‘Insta-famous’ and the continuous rise of Instagram Stories and Snapchat have added to the value of discovery online. Like no other generation, young people today are well informed about products and consumer goods, and they are less prepared to trust traditional advertising meaning if brands want their disposable income spent with them they need to think outside the box when it comes to targeting this generation.

## **DON'T CONFORM**

**Forget traditional media, plans and advertising. Using influencers and engaging with audiences are the best ways to position in culture authentically. Put the consumers' interest first and win them over.**

**94%**  
**OF MILLENNIALS**  
**THINK ONLINE ADS**  
**ARE NOT CREDIBLE.**





## 2. IT'S ALWAYS THE QUIET ONES.

Social media empowers young people who would otherwise be considered introverted in everyday life (Mark Zuckerberg changed the face of this forever). Research shows that the introverted millennials are the big content creators who churn out game-changing digital innovation.

Our advice to you? Block out all the noise and bright lights to see where the hidden gems of influence lie. Frankly, the online space is saturated with accounts with big numbers to their names, so it is up to you to sift through them to find the most appropriate one for your brand. But don't rule out the quiet kid who's on the come up! If you catch a rising star early enough, you might just bag yourself a bargain and your brand a one-way ticket to marketing stardom.

### DO YOUR RESEARCH!

**Use influencer tools such as our “Find Your Influencer” page, it will help you get real insight into who to work with and their potential value.**

# 3. BUILD IT AND THEY WILL COME.

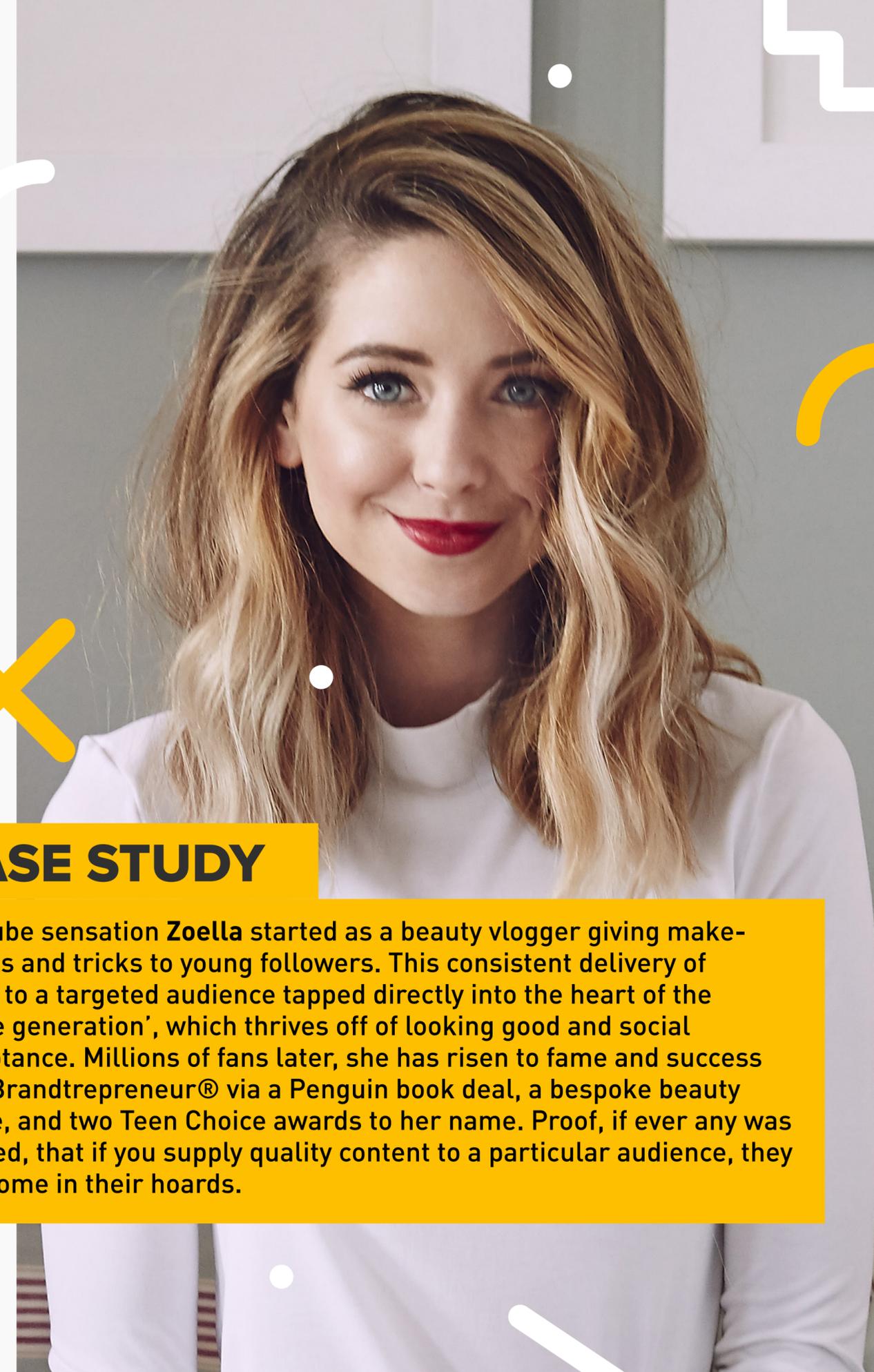
**80% of web traffic will consist of video by 2019, according to Cisco.**

Delivering consistent valuable video content attracts attention, lots of it. Self-education, particularly in the digital sphere, has become embedded in our daily interactions and often subconsciously too. If we have a query, we 'Google' it, or turn to Quora for some substantial advice. If we want to learn something new, we can watch a tutorial on YouTube. This generation has squashed together their thirst for knowledge and their desire for social validation, providing tonnes of demand for these services. This has opened the door for video streams of how-tos; nuggets of digestible content designed to administer self-help on any subject, both niche and mainstream.

**Influencer marketing can be highly rewarding. Think about how to forge long term relationships, rights deals and partnerships. You will get more value and inspire success.**

## CASE STUDY

YouTube sensation Zoella started as a beauty vlogger giving make-up tips and tricks to young followers. This consistent delivery of value to a targeted audience tapped directly into the heart of the 'selfie generation', which thrives off of looking good and social acceptance. Millions of fans later, she has risen to fame and success as a Brandpreneur® via a Penguin book deal, a bespoke beauty range, and two Teen Choice awards to her name. Proof, if ever any was needed, that if you supply quality content to a particular audience, they will come in their hoards.





## 4. THEY REALLY ARE CONSTANTLY CONNECTED.

The constantly Connected Generation sees technology as its greatest ally and its most reliable companion. There was a time when parents and teachers were the first port of call to solve an unknown with a trip to the library being a close second.

Now, the answer is only a click away or there is an app to neatly guide you with expertly composed UX design. Millennials have quickly become accustomed to the speed of this instant era where computers, smartphones and tablets are vehicles for receiving information incredibly quickly.

Everything you share online as a company has the potential to go viral online. If you execute this the right way, these individuals will swiftly become your brand advocates and start creating user generated content (UGC) promoting your business without even being prompted.

**It's less likely these guys are going to stop and listen, find a way to be part of an ongoing conversation. The more brands can feel native to them the more likely they are to respond.**

# 5. A GENERATION OF DIY'ERS.

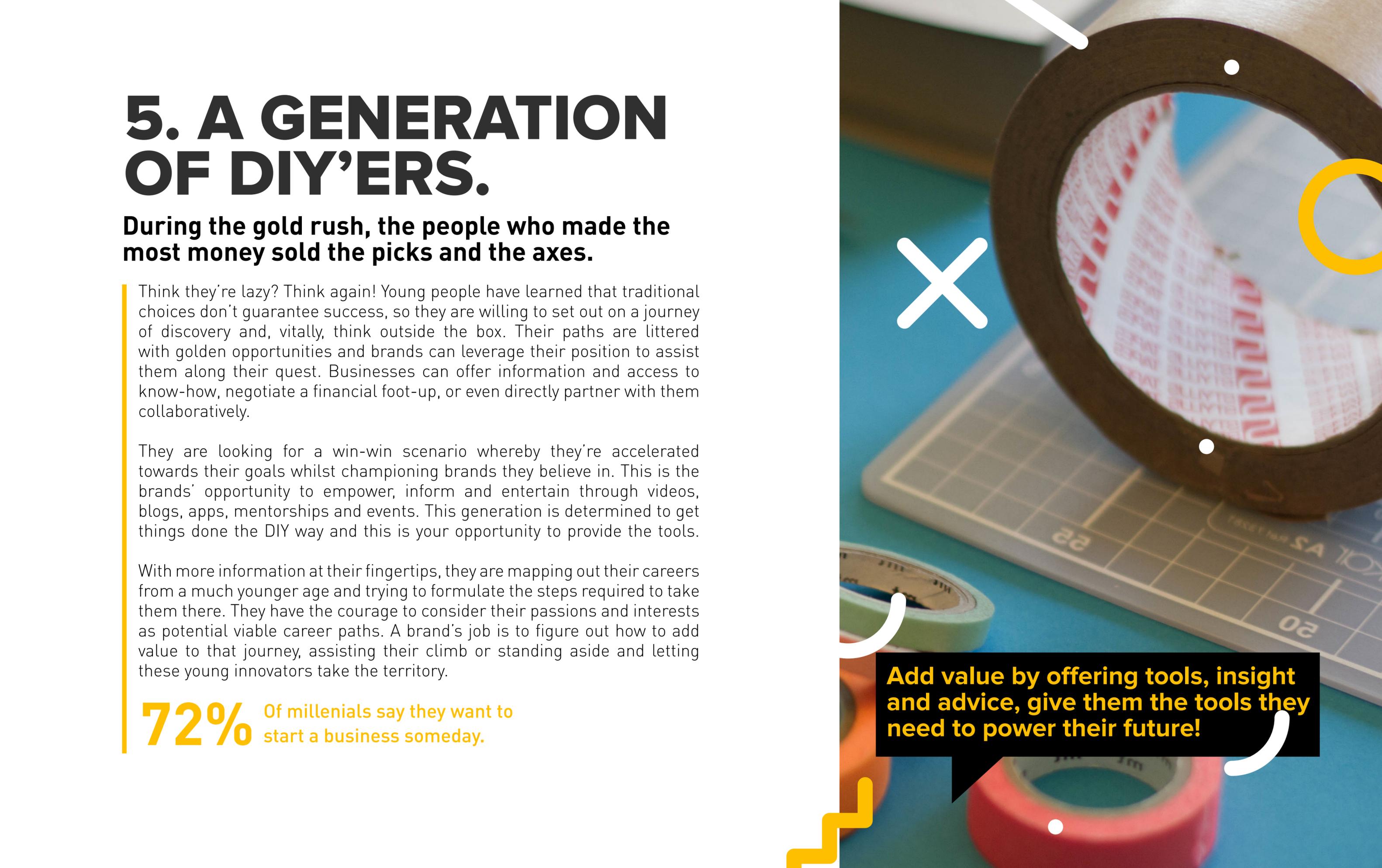
**During the gold rush, the people who made the most money sold the picks and the axes.**

Think they're lazy? Think again! Young people have learned that traditional choices don't guarantee success, so they are willing to set out on a journey of discovery and, vitally, think outside the box. Their paths are littered with golden opportunities and brands can leverage their position to assist them along their quest. Businesses can offer information and access to know-how, negotiate a financial foot-up, or even directly partner with them collaboratively.

They are looking for a win-win scenario whereby they're accelerated towards their goals whilst championing brands they believe in. This is the brands' opportunity to empower, inform and entertain through videos, blogs, apps, mentorships and events. This generation is determined to get things done the DIY way and this is your opportunity to provide the tools.

With more information at their fingertips, they are mapping out their careers from a much younger age and trying to formulate the steps required to take them there. They have the courage to consider their passions and interests as potential viable career paths. A brand's job is to figure out how to add value to that journey, assisting their climb or standing aside and letting these young innovators take the territory.

**72%** Of millennials say they want to start a business someday.



**Add value by offering tools, insight and advice, give them the tools they need to power their future!**



## 6. ENTERTAIN THEM OR GET LOST.

**Over 30% of millennial consumers say they would share branded content if they like it.**

Our research demonstrated that the Connected Generation consider the following brands to be their favourite to support: Apple, Nike, Samsung, Sony and Microsoft. Among those companies, the ability to trigger three emotions – joy, trust and anticipation – boosted their ability to earn attention and engagement from this generation.

These brands have been tapping into the passion points by getting involved in the real things that millennials enjoy. These include: sports, music, gaming and popular culture. For us, entertainment is the number one motivation to connect and transcends all others when it comes to consumer validation. These young digital natives prefer a brand to be fun and entertaining rather than informative and news-like by a margin of 6 to 1. They are then more inclined to share content and become your unofficial ambassador, carrying your brand far and wide. It is through this multi-network sharing process that knowledge of a brand spreads. We suggest you view your consumers as co-creators of the brand who fly the flag in their own way. Acknowledging this encourages them to curate and share more.

**Invite people to become part of the journey, tell them a story and get them invested. advertising is no longer “buy this product, it works”. The approach must be informative, engaging and entertaining.**

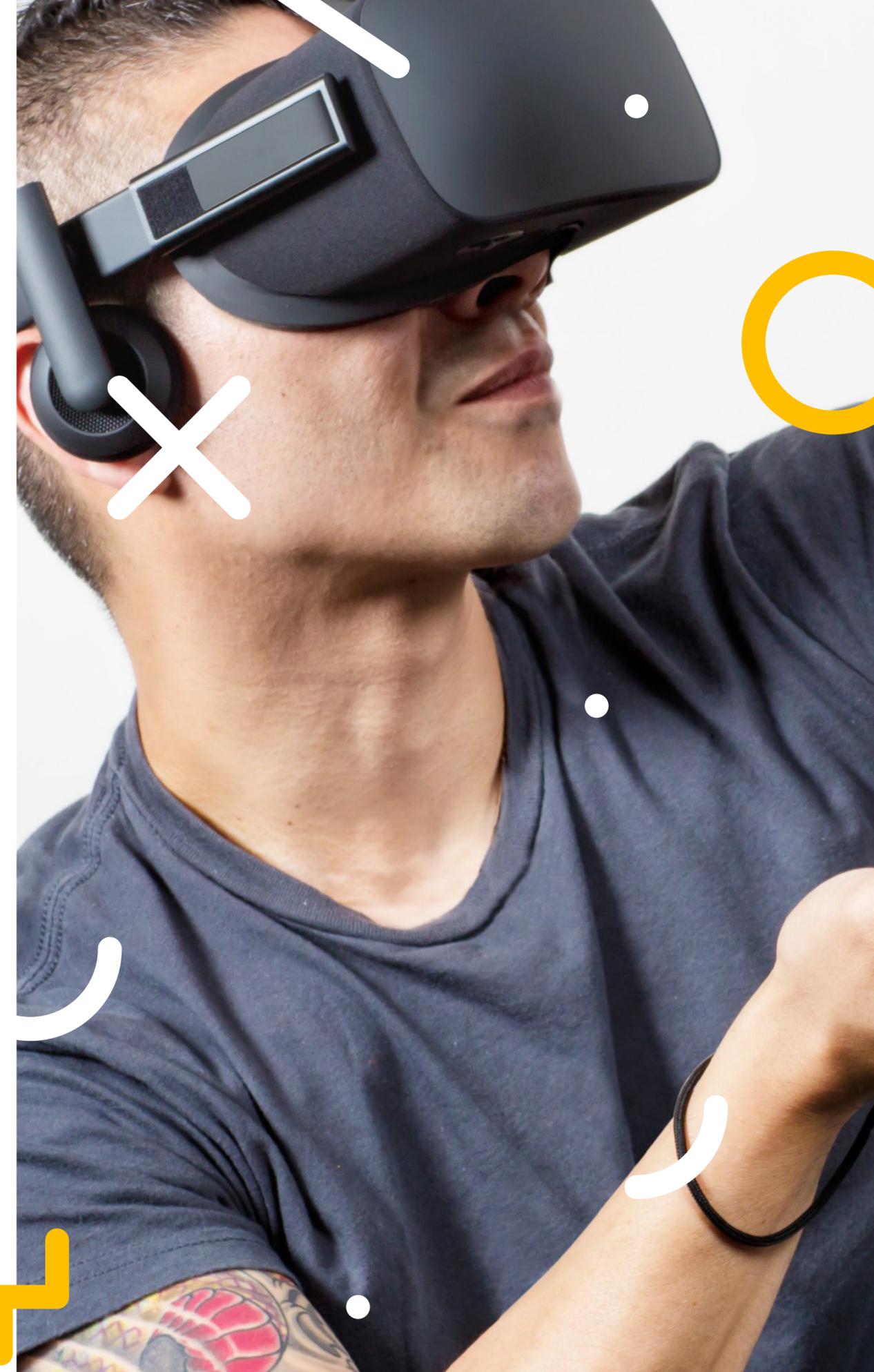
# 7. THAT VIRTUAL REALITY LIFE.

Virtual reality (VR) is an area of technology which is quickly gaining momentum in the gaming and entertainment world. Consumers crave novelty and innovation from companies, so marketers should already be thinking about ways they can integrate it into their customer experience.

VR is an immersive experience. Call it transport technology that provides unique access to an otherwise impenetrable world. A large majority of people seldom get to see magnificent events such as Formula 1 races, Beyonce concerts from the front row, or immense NBA games live from a courtside seat for themselves. Now, these experiences can be opened up to a vast audience through this revolutionary technology.

It is an area of tech which millennials are most excited about and for good reason. Companies are investing vast amounts into VR research and application, plus there are countless conferences taking place around the globe, specifically to educate inquisitive brands and consumers.

**VR is shaking up a cluster of industries, from shopping and travel to education and entertainment. Get ahead and exploring ways in which you can implement this technology into your customer experience.**





## 8. THERE'S NO TIME LIKE REAL-TIME.

**Brands can leverage interest by offering exclusive content which has an impending expiration date, forcing urgency and attention.**

Among the ever increasing dominance of the smartphone and the evolution of the constantly connected millennial, the concept of 'real-time social media' has taken centre stage. From Periscope and Facebook Live, to Snapchat and Instagram live videos, the idea of 'here today, gone tomorrow' has a very prominent and exciting existence in the digital stratosphere. For brands and marketers, it is a luring trend because it entices the attention of the consumer like no other form of advertising. The possibility of missing out on a piece of content is too much for millennials to overlook.

Snapchat and the new Instagram Stories are important because it's truly the first format for the mobile first generation. Real-time is key, since the inception of social media marketing, brands and agencies have been searching for the best methods to deliver integrated campaigns that make connect instantly.

### BE REACTIVE, BE REAL-TIME

**Being tapped into real-time culture allows brands to pounce on any trend or conversation. Social media plans should now involve real-time content – it is essential.**

# 9. THE RISE OF THE CHATBOTS.

**67% of millennials surveyed by Myclever Agency prefer chatbots as a channel of communication with service providers.**

It's a fact that millennials love to chat. Messaging apps like WhatsApp, Kik and Facebook Messenger are now bigger than social networks and there is no sign of their growth slowing down. These apps fulfill their need to take part in multiple conversations with their friends, family members and colleagues – merging reality with digital. And in 2017 a new conversation will be thrown into the mix.

Introducing the chatbot, a service you interact with using a chat interface. Just think of the bot as a digital human friend. Brands can now use chatbots within messaging apps to get all up in the business of their customers and develop a personal relationship with them; meeting their desire for instant communication.

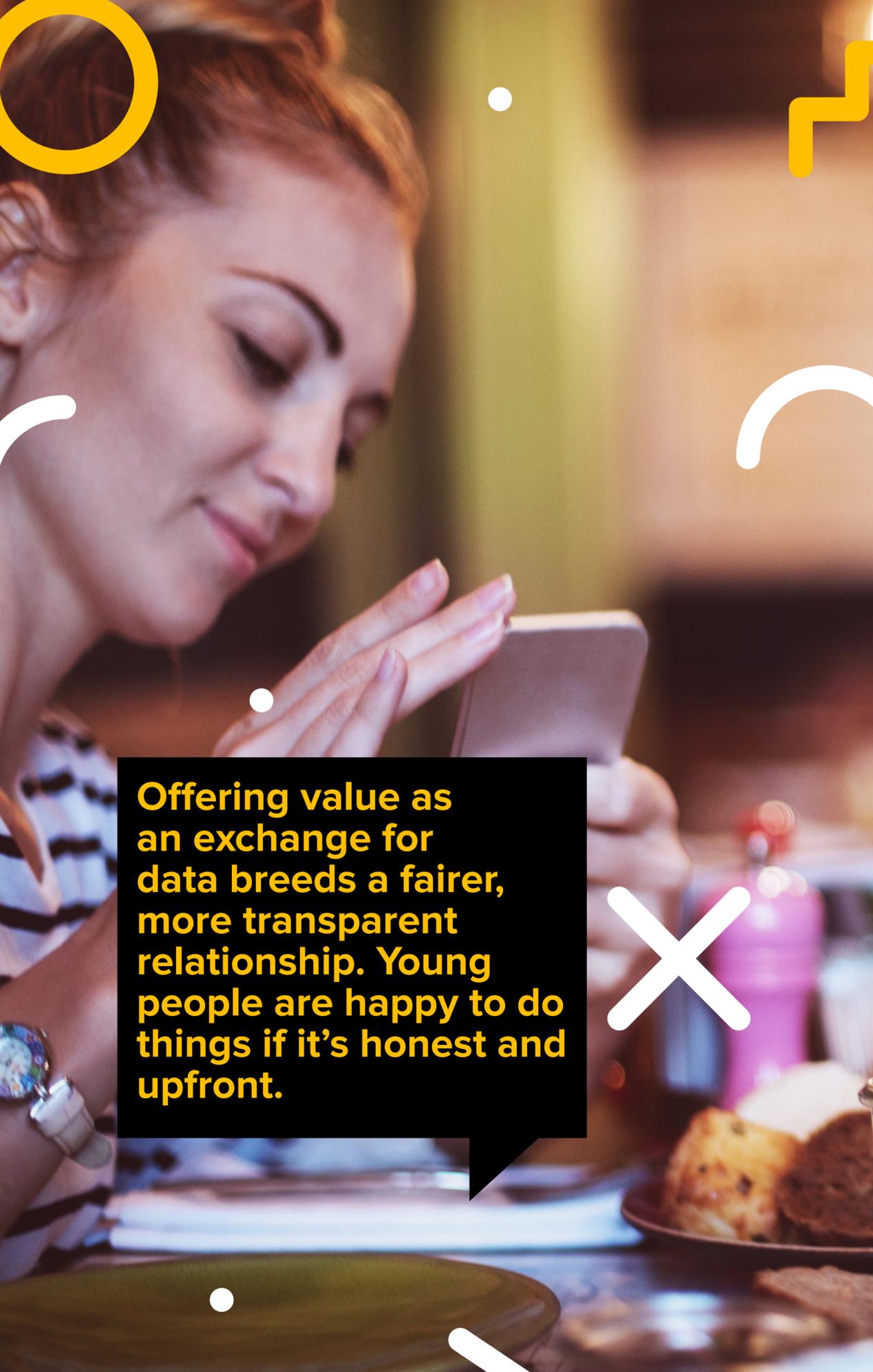
**To guarantee a successful chatbot experience, make sure you choose the right messaging service to partner with. Find out which apps your target market is using and what conversations they want to have with you.**

## CASE STUDY

**Trailblazing youth food brand Dominos has tapped into using chatbots with multiple messaging apps.**

Their easy order service can be accessed “anywhere” with a simple tap and click- perfect for Twitter fingered millennials who can order a pizza by using #EasyOrder. And when they are on Facebook, all they have to do is chat to Dominos using Facebook messenger. Simple. If that isn't instant enough, customers can also chat to them using text, voice, Amazon Echo, Smart watches and TV. Here's the thing; customers want to chat to brands they love, so make it easy for them to communicate with you by creating an automated service experience that understands them, satisfies their needs and serves them life enriching content.





# 10. FOMO TO FOBO.

## **FOMO is the Fear of Missing Out FOBO is the Fear of Being Offline.**

The fear of missing out or not being in the know causes anxiety and a sense of diminishing social importance. These are strong motivators and ones which have been harvested by sales people for centuries.

Fast-forward to 2017, the fear of being offline is a widespread phenomenon. We've all experienced seeing young people around dinner table, at the train station or at a bar with their heads down and eyes fixed to a screen. These FOBO habits feed a wealth of data to network providers, companies and marketers. The more you are online, the more data you are transmitting, which means you could be leaving quite a large digital footprint.

While the security and privacy issues related to this are up for debate, one thing for certain is that billions of pounds worth of data, or 'social currency', is being circulated on a daily basis.

Brands can take comfort from FOBO, knowing that there is a constantly connected audience to take advantage of. The digital nation prides itself of being 'in the know' and permanently wired up to the internet. They loosely act as A&R's for online content, talent and entertainment, spotting vloggers, bloggers and Instagrammers. Consequently, they assess the value before them and decide if it is worth sharing.

**Offering value as an exchange for data breeds a fairer, more transparent relationship. Young people are happy to do things if it's honest and upfront.**



# 11. SHARING IS CARING.

**65% of our surveyed millennials agreed that they favoured sharing over ownership.**

Open integration and information sharing is at the crux of the Internet and the foundation of its popularity. Think about how often this process occurs through things like conversations, reviews, transactions, crowdfunding and social media.

Most millennials belong to what we would consider a sharing platform online because they value access far more than ownership. This new school of thought is driving a different kind of economy which is more focused on community and collaboration than accumulation and ownership. The Connected Generation shares openly and at scale – they are your ambassadors waiting for you to show them something worth representing.

## CASE STUDY

A company excellently taking advantage of this mentality nouveau is Uber. Uber firstly empowers the consumer to earn extra income by working for the company in their own time and leisure. Secondly, it has introduced UberPool which invites customers to share journeys in order to save money. The fact that Uber sees this as a viable option shows how open this generation is to sharing resources. This new model of collaborative consumption is huge and it is here to stay. For brands and companies, the alarm bells of opportunity should be ringing in the boardrooms because the sharing economy is a highly lucrative one.

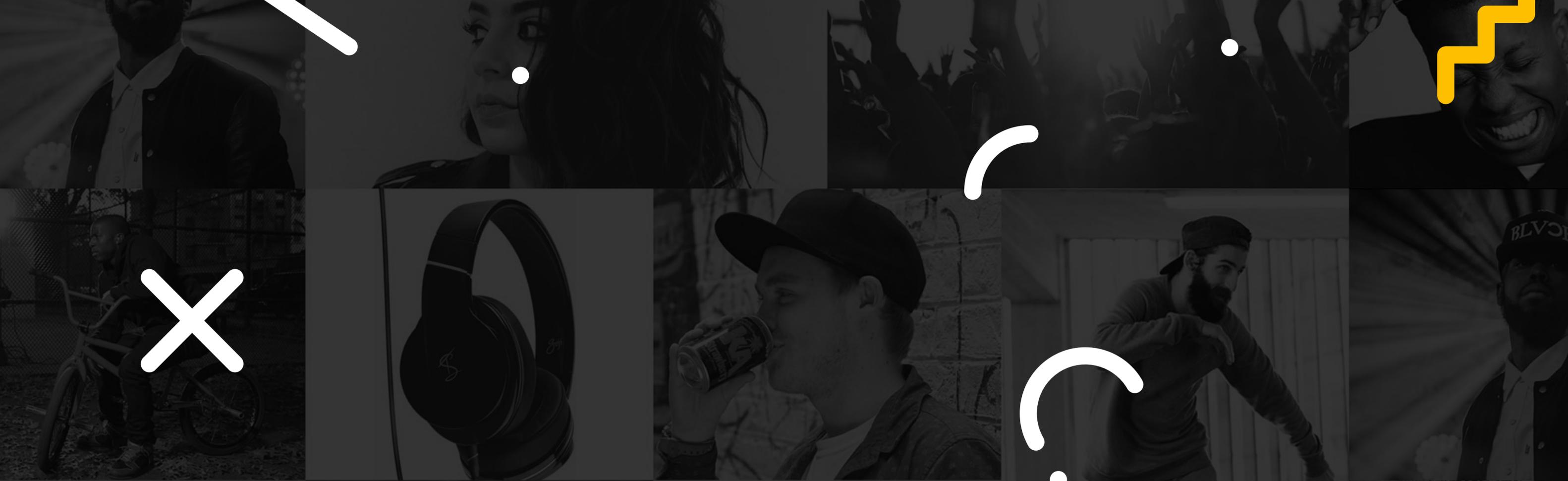


## 12. WHAT ARE YOU SAYIN'?

The oxford dictionary have never had a harder time! A mixture of cultures and technology has bred new ways of connecting, effecting our language. Social media and influencers can spread sayings in moments. In the same vein unknown people can turn overnight celebrities via memes, Vine's and YouTube videos, new words such and phrases such as 'bae' and 'on fleek' can crop up instantly. Young people are more experimental, and adaptable as ever and the constant speed at which culture shifts influences this.

As young people increasingly have more friends to message, more apps to use it means less time. Conversations are shortening, snaps are more efficient and emojis can say more. This is the new language, in a 140 character universe.

**When communicating with the Connected Generation, be visual, use less text and more images. a picture is worth a 1000 words remember!**



**We Make  
Brands Famous.**

[www.disruptltd.com](http://www.disruptltd.com)

**Work with us to make your brand famous.**  
[holla@disruptltd.com](mailto:holla@disruptltd.com)

**Find out more about the connected generation,  
or to book a talk, drop us an email.**  
[connectedgen@disruptltd.com](mailto:connectedgen@disruptltd.com)

### **Research Sources**

Disrupt Lab, TrendHunter, RSA Org, A.S.B.O Gen, Presentation, Sparks & Honey insight, Voxburner Report, UK Insight Report, Goldman Sachs Report, [thisisinfluential.com](http://thisisinfluential.com)