

A guide to the Gen Z guest and traveller

 By [Guy Stehlik](#)

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Gen Z is (almost) all grown up and the spotlight is steadily shifting from Millennials to reveal Gen Z's emerging purchasing power (both in terms of direct and indirect spend) and the way in which this younger generation is re-shaping the realm of travel. While there are indeed a few similarities between Gen Z-ers and Millennials, travel and accommodation suppliers are having to make significant changes to their marketing approach when it comes to attracting and retaining the interest of the decisive Gen Z guest.



Source: Thought Catalog via [Unsplash](#)

Below is a look at Gen Z's wants and needs, their defining travel habits and behaviours, as well as some advice regarding how travel suppliers can make the necessary shifts to create meaningful connections with keen Gen Z jetsetters in the future.

Gen Z vs Millennials

It's true that generations are moulded to a large extent based on the contexts into which they are born. Generation Z (comprising individuals born between the years of 1997 and 2012) were born into the age of technology, with the internet and social media at their fingertips from a very early age. In fact, they're the first generation never to know a world without the world wide web, computers and smartphones.

It's unsurprising to discover that technology plays a crucial role in this generation's travel habits and preferences. This is the main similarity between Gen Z-ers and Millennials – they rely predominantly on the internet to make their travel decisions and to book their holiday.

According to a European Travel Commission (ETC) market study on Gen Z travellers, both Gen Z-ers and Millennials place value on flexibility and independence, which is why online booking is so attractive to both markets. Relying heavily on the convenience of technology in their day-to-day lives, it also makes sense for both generations to favour OTAs (online travel agencies) when planning a trip, acting as a one-stop-shop for all their travel requirements. OTAs are their preferred booking channels for everything from flights and accommodation to ground transport and leisure activities.

The main difference between the two is how Gen Z feels about travel in a post-Covid world, being more open to the idea of resuming international travel sooner rather than later. Based on statistics gathered by travel booking platform, GetYourGuide, more than half of Gen Z-ers are planning international trips, whereas more than half of Millennials don't intend to venture further afield any time soon.

Furthermore, Gen Z-ers are more likely to judge destinations by their values rather than passively taking inspiration for future travel from friends, family and the internet.

Gen Z travel-related wants and needs

Climate change, mental health challenges and equality are contemporary issues of great importance to individuals born after 1997, and their opinions surrounding these issues have a direct impact on their travel-related wants and needs. For example, the majority of Gen Z-ers will keep sustainability in mind when booking to stay at a hotel or even when choosing a destination to visit.

For Gen Z-ers, it's not just about finding a hotel offering excellent value for money. These travellers will be taking various other factors into account when making a booking, such as the hotel's inclusivity policy and how it's taking action to reduce the establishment's environmental impact.

Additionally, with maintaining optimal mental health being a top priority for Gen Z, they'll be hoping to make the most of their travels, ensuring that their accommodation provider is able to provide many different options to help them de-stress, relax, and re-centre. Along with unwinding, studies show that unique experiences are important to this demographic, too. They're less inclined to opt for run-of-the-mill adventures, like skiing or surfing, and more likely to jump at the opportunity to book a desert safari in Namibia or to head out on a mountain gorilla tracking excursion in Uganda.

Finally, as mentioned above, Gen Z-ers demand that technology be integrated into every seam of their traveller journey, from navigating through the airport to checking into their hotel or requesting room service via an app.

Advice to accommodation providers

The primary takeaway when it comes to appealing to Generation Z travellers is fully embracing technology and paying close attention to ensuring equality and sustainability within your establishment.

Not only should you be taking this action, but you should also be communicating clearly that you are on every platform possible. Make sure prospective travellers know where and how to download your hotel's app and how you've updated your guest rooms with the environment in mind. These details are what could tip the scales in your establishment's direction when a travel decision is being made.

Remember, it's not only the Gen Z-ers over the age of 18 who are making travel decisions as of 2022. With the internet and information a mere click away, teenagers and even pre-teens are chipping in when their parents are planning trips and, as time goes on, their purchasing power is only going to increase.

Now's the time to start taking Gen Z, their wants, needs, and expectations seriously. They are the travellers of both the now and the future, after all.

ABOUT GUY STEHLIK

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