



# Gen Z in 2022

Culture, Commerce, and Conversations





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# Introduction



At Snap, we aim to listen to and understand our audience, and Gen Z is an important part of that. We surveyed 16,000 people across 16 markets, with nearly 5,000 of them being Gen Z, and held more in-depth discussions with select participants and their friends. Additionally, we spoke to academics and youth experts, uncovering their predictions for the future of culture.

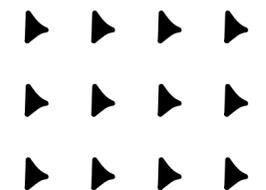
We found that the last two years haven't changed who Gen Zs are so much as how they show up. Like millennials, Gen Z is distinguished by their kindness, creativity, and a sense of humor. But for Gen Z, values such as peace and equality are of greater importance. These values have moved to center stage for them, to influence how they interact, not only with their friends but also with brands and their wider community. Beyond this, they're placing even greater emphasis on having fun, accomplishing their goals, caring for their health & wellbeing, and building relationships.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778, 25+ N= 11,222 | Q: How, if at all, has the importance of these values changed for you since before the pandemic? | Q: Which of the following issues are most important to you?

It's no secret that the world is at an inflection point. Not only is Gen Z paying attention to this change, but they've made it their personal responsibility to make the world a better place.

**Gen Z is evolving many aspects of how we live — from how we connect and communicate, to how we consume.**

Here we will outline the shifts that Gen Z is leading and how brands can adapt effectively to Gen Z's outlook.



# Insights into Gen Z





**Chapter**

**01**

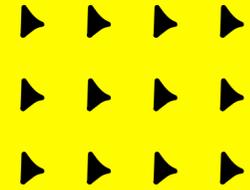
**Championing  
Authenticity**

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# Gen Z is embracing who they truly are, despite pressures of expectation.



For nearly half of Gen Z "**being true to who I am**" has become even more important to them over the last two years. Gen Z is significantly more likely than millennials and Gen X to say this.<sup>1</sup>

**Gen Z is at the center of a growing desire for authenticity in society at large**, a desire which is increasingly giving shape to our methods of digital communication. This generation is driving a shift toward greater transparency, reimagining online life as something that feels real, fulfilling, and genuinely fun.

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: How, if at all, has the importance of these values changed for you since before the pandemic?



Gen Z is

# 1.6x

more likely than millennials and Gen X to say **"worrying about what others think of me"** is a cause of stress.<sup>1</sup>

# 56%

of Gen Z feel **they get stronger and grow from challenges**. They're significantly more likely to say they are excited to grow and explore their identity compared to millennials and Gen X.<sup>2</sup>

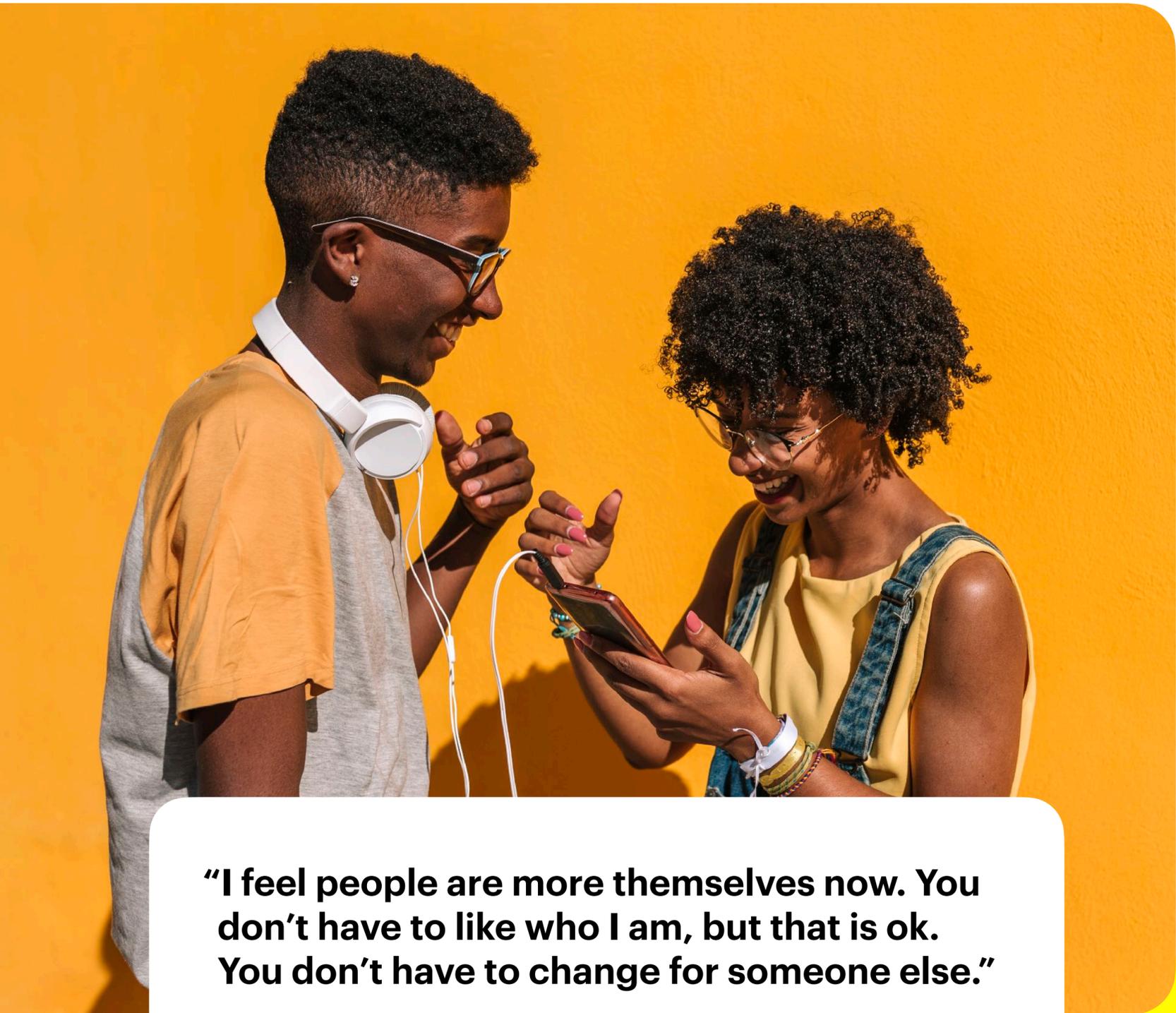


One thing that distinguishes Gen Z from older generations is a sense of resilience. To them, **challenges are a chance to grow and discover new parts of themselves**. They're excited by opportunities to get stronger and they're on the lookout for positive environments in which to do this.



<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: What are the main causes of stress in your life?

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778, 25+ N= 11,222 | Q: We're going to present you with a set of statements. For each pair, please use the scale to answer which you agree with most.



**“I feel people are more themselves now. You don’t have to like who I am, but that is ok. You don’t have to change for someone else.”**

Gen Z, Netherlands, 21

# 69%

of Gen Z focus on **using apps that feel like positive environments.**<sup>1</sup>

# 71%

of Gen Z say they focus on **living in the moment.**<sup>2</sup>

Snapchat has always been a place for people to live in the moment, express themselves, and have fun together. For Gen Z, being able to do this is a chance to escape the external pressures of expectation that weigh heavily on their generation and explore themselves on their own terms.

Rather than putting on a brave face, they’re building spaces in which they feel supported. The content they share reflects what life is actually like, and **Snapchat is the #1 app where Gen Z enjoys sharing real-life moments.**<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Please tell us the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your feelings and emotions.

<sup>3</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z - Daily Snapchatters = 2,092 Daily TikTok = 2,223 Daily Instagram = 2,150 Daily Facebook = 1,227 Daily Messenger = 1,088 Daily Whatsapp = 1,554 Daily Twitter = 1,101 | Q: Which of the following moments do you enjoy sharing or celebrating on each app? Please select all that apply. (NET: Funny / random things that happen during my day, moments that capture what my life is actually like.)



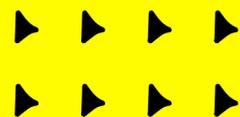
**“Snapchat makes me feel happy and healthy... Without [it], I’d feel much lonelier and disconnected from the world and my friends and family. The use of group chat, the ability to send pictures, and to reply to stories, all of those features feel super personal and help me keep in close contact with my loved ones.”**

Gen Z, 23, UK



# Gen Z is showing up differently, and so should brands...

Brands have to accept Gen Z for who they are and consider ways to embed themselves seamlessly into this generation's everyday conversations. **Gen Z is looking for brands that can complement the spaces they are creating — spaces that are supportive and encourage self-expression and self-exploration.** Brands should look to share content that authentically portrays who they truly are and what they stand for. Remember — openness and transparency are key for this.



SCAN ME



**“Gen Z are so self aware... they really grew up online with the explosion of digital spaces. They speak openly about how it impacted them and their relationships with older generations.”**

Iona Literat, Gen Alpha & Gen Z Tech Expert





**Chapter**

# 02

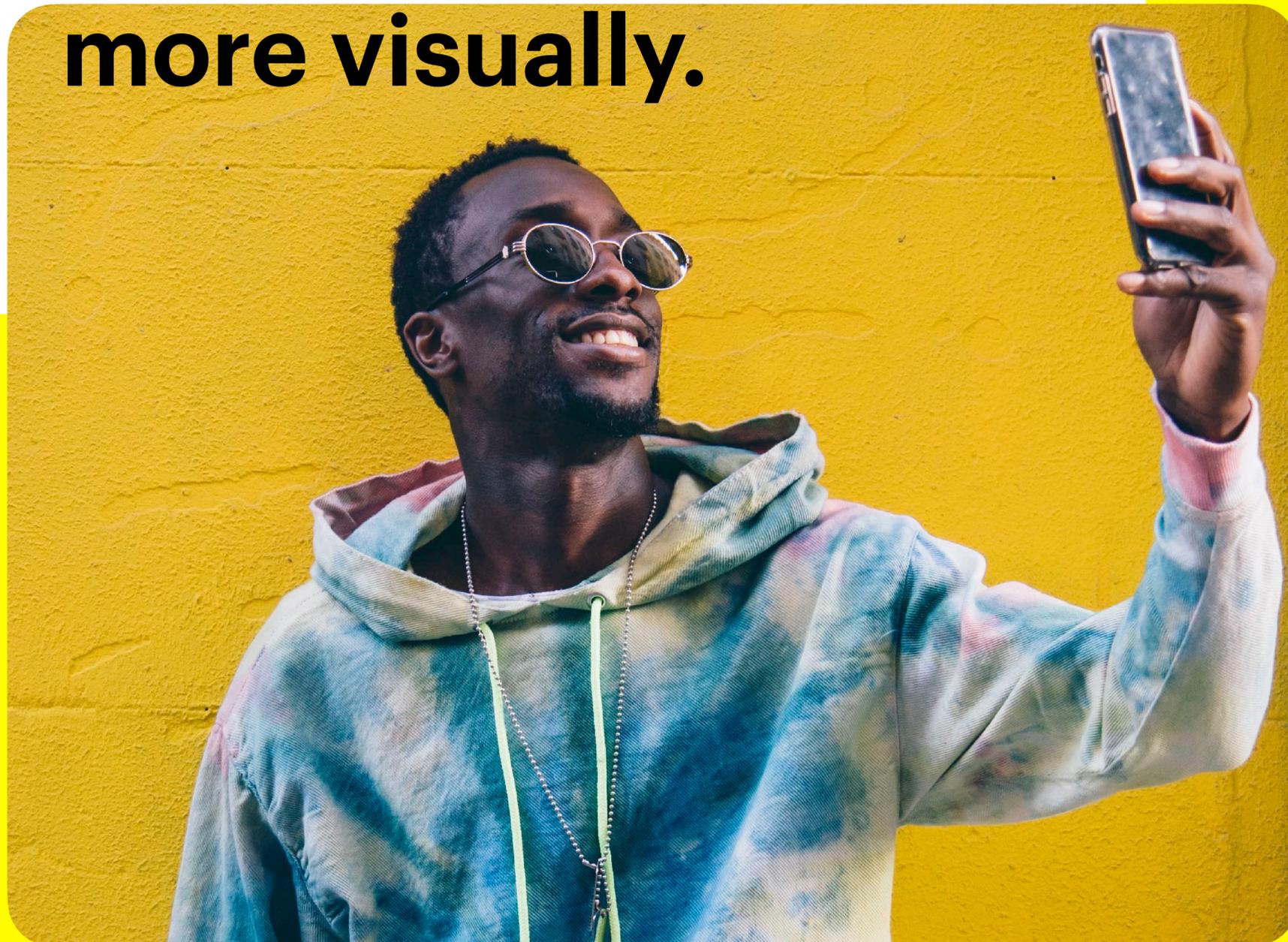
**Communicating  
Expressively**

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# Gen Z is choosing to communicate more visually.



# 95%

have used visual communication when messaging friends.<sup>1</sup>

# 2 in 3

Gen Z use visual communication to make connections more personal.<sup>2</sup>

We're living in the era of visual communication, and Gen Z is a key player in this. With visual communication, Gen Z is building stronger relationships and connecting in ways that are both more creative and expressive.

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778, 25+ N= 11,222 | Q: Thinking about all apps you use, which of the following things relating to visual messages (e.g. pictures, videos, filters / lenses, emojis / bitmojis) have you ever done?

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Why do you like sharing / receiving visual messages (e.g. pictures, videos, filters / lenses, emojis / bitmojis) on apps? (NET: feel more personal, make it easier to build stronger connections / relationships, help me to feel more involved in my friends' lives, even if I'm not there).

Nearly

# 3 in 5

Gen Z use digital avatars and Bitmojis to help them express themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Nearly

# 60%

of Gen Z say AR experiences feel more personal.<sup>2</sup>

From Bitmojis and emojis to GIFs and AR, Gen Z is the true “digital native” generation and things are evolving fast. AR, specifically, allows for even greater personalization, with new and exciting opportunities for brands to relate to their consumers.

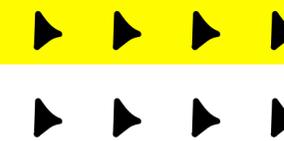
<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Please tell us the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your feelings and emotions

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: How much do you agree with the following statements about Augmented Reality (AR) in general?



**“Snapchat feels much more immersive and personal than other apps. I love the way that you can create a picture, send it to a group chat with a personal caption and filter that makes it much more unique — no other app can really do that.”**

Gen Z, 23, UK



**“Pictures and videos are a more inclusive way of communicating. It allows me to take my friends with me and show them what I'm up to instead of just telling them, which keeps us connected and makes interaction more authentic.”**

Gen Z, 19, Germany

The way that Gen Z is connecting with the world around them is becoming even more immersive. Gen Z is leading the way in **using AR to play games** (1.3x more likely than millennials and Gen X), **enhance their entertainment experiences** (1.2x more likely than millennials and Gen X), and **learn new skills** (1.2x more likely than millennials and Gen X).<sup>1</sup> The majority of Gen Z feels that AR has the power to bring them an enhanced personal connection with the brands they follow.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778, 25+ N= 11,222 | Q: ...and which of these AR experiences have you already done? Used AR to...

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: How much do you agree with the following statements about Augmented Reality (AR) in general?



# There are a few things for brands to consider in this world where photo and video rule...

Gen Z embraces visual communication — it's a way to build more personal connections and enjoy immersive experiences. To connect with Gen Z, **brands will do well to adapt and build a strategy around a camera-first mentality.**





**Chapter**

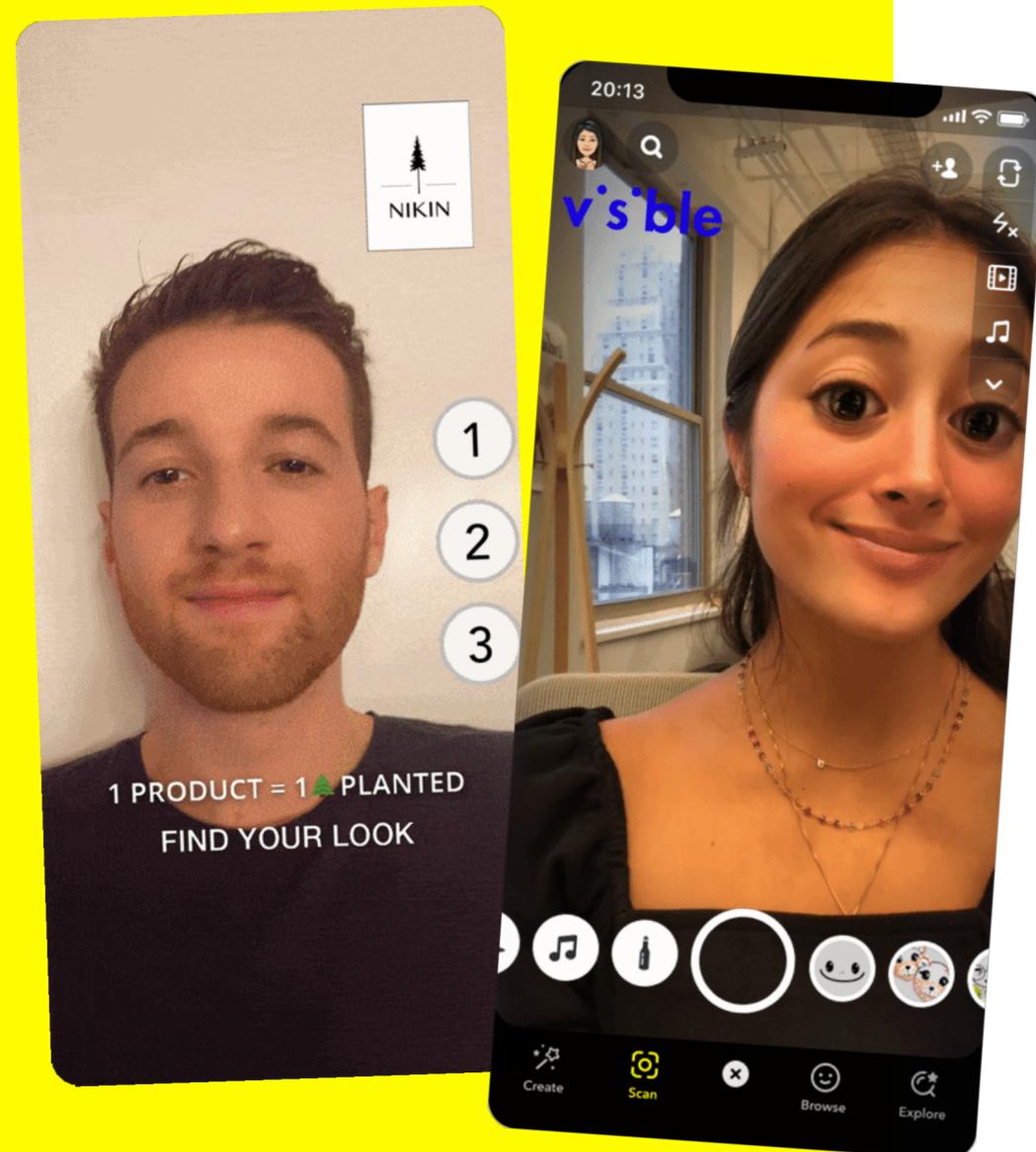
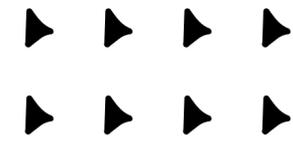
**03**

**Shopping  
Interactively**

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# Interactive and personalized shopping experiences are a must.



# 92%

of Gen Z are interested in using AR for shopping.<sup>1</sup>

**Over half** of Gen Z say they'd be more likely to pay attention to an ad that incorporates AR.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: One way augmented reality (AR) could help you is by assisting you in your shopping experience. What are the reasons why you'd want to use AR for shopping? (NET: All responses)

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: How much do you agree with the following statements about Augmented Reality (AR) in general?



# 41%

of Gen Z like to experiment with aspects of their look or appearance. They're more likely than millennials and Gen X to do this.<sup>1</sup>

Gen Z is also redefining how we shop, turning to AR to get inspired, experiment with their look, and try on potential purchases before they buy. This is part of a more general trend Gen Z is leading, where shopping is not only becoming more digital but also more interactive and personal. Gen Z is more likely than millennials and Gen X to buy an item that they've experienced first using AR and feel it is important that brands offer immersive experiences.<sup>2</sup>

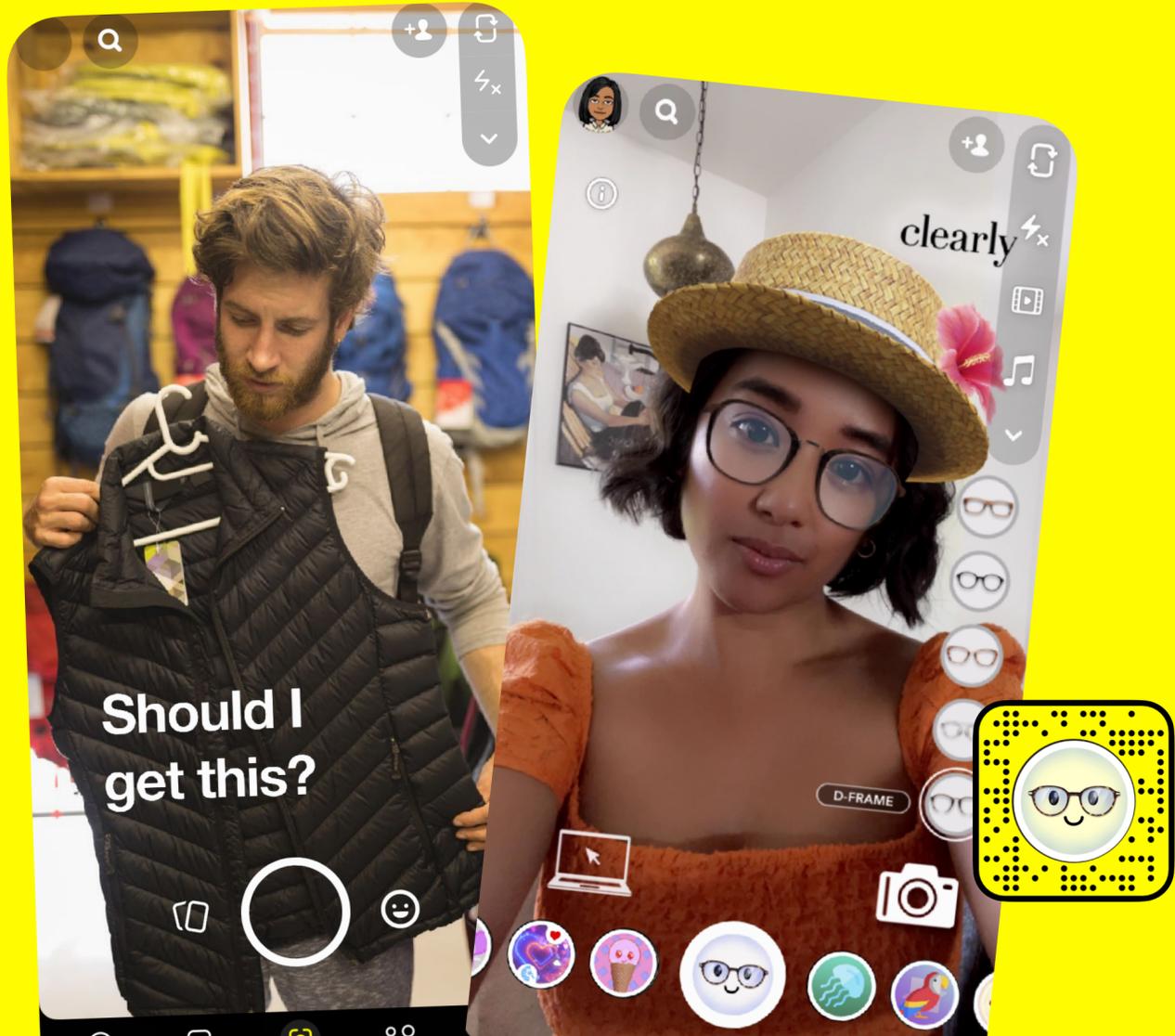
<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778, 25+ N= 11,222 | Q: We're going to present you with a set of statements. For each pair, please use the scale to answer which you agree with most.

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778, 25+ N= 11,222 | Q: E2. Now, thinking about the way you shop, which of the following do you do more of now compared to before the pandemic?



**"I see brands on my friends' private stories when they're opening shopping hauls they've got in the post – it inspires me to buy stuff from those brands too."**

Gen Z, 15, Australia



**“Whenever my friends or I buy something, new or second hand, we send each other snaps with pics of it. We naturally mention where we have bought it and which brand it is.”**

Gen Z, 24, Norway



Not only does shopping with AR allow Gen Z to identify the size or style that suits them, but it also creates a more fun and social experience. For Gen Z, AR is a way to enhance the shopping experience, making it more convenient and more connected.

**Snapchat is increasingly somewhere to experience and share the joys of shopping — it is the #1 platform where Gen Z enjoys sharing purchases they love or when shopping.<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z - Daily Snapchatters = 2,092 Daily TikTok = 2,223 Daily Instagram = 2,150 Daily Facebook = 1,227 Daily Messenger = 1,088 Daily Whatsapp = 1,554 Daily Twitter = 1,101 | Q: Which of the following moments do you enjoy sharing or celebrating on each app? (NET: When I've bought something I love, When I'm shopping)



# Brands can harness the power of AR to engage Gen Z in more immersive ways...

Gen Z is looking for fun and social experiences when they shop, and 63% of them feel AR is going to make life easier.<sup>1</sup> Brands need to invest not only in AR experiences but ways of standing out as this tech continues to grow.

AR has the power to re-center the shopping experience entirely around the individual consumer. Gen Z is starting to expect this from their brands. They want to seamlessly interact with, try on and purchase products, and share the experience with their friends.



<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: How much do you agree with the following statements about Augmented Reality (AR) in general?



**Chapter**

# 04

## **Prioritizing Connection**

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# Gen Z cares about the wider social implications of their actions.

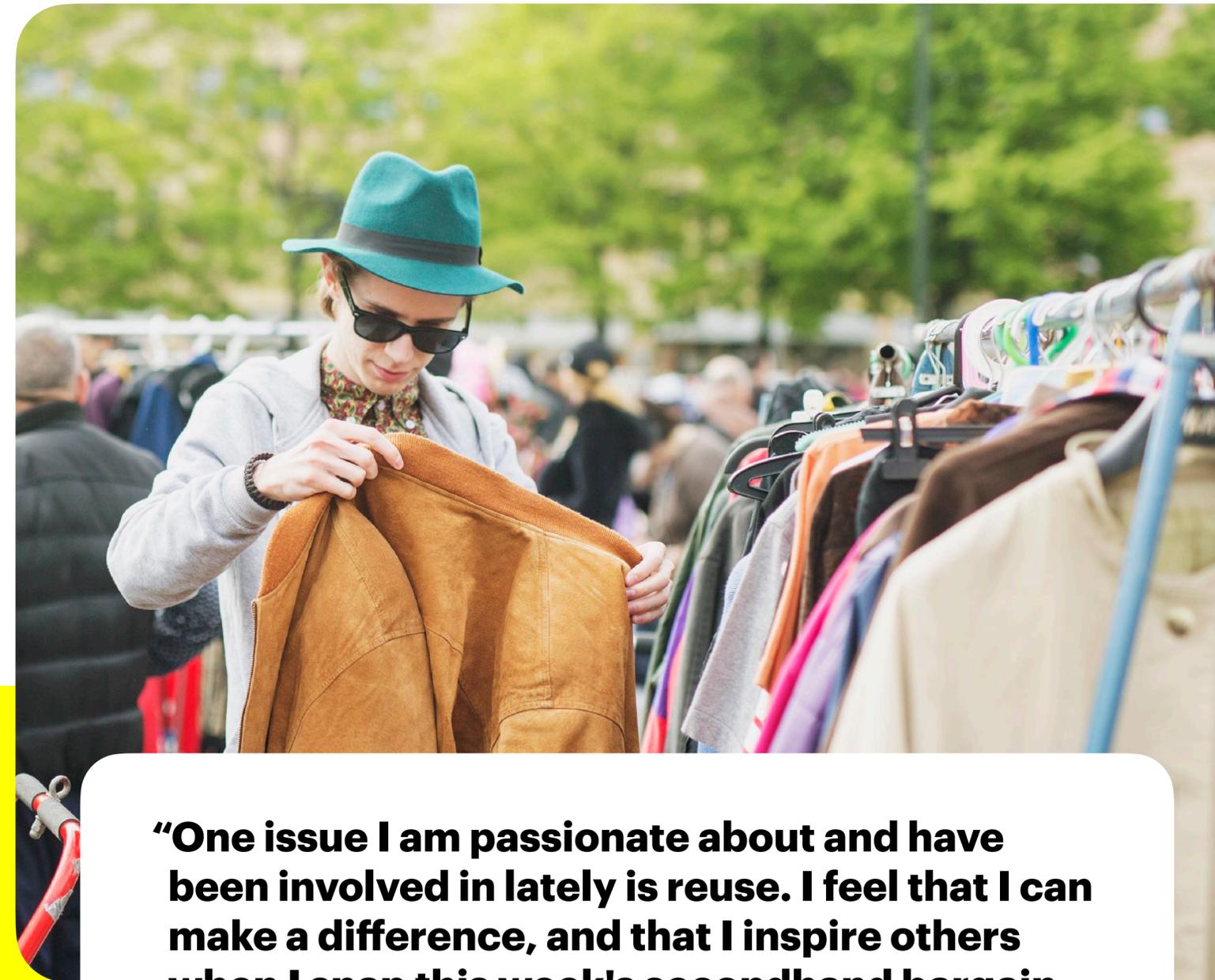
# 70%

of Gen Z value actions that benefit the collective.<sup>1</sup>

They see, for example, AR as shopping tools to reduce carbon emissions and lessen their personal environmental impact. It's also a tool for them to explore places around them. Gen Z is increasingly focusing on the collective good, with Gen Z significantly more likely to feel speaking up about social and political issues has become more important in the last two years.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Which of these are important to you? Please select all that apply. (NET: Reducing my environmental impact, Speaking up about social / political issues, Supporting my community and taking time to help others around me, Being open to learning from others and respecting different cultures).

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Which of these are important to you? Please select all that apply. (NET: Reducing my environmental impact, Speaking up about social / political issues, Supporting my community and taking time to help others around me, Being open to learning from others and respecting different cultures) | Q: What are the reasons why you'd want to use AR for shopping? | Q: How, if at all, has the importance of these values changed for you since before the pandemic?



**“One issue I am passionate about and have been involved in lately is reuse. I feel that I can make a difference, and that I inspire others when I snap this week's secondhand bargain from the app Finn to friends and family.”**

Gen Z, 24, Norway



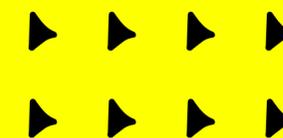
**“Connecting with other people is the most important thing we can do on this planet.”**

Gen Z, 22, USA

# 71%

of Gen Z plan to spend more time connecting in-person than before the pandemic.<sup>1</sup>

Gen Z invests time in both self-care and collective care. In fact, **3 in 4 agree that connecting with close friends is the simplest way to feel happier**, and nearly 3 in 5 connect with those close to them or their communities to deal with stress.<sup>2</sup>



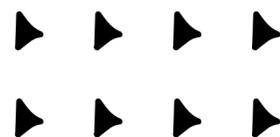
<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Compared to before the pandemic, which of the following do you plan to do more of in the future (assuming there are no travel restrictions in place)? (NET: Going out and meeting new people, Hanging out with my family, Attending in-person events)

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Please tell us the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about your feelings and emotions. | Q: Which of the following do you currently do to help you deal with stress?

This desire for deeper relationships extends to how Gen Z relates to brands.

**More of Gen Z has a digital relationship with brands than before the pandemic, and the majority of them now see it as increasingly important for brands to build meaningful connections with them.<sup>1</sup>**

Brands play a really important role in the social life of Gen Z — with just over half connecting with others over brands they like.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>1</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: Now thinking more generally - compared to before the pandemic, which of the following have become more important to you when choosing brands to purchase products from? (NET: Makes me feel like I'm part of a community (e.g. through in-person events or a platform built around sharing ideas and reviews), Makes me feel like I'm making a difference in helping them grow, Incorporates my feedback / lets me have a say in the products they create, Helps me live up to my values).

<sup>2</sup>2022 Global Crowd DNA Study commissioned by Snap Inc. | Base: Gen Z N = 4,778 | Q: How do you typically show loyalty to brands you like? NET: I talk about the brand with my friends and family, I like to connect with other people who share my love for the brand (e.g. social groups on apps)



**“For me, it’s important that a brand shares the same values that I have. Credibility is also super important. That’s the key word for me — how credible is the brand?”**

Gen Z, 23, Germany

# In light of Gen Z's social values, there are a few things for brands to consider...

More and more, consumers are expecting the worldviews of the brands they purchase to align with their own.

**Gen Z, in particular, is looking to buy into brands they can support, promote, and stand behind. It will work well for brands if they are open, honest, and clear about their values, motivations, and goals.**

Brands also can help build communities. Gen Z enjoys talking to people who share their love for a brand. Harness this — facilitate interconnections by giving people content they feel they can talk about and share.





**So, these are  
the things to  
remember...**

# 1. Gen Z is leaning into their authentic selves.

When it comes to their identity, Gen Z is exploring who they truly are — vulnerabilities and all. They seek freedom to do this, and Snapchat provides a positive space for exactly that.



## 2. From Bitmojis and emojis to GIFs and AR, this generation loves creative communication.

For Gen Z, interaction is vitally important, regardless of how far apart they may be. Visual communication lies at the heart of their interactions, providing the ability to build deeper relationships.

### 3. This generation is reshaping the shopping experience.

Commerce is changing. Gen Z is turning to AR to experiment with their looks, try on products before they buy, and share the experience with their friends.



### 4. Gen Z is prioritizing the greater good and building community.

In doing so, they're recognizing the benefits their connections — with family, friends and brands — can bring.

**Connect with the generation that's evolving everything from how we communicate to how we shop and show up.**





## THE GEN Z REPORT

The Gen Z report, a Snap Inc. and Crowd DNA collaboration, examines the behaviors and values of Gen Z in Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Snap Inc. and Crowd DNA surveyed nearly 5,000 Gen Zs, interviewed youth experts, and conducted a week-long mobile ethnography with leading edge Gen Zs to better understand what matters most to them. Our sample was nationally representative between the ages of 13-44, capturing views of millennials and Gen X as well.

## METHODOLOGY

### Quantitative online survey

Crowd DNA ran a 15-minute online survey among a sample of 16,000 respondents in 16 countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States.

The quantitative element was in-field between 5th November 5 and November 26, 2021.

All respondents were aged between 13-44 years old, had to own a smartphone and be a user of at least one social / messaging / camera app.

13-17 year olds were recruited through their parents or guardian.

An initial 1,000 respondents were recruited per market based on nationally representative quotas (based on secondary research) placed on age, gender, region and ethnicity to ensure nationally representative numbers.

### Qualitative interviews

Two leading-edge members of the Snapchat Generation in each of the 16 countries completed weeklong vlogging diaries to deliver depth and emotion.

In total, 23 of the 32 were Gen Z.

They were also asked to include friends in these tasks, upping our sample size and extending the number of perspectives to draw from for the research.

### Alignment with experts

We spoke to 4 experts in the field to round out our knowledge base:

Ioana Literat - Gen Alpha & Gen Z Tech Expert, USA

Derek E. Baird - Kids & Teen Content, Culture Strategist, Global

Dr. Damian Radcliffe - Professor of Journalism & MENA Studies, UAE / Saudi Arabia

Mark McCrindle - Social Researcher & Futurist, Australia / Global