Marketing to Four Generations of Dental Professionals

By Jefferson Davis, Competitive Edge

A famous quote in the sales arena is, “If you can see John Smith’s world through John Smith’s eyes, you will sell John Smith what John Smith buys.”

And while this is a pretty accurate quote, the challenge in today’s marketing and sales arena is there are four generations of John Smiths, who all tend to see the world a little differently:

1. Baby Boomer: Born 1946 to 1964
2. Generation X: Born 1965 to 1976

Generational Marketing is a marketing approach that uses generational segmentation in marketing communication. Here are some suggestions for marketing to each generation:

**Baby Boomers:**
- Receptive to email marketing as long as it’s relevant.
- Still leaves and listens to voicemails.
- Embraces slower technologies than other generations.
- Uses social networking sites, primarily Facebook with a goal of reviving dormant relationships, and LinkedIn for business contacts.
- Are receptive to direct marketing and sales tactics.
- Like to talk to real people.
- Tends to read more longform copy.
- Spend more time on computers than mobile devices.

**Generation X:**
- Very busy with the multiple demands of life.
- More active on Facebook and Twitter.
- On par with Millennials with technology adoption and usage.
- Responds to visually engaging and vibrant video content.
- Enjoys in person shopping but embraces online shopping as well.
- Email marketing works well with this generation.
- Influenced by products or services that benefit society or the environment.
- Pinterest and Facebook are good branding media.
- Responsive to direct mail.
- Reads more digital press than print.

**Millennials:**
- Slowly taking over the workforce, outnumbering Boomers and Millennials.
- Highly entrepreneurial.
- Value social issues ahead of economics.
- Want their work to be stimulating and not boring.
- Prefer online research and shopping.
- Highly motivated from recommendations and peer reviews.
• Not very responsive to traditional marketing tactics.
• Highly influenced by photographs and videos, so Instagram is a good channel.
• Always looking for the next big thing.
• Prefers to talk and plan with colleagues they trust in decision-making.
• Responds to incentives, coupons and discounts.
• Likes reward and loyalty programs.
• Can be reached through radio and podcasts.

**Generation Z:**
• It’s all about digital! Very tech savvy.
• Can be reached and are highly influenced by social media.
• Very short attention span; about 8 seconds.
• Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok are the best channels.
• Instagram stories and YouTube bumper ads work well.
• Identifying and tapping into their social media influencers is effective.

As you put together your pre-event marketing plan and your in-booth visitor experiences, try to take into consideration the various generations and how you can provide communications and experiences that appeal to various segments and across all segments at the same time.

References:
https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/GENERATIONAL-Marketing-Tactics
https://www.superside.com/blog/generational-marketing

**Jefferson Davis, President of Competitive Edge** is North America’s leading exhibiting productivity expert. Since 1991, his results-focused, process-based approach to addressing critical exhibiting success factors has helped clients generate over $800 million in combined exhibiting results. Jefferson provides highly intensive exhibit consulting and training services guaranteed to deliver results.

For a no-obligation discovery meeting, schedule a 30-minute meeting here.