

COLUMNS

# Why luxury beauty brands need a multiplatform approach to captivate millennials

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By A LUXURY DAILY COLUMNIST

With TikTok continuing to dominate the beauty scene, we've seen brands focussing their marketing power on Gen Z, but are they missing a trick?

With millennials having a combined spending power of \$13 trillion, brands need to capture their interest, and quick. Every generation has their own way of scouring the category.

From brand and channel preferences to different product needs, generations have different nuances in their searching habits; millennials are no different.

## **Embrace the millennial**

Unlike the younger Gen Z, who are more likely to use TikTok, or older generations, loyal to Google, millennials straddle the middle ground.

With more than 40 percent of millennials searching across five platforms, including Google, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok, per Greenpark data, millennials are like no other generation when it comes to their activeness across a variety of digital platforms.

It's this multifaceted search behavior that underpins why beauty brands can't focus on a single platform. To connect meaningfully, brands must craft tailored strategies across multiple platforms, leveraging each one's unique strength searchability on Google, visual storytelling on Instagram and dynamic engagement on TikTok.

Data shows us that millennials are a multiplatform generation as likely to visit Google as any other channel. So how can brand engage with this generation, and why should they?

For example, they might start by searching on Google but then head to social media for inspiration or vice versa, start on socials before finishing on Google to look at the product's reviews.

Millennials are open to exploring different aspects of the beauty world, whether it's tutorials, trend-led items or product-based data. Regardless, they want information from a range of channels to make an informed decision.

They are the first generation that has grown up with Google as a part of their daily life while simultaneously explore each new social platform as it becomes popular. For beauty brands, this theoretically creates a perfect digital playground to reach out and connect with potential millennial consumers.

Yet one of the millennial generation's cliches is that they are the middle child that gets overlooked. They aren't as exciting as Gen Z and don't yet have that the behemoth spending power of older generations.

In fact, when it comes to the beauty sector in particular, there's almost a toxicity associated with millennials, inflated by the trend of Gen Z seeing them as cringey. To match this energy and appeal to the younger audience, brands risk swerving too far to avoid being associated with millennials.

In reality, they are neglecting a strong customer base with significant and growing spending power and an interest that spans a range of categories. At a time when millennials are seemingly being discarded for something a bit younger and cooler or older and financially shinier, it's time for brands to do the opposite and embrace the millennial.

### **Don't get swept up in the trends**

With the sector being so trend-driven, it can be challenging for brands to measure their effectiveness across platforms.

For example, no one could have predicted that Drunk Elephant would become the Gen Alpha beauty brand of choice. Especially after it initially targeted older, wealthier, more ingredients-focussed customers.

Consumers can be heavily influenced by content creators and social conversation which can often make or break a brand. As demonstrated by Clinique's viral Black Honey Almost Lipstick that arguably failed to impact Clinique's overall perception.

These trends often focus on a single product too, making it difficult for brands to jump on the short-term success. This presents a fine balance: brands need a nimble strategy that is simultaneously always-on.

While the rise of particular social media channels offers a wealth of opportunities, brands can't afford to forget a well-refined SEO strategy that's focussed on appearing in those important educational searches.

They must remain open minded and analyze each channel separately. Millennials crave credibility and authenticity and it's the brands forcing non-specific content that will run into issues.

This entails doing some research on what conversations are happening on what platform, allowing them to understand the audience on each channel and what is and isn't working. From there, brands can create a network of interlinking but not repetitive content.

Some pieces are only going to be relevant for TikTok and Instagram, while others may suit more information-led and search driven platforms like Google so it's important to decipher what forms of content work on each platform.

### **Brand standouts**

Refy Beauty does this particularly well. They've built their presence on different platforms in a targeted and strategic way in addition to utilizing their founder and her channels to help make the brand more relatable and appealing.

Other brands like Fenty Beauty back up everything through their inclusive product range. Of course, it helps having Rihanna as a figurehead, but the brand nails authenticity across their social platforms.

Similarly, MERIT has the right minimalistic aesthetic that is fashionable but not too beholden to trends. They've used interesting partnerships with the likes of Proenza Schouler and Grace Coddington to engage with a millennial audience in a fashion-conscious way.

Every brand has their own challenges when it comes to attracting millennials. But by adopting a multiplatform approach that is authentic, doesn't rely on trends and leverages each platform's unique capabilities luxury beauty brands can embrace a generation that is crying out for the beauty industry's attention and respect as a consumer.