

## **Branding for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Teenagers**

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Teenagers - kids from the age of 13 to 19 - currently spend \$150 billion per year globally. Teens also influence an additional \$150 billion per year globally with “pester power.” And they indirectly influence another \$300 billion per year, for example, in situations in which a parent makes a purchase taking into account kids’ tastes. That’s a total purchasing/influencing power of \$600 billion this year. In addition to the products that teens buy for themselves and/or consume themselves (food, entertainment, clothing, music, electronics, etc.), teens actually influence adults’ purchases of a large variety of products. Although earlier generations have grown up with computers and computer games, this is the first generation to have grown up with online chat and multiplayer online games as part of their milieu. This generation uses the Internet not just to find things out or to connect with friends from their neighborhoods or from school. This generation uses the Net to make new friends from all over the world, to compete with them for mastery of their virtual worlds, and to co-create new communities and planets. Today’s teens are also masters of multitasking. They are able to do their homework, talk on the phone with friends, watch TV, surf the Net, chat online, and listen to music - all at the same time. Historically, teenagers have been the change agent in every society, powerful and influential as ever in almost all areas. Most companies have tried to harness this power of the teen market- very few have succeeded in harvesting the rewards of teenage brand-loyalty. Therefore, in the often- freckle world of teenagers, the brand name should be able to trigger a series of expectations not only about the product, its quality, ease of use, etc., but also about what the product stands for in the mind of teenager. Branding, therefore not only represents the company or product, but also cool image. To acquire the teenage market, companies need to adapt to the fast changes in a way that sets branding apart from the rest of the competition. Today’s teenagers are not only a powerful segment but also probably the most profitable. This paper is an attempt to gain an insight in to the decision- making process and the vital factors that influence teenage behaviour. There is also being longer term returns in brand loyalty as teenagers of today become the buyers of tomorrow. The paper is an honest endeavor which will throw light on the significant aspects that the marketer can afford to ignore only at his own risk. Some of these issues discussed: teenage demographics, psychological issues, personality issues, emotional issues, parental influence, peer pressures, ad exposure, celebrity endorsement, and shopkeeper behaviour. The paper would also try to analyze the shopping and spending patterns at the retail level and will make an effort to provide an insight into the media that usually appeal to their psyche.

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### **Introduction**

India, with an area of 1.26 million square miles (3.29 million kilometers), is the largest democratic country in the world. The country has about 16 percent of the world’s total population and 2.4 percent of the global land area. India is one third the size of the United States and occupies most of the Indian subcontinent in south Asia. Next to China, India is the most populous country in the world, with a 1995 population of 950 million. India’s urban population accounts for 28 percent of the country’s total population. In 1991, one third of the 12.6 million inhabitants of Bombay were homeless, living on the streets or in squatters’ camps built on putrid landfills. Bombay, India’s most populous city, has 100,000 people per square kilometer. The 1995 age distribution showed that 36.8 percent of the populations were under 15 years of age; the working age group (15 to 64) was 69 percent; and the aged population (65 and over) was about 4 percent. The 1995 life expectancy at birth for males was 58 years and for females 60 years. The birthrate was twenty-eight per 1,000 populations and the death rate ten per 1,000 population, giving a natural annual growth rate of 1.8 percent. The 1995 infant mortality rate was 76

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per 1,000 live births. The sex ratio showed 929 females to 1,000 males. India has one hospital bed per 1,357 persons, and one physician per 2,189 persons. The 1993 literacy level was estimated at about 50 percent, with schooling compulsory to age 14; the literacy rate is significantly lower for females than males.

It is not uncommon to see a teenage customer spending money to buy the latest album of Sonu Nigam, to play on his MP3 compatible play-station, browsing through the latest magazines on fashion before entering the lee's showroom, to buy a pair of low cut jeans and a matching bottle red top and then using the latest model of a Motorola cell- Phone to send pictures of himself to some close friends. Teenage consumers have now become a growing force in almost all global markets, increasing not only in number, but more importantly also in spending power. Most companies have tried to harness this power of the teen market- very few have succeeded in reaping the rewards of teenage brand loyalty. The immense potential of this segment has made it even more important for marketers to arrive at the correct methodology at the earliest. Since there are not many teenage- specific brands in India, most strategies have been adopted from foreign foreign countries, to address the burgeoning Indian teenage customers. Since the Indian teenager has always been different from their counterparts abroad, branding to Indian teenage customers is easier said than done.

### Purview of this Paper

Today's teenagers are not only a more powerful segment but probably one of the most profitable. This paper is an honest endeavor to gain an insight into the decision making process and the driving factors that influence teenage buying behavior, there by helping a marketer to take advantage of long term payoffs in brand loyalty, as teenagers today become the buyers of tomorrow. The paper will touch upon some important aspects like

- ✓ Teenage demographics
- ✓ Issues that appeal
- ✓ Psychological issues
- ✓ Personality issues
- ✓ Emotional issues
- ✓ Peer pressures

An understanding of the above issues would definitely help a marketer to better analyze the shopping and spending patterns to teenage customers, and come out with long-term wining strategies.

### Teen Demographics

<b>Broad Age Groups : (Excluding J &amp; K)</b>			
<b>Age Groups</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>
<b>6 years and below</b>	<b>150,421,175</b>	<b>77,322,151</b>	<b>73,099,024</b>
	<b>17.94</b>	<b>17.77</b>	<b>18.12</b>
<b>7 to 14 years</b>	<b>161,943,487</b>	<b>84,405,295</b>	<b>77,538,192</b>
	<b>19.31</b>	<b>19.39</b>	<b>19.22</b>
<b>15 to 59 years</b>	<b>464,826,476</b>	<b>241,411,392</b>	<b>223,415,084</b>
	<b>55.43</b>	<b>55.47</b>	<b>55.39</b>
<b>60 years and above</b>	<b>56,681,640</b>	<b>29,363,725</b>	<b>27,317,915</b>
	<b>6.76</b>	<b>6.75</b>	<b>6.77</b>
<b>Age Not Stated</b>	<b>4,695,158</b>	<b>2,705,595</b>	<b>1,989,563</b>
	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>0.49</b>

Data Source: 1991 Census of India

Distribution of Population by Age and Sex 1991										
Census Data Online										
Source: Census of India 1991										
	Age		Total			Rural			Urban	
Country	Groups	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>INDIA*</b>										
Population in '000	Total	838,568	435,208	403,360	622,796	321,271	301,525	215,772	113,937	101,835
Proportions (%)	0-4	12.2	12.0	12.4	12.7	12.6	12.9	10.7	10.4	11.0
	5-9	13.3	13.2	13.4	13.7	13.7	13.7	11.9	11.7	12.2
	10-14	11.8	11.9	11.6	11.9	12.1	11.6	11.5	11.4	11.7
	15-19	9.4	9.7	9.1	9.2	9.5	8.8	10.2	10.3	10.1
	20-24	8.9	8.6	9.2	8.5	8.2	8.9	9.9	9.9	10.0
	25-29	8.3	7.9	8.6	8.0	7.7	8.3	9.1	8.7	9.5
	30-34	7.0	6.9	7.1	6.7	6.6	6.9	7.6	7.7	7.6
	35-39	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.0	6.1	6.0	6.9	7.1	6.7
	40-44	5.1	5.2	4.9	5.0	5.0	4.9	5.4	5.8	4.9
	45-49	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.6	4.1
	50-54	3.7	3.9	3.5	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.2
	55-59	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.4
	60-64	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.3	2.2	2.3
	65-69	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.3	1.3	1.4
	70-74	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.0	1.0	1.1
	75-79	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5
	80 +	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.7

### Paradigm shift

#### Materialistic Values

- Teens, on the other hand, spent time and money collecting brand names.
- Well known brands last longer, match what one's friends are wearing, look modern, affluent
- Today teenagers dress up more, try to follow fashions closely, and dare to express themselves. "They are braver today" said a higher school teacher.

#### Influences

- Fashion center – US.
- Influenced by TV, actresses, pop singers
- A lot of people study abroad, and bring back influences

#### Changes

- Higher standard of living
- More educational options available with private colleges (High School teacher)
- New techniques in education. Scientific approach/beliefs more effective
- Don't just believe what you are told, but value the truth. Believe what we see and hear
- Now more variety of occupations
- Housework easier - more facilities, washing machine, micro-wave, can buy readymade food

- More working women, don't care to rely on husband, have their own salary, own budget for spending
- Now in marriage, women don't just want to please their husband, but also want to be themselves

#### **Changing Attitudes**

- Take care of health, and body. Care about food intake, make up (women)
- More travel, tourism, to the beaches, forests, mountains, nature
- Religion in bad shape, leaders behave badly
- Not afraid of sinning
- Problems, concerns, worries shared with friends, not family
- People more ambitious now.
- Both parents work, less time spent with kids, more tension at home
- Mothers compensate by giving their children money or buy them things
- Material things substitute for love
- Things are easy to buy, so many shopping malls nowadays
- Kids don't know the concept of saving
- Parents blame themselves, can't scold children, want to avoid conflict
- Parents feel if they are too strict, there will be too much pressure on the kids, affecting their education / mind, etc
- May have to accept changes - can't control them, only guide them, otherwise will do something and not tell you
- Children hide things from their parents - pack clothes and change after tuition class
- Children less confident now, closer to friends
- They copy friends, can't live without the acceptance of friends
- Talk for a long on the telephone, even after midnight
- Dress a certain way - to be accepted by the group
- Used to live in large extended families with grandparents - now more and more people are living as nuclear families
- 10 years ago, people were more gentle, more respectful. Now they are more aggressive now, more self involved, think only of themselves

#### **Today's heroes**

- Today's teens want to be popular, like a pop star or actress on TV, model - someone who is creative, confident
- Nicole is a very important symbol for the creative teenager - she is smart and energetic
- Radio DJ important source for problem solving - someone to talk to.

#### **2010: Men vs Women**

- Women will be working more, more efficient and capable than men
- Men and women will be more equal
- Thai ladies will be leaders in decision making
- People will live alone more, won't marry too soon; will want to be independent first.
- Live together and have many partners to try out.

#### **2010: Morals and Values**

- Teenagers too bold, will like to shock people.
- Preserve the forests, no animal testing.
- Hope that people will be judged by their ability, not by their looks or personality

#### **2010: Education**

- Lots more competition, kids will study harder
- Education will be open to all, not just those with money

#### **2010: Fashion**

- Outrageous fashions, people will do a double take
- Unisex, want look at each other

- Men will wear lip gloss

**2010: Eating Out**

- No restaurants, get food from vending machines
- No waitresses. A screen will come up, just order what you want
- Chilled drinks without refrigeration
- Unusual foods, don't gain weight
- Concentrated nutrition so you don't have to eat a lot
- More natural foods, will get into your bloodstream faster

**2010: Health Care**

- Surgery - so you don't have to look old any more
- 1 medicine for all diseases
- See the results immediately, especially skin treatment
- Won't need doctors anymore, will have medicines with no side effects
- Genetically modified products

**2010: Product/Service Suggestions**

- Hair Care: (Men)
  - Driven by convenience
  - Shampoo with no water needed
  - Use shampoo and it lasts for 1 month
- Hair Care: (Women)
  - Shampoo for wavy hair, for straight hair
  - Do it yourself - don't need to go to the salon
- Skin Care:
  - spray on lotion
  - spray or apply on tan - like a mask - which lasts 1-2 days
  - Will have masks, won't need to use make up any more
  - 2-in-1 : cancer prevention and sunscreen, all in one
- Internet:
  - The world will be smaller. Can see and buy everything on the internet
  - Can stay in bed and wait until they deliver it. No time wasted searching
  - Catalogues for the future season on the websites
  - Home pages with prices and where available
- Services - Banks
  - Monthly interest, don't have to wait a year
  - Micro-chip credit cards same as car key, ID card - like a bar code in the body
  - On line transactions from home, can see the teller's face
  - Transactions on the telephone, give cash without leaving the house

**Pace of Change**

- Both fashion and technology expected to change rapidly
- Food is usually slower to change in all Asian countries
- Banking a notable exception, though considered important
- Health and personal care not as important nor expected to change much

**What we have learned**

- Some optimism, some worry, some concerns about the future
- That there will be significant changes, there is little doubt
- Teenagers are following the textbook - using dress to express their biological coming of age, their independence from their parents
- Almost magically, the weird teens transform into disciplined, socially attuned young working adults

## Branding

Branding is an important tool to create brand consciousness within the target audience. However, branding is more than creating an awareness of a particular brand. In order to appeal to teenagers, the brand name should be able to trigger a series of expectations not only about the product, its quality, ease of use, etc., but also about what the products stands for in the mind of the teenager. Branding, therefore not only represents the company or product, but also its “cool” image to the teenagers. To tap this teenage market, a marketer needs to adapt to the rapid changes in a way that sets the brand apart from the rest of the competition. Lets us throw light on some important indicators of what influences the teenage customer.

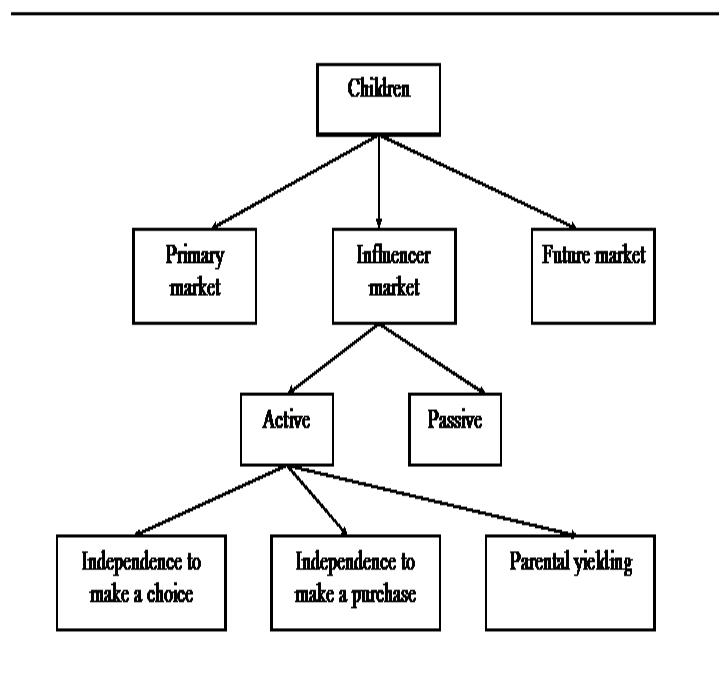
## Teenage Customers

Today’s teenage customers have emerged as big-time spenders, who not only have a good amount of pocket money but also know how to supplement the same by means of internships, summer jobs, part-time jobs. This coupled with an increased awareness of all things (thanks mainly to internet) and a voice which speaks out what they want, makes this segment a most desirable one from the marketer’s point of view. Just to give an idea of the kind of spending that teenage customer would do, the data on the spending of teenagers on clothing for the year 2003, is reproduced below.

Category	Population(in millions)	Spending(in Millions)	Average spending per person (in Rs.)
All non-adults (up to 19 yrs)	460	1,51,650	329
All children (up to 12 yrs)	300	85,450	284
All teenagers (12-19 yrs)	160	66,200	414

Source: ACNielsen

## Teens As Influencers



The teenagers therefore, become a lucrative market because of certain characteristics which are not to be found in any other target segment. These can be classified as:

- Search for an identity
- Improved cognitive power
- Changing sexuality
- Growing importance of self-esteem
- Higher mobility
- Gender differences
- Increasing need for independence
- Increasing buying power
- Increasing peer power

Let us examine each issue in greater detail, before using them to create a brand that will be valued and accepted by teenage customers.

➤ **Search for an Identity**

The age group of 13-19 years is a group searching for its identity. They are no longer content being somebody's son/daughter, but want to be recognized for what they are. They are very open to experimentation and trying to figure out what works for them. In this process of experimentation, finding acceptance from their peer group is critical factor in creating their identity. This experimentation and acceptance may not just be limited to complex thinking process but also includes group activities. The group activities may take the form of just 'hanging out' together or may even manifest itself in the form of physical activity, like organized sports. This stage also poses questions in their minds like "who am I"? This is not very easy to deal with or answer and can create a intricate chain of thoughts, which could be as complex in nature, as the question itself.

➤ **Improved Cognitive Power**

Teenagers go through two phases in building and honing their cognitive powers. The stage between 13-15 years is marked by the development of their abstract thinking abilities. The need to use abstract thinking to solve complex puzzles/ problems appeals to them and helps them in further building their identity. The next stage, between 16-19 years is marked by more remarkable changes in their ways of thinking and analyzing data. By this time, the brain is almost fully developed. This brings in the ability to empathize, to control impulsive reaction and metacognition. The earlier capabilities of abstract thinking now become full-fledged ability to reason and reflect.

➤ **Changing Sexuality**

One of the most important and radical change that takes place in a teenager, is the hormonal change resulting in changing sexuality. Again, the early teens stage is marked by rapid and sometimes un-nerving changes taking place in the hormonal levels. This creates an imbalance, which the teenager is not geared to handle. The hormonal balance is at best an unsteady one and may change radically, over short periods. The late teens (between 16-19 yrs) is marked by a settling down of the changes in the hormonal levels and the teenager being able to better understand and control the change that has taken place. This brings in a certain amount of maturity in their sexuality, where they are fairly comfortable with the biological, psychological and physiological change.

➤ **Importance of Self-Esteem**

The early teen is a stage where they go through a lot of soul- searching and trying to figure out their own identity. The need for a healthy self-esteem is a crucial driving factor. They are just learning to deal with their own ego and ask themselves questions like "who am I?" The role of acceptance, love and success is very important in their building a healthy ego and identity.

➤ **Higher Mobility**

Teenage customers are also moving away from the place where they spent their childhood, usually for higher studies. This means that moving into a place which is unfamiliar. In their need

to create a familiar surrounding for themselves, in this new place, teenage customers are known to spend not only objects that they desire but also for the basic needs. Somehow, this spending becomes a mechanism to overcome the shock associated in moving to an unfamiliar place.

➤ **Gender Differences**

Gender is also a major differentiator in the amount spent and the pattern of spending. It was found on comparing the typical spending by a teenage customer, that females spent almost 22% more than males. It was also found in the same research that the items rated at top three were very different amongst male and female teenage customers.

Rating	Females	Rating	males
1	Apparels	1	Gadgets
2	Fashion accessories	2	Music
3	Food	3	apparels

Several such differences have made marketers understand that preferences among male and female teenage customers are likely to be very disparate. Now that we have seen the factors which influence and effect the decision of the teenage customer, let us look at what lessons a marketer can learn from these for branding a product successfully to the teenage customer. As we have seen above, some of major components of brand equity that a marketer needs to keep in mind for creating the right mix in the mind of the teenage customer.

➤ **Increasing need for Independence**

The beginning of the teens also marks a significant increase in the need to be independent. This need for independence may be exhibited in the form of taking decisions without the inputs (or inference) from parents and other adults. This is usually displayed by the teenager in the form of going for shopping on their own or more likely with their own peer group, which gives them the feeling of lack of pressure and hence greater independence.

➤ **Increasing Buying Power**

The amount of money available to teenagers today is much more than what was available a decade or so ago. Today, the population of teenagers is shrinking whereas the population in the age group 20-49 is rapidly increasing. This means that there will be fewer teenagers per adult in the age group 20-49 years. This translates into a direct increase in the amount of money available to a teenager. Teenagers are also increasingly open to taking up short term project and summer projects. This provides them with additional sources of income, which again translates into extra spending.

➤ **Increasing Pester Power**

The teenagers today are quite vocal about what they like and dislike what they want and don't want. The 80's were marked by the teenager accepting, to a very large extent, the final decision made by the parents. However, today, they not only speak their mind, but increasingly adopt pressure tactics to get things their way. This is what is meant by "pester power". Pester power is one of the powerful considerations that a marketers need to understand and leverage. Teenagers are not unknown to putting pressure on their parents through constant reminders, even to the extent of irritating or pestering them. This pester power, usually, does not take into consideration what could be possible constraints on the part of parents. It may sometimes even take the shape of "so what if you did it for me" type of attitude.

➤ **Brand Loyalty**

By creating an identity for the product which fits in with the identity that the teenager is trying to create for him/herself. The brand loyalty must also allow the teenage customer to peg his individuality on it, so that the association becomes a long-time association. Loyalty created in such a manner will definitely help the marketer reap future benefits, because the teenage customer of today will most likely be the loyal adult customer of tomorrow. Here we should also focus on the brand equity pattern, which is as follows:



**Brand Patterns: a Catalogue of the Ways Brands Evolve**

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

These four main patterns, arrayed by type and by incidence, describe how market shifts affect brand strategy.

**Mega Patterns**

Functional to Emotional. Customers elevate the intangible benefits over product functionality.

Concentration to Proliferation. As customers demand greater product choice at multiple price points, companies move from a single brand to multiple brands.

Mass to Relationship. Customers' desire for tailored offerings leads to greater dialogue between company and customer, with more attention paid to the many points of customer contact.

Upward Spiral. Companies with the most consistent, clear messages to customers, employees, and investors realize higher shareholder value.

**Brand Equity Patterns**

De Facto Brand. The first entrant in a new category benefits from tying the brand intrinsically to the category's main benefit.

Desert to Candy Shop. As the number of choices in a category proliferate, customers jump to the hot brand of the moment.

Relevance to Irrelevance. Customer priorities change, which reduces the relevance of established brand messages.

Brand Apathy to Thirst. As customers become more discriminating among competing products, they place a higher value on certain brands as a guarantee of process quality.

Rare Birds to Lemmings. In categories with rapid change, first-mover brand positionings spawn significant imitation.

Delayed Trigger. Business design success stays ahead of brand development.

**Brand Investment Patterns**

Choice to Simplicity. Customers desire simplicity in selecting and purchasing products, and the brand becomes defined by how consistently it delivers convenience.

Scarcity to Ubiquity. As a company expands its offerings across multiple products or channels, the brand becomes overexposed, and equity erodes.

Branded Experience. As customers expect involvement with a product or service, the brand begins to stand for an ongoing experience, not just a product or transaction.

**Brand Target Patterns**

Declining Core. Brand equity remains strong, but among a smaller and smaller population.

Mainstream to Luxury. As some customers migrate upmarket from core offerings, a brand is repositioned to capture these higher-value customer segments.

Chasm Crossing. As a company's target consumer moves from the early adopter to a mass audience, the brand equity evolves or is stymied.

Investor Star. Courting the investor community helps establish the brand as well as raise capital.

Employee Star. In businesses where customer interaction with employees is frequent or critical, a focus on employee understanding of the brand promise strengthens customer loyalty.

➤ **Perceived Quality**

The teenage customer with his cognitive powers and deductive logic is quite capable of understanding when the marketer is trying to create hype around the product which is not supported by quality. Hence, in creating brand equity it would be worthwhile to under promise and over deliver. The other factor that the marketer should bear in mind is that the quality should be maintained or improved over a period of time. Most marketers take quality for granted, once reasonable brand equity has been established. This is a dangerous route to self destruction.

➤ **Brand Association**

The brand should be built around what appeals to the teenage customer, like “cool”, “in things to do”, “in place to hang out”, etc. The brand association must also be able to give some kind of value addition to the self esteem of the teenage customer.

➤ **Product Innovation**

Since the brand loyalty of teenage customers is known to be short lived also fickle, it is crucial that the marketer understands that constant product innovation is the blood line of brand building.

➤ **Iconic Status**

The teenage customer relates far more easily to an icon . the icon thus becomes a base-line for the teenage customer to base his/her decisions. However, it is also important to realize that the icon must be current with the needs and aspirations of the teenagers and must be closely related to the product that it being branded. A soft drink having a aiswarya rai as a brand is likely to benefit from her iconic status, but the same person will fail miserably if the product that is being branded is real estate. The above suggestions would definitely help the marketer to successfully brand the product to the teenage customer. Yet, despite the best efforts and strategies of marketers, the teenage customer will always remain one of the most challenging markets to penetrate.

### **Why is teen marketing so important?**

**Like** never before, this market has the most power to make or break brands. No other generation has ever been confronted with a greater opportunity to reshape marketing. Three major factors affecting the way this group acts. The **first is technology**. Teens do not see technology as an innovation; instead, it is considered fundamentally an extension of their consciousness. While marketers may taut innovation, teens see it as a mere fact of life. The second factor is the **economy**. The middle class is shrinking and teens recognize only two groups: the affluent and the poor. They perceive no middle between theses extremes. The third factor is **aging**. Since this generation may see people live to be 150 years old, they have no sense of the age-related process of growing up. In an ageless world, it's hard to know when growing up begins and when being a child really stops.

Freedom is at the core of the teen belief system. They want the freedom to go wherever they want and to be whoever they want to be. They challenge old environments, such as that of the workplace. They collectively formulate ideas about the world and believe in only what they agree upon. They value the freedom to build their own sense of style, often influenced by the entertainment industry. The era of passive consumerism is over. Only 25 percent of teens are considered passive consumers. This generation is opinionated and takes action. They have been trained as shoppers since their early childhood and influence billions of dollars in spending.

There are five major changes that face the millennial generation:

1. Unprecedented financial risk is a powerful force. This generation is \$10 trillion dollars in debt. They feel that they are in the midst of World War III and that the war concerns their ability to live in relative peace. This perceived war clashes with teen desires for freedom. As a result, there is increasing anxiety among teens who assume a "predator and prey" posture. For example, they have a prey response against marketing -- they see themselves as victims and the older generation as unable to manage financial risk.

2. For teens, the most effective role models exist within the family. The love of family is pervasive within their lives and the teen/parent relationship is strong. The mother has emerged as the strongest role in the family. There is still angst among teenagers, but at the end of the day the relationship holds. For example, the mother/daughter relationship on the WB's "Gilmore Girls" demonstrates a high level of love occasionally disrupted by miscommunication. Teens have learned how to change nagging into negotiating: "C'mon, Mom. I know we don't need a new car, but don't you think you'd look great driving that new X5 around town?" What does this mean for marketers? Popular brands are those that prove to be safety nets, not necessarily fashion statements. Brands should allow people to make their own decisions.
3. Interpersonal communications trump media. The information space has changed. A teen spends on average nine hours a week on direct phone communication. Networking never stops. The Ryze Blog Tribe shows that opinion leaders control the flow of information. One person in this tribe has over 400 IM relationships. The distribution of opinion depends on the strength of the agreement or disagreement with the message. The implication for marketers is that more companies should follow eBay's strategy of offering a peer-to-peer connection. eBay works because it enables a transaction in which a person makes a one-to-one purchasing connection with someone who shares a common interest, with eBay merely facilitating that connection.
4. Everybody is somebody's leader. Leadership tends toward specific categories, that is, handbags in particular rather than fashion in general. Teens look to certain knowledgeable teens for influence in a specific category. For teens, it's not so much that because someone is an expert she will be offered her own television show. Instead, a person is considered an expert because she already has a television show. Celebrities can be self-professed and their credibility can be self-generated. How should brand marketers respond? Successful brands today let teens lead. Reverse the marketing process from aiming for awareness to achieving shared network respect. Let teens have an influence in shaping your brand's identity.
5. Teens create their own worlds. Their reality is under their control -- the line between reality and non-reality has dissolved. They prefer simple, linear stories -- ones that have beginnings, middles and ends. Teens love the Geico ads because they are simple and linear, but still entertaining and educational despite its existence in a boring industry. Brand advertising should engage teens in linear and entertaining stories.

With these changes in mind, effective marketing requires brands to demonstrate authenticity (voice brand opinions and stories and do not stray from it), be bold (make a statement that offers them something new), connect consistently (responses to messages in all media should be consistent or you'll lose their interest and trust), build relationships over time and learn to speak in the teen's own idiom. The chapter focuses on marketing targeted to children and teenagers. Children and teenagers are being exposed to commercial messages in numerous places and through various media channels e.g. television, the Internet, mobile phones etc. Children have more money to spend, they are massive consumers of media and new ways to market product and services are developed continuously. Parents try to help their children to understand commercial communication. However, many parents are not familiar with the many new ways to do marketing. This chapter examines the quantity of advertisements, commercials and other types of marketing initiatives that children are facing in their everyday lives. Does marketing influence children's consumption? Furthermore, the chapter focuses on how the parents tackle advertising in relation to their children.

### **Teen Spending Patterns: Boys Vs Girls**

All teens are not alike, and grouping them together could be a roadmap for disaster. Take, for example, a typical eighth grader compared with a college student. While Disney's "High School Musical" is all the rage for one, the other is much more engaged by the latest drama on MTV's

“The Real World.” And don’t discount the hugely important gender differences. Anybody with kids knows how different boys are from girls. Therefore, when analyzing teens, boys and girls need to be viewed separately. For example, girls believe that they are more grown-up than boys, and spend their money on very different things, such as jewelry and clothing, while boys’ interests trend toward games and electronics. However, both spend money on music and movies, which increases as kids shift from the 12–14 age bracket to the 15–17 one. It is also important to realize that “what’s hot” can be polarizing, because for each teen fad with adoring fans, there is a subset of teens who simply hate it. Finding a teen idol as a spokesperson for a brand could divide an audience. For each loyal fan of Justin Timberlake, there is another teen who simply abhors him. Interestingly, this love/hate relationship seems to be more common with the “beautiful people” than with stars like John Heder or Jack Black, who garner more universal appeal.

### Boys spend more on video games than girls

BehaviorStage	LifeStyle						Total
	Cosmopolitan Centers	Affluent Suburban Spreads	Comfortable Country	Struggling Urban Cores	Modest Working Towns	Plain Rural Living	
Male 12–14	253	234	202	205	215	129	202
Male 15–17	89	144	113	178	97	101	120
Female 12–14	103	45	42	129	38	51	62
Female 15–17	2	4	30	26	8	5	13
Total	114	107	97	138	92	72	100

Source: ACNielsen Homescan & Spectra, Penetration (Population)/% Penetration Index, All Channels/United States, BehaviorScape Framework.

High Consumer, 120–149      Very High Consumer, 150+

### Girls spend more on clothes than boys

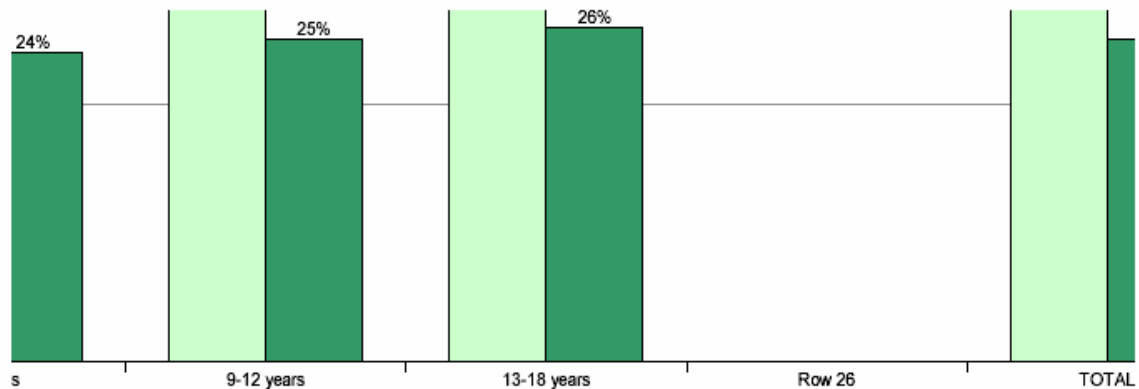
BehaviorStage	LifeStyle						Total
	Cosmopolitan Centers	Affluent Suburban Spreads	Comfortable Country	Struggling Urban Cores	Modest Working Towns	Plain Rural Living	
Male 12–14	56	47	36	86	56	36	50
Male 15–17	50	52	67	82	32	63	58
Female 12–14	186	132	127	122	187	114	141
Female 15–17	97	173	132	123	135	223	156
Total	97	101	90	103	101	108	100

Source: ACNielsen Homescan & Spectra, Penetration (Population)/% Penetration Index, All Channels/United States, BehaviorScape Framework.

### Advertising Makes a Huge Impact - but so do Parents and Friends

The chapter argues that the consumption of children and teenagers to some extent is influenced by marketing. 50 per cent of the children and teenagers often wish for products they have seen advertised, and 25 per cent often buy/get products they have seen in an advertisement.

### The Influence of Commercials as to Children's Wishes and Children's'/Parents' Purchase



Source: *The Consumer Report, 2005*

Children are not only influenced by commercials targeted to children. By the age of eight, children are being exposed to more advertising directed to adults than to children. Peer groups and parents have a large influence on which products will be preferred and prevail. As substantial sums are spent on marketing initiatives, it seems fair to presume that commercial communication influence the choice of consumption.

#### Conclusion

At a young age, children have cash at hand to spend, they use a lot of time on various media and teenagers exert considerable influence over parental decision making when it comes to household purchases. At the same time, business and trade pour ever more money into advertising. The number of television commercials since 1998 has increased from 1,000 spots per day to 3,000 spots today. In 1998, 283 spots were transmitted in connection with family and children's programmes every day: today this number has increased to 576 spots. Concurrently with this, Internet and mobile phone technology invent new ways to carry out marketing that are particularly appealing to children and young people. As an example, 42 per cent of the young teens have tried to participate in a competition via SMS.

Teens are a moving target. They were born and raised during a digitized age where change happens rapidly. Born into the MTV generation where the rally cry was "I want my MTV", they have learned that what they want, they get. In their world, everything is immediate. From instant messaging to microwave meals, instant gratification is their mantra. Millennials are the first generation of true multi-taskers, easily balancing e-mail, text messaging, musicdownloads, homework and a strict schedule of sporting and other activities, simultaneously. This generation is more adept at communications than any of its predecessors. The wireless Internet is their central nervous system, and simply put, they just don't need much else. If they're that connected, then connecting with teens should be simple, right? Not necessarily. While it may seem easy to develop a systematic marketing plan (if teens = computers, then website advertising = success), connecting in the right places at the right time to the right audience is a challenge at best.

If you live in a household with a teen, get ready to stock up on deodorants, grooming aids, acne remedies and other personal care products, instant meals and school supplies—in that order. According to information from ACNielsen Homescan, categories such as these are greatly overdeveloped for the teen market. While that may not come as a complete shocker, consider the fact that many of the brands that have risen to the top of this typical list are those that cater to this trend-conscious segment by offering something new, different or cutting edge. Take for example Unilever's AXE deodorant for men. Appealing to the raging hormones of boys (and young men), the product comes complete with its own risqué website where the "AXE effect" promises to

attract the opposite sex “when used responsibly.” AXE now generates \$269 million per year in the food, drug and mass merchandiser channels (including Wal-Mart). According to a recent NPD survey of 3,500 consumers, 57 percent of the 13-to-18 age group polled said their purchases are influenced by celebrities or endorsements by celebrities, compared to just 21 percent of overall consumers. One factor dominates their buying choice - brands and brand image. To them, a strong brand is one that is well-advertised; they felt that advertising showed a company's commitment to a product. They also took a stance on 'me too' products, feeling that copycats were piggybacking on the success of others. To market successfully to the teenagers marketers need Proper celebrity endorser, beautiful product designing and packaging, competitive pricing, and outstanding media vehicle, well thought out promotion mix, proper distribution strategy and above all the honest effort to create trust and wellbeing.

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