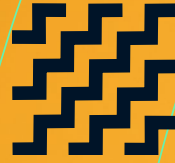


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UNDERSTANDING

GENERATION

ALPHA



generationalalpha.com

UNDERSTANDING GENERATION ALPHA

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INTRO

There is a generation that comprises more than 1 in 7 people, who are influencing the purchasing power of their household and are key to the future, yet few people have heard of them. Within the next four years they will outnumber the Baby Boomers, and many of them will live to see the 22nd century.

We're talking about Generation Alpha, the current generation of children who began being born in the year 2010. They are the children of the Millennials, and often the younger siblings of Generation Z. There are 3 million of them in Australia and more than 2.8 million are born globally every week. When they have all been born (2025) they will number more than 2 billion – the largest generation in the history of the world.

While they are currently the youngest generation, they have brand influence and purchasing power beyond their years. They shape the social media landscape, are the popular culture influencers and the emerging consumers.

It is important to understand the traits of Generation Alpha because they represent the future and provide a lens through which to look at the next decade and beyond. While Generation Alpha are currently our primary school students, by the end of the 2020s the oldest will be moving into adulthood, the workforce and household formation, ready or not. If organisations want to not only exist in a decade's time, but thrive and flourish, then understanding Generation Alpha and the future they will be shaped in and contribute to, is imperative.

This paper is authored by Mark McCrindle and Ashley Fell, two social researchers who are leading authorities on Generation Alpha and the emerging generations. We believe this complimentary whitepaper will be invaluable for you in navigating and leading through times of change.

If organisations want to not only exist in a decade's time, but thrive and flourish, then understanding Generation Alpha is imperative.



Mark McCrindle

Mark McCrindle is a demographer and social researcher, best-selling author, TEDx speaker and Principal of McCrindle Research. He is the author of three books on emerging trends and social change. He coined the label: Generation Alpha, and is regarded as an international authority on Generation Alpha.

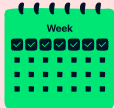


Ashley Fell

Ashley Fell is a social researcher, TEDx speaker and Director of Communications at the internationally recognised McCrindle. As a trends analyst she understands the need to communicate with them. She is co-author of the book Generation Alpha and regarded as a leading expert and media commentator on Generation Alpha.

TOP 10 FACTS ABOUT GEN ALPHA

1



2.8M

Number of weekly births

2



2.2 Billion

Globally in 2025

3

Changing global order

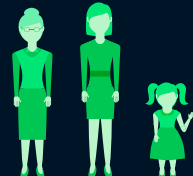
Top countries of birth:

- India
- China
- Indonesia

4

Context

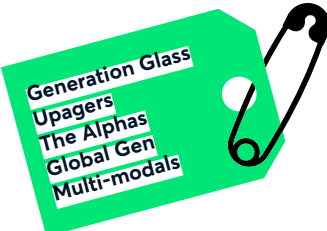
They are the children of the Millennials
They will be parents to Generation Gamma



Millennials - b. 1980-1994 • Generation Gamma - b. 2040-2054

5

Other Labels



6

Why they are named Alpha

Generation Alpha represent a whole new generation, entirely born in a new century. Going back to the beginning didn't feel right for this next generation, so we've moved to the Greek alphabet.

7

The top names



Boy

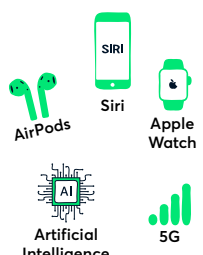
- Noah
- Oliver
- William

Girl

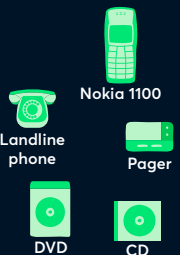
- Olivia
- Ava
- Amelia

8

Tech IN



Tech OUT



9

Why they began in 2010



Generation Alpha began being born in the year 2010, at the start of the digital era where devices dominated. They began in the same year the first-generation iPad was released and Instagram launched. With the typical generation length spanning 15 years, the last of the Generation Alpha's will finish being born in 2024.

10

Millennials x Alpha

Discman		iPhone	
Nintendo64		FORTNITE	Fortnite (on any device)
Joy Of Missing Out	JOMO	FOMO	Fear Of Missing Out
Broadcast			Streaming
MSN Messenger			Snapchat
Gangnam Style			Baby Shark

WHY WE NAMED THEM GEN ALPHA

Just over a decade ago, it became apparent that a new generation was about to commence and there was no name for them.

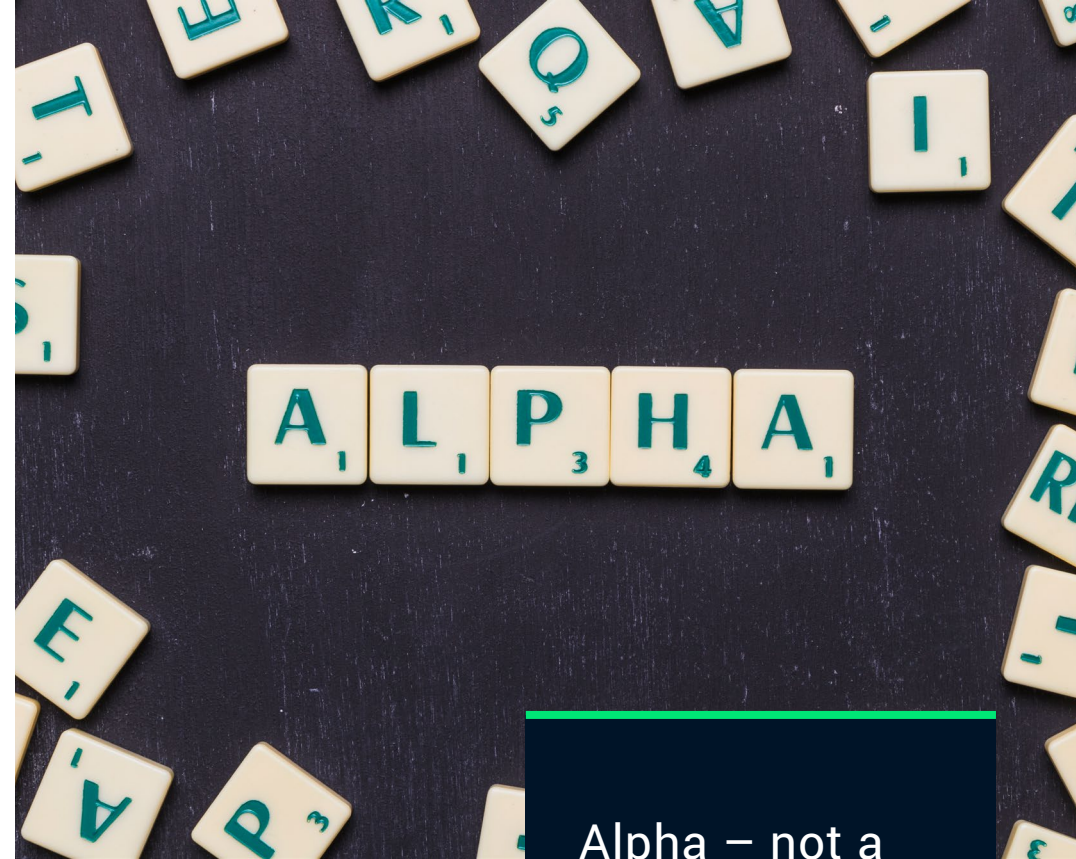
As a research agency with a keen interest in generational analysis, we decided to test a few names out with a survey of Australians. When we asked people what they thought the next generation should be called, many people suggested Generation A, having come to the end of the alphabet with Generation Z. But Generation Alpha represent a whole new generation, entirely born in a new century. Going back to the beginning didn't feel right for this next generation.

Additionally, this was all taking place just after the Atlantic hurricane season of 2005, when there were so many storms that the normal alphabetic names had been used up and so for the

first time, the Greek alphabet was used, starting with hurricane alpha an, hurricane beta etc. That's how the nomenclature naming in science works.

So in keeping with this scientific naming of using the Greek alphabet in lieu of the Latin, and having worked our way through Generations X, Y and Z, we settled on the next cohort being Generation Alpha – not a return to the old, but the start of something new.

We have also found from our generational research that generic labels rather than descriptive ones are likely to last. Names like the Baby Boomers, which describe a unique demographic phenomenon at the birth of a generation, based on the timing when the leading edge were coming of age, are a departure from the norm.



Alpha – not a return to the old, but the start of something new.

A label like Generation X, Generation Z or Generation Alpha provides a blank canvas on which a generation can create their own identity rather than have a descriptive label, relevant for just a segment of the cohort or for a period of time pinned on them. It's a whole new generation and a whole new millennium, in a whole new era. Hence Generation Alpha.



Generation Alpha began being born in the year 2010, the same year the first iPad was released, and was Instagram launched. With the typical generation length spanning 15 years, the last of the Generation Alphas will finish being born in 2024.

HOW WE KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THEM?

We can predict a fair bit about Generation Alpha by analysing the demographics surrounding them, which give some forward forecasts: age of parents (older), cultural mix (more diverse), socioeconomics (slightly wealthier), family size (smaller), life expectancy (longer).

Then there is the research on their parents, the Millennials (or Generation Y) which gives us a sense of how they will be raised; more frequently moving and changing careers, materially endowed, technologically supplied and outsourcing aspects of parenting such as childcare.

Finally, there is the analysis of Generation Alpha themselves in their formative years, and we can learn a lot from this too; app-based play, increased screen time, shorter attention spans and digital literacy but less social formation.

TWEEN TOWN

We can also look at the current 8 to 12-year-old market segment. We call them tweens, those aged 8 to 12, who are “in-between” childhood and adolescence. Current tweens, a mix of Generation Alpha and Generation Z (the children of Generation X), have emerged as their own demographic, and are now seen as brand influencers, a consumer segment, and a target market.

Social media has been integral to the development of tween identity. Many tweens are actively engaging on sites, uploading their own YouTube videos and connecting with friends on Facebook. Many websites are targeted specifically at this demographic. Tweens can create virtual pets, play dress-up, and interact online with other people their age.

The relatively new world of ‘tweendom’ is evidence of the ‘upageing’ (growing up faster and at a younger age) of today’s emerging generations. These young people have access to more technology, information, and external influences than any generation before them.

THE WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE AND HOW OF GEN ALPHA

WHY THEY MATTER

Generation Alpha represent the future and provide a lens through which we can look to the next decade and beyond. While they currently populate our primary schools, over the next decade the oldest will move through the teen years to reach adulthood. But even still, these youngsters are influencing their millennial family purchasing and are early adopters of technology, having been born entirely in the 21st century. Not only that, they will be the largest generation ever, emerging while the world is experiencing a shift to the Asian century. When the youngest Generation Alphas hit adulthood (in the mid 2030s), the largest middle-class component will be from Asia.

HOW THEY COMPARE TO OTHER GENERATIONS

Generation Alpha will be the largest generation as we have a greater population than ever before. They will live for longer and will be



more culturally diverse compared to the former generations. Their technology makes them the most globally connected generation ever. They are deemed social, global and mobile as they will work, study and travel between different countries and multiple careers.

Generation Alpha are 'upagers' in many ways: physical maturity is on setting earlier so adolescence for them will begin earlier—but beyond the physical, social and psychological, educational and even commercial sophistication also begin earlier, which can have negative as well as positive consequences.

While adolescence begins earlier, it also extends later. The adult life stage, once measured by marriage, children, mortgage and career is being pushed back. This generation will stay in education longer, start their earning years later and so stay at home with their parents for longer than was previously the case.

The role of parents therefore spans a wider age range, still caring at home for their adult kids even into their late 20s. Generation Alpha will no doubt prolong this trend. In Australia we've labelled the stay at home 20-somethings the KIPPERS, which stands for Kids In Parents' Pockets Eroding Retirement Savings!

SHAPED BY TECHNOLOGY

Generation Alpha is defined by technological devices like smartphones and tablets, video games, driverless trains, autonomous cars and smart speakers that speak back to you. This technology has only been developed within their generation and it is all they have ever known. It is also being taken up quicker than ever before. While radio took 38 years to reach 50 million users, the television took 13, the iPod just four, the internet three, Facebook just one and the Pokémon Go phenomenon took just 19 days!

Coming of age in unprecedented times of change and rapid technological advancement, Generation Alpha is part of an unintentional global experiment where screens are placed in front of them from the youngest age as pacifiers, entertainers and educational aids. This great screen age which we are all living in has bigger impacts on the generation exposed to such screen saturation during their formative years. From shorter attention spans to the gamification of education, from increased digital literacy to impaired social formation, these times impact us all but transform those in their formative years.



Generation Alpha been raised as “screenagers” to a greater extent than the fixed screens of the past could facilitate. For this reason, we also call them Generation Glass. It is almost impossible to pry Generation Alpha away from their devices, which have been prominent in their lives from the day they were born. Their exposure to technology during their formative years will have a great impact on their lives. They have been using these devices from before they could talk, so we are yet to see the impacts of their interaction with screens. There will certainly be some positives, but like any other generation would, it will provide Generation Alpha with some unique challenges.

WHO COMES AFTER?

Generational definitions are most useful when they span a set age range and thus allow meaningful comparisons across generations. That is why the generations today each span 15 years with Generation Y (Millennials) born from 1980 to 1994; Generation Z from 1995 to 2009 and Generation Alpha from 2010 to 2024. So it follows that Generation Beta will be born from 2025 to 2039.

If the nomenclature sticks, then we will afterwards have Generation Gamma (the children of Generation Alpha) and Generation Delta, but we won't be getting there until the second half of the 21st century!

ENGAGEMENT ACROSS THE GENERATIONS

	GEN Z	GEN ALPHA	GEN BETA
EDUCATION OUTCOMES	 Employable	 Adaptable	 Entrepreneurial
SCHOOL FOCUS	 Exam results	 Learning skills	 Life skills
MARKETING	 Peers	 Influencers	 Artificial intelligence
WORK STYLE	 Participative	 Collaborative	 Co-creators
IDEAL LEADER	 Coordinator	 Empowerer	 Enlarger
PAYMENTS	 Credit card	 Digital	 Virtual
TECHNOLOGY	 Touchscreen	 Voice-recognition	 Gesture control
CONSUMER TRENDS	 Customised	 Personalised	 Predictive
ADVICE	 Professional credentials	 Social validation	 Peer influence
BUSINESS CONTEXT	 Changing trends	 Frequent disruption	 Continuous volatility

THE FUTURE CONSUMERS

Generation Alpha are the most materially endowed and empowered generation ever. They have been shaped in an era of individualisation and customisation where they can get their name printed into the storyline of books, embroidered onto their shirts or put on a jar of Nutella.

Because of rapid advances in technology there are many things Generation Alpha will not be accustomed to using. Just like record players, VHS and pagers haven't been part of our day-to-day lives for a number of years, the use of traditional dictionaries, street directories or DVD players have similarly made their exit over the last decade. Looking ahead, it is very likely that Generation Alpha will never use a wallet, single-use plastics, listen to the radio as a device, participate in a written exam or set an analogue alarm clock.

While Generation Alpha are yet to hit their teens, they have brand influence and purchasing power beyond their years, engaging with brands, toys and products that speak to the future needs of this generation.

IS THE FUTURE OF SUCCESSFUL BRANDS JUST TECH-ENABLED TOYS?

Parents are increasingly aware of the negative consequences of too much technology time – the isolationism and anti-social impacts. However, there is a halo-effect for tech-toys which increase connectivity, facilitate community and develop social and global skills.





They are more formally educated, yet less proficient in practical skills, assessing risk, setting and achieving goals, and developing hands-on competencies.

WHAT KIND OF 'PLAY' IS MOST USEFUL FOR BRANDS TO DEPLOY NOW, IN THE DIGITAL AGE?

Parents are becoming aware of the life-skills deficit evident amongst the next generation. They are more formally educated, yet less proficient in practical skills, assessing (and when appropriate confidently approaching) risk, setting and achieving goals (whether sporting or otherwise), and developing hands-on competencies. Fun toys which develop specific skills such as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths), social competencies, entrepreneurial skills, strength and coordination, financial literacy, innovation and resourcefulness will be favoured by parents and educators.

WHAT ARE THE DRIVERS THAT ARE IMPACTING HOW TOY BRANDS ENGAGE WITH THEIR CONSUMERS?

Educational toys – the future of toys is not just in the home but the classroom and the childcare centre. Education is beginning earlier with 3 and 4 year olds spending more time in childcare – and in facilities that have a focus on education and development. Therefore toys, of educational benefit, are an essential part of the focus.

Free toys – another change we are seeing is that sponsored educational materials – once anathema to educational institutions, are becoming more acceptable as the barriers between education, business, and community blur. With education (and household) budgets under strain, corporations for altruistic and well as commercial motives, will increasingly be part of the education, community and child-rearing domains – with branded toys a means by which this support is delivered.



THE FUTURE

Generation Alpha may never see a camera that requires film, and they'll never have to wait for their photos to be developed. The only phones they've ever seen also take photos, record videos, access the internet and play games—this is a far cry from landline telephones that could be taken 'off the hook'!

As such, a shift in educational engagement is occurring for Generation Alpha, with schools switching from structural and auditory learning to engaging, visual, multimodal and hands-on methods of educating this emerging generation.

Because their parents will indulge them in more formal education and at an earlier age, Generation Alpha will have access to more information than any other generation gone before. Their formal education has never been equalled in the history of the world, with a predicted 1 in 2 Generation Alphas to obtain a university degree.

Generation Alpha will surpass even the praised and sophisticated Zeds in terms of education, with 90 per cent predicted to complete high school, compared to 80 per cent today, and with the majority going on to further study in some form.



Generation Alpha will have access to more information than any other generation gone before.

OF EDUCATION

GREATER JOB MOBILITY

Work will remain a key feature of life in the future, as it is now. Almost two in three employed Australians work full time, and of these, more than half are putting in 40 or more hours per week. However, the average length of time workers stay in their role has shortened to just under three years.

If this tenure continues through the working life of today's school leavers, then they will have on average 18 different jobs over 6 distinct careers. Many of these future jobs don't currently exist, with 65% of those entering primary school today predicted to end up working in entirely new job types that don't yet exist.² While technology is replacing jobs, it is also creating many new ones, such as the fourth industrial revolution we are now in. When today's senior school students were at primary school, there were still people employed as toll collectors on motorways! Now many of these students are learning skills in robotics, coding, social media marketing, app development and big data analytics.

NEW GENERATION, NEW DECADE, NEW CAREER OPTIONS

As the emerging generations begin to consider their career options, there are jobs available in entirely new industries such as nanotechnology, block-chain, cyber security, autonomous transport and virtual reality.

The jobs of the future will come not only from technological change but also demographic change. The ageing population is creating new opportunities, not just in the aged care sector but other related industries. Record birth rates and more affluent parents are creating new childcare services and carer roles. From cultural diversity to changing family structures, population shifts create new demands and industries.



SKILLS NEEDED TO THRIVE IN THE DECADE AHEAD

The anticipated rise of automation has led to a focus on developing 21st century skills for lifelong learning in students. Within this context, parents believe students are most equipped with digital skills and creativity (60 per cent and 57 per cent, respectively). There is work to do, however, in the area of critical thinking, the lowest ranked competency by parents with just 43 per cent believing students are extremely or very equipped. As the world of work changes, it is the character qualities as well as competencies that will futureproof Generation Alpha. Parents believe students are equipped with curiosity (60 per cent) and adaptability (50 per cent), yet there is room to improve in leadership skills (42 per cent).

THE WELLBEING FOCUS

The trend of wellbeing has been steadily increasing over the last few years, particularly in schools and in the workplace. In the last five years, almost half of parents (48 per cent) have increased their expectations of their child's school to support wellbeing.

More than one in four (27 per cent) have significantly or somewhat increased their expectations.

The parents of Generation Alpha, (Millennials; also known as Generation Y) are driving this expectation inflation with three in ten (31 per cent) significantly or somewhat increasing their expectations of schools compared to one in four Generation X parents (23 per cent).

As student wellbeing challenges rises in prominence, it is important for schools to understand parent expectations and the school's role in the wellbeing journey. Almost all of parents (97 per cent) believe schools should have a holistic focus and play some role in the management of wellbeing, the question is to what extent. More than two in five parents (46 per cent) believe schools should provide individualised support for wellbeing but refer on to other experts.

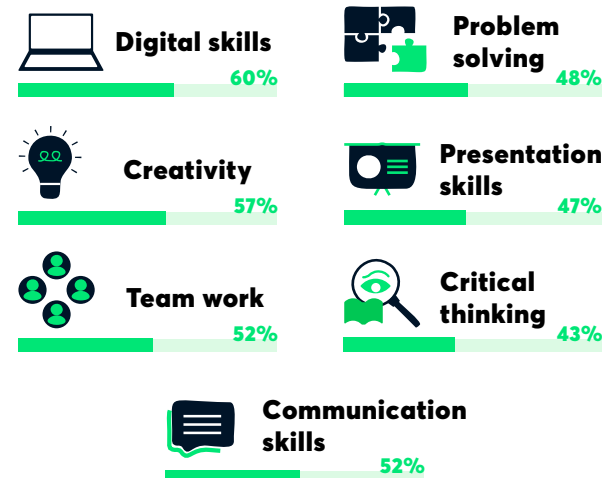
Generation Y teachers agree, seeing themselves as the first line of defence and will then refer on to other experts. The challenge for schools, however, is that almost a quarter of parents (24 per cent) believe schools should provide extensive individualised support for all wellbeing issues.

Generation Y parents seem to be driving this viewpoint, being more likely than Generation X parents to believe schools should provide extensive individualised support for all wellbeing issues (28 per cent cf. 21 per cent).³

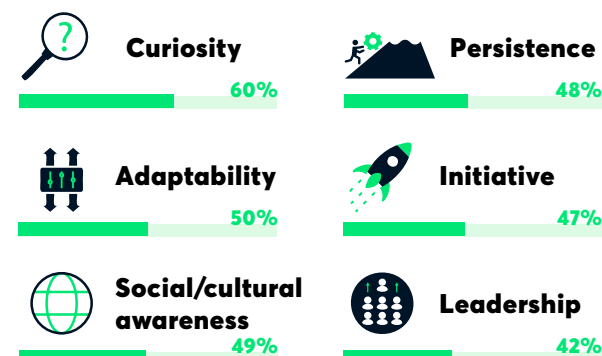
TODAY'S STUDENTS ARE EQUIPPED WITH SKILLS AND CURIOSITY

% of parents who believe students are extremely/very equipped

COMPETENCIES



CHARACTER QUALITIES



THE FUTURE OF WORK

Massive changes are happening to the workforce, as some jobs disappear, and new jobs emerge. Generation Alphas will have careers in emerging fields such as cyber-security, app development and cryptocurrency. They will be lifelong learners, holding multiple jobs across multiple careers. They will also need to be adaptive, constantly upskilling and retraining to remain relevant to the changes anticipated as they move through their working life.



GENERATION ALPHA WILL LIVE LONGER AND WORK LATER

Generation Alpha will be students for longer. They will stay longer in education and start their earning years later, which will put them behind financially. By pushing back their working years to invest more in education, this means they will stay at home for longer.

Advancements in medicine and technology result in an ageing population, so Generation Alpha will live longer. Their adult life stage of work, marriage and having children will occur later. They will also be wealthier as they will work longer before retiring.

For Generation Alpha, retirement will not mean stopping work. Rather it will mean downsizing and downshifting, allowing them to stay active later in life, as working into their 60s and 70s will become the norm.

WORK WELLBEING

As when, where and how we work shifts over the next decade, Generation Alpha will be emerging into the workforce at a time when wellbeing will be at the top of

the agenda. Even over the last few years it is clear that the topic of wellbeing is one that has resonated very strongly as a rapidly rising issue.

Our worker survey showed wellbeing to be the number one workplace issue, with 72 per cent of workers saying it is extremely or very important to them, ranked above sixteen other workplace components.⁴ Among the emerging generations, there is an expectation that all aspects of their life will provide the opportunity to thrive, and therefore less tolerance for workplaces and organisations that hinder wellbeing.

Corporations are now employing wellbeing managers and many city buildings have office concierges. More recently, devices and apps are focussing on furthering human wellbeing and flourishing, and this will be even more the case for Generation Alpha, translating to their expectations of the workplace.

After a decade of digital disruption and increasing velocity of change, the 2020s will mark a decade of seeking simplicity and personalisation of the services we engage with. In a world of screen saturation, 24/7 expectations and always-on technologies, the decade ahead will see people not so much turn technology off, but to turning on apps and solutions to make life function more efficiently and enhance their wellbeing. More than just an extension of the outsourcing trend, consumers will pay a premium for simplicity and services that are customised to their unique priorities and preferences.



Generation Alpha will be emerging into the workforce at a time when wellbeing will be at the top of the agenda.

PARENTING AND LEADING

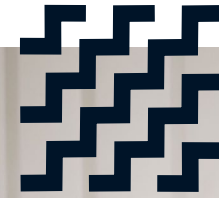
Generation Alpha are the first generation of children to be shaped in an era of portable digital devices, and for many, their pacifiers have not been a rattle or a set of keys but a smartphone or tablet device. Those aged 8-12 year in the United States (tweens) consume on average 4 hours and 44 minutes of screen time per day for entertainment purposes. This increases to an average of 7 hours 22 minutes for those aged 13 to 18.⁵ Such is their multi-screening behaviour that this is expected to increase for Generation Alpha who have been born into a world of iPhones, YouTube and Instagram.

The new challenges for parents of Generation Alpha centre on watching out for screen addiction, cyberbullying and the management of child-friendly content. While parents have some unique challenges, it is encouraging to remember the Millennial parents of Generation Alpha have themselves been shaped in the digital world, so are better equipped to manage these complexities. It is also important for parents to remember that despite seemingly overt differences, some basic dynamics between parents and children are timeless.

For 21st century parents, the input of their own parents and the sage advice of grandparents have never been more important. The role of grandparents has significantly stepped up in our society as they play important roles in the lives of Generation Alphas. Baby Boomers have a depth of life experience and knowledge they can instil in their grandkids to stay connected in their lives. Grandparents now also take on a larger caring role as Generation Alphas parents, the Generation Ys, are working more.

Generation Alpha are looking to parents and leaders for guidance. Parents need to give Generation Alpha confidence, as many young people face insecurities and mental health issues about an uncertain future that is constantly being painted for them.

Parents should encourage Generation Alpha to invest in the future. By investing in training and education in both life skills and people skills, Generation Alpha can remain relevant and have the confidence to move forward.



A POSITIVE OUTLOOK FOR THE ALPHAS

The outlook for Generation Alpha is positive, even amidst so much change. We are talking about a generation that will live longer, work later, will be more formally educated, materially endowed and globally, will be the wealthiest generation to date.

Every generation is a reaction to the one that came before it. The Baby Boomers were the protest generation; radical, started careers young and climbed the ladder early. Millennials were quite the opposite; conservative in some ways and more risk averse. While the Baby Boomers were the free-range kid approach, the Millennials were very structured and planned.



We are talking about a generation that will live longer, work later, will be more formally educated, materially endowed and globally, will be the wealthiest generation to date.



When we compare Millennials to Alphas, we predict that the Alphas will have children earlier than their parents, with a biological limit to the rising age of first birth of parents, will we see a higher fertility rate for the Alphas, meaning a younger age of parents. We can also expect Generation Alpha to seek out both a family and a career, even more than their Millennial parents have.

Generation Alpha may never have heard of pay and gender equality issues, road infringements will not be an issue, they will be 'rentvesters' who will prioritise lifestyle and view accommodation as a service.

The future of health will be more advanced for Generation Alpha than any other. They will experience a shift from private health insurance to a user pay system or health savings fund. More concerned about calorie intake and portion size, they will drink less alcohol and soft drinks, be used to a sugar tax, and engage with a rise in plant-based proteins.

Generation Alpha will also see different mainstream approaches to alternate eating choices like non-diary options, with more health food options available to them, as well as the regularity of devices that can monitor their movements and commodities, health and exercise.

With sustainability and climate change on the radar of their older Generation Z siblings, Generation Alpha will grow up with these political issues at the forefront of the agenda.

The youngest Generation Alpha's won't need a car or possibly even a license when they hit adulthood, with public transport, Uber and driverless cars making these parts of modern life today obsolete. They may never sit a written exam, vote in a traditional polling booth or own much, with the view that life (like Netflix) is a service.

While Generation Alpha will encounter a lot of change, it is important to remember that some timeless human needs do not change. Amidst all the change, Generation Alpha will still crave acceptance, community and belonging. These timeless human needs, while expressed differently over time, will be the key drivers for Generation Alpha and are important for leaders, organisations, parents and community groups to keep in mind as they lead Generation Alpha through the next decade and into adulthood.



Amidst all the change, Generation Alpha will still crave acceptance, community and belonging.

A FINAL WORD

As we look to the future and the decade ahead, to best serve this next generation it's important to take the time to understand and engage them. We've got to connect and communicate in ways that speak their language. What worked for Generation Y may not work for Generation Alpha, and what was effective in a leadership style in the 20th century may be less effective in the 21st. We have to engage with where this next generation are at.

Generation Alpha need to be equipped with the skills and the competencies that will enable them to thrive in this era of change. How we equip this generation will be different to how it has been done in the past. Generation Alpha don't need the same authority structures, hierarchies, or traditional power approaches, because we're in more collaborative times. Being the most digitally savvy generation ever, and as we move to a world with more robotics, interpersonal skills will become more important than ever for Generation Alpha.

Imperative to leading this next generation well is entrusting them with opportunities to grow. Allowing them to experiment and fail is key to building the resilience in this next generation, for them to thrive in the years of change ahead. Not everything will work successfully the first time, but that's how we all grow. By engaging, equipping and entrusting Generation Alpha, we can set them up well for the years to come.



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