



THE DINGLEY PRESS

Your Catalog Partner



Generational *focus*

THINKING CROSS-GENERATIONALLY ABOUT YOUR CATALOG CAN HAVE GREAT IMPACT FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Cross-generational appeal is more important to your catalog program than you might realize. Even so, it is imperative to understand who the bulk of your audience is. By segmenting your customers, you can target them much more efficiently. When this happens your message becomes powerful.

Generation is more than just an age

An article posted by AccountingWeb.com explains, "...the way in which you brand and market your offering is highly relevant across multiple generations. However, the probability is that each generation will respond differently based on their cumulative experience as a generation. The key is to know your audience and its demographic composition before you begin planning your media programs" ([read more of this article](#)).



Generation is not just an age. As the article states, it is an accumulation of shared experiences among many individuals. By understanding generations and the experiences they share, it is much easier to make a connection that holds buying power. Many brands have a specific generation they are aiming for while others have a much more diverse audience. Both strategies are legitimate and depend on what kind of brand you have and what your ultimate goals are. No matter what type of catalog brand you have—whether it is a generation focused brand or a more diverse focused brand—this white paper will look at strategies that will help you reach an audience in multiple or select generations.



"Few will have the greatness to bend history itself; but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total; of all those acts will be written the history of this generation."

~Robert Kennedy



Strategies to help you reach multiple generations

Market Across Channels

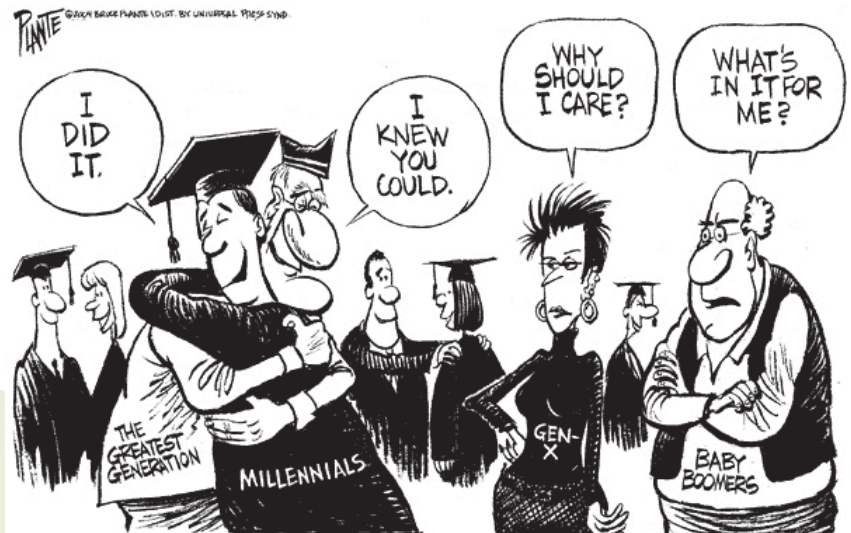
This might seem obvious; however, one sure fire way of reaching out to multiple generations is to make sure you use all channels to market. This means social media, blogging, cold calls, and catalogs. According to the pewinternet.org [data trends](#) of offline adults, 2013 statistics reveal that only 14% of adults do not use the internet. That's not a very high number. Statistics also show that catalogs are the preferred choice marketing among Baby Boomer through Generation Y. How many of these catalog purchases are made online is near impossible to track, and, it doesn't really matter. What matters is that you're making the sale. After all, the best way to reach diversity is to be diverse yourself.

Segment Your Mail List and Create Multiple Versions of Your Catalog:

Another strategy would be to create multiple versions of your catalog geared towards each generation you are targeting. This would take a certain amount of effort to collect data about your mail list prior to your mailing. However, taking the extra time to target market your generation could be extremely valuable.

Create a New Title:

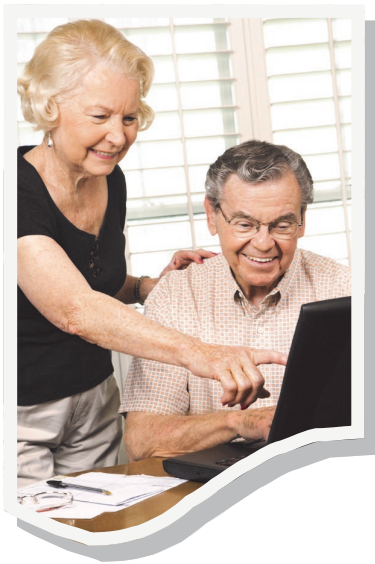
Subsidiaries allow you to create separate branding and marketing. This allows business to focus on two different targets in two different sects, such as Baby Boomers and Generation Y. Creating a subsidiary is a viable option if you have popularity in dual age groups and are not sure how to divide your branding between the two.



20TH CENTURY INNER CHILD



21ST CENTURY INNER CHILD



The Baby Boomers

"As the baby boomers like me are retiring and getting ready to retire, they will spend whatever it takes - and they're the wealthiest generation in our country - to make themselves live an enjoyable life in their retirement years. —David Rubenstein

Who they are: An in-depth blue paper called [Marketing to Baby Boomers](#) put out by cataloger and marketing experts 4imprint describes the generation best when they describe the Boomers as being "the generation that

witnessed and participated in some of the greatest social changes in the country's history." This is the generation that was born between the mid 40's to the mid 60's. "...they're the folks that lived through unprecedented social and technological advances.... [they] witnessed the dawn of space exploration, accessibility to long-distance travel and unprecedented prosperity."

Their attitudes, interests, and values: The leaps in advancement the Boomers experienced socially, technologically, environmentally, and economically are vast. In the 60's and 70's when they were coming of age, the country was in somewhat social disarray. They were divided by differing beliefs in politics and social statuses and inequalities. They lived through the Civil Rights Movements, the Women's Movement, and many more of some of the most rapid and shocking social changes in the country. Because of this they have somewhat of an "I can change the world" attitude.

But they are not always optimistic. Rapid changes in the economy and big business affairs have changed retirement and this has them a bit frazzled. An article published by valueoptions.com explains that "although Baby Boomers often are portrayed as the postwar generation of opportunity and optimism, many members worry about retirement and have failed to adequately prepare for the transition from work to retirement" ([read the article](#)).

How to market to them: The Baby Boomers are extremely focused on bettering their conditions, whether it be health, happiness, or finances. Here are some useful tips that will help you market to this generation in your catalog

Coupons: Statistics show that people with an income of \$100,000 or more per year are most likely to use

coupons (see article [Smart, Rich, Responsible People Love Coupons](#)). Since Baby Boomers carry a hefty percentage of wealth, many would certainly fall into this category. An article posted on [grandparents.com](#) explains "Boomers are especially high users [of coupons]. ...93.8 percent of 45- to 54-year-olds use coupons, and 94.7 percent of those age 55 to 64 shop with them." Much of this stems from the traditional mentality that every little bit helps, especially when it comes to saving money.

Emphasize Personal Growth and Happiness: This brings us to the next topic. As the Boomers love to better their finances with the usage of coupons, they likewise are attracted to anything that will emphasize personal growth and happiness as well. The Boomers are an incredibly active group of retirees and they don't want to be marketed to as 'old people.' They want to be made to feel young and vibrant and they want products that will do that for them as well. When picking our product models and images for your catalogs try to remember to pick out images that emphasize personal growth. For more information on this topic check out the article [4 Tips for Marketing to Baby Boomers in the Digital Age](#).

Create a Direct Pathway for Communication: One thing I recall about my Mother and Step Father (both are Baby Boomers) is the amount of frustration they would experience not being able to reach a real person. If you don't have a person on the other line of the 800 number you print on your catalog, you will lose sales from this population. These folks need to know you care about their well-being or they will find someone else who does.

Why target them: A recent article published on October 4th by directmarketingvoice.com, [Reaching Baby Boomers Through Direct Mail Postcards](#), explains that "Baby Boomers control 70% of all disposable income." Not only that but the "Baby Boomer demographic is arguably the most valuable of all for marketers due to its combination of significant buying power, openness to new brands, and high direct mail response rate." This is huge. If you are not marketing to this generation, you might want to start thinking about why not?

Generation X

"The best day of your life is the one on which you decide your life is your own. No apologies or excuses. No one to lean on, rely on, or blame. The gift is yours - it is an amazing journey - and you alone are responsible for the quality of it. This is the day your life really begins." -Bob Moawad

Who they are: Generation X is unique in that it makes up less of a percentage than any other generation. Born from the mid '60's to late '70's, this generation like its successor Gen Y have been bombarded with media. Unlike Gen Y, however, Gen X seems to have a wider array of skepticism for brands, most likely as a result of hard financial times through recessions. This generation does not like to be told what to do and unless they feel like they are making their own decisions, you can forget about making a sale.

Their Atti-

tudes, interests, and values:

Gen X grew up in one of the most rapidly changing times. A time when "mimeograph machines turned into high-speed copiers, faxes plodded from 30 minutes a page to seconds, and heavy adding machines were replaced with handheld calculators. Whereas computers were the size of whole buildings for the Traditional Generation and whole rooms for Baby Boomers, the computer now became a desktop appliance" (see article on valueoptions.com). In addition the article points out that:

Advancements in technology and exposure to music television brought different cultures into the living rooms of this generation. Single-parent and blended families helped this generation understand that families come in all shapes and sizes. More inclusive of others and accepting of differences from themselves or their experiences, this generation is accepting and embracing of diversity.



As a result (and as anyone who lived through the 60's and 70's can attest) this generation is extremely independent and they value individuality. In order to market to Gen X it is imperative to reach them on this level of independent thought.

How to market to them: Because of their level of skepticism, thirst for knowledge, and quest for individuality this group can be tough to target. Here are a few techniques that can help you reach them.

Direct Mail: Catalogers luck out with Gen X. According to delivermagazine.com 67% of Xers read their direct mail each week and 86% bring the mail in the day it's received. That's a pretty good amount of people reading your catalogs each day. An article by Thorin McGee from [Target Marketing Mag](http://TargetMarketingMag) states that Gen X is the "ideal direct market. They're savvy and price sensitive, and they don't trust corporate America, so less-known direct marketers have a fair chance against the titans of brand marketing."





Content Market: Generation X is likely to know every little detail about a product prior to purchasing. They read reviews and talk it through with their friends. Quality is important and honesty from the retailer is imperative. Including additional copy about a product is a good way to gain their trust. White papers and blogs not just advertising a product, but educating them about it is the way to go with this generation.

Combine Direct Mail Marketing with Digital Marketing:

With the online world expanding so immanently it is bad news for catalogers to ignore the benefits of multi-media marketing. Generation X is on social media sites, especially Facebook. Marketing to Generation X on Facebook and other such media sites is important, again, probably because of their skepticism of corporate America. A brand message that finds them through a

friend's post will carry more weight for them than a targeted message from a retailer. Rather it be through direct mail channels, digital channels, or better, both channels, the best thing to do is put your name out

there and then let them come to you. So, if this is your target market, be sure to keep up on your SEO.

Generation X, we stopped believing in Social Security with Santa Clause, the Tooth Fairy and the Easter Bunny.



someecards
user card

Why target them: By now you may be asking yourself, "if Generation X is such a tough market then why bother?" For one these are people who are at the peak of their careers. They are bringing in the wages, building homes, and raising families. They will

be your best Christmas shoppers, best clothes shoppers, back to school shoppers, home repair shoppers, and so on. They may be well known as the "lost generation," however, when it comes to marketing, they certainly should not be.



Generation Y

"In the end, the American dream is not a sprint, or even a marathon, but a relay. Our families don't always cross the finish line in the span of one generation. But each generation passes on to the next the fruits of their labor."
—Julian Castro

Who they are: Also known as the “Millennials” and “Generation Me,” this generation was born and grew up in the 80’s and 90’s. They have been generalized as lazy, self-absorbed, and financially dependent. An article on howstuffworks.com written by Michael Franco explains “...despite their liberal leanings, the members of Generation Y tend to be much bigger conformists than the more radical, individualistic X'ers that came before them. They want to have an impact on the world, but they're happy to do so wearing the same "cool" jeans and sneakers as the rest of their friends” (see [article](#)). According to William Schroer from socialmarketing.com, “Gen Y kids are known as incredibly sophisticated, technology wise, immune to most traditional marketing and sales pitches...as they not only grew up with it all, they’ve seen it all and been exposed to it all since early childhood” ([read the article](#)).

Their Attitudes, interests, and values: Generation Y has been surrounded by media from big advertising to high production and the construction of Wal-Mart's and Rite Aids and a McDonalds on every block. Simply driving down the street is enough to be bombarded with marketing. Do you want Dunkin Donuts, Tim Hortons, or Mr Bagel? Who really cares? Not generation Y. They’ve been so subjected to it for so long that, well, marketing just doesn’t work as well on them. An article on Forcemarketing.com points out:

Twenty-first century marketing to Gen Y is a blitzkrieg of digital information. They’ve grown up with home computers, internet surfing, and the short information cycle of non-stop TV and cable media. Because of that endless loop of information, Gen Y is quite savvy about promotional spin. The push of a sales pitch is less effective on them than any other demographic.

This is the first generation to grow up with the internet. They also grew up with globalization and cell phones. Think back to the 90’s. Do you remember AOL and chat



rooms, all essentially the beginning of social media? Generation Y shaped social media into what you see it as today. This is all due to their innate desire to be socially connected while also maintaining a platform where they can be self-expressive. Both of these things are important to this generation and if you want to connect with them, social media is one of the best ways to do it. The Millennials have watched technology as it screams rapidly towards evolution. Do you remember when cell phones were the size of a box? I do!!

How to market to them: As stated above in the last section, Generation Y is a tough sell because they have become immune to marketing. There’s not a whole lot that will impress them. As a result they tend to receive less direct mail, show up less on mail lists, and in general get overlooked by marketers. So what can catalogers do to connect more with this generation though direct mail? Here are a few ideas that will help you better connect to these so called echo-boomers.

Create a visual experience: For a generation who values speed and informational accuracy, a visual experience is not just effective, but it’s necessarily. Consider Dr Lynell Burman author of the book *Visual Literacy*. She explains, “As human beings, our brains are wired for images. According to research from 3M Corporation, we process visuals 60,000 times faster than text” (See [Why Visual Literacy?](#)).



That said, not too long ago we posted a blog called [How the Digital Transformation from Text to Image Can Help Your Catalog](#). In this blog we talk about how a customer needs to do more than like a brand. They need to be captured by the essence of it, to have the experience of what your brand represents and feel like they are a part of it and in turn can use the inspiration for their own self-expression. Creating a unique visual experience is a good way to accomplish this in your catalog.

How do you best accomplish this visual experience in your catalog? You select images that tell the story of your brand. One that relates to the combined experiences of the generation while at the same time encourages self-expressionism.

Create a larger more meaningful experience/and or marketing through a cause: Whereas Generation X had looked ahead into a somewhat drier future, Generation Y has a future that is even less optimistic. This is the generation that grew up in constant fear of terrorist attacks and oil spills. As a result, they want to make everything better. Think about the recycle craze, the go green craze, the save the planet and stop global warming agendas. This is the work of Gen Y.

This in mind, one way to reach out to this generation with your catalog is to make them feel like they are part of a larger and more meaningful experience. Consider the following passage from the Abercrombie and Fitch website:

Abercrombie & Fitch is committed to giving back and making a positive impact on the communities where we do business. We show our commitment through monetary and product donations, as well as countless hours of volunteer work that our associates give to a host of great causes.

Many companies have done the same giving certain percentages of their profits away to charities. Catalogers have fallen in to suit as well and many have begun printing on FSC. Part of this is making your customer feel like they are a vital part of something bigger than they are and as a result they feel like they are contributing to the greater good. With Gen Y, it's important to reach them through their values. If you do this, you've got them. Until then, you're just another of the qua-billion advertisements they've seen that day. Consider Lee Nation Denim Day and other such campaigns. Here are three reasons why this strategy will set your campaigns apart from other companies and create lifelong followers/and shoppers from this generation:

Sincerity
Purpose driven
Movement oriented

Why target them: Interestingly in her article [Direct Mail Makes an Impact on Generation Y](#), Mindy Chariski points out that "... though households headed by Millennials receive less advertising mail than older Americans, many are receptive to it." She continues on about a survey conducted in 2010: "...marketing firm Epsilon found that for certain categories like insurance and cleaning products, participants ages 18 to 34 preferred to receive marketing information from offline sources, led by mail and newspapers, than from online sources like social media."

Additionally, statistics show that up to "75 percent of people ages 25 to 34 have made a purchase resulting from direct mail." So, not only is this generation extremely affected by direct mail, but they are the largest generation since the Baby Boomers and have the most buying power within a household. So, if you're not connecting to this generation via catalogs, you are missing out on a great opportunity.

Generation Z

“Grandchildren are the dots that connect the lines from generation to generation..” —Lois Wyse

Who they are: Generation Z is tough. This typically is made up of people born after 1996. Our kids. When is the last time you’ve observed someone from this generation with technology? Does your nine-year-old know more about your computer than you do? This is the truth. This generation has never seen a world without iPods or cell phones.

Their Attitudes, Interests, and Values: Consider this:

generation Z has always had a universe of information at their fingertips. Interested in knitting? You don’t need to ask Grandma anymore. In an article titled [How Generation Z Works](#) published on the howstuffworks.com website, writer Lance Looper explains: “This group... has lived their entire life with instant access to mountains of data on any topic that flutters through their imaginations. They’ve never known the frustration or sheer physical effort of rifling through the M-O volume of the encyclopedia to find out about the Magna Carta. They’re technologically savvy and just as likely to spend their time writing and programming video games as simply playing them.”

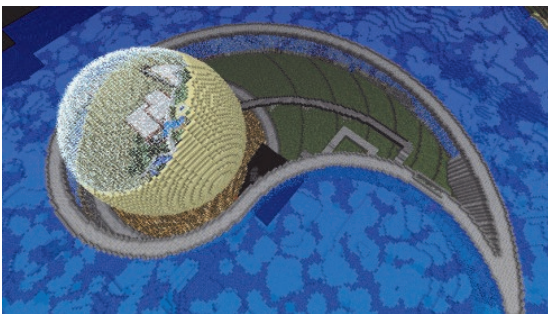


Sladek wirtner and CEO of XYZ writes: “More shocking than the game’s purchase stats is the fact that children today are obsessed with a game that runs on 1980s animation. Yes, you read that right. The most tech-savvy generation is playing a game using the same technology their parents’ generation used.”

But, Minecraft is much larger than the graphics. Sladek terms Gen Z as being the generation of realists. They want to change the world. They want to create and rebuild. Sladek points out that:

“Yes, Gen Z is tech savvy, but more than technology, this generation has been shaped by the crises they were born into: school shootings, climate change, terrorism, and the Great Recession... These dark events have undoubtedly made this generation more cautious, but also provided this generation with the inspiration to change the world — and their realistic approach to life is going to allow them to do it.”

What does Minecraft say about Gen Z? They are creators not observers as Gen Y was with their roll playing games. They are smart, cautious, creative, and understanding of the world around them. They will shape this world more than any previous generation. In fact, according to Sladek, they are so health and environmentally conscious that the average human life span will very likely increase to an average of 100 years. It’s not the fantasy of the game that has captured them; it’s the realism, the simulation of reality that has them so captivated. The question we must address is how do we as catalogers reach this generation through direct mail efforts in order to generate brand loyalty from them? Looper says that “Kids today have little need to await direction. They can access whatever information they need relatively freely and that information is usually enough to base a decision on.” How do you market to an audience like that?



This image can be found from the article [Minecraft in Education](#)

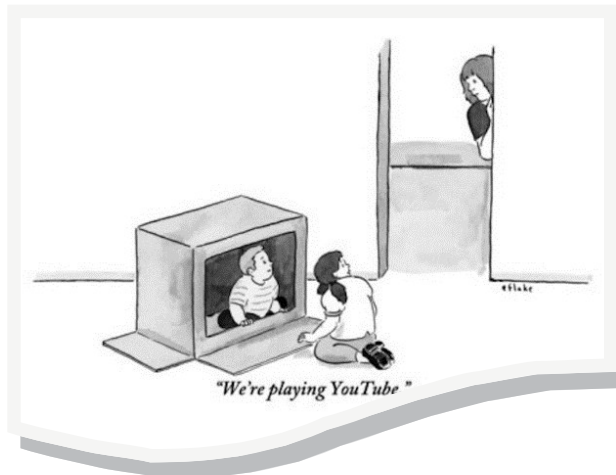
Consider the game Minecraft. If you are not familiar with the game, let me just say that this is probably the most popular video game that ever

existed—ever. In fact, it’s more than a game. For generation Z it is “play.” It’s Legos and house and dress up all in one. It’s also problem solving and elemental learning. It’s fun, emotional, creative, and it teaches kids collaboration. Most shocking about the game is the graphics. Consider an article posted by XYZuniversity.com [What Minecraft Teaches Us about Gen Z](#). In the article Sarah

How to Market to Generation Z: Learn from Minecraft. If you want to reach people in this generation with your catalogs, you must be interactive, innovative, and realistic. Ideally, they would be able to create their own product or have an experience that simulates that aspect. Let’s take a look...



Personalize: This is one of the most important techniques when marketing to Gen Z. But with this generation it is important to think outside of the box. Using new techniques to create old results isn't necessarily going to work. For example, in the past you may be trying to define your brand to the consumer, but to be successful, you must make them feel like they're defining the brand. This is a generation where diversity and individuality is engrained. So, a personalized coupon, although it works great for other generations, isn't necessarily going to work with this one. Think instead *Personal Interactivity*.



Interactive Marketing: Remember these kids really dig collaboration. They are all part of a larger social picture. Sharing is essential to getting your brand recognized. One of the best ways to do this with a catalog is through the use of *Augmented Reality*. If you have a clothing catalog, for example, wouldn't it be cool to design an app where customers can share images of themselves in the clothes they bought and when the item page is scanned, using AR, you can browse through photos of others who have bought the same product. This allows the consumer to see how the outfit

fits others. The experience has now transitioned from an individual being told what to buy from the consumer to an actual **collaborative** experience: people interacting through your brand. How about an AR app where the consumer can pair up articles of clothing on the page? They are now creating their own style, their own outfit rather than being told what they should be wearing. This brings a whole new dynamic to personalization. You are giving the consumer what they crave. In the case of Gen Z, you are giving them shared experience, creative license, and freedom to express their individuality.

Focus on the product not necessarily the brand: Here again, the ideology has changed from Gen X and Y. Where in the past you could rely on brand loyalty, now you must instead focus more on the product. Look at iPhone and Samsung. That's a perfect example. They are product marketing to the sky and back because in the cell phone world there isn't as much brand loyalty going on as there used to be for other devices. It's about what is newest and coolest and, well, for Gen Z which is the most multi-functional and has the longest battery life. We don't hear much from Toshiba these days nor Mitek or Acer. Almost everyone I know has a Samsung or an iPhone. It's product marketing versus brand marketing and catalogers can learn a lot about how to market to Gen Z by watching these two brands.

Let me give you a specific example. Let's consider now *product interactive marketing*--this is not unlike the last example of the collaborative clothing experience. Let's say this time you are a computer electronics cataloger. How about using AR to design an app for your catalog that brings you to video reviews from other customers who have bought that product? Or how about an instructional video as to how the product is made? Remember; focus on showcasing the product rather than pushing the brand.

Why to target Generation Z: Besides the fact that they are the next big generation and our consumers of the future, by targeting this new generation as marketers we will evolve and learn along with them as they grow in to full-fledged consumers, which eventually will make or break your brand. It is important to understand the complexities and intelligent nature of this generation. Julian Smith, head of strategy and innovations at Fetch writes:

Research suggests that their [Gen Z] brains have evolved to process more information at faster speeds, and are cognitively more nimble to handle bigger mental challenges. They think spatially and in 4D. Gen Z have always known how to zoom, pinch and swipe. They have grown up with hi-def, surround-sound, 3D and now 4D – 360 degree photography and film is their normal. But as a result of all this their attention spans are getting shorter. Getting and keeping their attention is harder. (Move over Millennials - it's time to talk to Gen Z)

Personally, I don't think its attention span that's the underlying issue here (as any parent who has watched their child play on Minecraft for hours might determine). The problem is engagement. As Smith points out, this generation does not live in a 2D world as past generations have. They experience in 4D and unless you can reach them on all platforms, then they will be bored with your product. AR is a huge breakthrough for this generation. NOW is the time to begin experimenting



Bridging The Generations



The world is changing and it is a different place than it was just five years ago. Advancements in technology, social changes, the way we raise our families, all of these things change from generation to generation. Although, some marketers will claim that generation has nothing to do with selling, the truth is, generation is actually a great way to understand the broader scope of your consumer. It at least gives you a basic ground for understanding the way they think.

By now you may be asking yourself which generation is the most valuable to market to? That is a question that only you can answer. Ask yourself, who is your shopper? Who is on your mail list. That should at least give you a good idea where to start.

But remember, in some cases branding to one generation can meld into another. For example, due to divorce and single home families, Gen Y has often stepped up to help their Baby Boomer parents make financial household decisions, such as what kind of car to buy or what brand of toilet paper. Here are a few tips to help you bridge the gap between generations in your marketing campaigns.

1. Never assume that the other generations are not interested in your product, instead ask yourself, "how would they be interested?"
2. Let your target audiences define themselves rather than the other way around and then follow suit.
3. Never assume your consumers age, realize that generation is an attitude not a number.
4. Experiment with different generations, you may be surprised to find there was a whole market out there for your product that you never even considered.
5. Realize that, although, generation can give you a place to start, it is not the only demographic to consider when getting to know your consumers.

Good luck finding your consumer! For more articles like this one, feel free to visit our [blog](#) and don't forget to **share!**