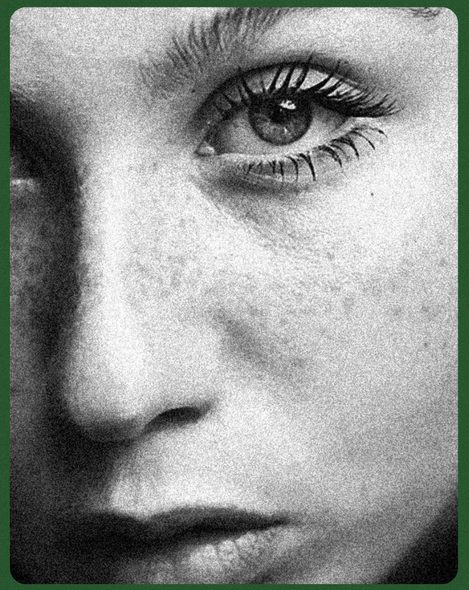
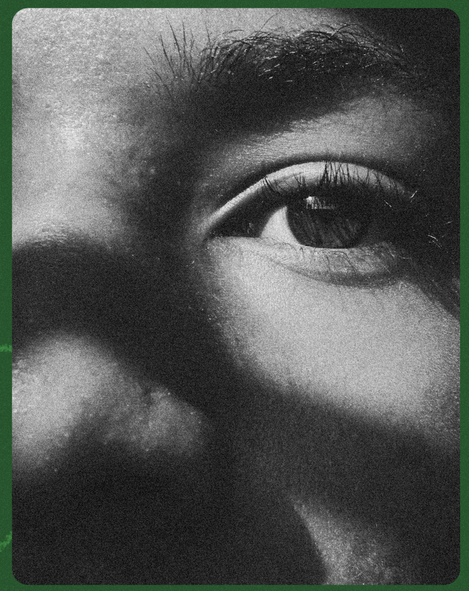
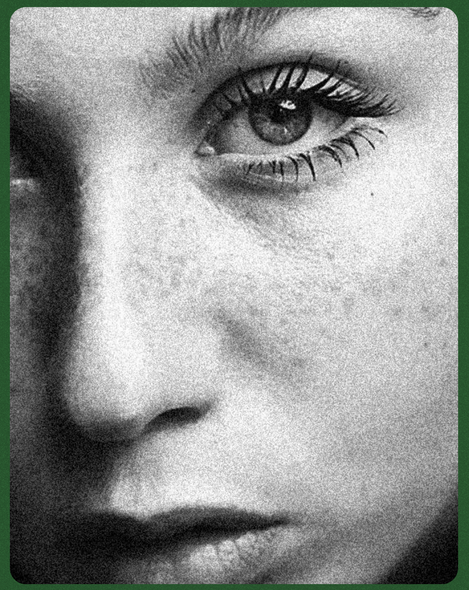
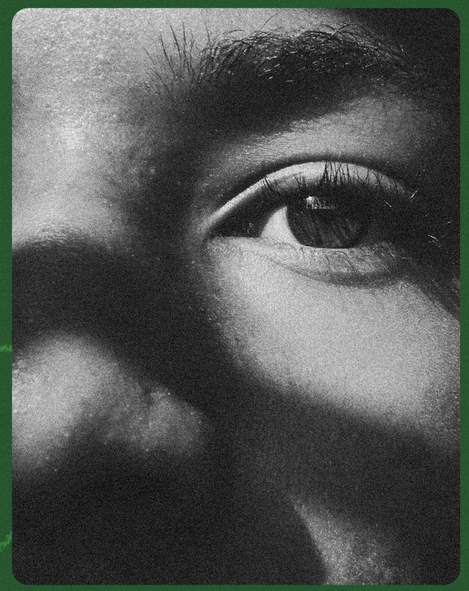
GEN Z IS UNDER A MICROSCOPE.





Since the moment they entered adolescence, they've been scrutinized and analyzed.





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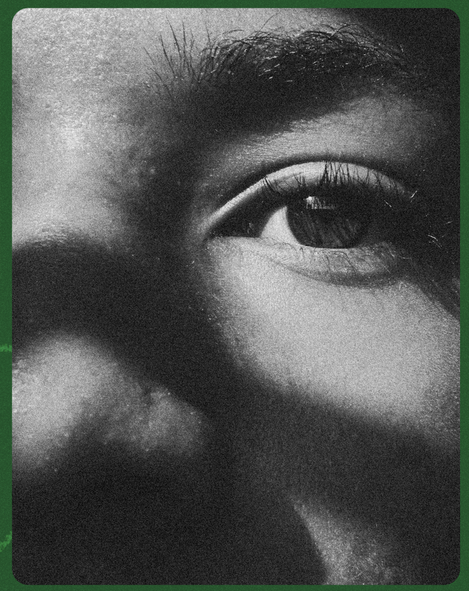

Outsiders project universal truths about them derived from TikTok trends, celebrity avatars, or their own experience parenting them.

Since the moment they entered adolescence, they've been scrutinized and analyzed.

Outsiders project universal truths about them derived from TikTok trends, celebrity avatars, or their own experience parenting them.

But Gen Z isn't a monolith.

ATLANTIC INSIGHTS PRESENTS:

GEN Z, *RECONSIDERED*

Uncommon Questions, Unexpected Connections

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That's why Atlantic Insights—the marketing research team at The Atlantic—asked uncommon questions, identified unexpected connections, and centered our shared humanity through new research in collaboration with students from Brown University.

Uncommon Questions, Unexpected Connections

That's why Atlantic Insights—the marketing research team at The Atlantic—asked uncommon questions, identified unexpected connections, and centered our shared humanity through new research in collaboration with students from Brown University.

The result is an in-depth analysis of a complex generation of adults, and a look at how brands can understand, engage, and move the dial among tomorrow's leaders.

SO, WHO ARE THEY?

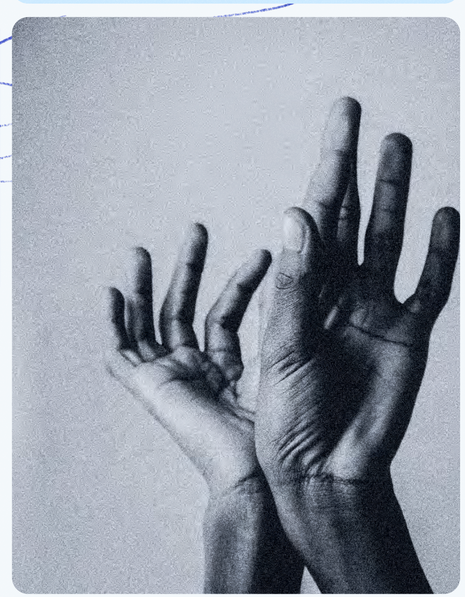
THE NEW GENERALISTS

GEN Z, RECONSIDERED

REPORT

FROM THE MARKETING RESEARCH TEAM AT THE ATLANTIC

Gen Z generalists are the new vanguard, leaders who are driven to improve themselves and the world.



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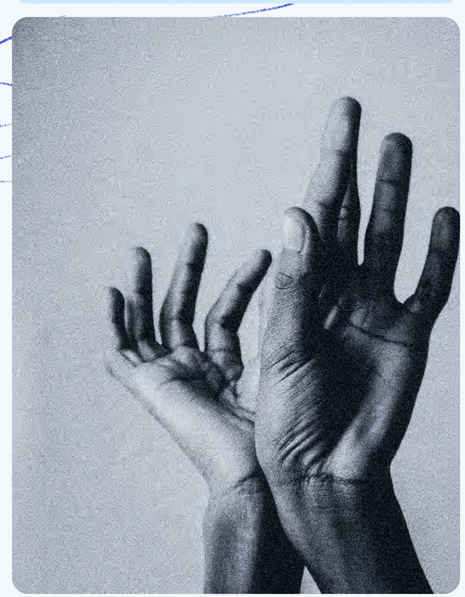
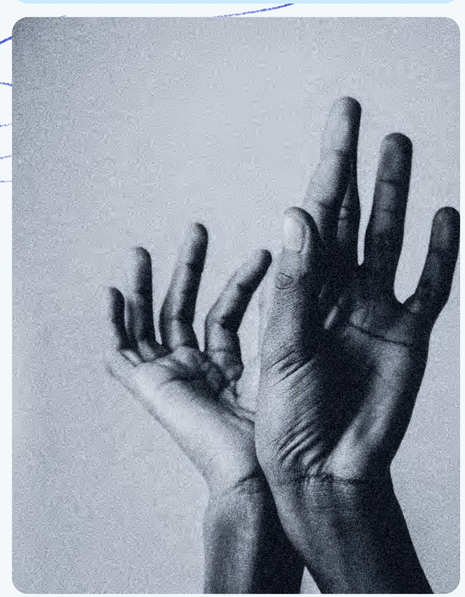


They're Curious Explorers. Curators. Collectors. Creators. Builders. Truth-Seekers. Social Do-Gooders. Human-Powered. Humorous Storytellers. Community Advocates.

They remain true to their core beliefs and values despite having different interests and priorities.



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73%

of respondents to our survey are *ambitious*, striving to be the best they can be. They expect excellence from themselves, others, and the brands they support.

23%

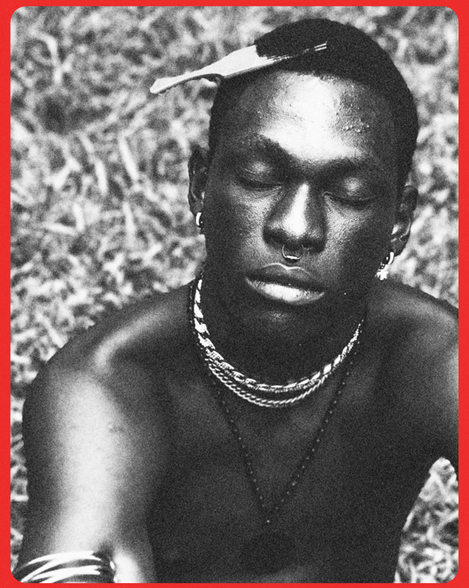
of respondents represent a *spectrum of personas*, including *activists* driven to help save the world, *dreamers* who prioritize the present moment and carefree, go-with-the-flow *followers* who lean on more dominant Gen Z segments for guidance.

#1

Across both personas, future and career ambitions are their primary motivation. This is the next generation of leaders—high-achieving and influential.

TAKEAWAY

REDEFINING CONSUMER CULTURE

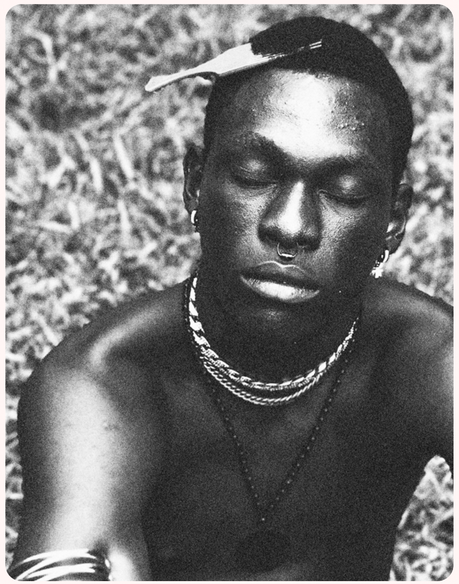


GEN Z, RECONSIDERED

REPORT

FROM THE MARKETING RESEARCH TEAM AT THE ATLANTIC

A World of Authenticity



A World of Authenticity

Authenticity is at the heart of what drives Gen Z and it grounds the worlds they are building for themselves. It guides everything from how they show up, to their personal relationships and the way they connect and engage with brands.

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92%

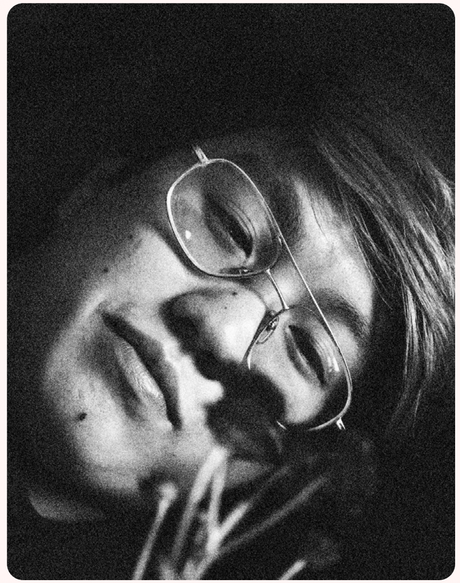
of Gen Z find authenticity and being true to oneself extremely important.

“

There needs to be an authentic story. Gen Z will look.They will go to your website and they will look for further information to see if what you're saying is actually true.

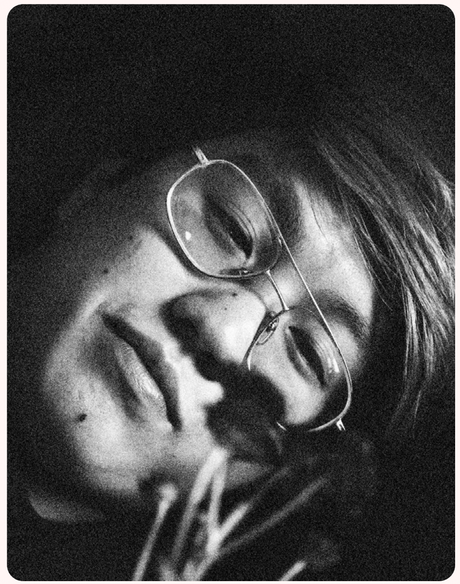
JADE BEASON
Founder & Creator, Jade Beason Ltd

Less Transaction, More Human



Less Transaction, More Human

While associated closely with social media and the scrolling economy, **Gen Z are much more than what they see on their screen.**



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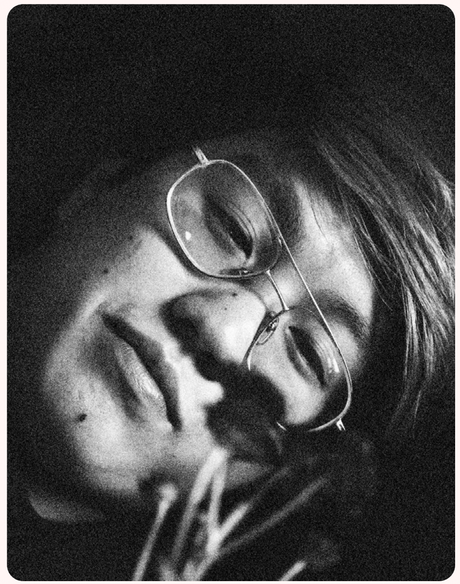

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While associated closely with social media and the scrolling economy, **Gen Z are much more than what they see on their screen.**

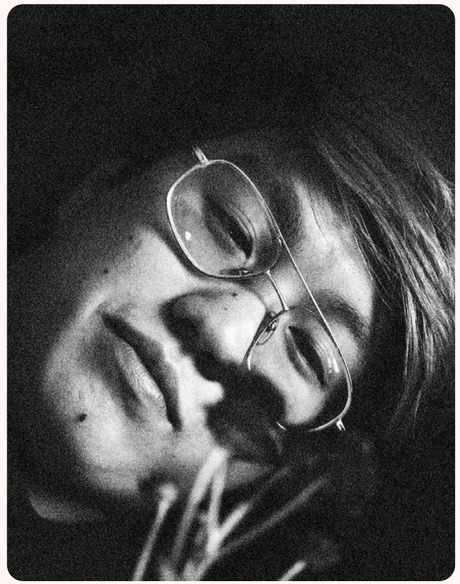
32%

Purchases are influenced more by friends & family or word of mouth than any other single factor or touchpoint—including brand presence, price, and influencer or celebrity endorsements.

“

Humanize your brand,product, service. Partner with creators to tell that story and actually move the needle for your business.

ZURI GODFREY
Brand Marketing Manager, Google



Enlightened Consumption

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While price is a determining factor, quality and brand trust combine to influence Gen Z purchase decisions the most.

Enlightened Consumption

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They're not simply scrolling and buying.

35%

While price is a determining factor, quality and brand trust combine to influence Gen Z purchase decisions the most.

“

Gen Z is incredibly product loyal and they're really, really knowledgeable and discerning about the products. And so you have to be able to deliver.

CARLEY CALDAS
Vice President, Brand Marketing & Media, eos Products

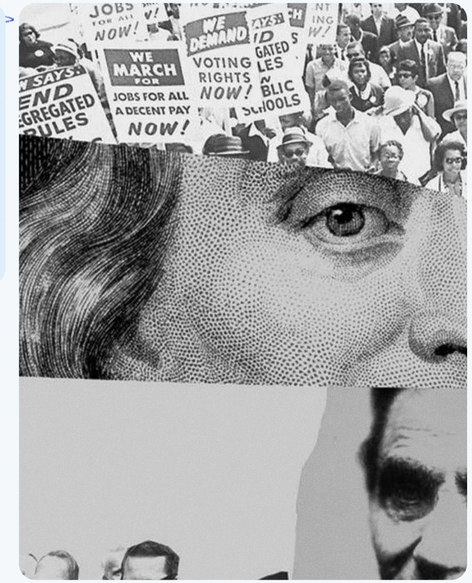
TAKEAWAY

WHY THE ATLANTIC?

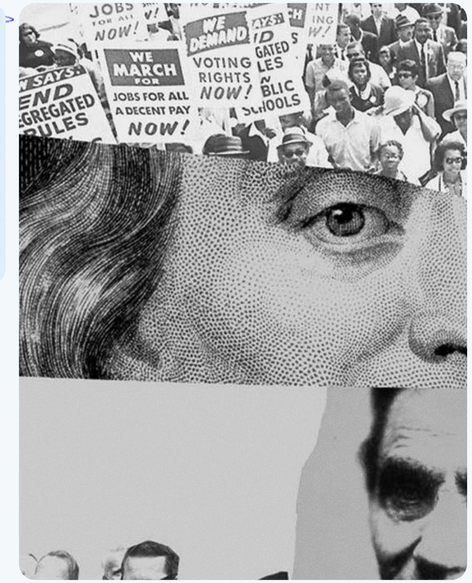
“

News is very important and how you get information. But when it comes to hearing about the people in society you live in, profiles and longform journalism lends itself well to connecting with other people.

MALE, 20 YEARS OLD, WHITE
Brown University student



Gen Z achievers crave trustworthy, longform journalism.



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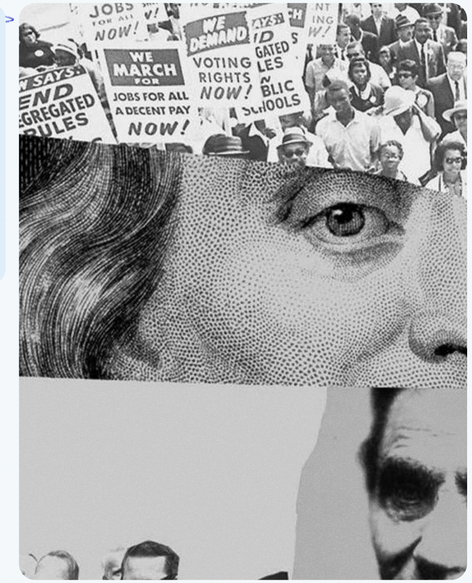
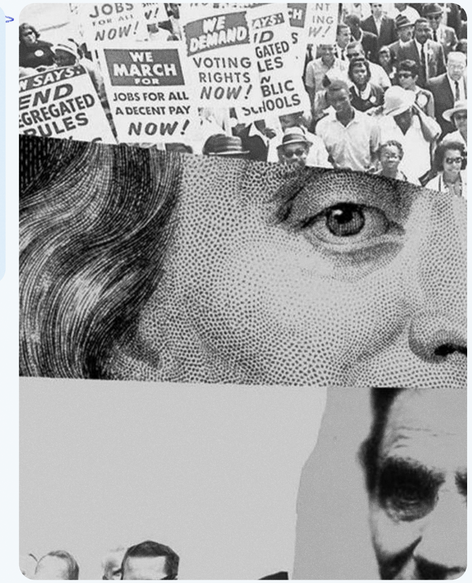


While Gen Z may be social media-native, they don't count on it for their fundamental understanding of the world and their place within it.

Top 3 Reasons Gen Z engage with their preferred publication:



Top 3 Reasons Gen Z engage with their preferred publication:

55%

Credibility

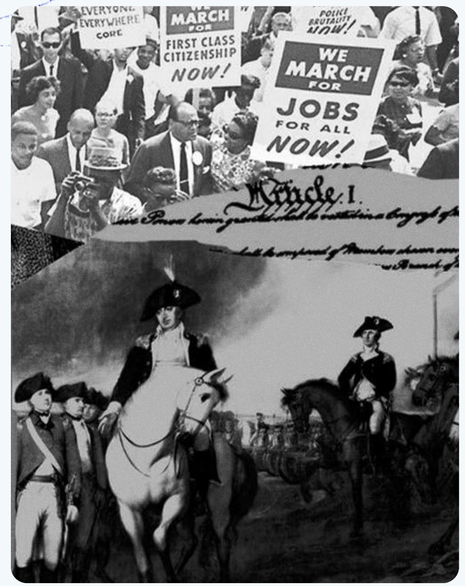
44%

Thought-provoking content

42%

Wide range of news and current events

Topics they want to see more covered by news media:



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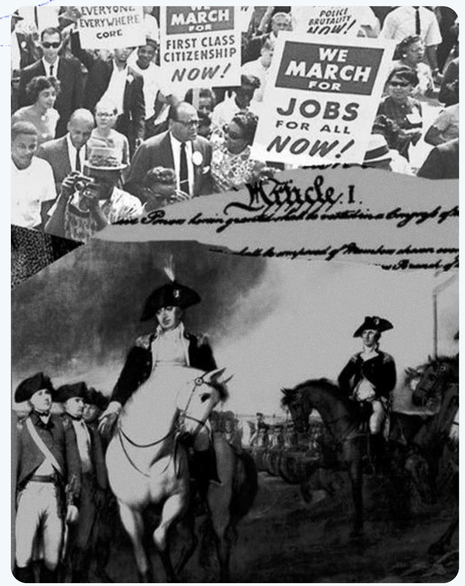


42%
Science & Climate

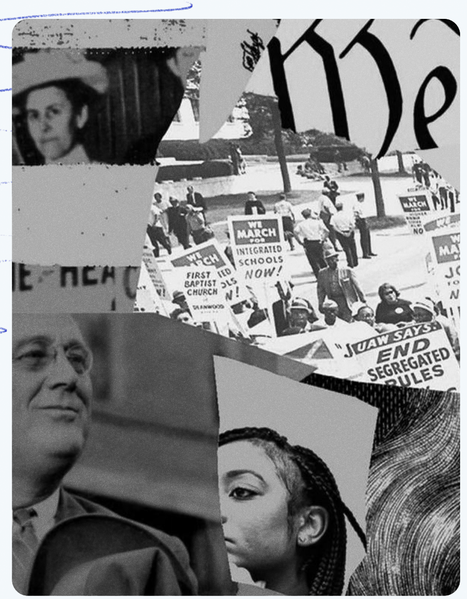
42%
Arts & Culture

30%
Government & Policy

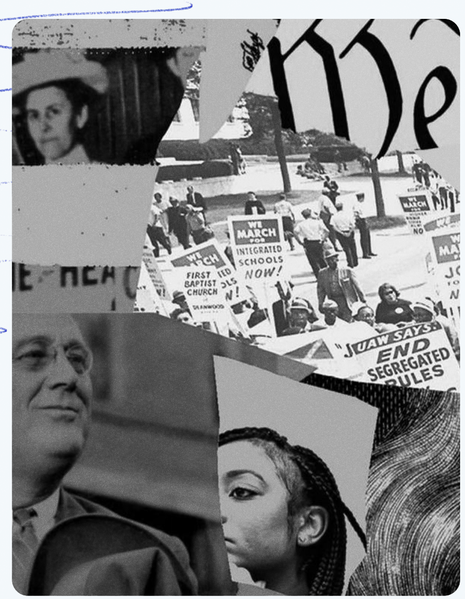
“

If you want to continue to be a part of Gen Z's lives as they grow up or as they age, then you also have to evolve how you communicate and engage with them.

KELLY BUCHANAN SPILLERS
Global VP, Digital Marketing, CeraVe, L'Oreal



The Atlantic helps Gen Z make sense of their world.



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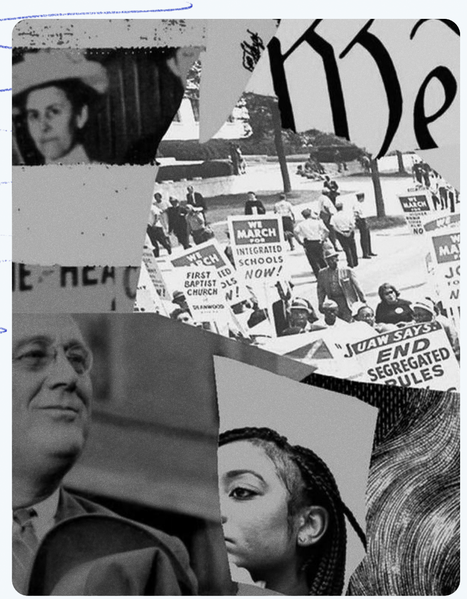

Science & Climate

3x

More likely to read

Arts & Culture

2.5x

More likely to read

Books

2x

More likely to read

From *The Atlantic*

The Awful Ferocity of Midlife Desire

by Sophie Gilbert

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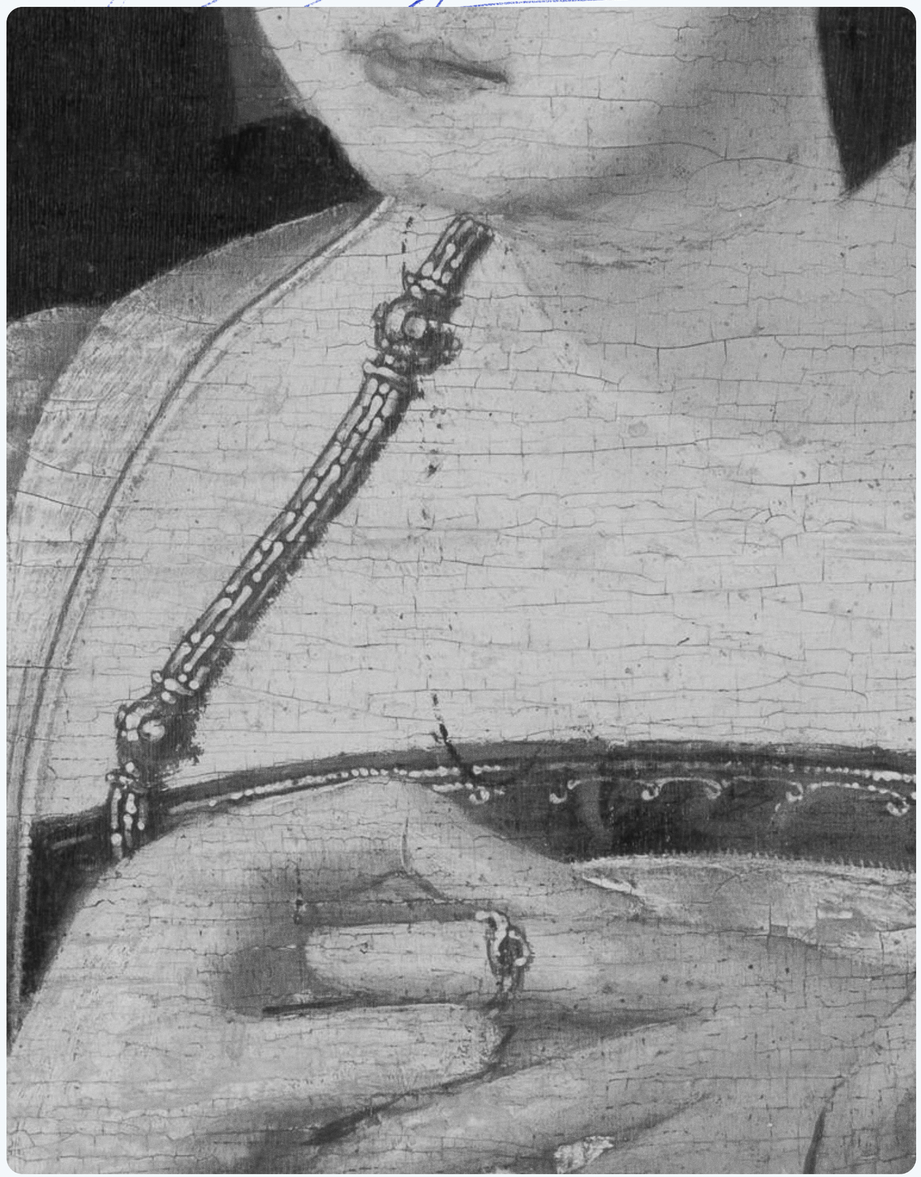
2022 Pulitzer Prize Finalist

From *The Atlantic*

Why Does Romance Now Feel Like Work?

by Hannah Giorgis



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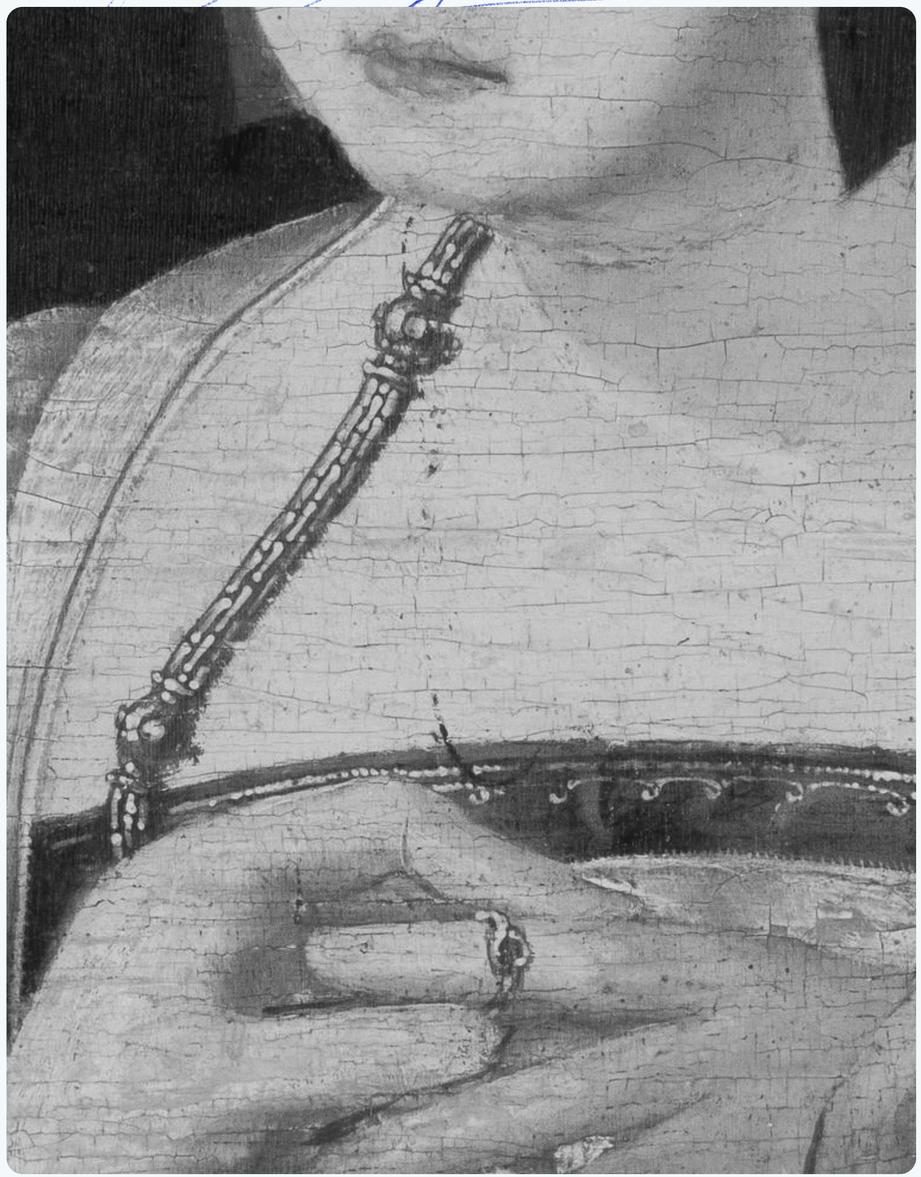
More likely to be read by Gen Z



From *The Atlantic*

The Mysteries of Plant Intelligence

by Zoë Schlanger

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10x

More likely to be read by Gen Z

Influential & Engaged

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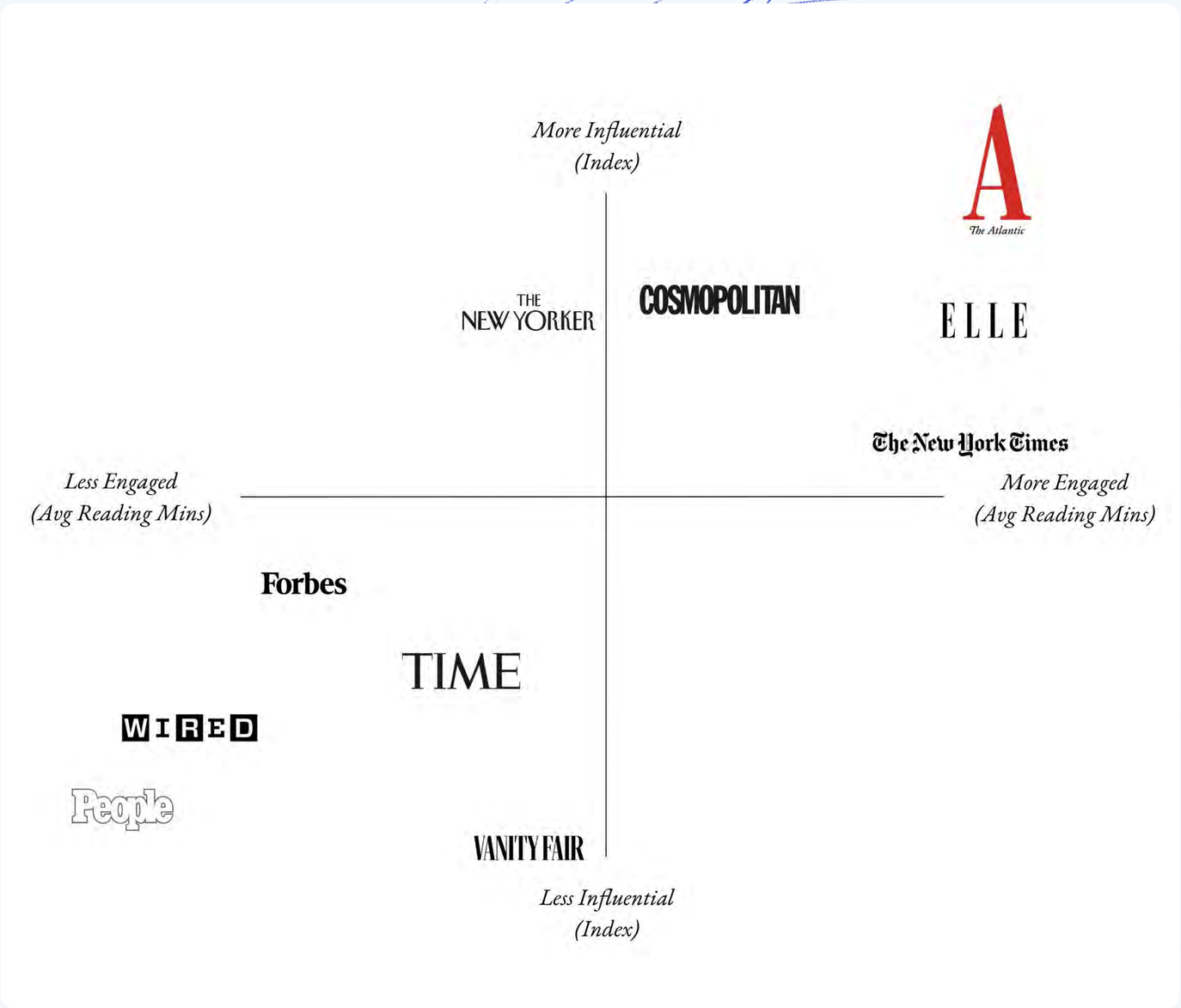
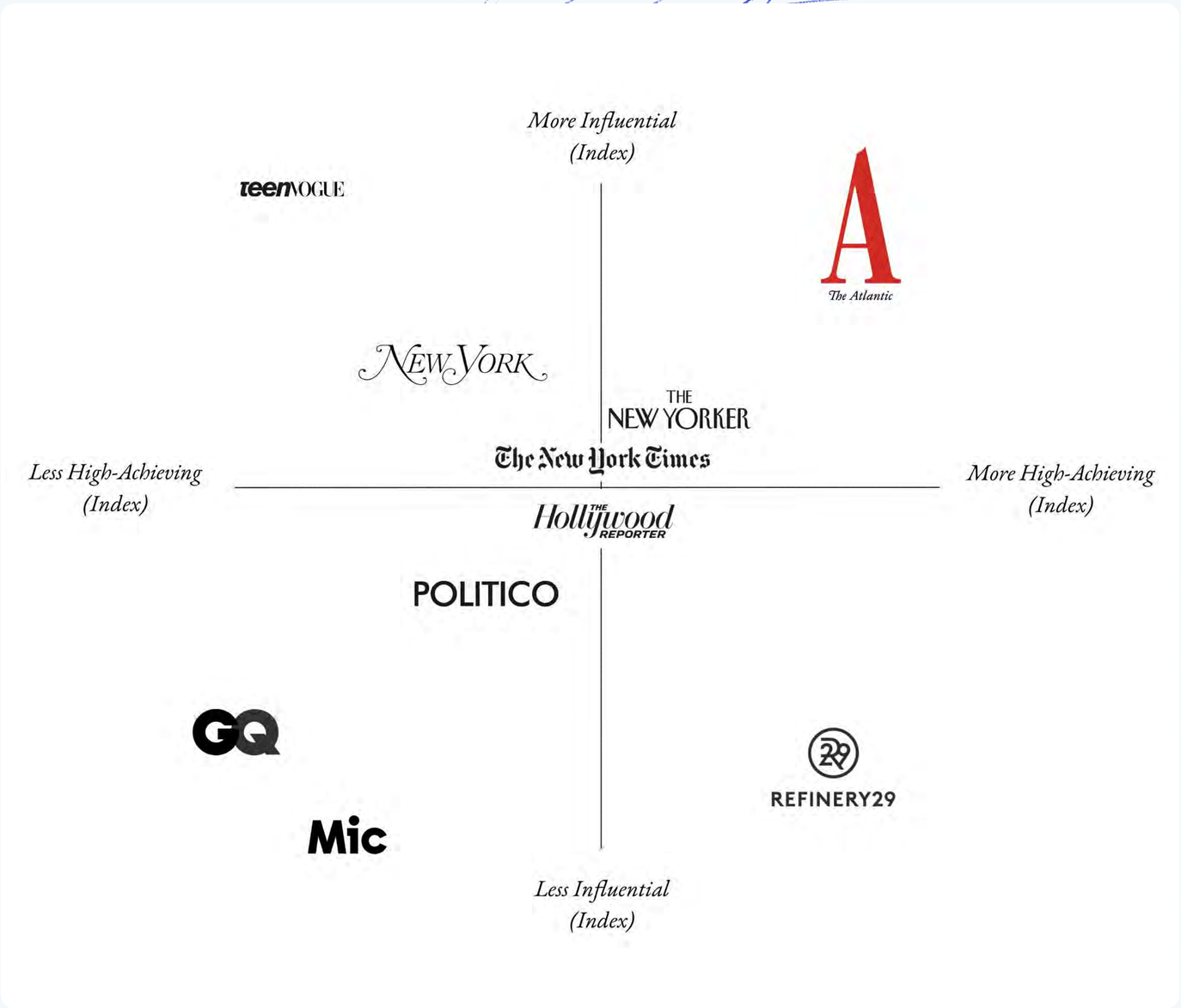


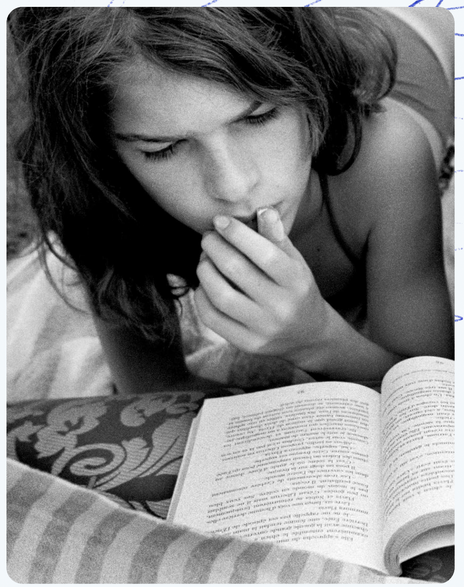
Cultivating Future Leaders

FROM THE MARKETING RESEARCH TEAM AT THE ATLANTIC

Cultivating Future Leaders



Gen Z Readership At A Glance



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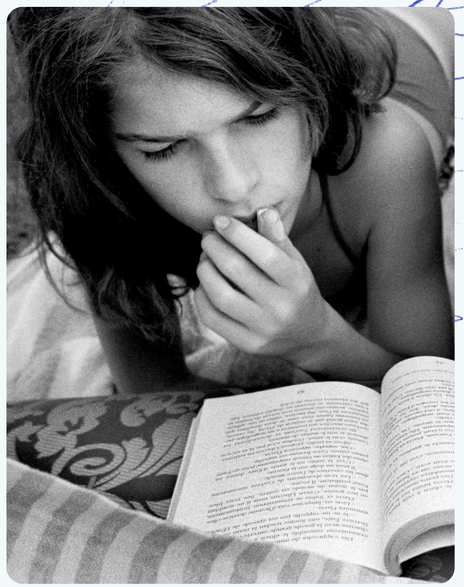

Our Gen Z readership is diverse across multiple categories including gender and race.

Gen Z Readership At A Glance

53%

Identify as Female

47%

Identify as Male

Our Gen Z readership is diverse across multiple categories including gender and race.

Gen Z Readership At A Glance

37%
Hispanic or Latino

19%
Black

10%
Asian or AAPI

5%
Indigenous

Our Gen Z readership is diverse across multiple categories including gender and race.

Gen Z Readership At A Glance

Our Gen Z audience is well-educated and live in key media markets.

Gen Z Readership At A Glance

61%

Currently students or have Bachelor's degree

45%

Reside in a U.S. Top 10 media markets

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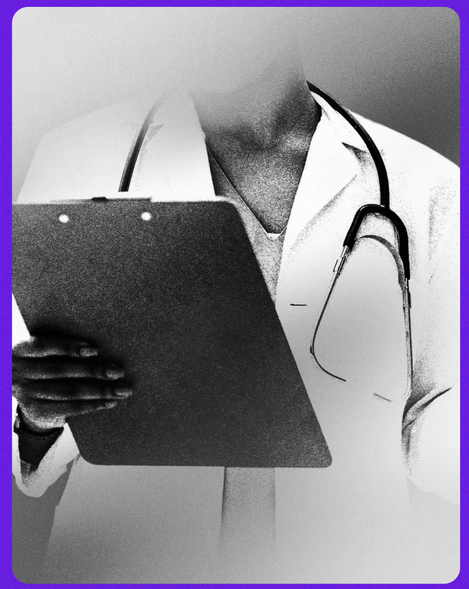
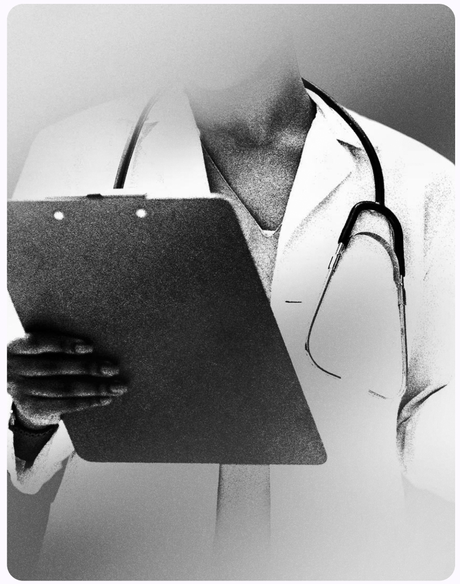
Average HHI

TAKEAWAY



WAYS TO INTEGRATE

Health & Wellness



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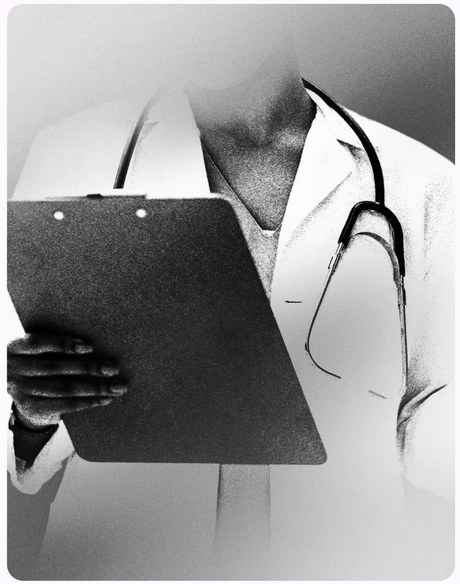

Our mental health and holistic wellness coverage serves an essential purpose for Gen Z. We aim to cover the most urgent, accessible health issues our readers deal with everyday—pulling back the curtain on why we think, act, and live (or die!) the ways we do.

Health & Wellness

6X

Gen Z are 5.7x more likely to read *The Atlantic's* health section compared to our avg. reader.

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The Opportunity

- *Being Human* health expansion
- *Dear Therapist* column + newsletter
- *How to Build a Life* column + newsletter
- How To...podcast series
- Always-on Health coverage
- Re:think Custom Content

Human Connection

Human Connection

Gen Z is all about fostering connection and community – whether that's online or offline. AtlanticLIVE, the award winning experiential division of *The Atlantic*, is at the ready to build bespoke, IRL experiences for your brand. Bring us your biggest ideas and let's create an experience together.

Human Connection

32%

are influenced more by friends & family or word of mouth when making purchasing decisions than any other single factor.

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The Opportunity

- Screening
- Art Exhibition
- Book Launch
- Live Podcast Taping
- Musical Performance
- Re:think Custom Content
- Atlantic Convening around one of *The Atlantic's* key editorial pillars

Arts & Culture

Arts & Culture

Cultural curation is essential to Gen Z's identity and how they navigate the world. As a cultural hub and literary destination, *The Atlantic* helps them discover, explore and spark curiosity.

Arts & Culture

#1

Gen Z want to see Arts & Culture covered by news media vs. other themes & topics.

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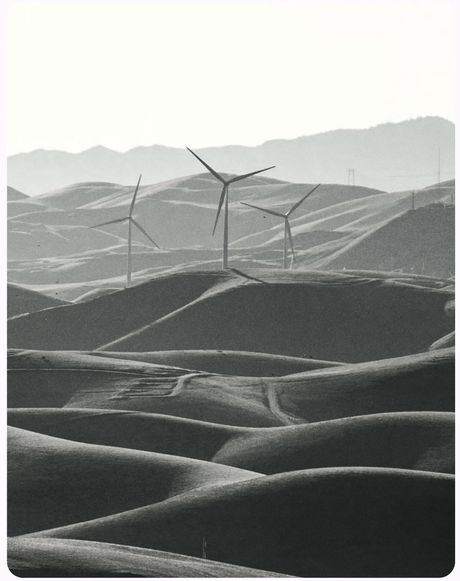
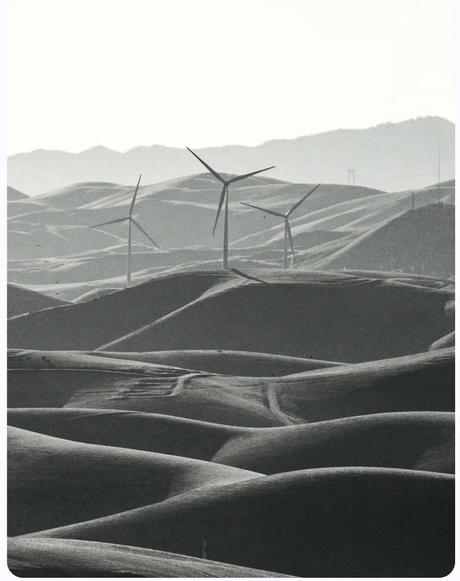
The Opportunity

- Book Recommendations
- Books & Culture
- Atlantic Archives
- Literary Travels
- Re:think Custom Content

Science & Planet



Science & Planet



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The Opportunity

- Always-on Science + Planet Coverage
- The Weekly Planet Newsletter
- Re:think Custom Content

ATLANTIC INSIGHTS PRESENTS:

GEN Z, *RECONSIDERED*

BRAND SUCCESS, AT A GLANCE

E.l.f. Cosmetics & Liquid Death

E.l.f. Cosmetics & Liquid Death

E.l.f. Cosmetics and Liquid Death surprise and delight with a bizarre collaboration.

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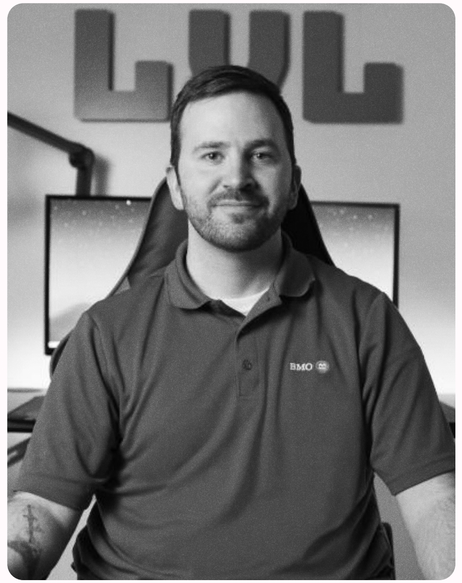
Why It Works

- **Authenticity:** Both brands are being "themselves," even if here, that's a little weird
- **Enlightened Consumption:** This isn't just a gimmick, both brands make useful, solid products and can back it up
- **Extra Credit:** Humor - though not highlighted specifically, our research found that Gen Z likes a moment of levity

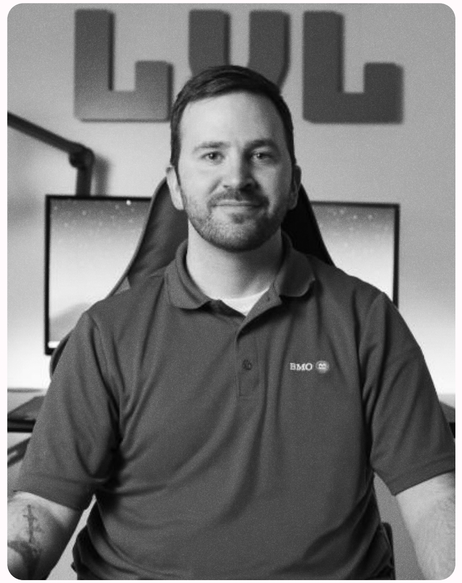
Bank of Montreal & Twitch



Bank of Montreal & Twitch

Bank of Montreal goes gamer to reach the next financial audience.

Bank of Montreal established Nxt Lvl, a virtual branch on Twitch, where they host weekly streams designed to teach young consumers about financial literacy while they're gaming. They have over 8.9M+ total views and 15,000+ hours watched.



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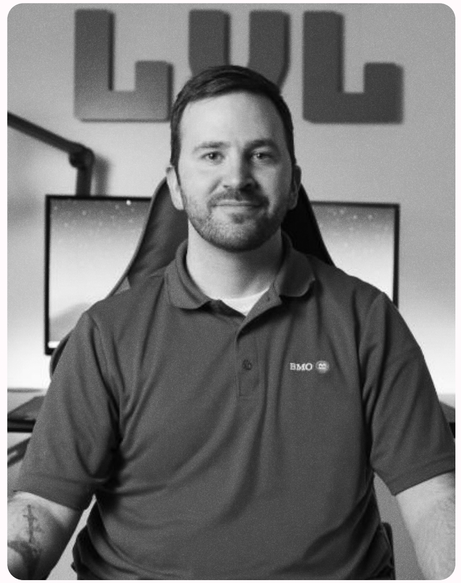

Why It Works

- **Authenticity:** Host, Sean Frames, was an internal hire, a BoM employee who was already a longtime avid gamer on Twitch
- **Enlightened Consumption:** BoM is offering solid, free financial advice; they have the research, and an institution and longevity to back it up.
- **Less Transaction, More Human:** Players are there doing something they love with friends - the brand happens to be there too, offering advice amongst comrades

The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation & Kith

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Frank Lloyd Wright channels his inner hypebeast to win over Gen Z.

The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation launched a limited number of New Balance sneakers created with Kith founder, Ronnie Fieg. The sneakers are inspired by one of Wright's most famous unbuilt projects, Broadacre City featuring the color palette of the architect's sketches.

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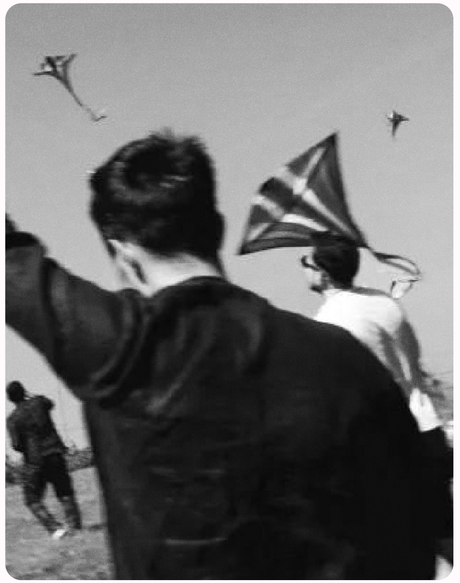
Why It Works

- **Authenticity:** The Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation wasn't afraid to let the collaboration stay very true to the artist's work.
- **Enlightened Consumption:** Consumers get to support a non-profit Foundation, while also wearing pieces from popular brands (Kith, New Balance). Also, the pieces teach the buyer a little about a cultural icon.

Hinge



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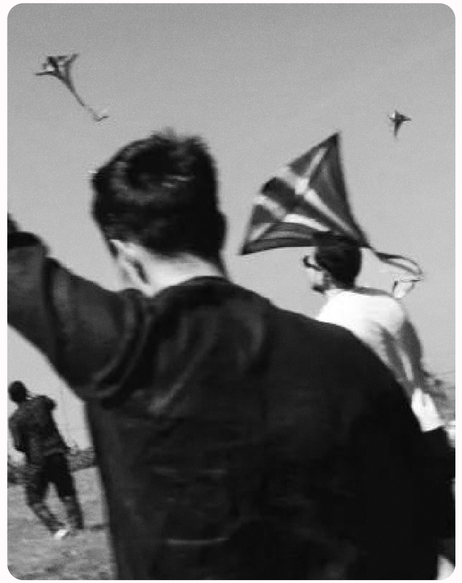
Hinge is spending $1 million to get people to meet IRL.

Hinge is launching a $1 million social impact fund to tackle the loneliness epidemic plaguing its Gen Z users. 501(c)3 groups in Atlanta, Los Angeles, and NYC can apply for grants to develop “fresh, free/low-cost, and recurring in-person connection opportunities” for young adults.



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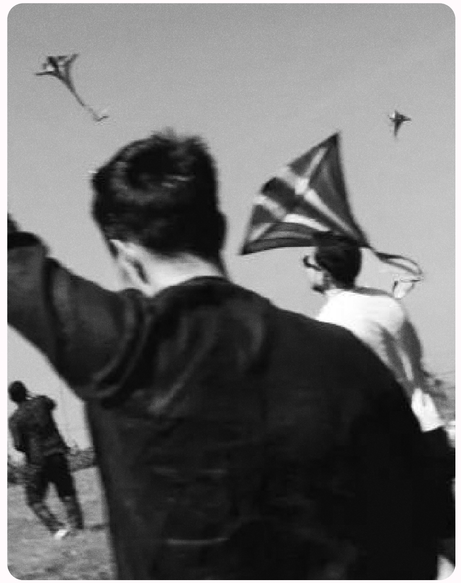

Why It Works

- **Authenticity:** Hinge already plays in the "meet-up" space for dates so it feels natural that they would foray into friends and community building.
- **Enlightened Consumption:** Hinge is partnering with local organizations that are already embedded in the communities their target audiences belong to.
- **Less Transaction, More Human:** Our study showed that Gen Z is most interested in spending time IRL with the people they love. Hinge is helping make that happen.

Gucci

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Gucci finds popularity among Gen Z in the world of gaming.

In 2019, Gucci dove into the world of gaming, producing a watch with esports company, Fnatic, which sold out in 48 hours. Gucci then created its own line of gaming themed goods: Gucci GoodGame. The collection is highlighted by iridescence and eccentricity, and features young and diverse models.

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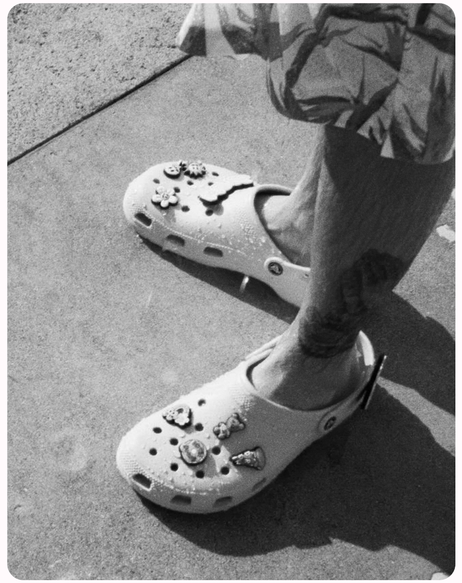
Why It Works

- **Authenticity:** Gucci took their commitment to the world of gaming and to gamers themselves, seriously. The time and consistency turned what could have felt like a gimmicky play into a true space for new, younger audiences to find Gucci.
- **Enlightened Consumption:** Gucci's commitment meant that when Gen Zers did their homework, Gucci passed the intent test

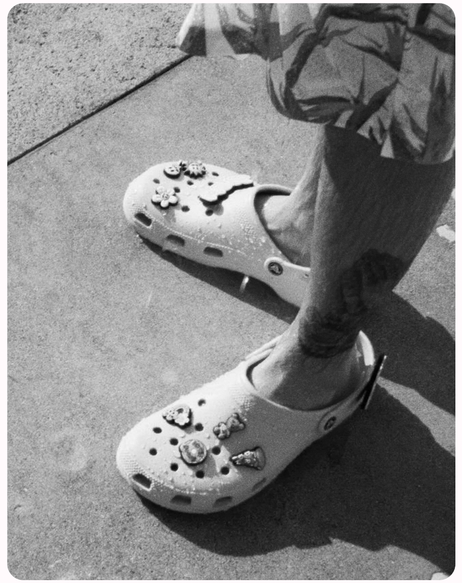
Balenciaga & Crocs



Balenciaga & Crocs

Crocs collabs with Balenciaga and Bieber to say fashion is subjective.

Crocs resurrected themselves with partnerships with luxury houses like Balenciaga and popular celebrities like Justin Bieber. Stereotype breaking partnerships like these show that luxury brands are willing to forge unlikely partnerships as a way to express these emerging values.”



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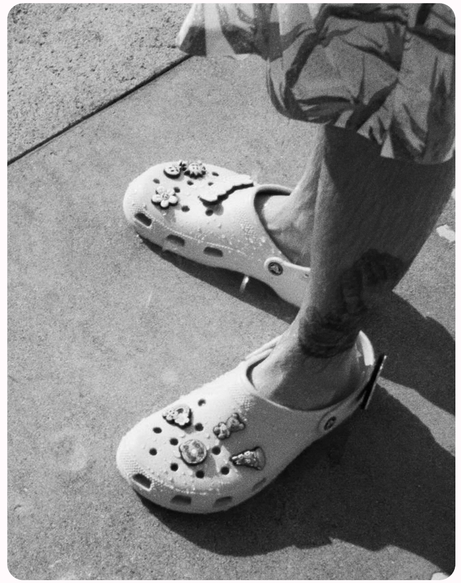

Why It Works

- **Authenticity:** Gen Z wears Crocs, with 48% having worn a pair before and 27% intending to buy. "As an artist, it's important that my creations stay true to myself and my style. I wear Crocs all the time, so designing my own pair came naturally," Bieber said in his release.

Levi's & Pinterest

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Levi's targets a young Pinterest audience with authenticity.

The "Styled by Levi's" campaign on Pinterest asked users to select up to 5 pictures that spoke to their style and identity. Users would then be presented with a Pinterest board of Levi's looks curated just for them.

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Why It Works

- **Authenticity:** Gen Z Pinterest searches are up 30% YOY, by partnering there, Levi's is meeting Gen Z where they are, with a 1:1 relationship.
- **Less Transaction, More Human:** Levi's is offeringa free service (customization) for each user's own preferences.