

Engaging Tomorrow's Customers, Today

Impactful Strategies to Connect with Gen Z Through Financial Education



EVERFI®



Introduction

With purchasing power primed to [explode](#) to \$12 trillion by 2030, it's safe to say that Generation Z has arrived and is making an impact on the economy and society in a big way. And with all that purchasing power and disposable income, the need for financial education, and the knowledge of how to spend that money wisely, has never been greater. Comprised of those born from about 1997-2012, today, Gen Z is starting to make major financial decisions and enter the workforce in increasingly large numbers. Like the generations before them, Gen Z has unique perspectives, priorities, and buying preferences that will completely reshape how companies and organizations market and sell in the years ahead.

To win over Gen Z students and build brand loyalty over time, forward-thinking companies need more than just an engaging social media presence. They need to create impactful and authentic brand experiences that resonate deeply with this generation.

There's no better way to do that than investing in their education in and out of the classroom.

That's because investing in K-12 education addresses two issues at once: it directly shapes the next generation of buyers, creating more financially confident consumers while also demonstrating a commitment to Gen Z's values of purpose and authenticity. With EVERFI's extensive K-12 network of students, teachers, and district administrators, organizations of all types and sizes have an incredible opportunity to make a positive impact in their community while enhancing brand engagement, fostering meaningful interactions between employees and young people, and cultivating relationships with future customers. The companies that invest in Gen Z today will be the clear winners tomorrow.

Now is the time to get started. In this white paper we provide insight into Gen Z's values and buying preferences along with clear strategies to incorporate K-12 financial education into your marketing initiatives.

Understanding Gen Z

Gen Z encompasses a wide range of people, from their early teens to mid-twenties, with their younger counterparts, Gen Alpha, close behind. These generations have been buffeted by economic, social, and technological upheavals that have shaped their worldview.



Economic Challenges

Gen Z has come of age during a time of rising inflation, soaring housing costs, job insecurity, and persistent student debt. This has contributed to them being debt-averse, prioritizing saving, and valuing experiences rather than overspending on goods. Gen Z is more financially literate than previous generations at their age. They often seek financial advice from online sources and their parents rather than traditional financial advisors.



Values and Motivations

Those born into Gen Z have been shaped by various justice movements and are highly values-driven, with a strong focus on social, economic, and climate justice. All of these factors influence Gen Z's approach to work, education, and finances. When it comes to buying decisions, companies should keep in mind that 85% of Gen Z believe that corporations have an obligation to help solve social problems. They value authenticity, loyalty, thoughtfulness, and open-mindedness and are motivated by the impact their actions have on others.



Technology and DIY Mentality

Gen Z is the first generation to grow up from birth with access to the internet and social media and their adoption of these technologies is unmatched. Yet, a growing body of research shows that Gen Z's near-constant social media and internet use negatively impacts their mental health and while digitally native, they are increasingly wary of, and selective about, the technologies they use. This generation's 24/7 access to technology and social media means that before buying, they can easily "check in" on a company to see if it is authentically aligning with their values and can just as easily switch to one that does. Gen Z prefers a DIY approach to learning, having had access to limitless information on the internet from birth.



Work Preferences

Gen Z values work that makes a difference and provides a sense of fulfillment. They are willing to forego higher salaries for jobs that align with their values and offer a healthy work-life balance. They seek a sense of accomplishment in their work, thriving in diverse, inclusive environments that prioritize transparency and encourage open dialogue and feedback. In a recent survey, 77% of Gen Z respondents said it is important for them to work for organizations whose values align with theirs.

The Benefits of Building Gen Z-Centric Marketing Strategies Around K-12 Education

K-12 financial education is a powerful tool for marketers looking to connect with Gen Z, because it accomplishes so many related objectives at once. It helps marketers build Gen Z-specific strategies that position companies as authentic, purpose-led organizations while directly addressing Gen Z's economic concerns. It also neatly fits within Gen Z's preference for DIY educational content.

Authentic, purpose-led organizations

A company's purpose is the reason for existing that goes beyond making a profit. Companies with a strong sense of purpose perform better across several important business metrics. For instance, consumers are four to six times more likely to buy from, trust, champion, and defend companies with a strong purpose. Purpose-driven companies witness higher market share gains and grow on average three times faster than their competitors while achieving higher employee retention and customer satisfaction.

This is especially important for building long-term loyalty with Gen Z. After learning a brand supports a social cause or is socially responsible, 85% of Gen Z consumers are more likely to trust it, 84% are more likely to buy its products, and 82% are more likely to recommend that brand to their friends and family.

Younger consumers are simply more inclined to support companies that align with their values and are committed to making a positive impact in their community. Engaging students in the classroom provides an exclusive opportunity to connect with the next generation in a trusted, distraction-free setting. It means you can directly enhance your brand engagement, foster meaningful interaction between employees and young people, and cultivate relationships with future customers.

Economic concerns

Another aspect of authenticity is showing young consumers that your company truly cares about their financial well-being and understands their economic concerns. Authentically engaging with young consumers through financial education sponsorships has real and lasting impacts. Research shows that students who take a personal finance class tend to have:

- Higher credit scores
- Lower loan delinquency rates
- Reduced use of risky services such as payday lending

Financial education is often included in a school district's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, and CTE funding is tied to how districts demonstrate innovation and advancement of the CTE program. This makes collaboration and support from the private sector a natural fit in providing innovative resources and measurable opportunities for students to develop skills that will set them up for success beyond graduation. Companies are uniquely positioned to help young people become more responsible and financially savvy consumers while building long lasting brand loyalty.

What's more, as they move through K-12 schooling, the resources your company generates can be shared in multiple different formats, from standalone downloadable resources to interactive modules, to social-friendly snackable content assets. All of this directly respects Gen Z's preference for DIY learning on their own terms.



EVERFI K-12 Financial Education Partnerships

The need for financial education in communities and schools is more critical than ever – especially for girls, people of color, and those in under-resourced communities. EVERFI's K-12 Financial Education suite is built to maximize student knowledge gains around important financial topics while keeping them engaged with interactive, real-life scenarios. By partnering with EVERFI, your institution can provide K-12 schools in your community with no-cost, meaningful financial education through a scalable digital program while demonstrating impact via data-driven reporting.

Instructional Depth & Breadth

More than 23,000 schools use EVERFI's suite of personal finance resources to meet curriculum standards and state mandates where applicable, all while setting students on a path to lifelong financial wellness.

Build Brand Affinity

Demonstrate a commitment to empowering communities with essential financial literacy skills and enhance brand affinity with both students and teachers. EVERFI's customizable learning platform allows you to include your branding, custom welcome videos, and other branded content to connect with the next generation of consumers and their families.

Volunteer & Work-Based Learning Opportunities

Sponsoring personal finance education in K-12 schools not only benefits students' educational needs but also offers employees meaningful volunteer and mentorship opportunities to engage with and support their communities.

Compliance

EVERFI's platform makes it easy to aggregate data to satisfy regulatory requirements like the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA).



EVERFI's Unmatched K-12 Network

750,000

teachers in
our network

7,000

school districts use
our learning platform

1 in 4

schools in the US use
EVERFI courses

23,000

active
K-12 schools

5.9M

students reached
in 2023-24

42%

low- to moderate-income
(LMI) schools

Campaign Strategies

As you look to begin incorporating K-12 financial education into your Gen Z marketing strategies, here are a few areas to get started.

1

Address Economic Challenges

Create content and campaigns that acknowledge and address the financial stressors currently facing Gen Z, such as inflation and student debt. Offer resources and tools that can help them navigate these challenges, positioning your company as a trusted partner in their financial journey.

2

Leverage Technology and Social Media

Utilize technology and social media platforms to directly engage with Gen Z. Share interactive and educational content that aligns with their digital habits. For instance, use social media to create a community where Gen Z can share their experiences and learn from each other.

3

Integrate Financial Education in Marketing Campaigns

Develop marketing campaigns that highlight your institution's commitment to financial education. Showcase success stories and testimonials from Gen Z consumers who have benefited from your financial education programs. This will not only build brand credibility but also resonate with Gen Z's preference for purpose-led companies.

4

Provide Authentic Engagement Opportunities for Employees

Create programs that allow your employees to engage directly with Gen Z. This could include mentorship programs, virtual workshops, or speaking engagements at schools. Authentic interactions will help build trust and demonstrate your commitment to making a positive impact in the community.

5

Measure Success and Adapt

Continuously measure and refine the success of marketing efforts through KPIs and consumer feedback. Encourage agility and adaptability in marketing strategies to stay relevant amidst changing market conditions and consumer expectations.



Now Is the Time to Act

Generation Z is poised to completely redefine how companies and organizations market and sell to their customers. Their unique beliefs, values, and buying preferences present both challenges and compelling opportunities for forward-thinking companies. To win the loyalty of this new generation, companies will need new strategies that create impactful and authentic brand experiences. Strategies that prove they understand Gen Z and the socioeconomic forces that shape them. There's no better way to do that than investing in their K-12 education.

With EVERFI's unmatched K-12 network of millions of students, teachers, and district administrators, companies can cultivate relationships and increase engagement with the customers of tomorrow, all while making a genuinely positive impact in their community today.

If you'd like to join the thousands of organizations partnering with EVERFI to connect with Gen Z through critical K-12 financial education, go to: <https://everfi.com/sponsorship>

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