

#### YOUNG FUTURES- MONTH TWELVE-MILLENNIALS

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In November of 2017, Insightrix Research® launched the Young Futures study- an innovative and interactive study with 20 Millennials from the province of Saskatchewan. There were many purposes of this study;

- To set the bar for research with millennials, and learn about best practices for engaging this 'difficult to engage' age group.
- To learn about the perspectives, interests, habits and beliefs of millennials in Saskatchewan.
- To have primary data upon which to do cost analysis between this type of study and traditional methods, such as focus groups.
- To test the capabilities of our SaskWatch Research panel, and use it for projects that thought outside of the box.

Retention rates and engagement rates were high, data gathered were rich and insightful, participants provided thoughtful and thorough answers, and interacted amongst themselves and with the moderator. We learned about the lifestyles and perceptions of millennials in the province.

Using an Online Community to engage with millennials proved to gather rich data and facilitate discussion, save on research costs, and emerge as a best-practice for engaging busy and hard-to-reach groups.

This report is intended to serve as one part in a twelve part series. Young Futures ran every month through November 2018. The data gathered each month will be included in unique reports, with a comprehensive book released at the end of the study to review findings and learnings of the project overall.

#### SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

# THE WHO AND WHAT OF OUR STUDY

We chose participants for this study from our existing provincial Online Research Panel, SaskWatch Research®. We strived to make our sample representative in terms of age and location. Our sample was created with equal numbers of participants from the North, South, Saskatoon, and Regina, as well as equal numbers from an early millennials (18-24), and late millennials (25-34) group. Participants were also chosen based on their indication of being "very comfortable" using technology, and "very comfortable" sharing their opinions online.

Thirty people were short-listed, and we utilized the call center on location at Insightrix Research® to recruit from this narrowed list. We informed people on the call that they had been selected to participate in a provincial-wide study of millennials that would cover a number of interesting topics. We described that this would involve participation in three research activities a month (surveys, bulletin board discussions, and diary mode discussions). We also informed people on the call that the study had intentions of carrying on for a full year, and invited them to participate in the study in upcoming months. We were able to find 20 people to participate in our study, and all of them agreed to continue to participate in upcoming months for the duration of the study.

#### **METHODS**

### HOWWEDIDIT

The Young Futures study utilized both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Surveys were used to gather quantitative data, and bulletin board discussions and diary mode discussions were used to gather qualitative data.

#### **BULLETIN BOARD**

Large or small online group discussions; richer insights than traditional focus groups, many-to-many dialogue where the moderator and participants interact together, qualitative data collection.

#### **DIARY MODE**

One-on-one online discussion; suitable for sensitive topics, qualitative data collection.

#### **INCENTIVES**

## WHAT WE OFFERED

Young Futures ran for three days each month, with a new research activity each day. Participants who completed all three activities for the month were awarded with an incentive of \$50. Those who completed all three activities each month also qualified for the monthly draw of \$100.



#### WE WANTED TO SET THE BAR FOR RESEARCH WITH MILLENNIALS

We wanted to learn more about pressing issues that young people face in their daily life, such as personal finances, mental health, concern for the environment, media consumption, etc. We approached the research in a fun and engaging way; we kept activities short, we chose activities that were engaging, visual and social, and we asked for input on issues that matter.

## THE SECRET SAUCE

#### **KEY ELEMENTS**

Our participants are awesome, obviously. But, there are three other main factors that made this project a success: cost effectiveness, speed, and accessibility.



#### **COST EFFECTIVENESS**

Online communities provide fast, cost effective access to research participants, including millennials, everywhere.



#### **SPEED**

From research activity conception, programming and gathering data, and exporting the information we collected- all stages of the study were quick and easy to understand.

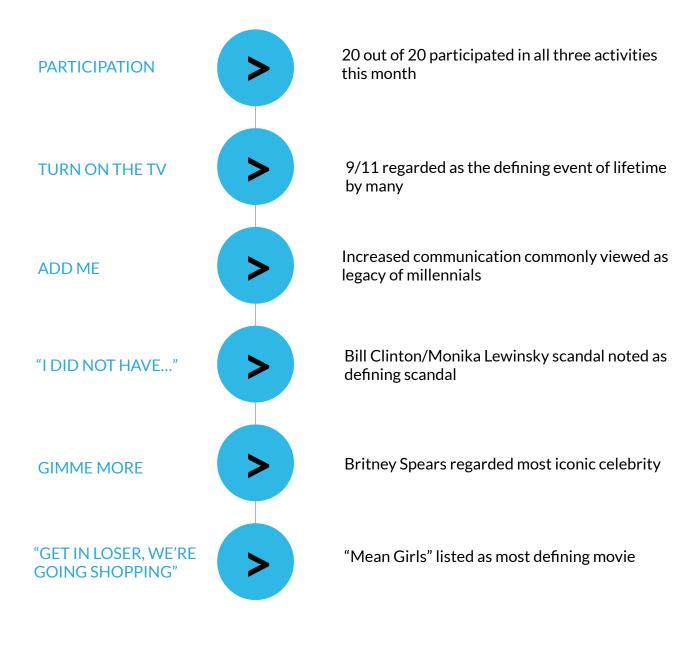


#### **ACCESSIBILITY**

Our participants could engage comfortably- wherever and whenever. Familiarity of technology with this group eliminated communication barriers. The geographic challenges found in traditional focus groups were also eliminated since participant location is irrelevant to an Online Community. Time is saved by allowing one skilled moderator to administer many groups at once.

## SNAPSHOT

#### **FINDINGS SUMMARY**



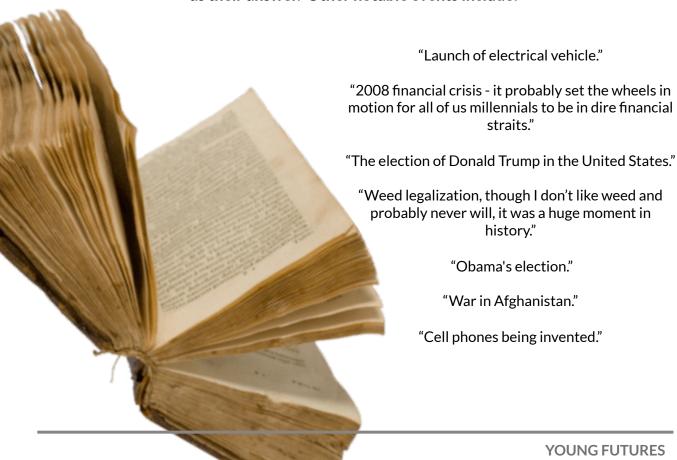
## I REMEMBER THAT...

To wrap up the project, we got our Young Futures millennials to explain the essence of millennial-ism. We asked them about the defining moments, people and things of the past, and how they view themselves- and their future- through the lens of being a millennial.

We also asked our participants to build lists of defining pop culture items from their lifetime. First, we asked them to indicate what they thought was the

#### THE DEFINING HISTORICAL EVENT

The most common answer was 9/11, with over half of our participants indicating this as their answer. Other notable events include:



#### MILLENNIAL EXPERIENCES

With the rise of pressuring paparazzi and the growing ridiculousness of celebrities, the presence (or at least the coverage of) scandal came to age as millennials did. We asked our participants to indicate

#### THE DEFINING SCANDAL

The front runner, by a landslide, was the Bill Clinton/ Monika Lewinsky scandal. Other notable mentions included:

"Kanye and Taylor Swift at the "OJ Simpson car chase." MMVAs." "#MeToo." "Trump being president." "Rob Ford's complete mismanagement of Toronto and crack binges. As for celebrities, "Post 9-11 racial tensions." maybe the Weinstein scandal and Me Too movement exposing all of the other predators."

# VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

**BULLETIN BOARD DISCUSSION** 

Millennials are often regarded as misunderstood. We thought we would open the stage for our group to express what they thought was the most misunderstood thing about them- as well as give them the opportunity to set the record straight.

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST MISUNDERSTOOD THING ABOUT YOUR GENERATION? WHAT LEADS YOU TO BELIEVE YOU ARE BEING MISUNDERSTOOD?

#### **GENERALIZATIONS**

"We are believed to be the reason that retirement doesn't exist, that we are not hard working, all we care about is money and objects but don't want to put the work in to get those things. Realistically, lots of us will never get to live on retirement due to cost of living and how everything is run on debt. Yes, there are a lot of people who don't have the motivation to work hard, but there are however a lot of us that do and it really sucks being in the same classification just because of the year I was born or how old I am."

#### LOOK TO THE BOOMERS

"I think there are lots of things that are misunderstood about millennials, but the biggest item that gets overlooked and also covers all the micromisunderstandings is: People forget that millennials are the product of baby boomers. People tend to be quick to point towards and blame millennials for social phenomenon that they do not see as preferable, but they forget to look farther back at what created millennials and what made them this way. [...] As an example, millennials are often referred to as entitled. However, it is rarely mentioned that millennials are entitled because of the way they were raised and treated by their parents - who in most cases are baby boomers. Baby boomers wanted our lives to be easy and to give us the things and opportunities that they didn't have growing up. You don't often hear a criticism that baby boomers made things too easy for millennials and that the implications are now becoming apparent."

#### NO CAKEWALKS HERE

"I believe that the most misunderstood thing about our generation is the fact that in 2018, a degree, a sterling work history, experience, and enthusiasm are not enough to get a good job any more - you need a considerable amount of luck, too. Our parents used to coast into careers in which they stayed for decades, whereas we struggle to find meaningful employment (and keep it). There is almost no such thing as organizational loyalty to workers any more, and in order to keep the bills paid, workers need to adopt a similar mindset. Even if your boss and team are supportive and positive, in many cases they don't make the decisions - and as soon as the budget is tight, you're out on the street as an expendable line item (much to the delight of another employer). This is the furthest thing from a rallying cry advocating for unions, mind you. Today's skilled millennials simply need to be vigilant in staying relevant and marketable, and comfortable with being uncomfortable. In the end, you reap what you sow - but it's not a cakewalk like it was in the 1970s+."

#### LAZY IS NOT AN OPTION

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"I believe that the most misunderstood thing about our generation is that we are "lazy" and/or "entitled." I don't think that our generation is either of these things. We are innovators and opportunity-takers - we are shaping the way the world interacts with one another. We came into our adulthood with the ability to communicate across the globe instantly and I think that our generation has the greatest chance of coming together and working toward common goals for the good of all humanity. We certainly are not lazy. Our diverse, ever-evolving jobs may be different than your traditional 9-5, but it certainly does not make us lazy. We take in information in a variety of ways, through social media, YouTube, podcasts, etc. We are the most highly educated demographic in recent history - a minimum of four years of additional schooling at the post-secondary level certainly does not make my generation lazy. Personally, I completed university level schooling, paid off my student loan in 7 years (\$30k+), worked three jobs to pay off my debt and bought a house. I'm one of the hardest working people I know - I work a day job for which I completed a professional degree in 2 years (in addition to my university degree). I teach part-time for the institute through which I received that professional certificate. I also volunteer my free-time to a fundraising organization and help to arrange events and all that entails (volunteer coordination, raffle prizes, decorating - the whole shebang). It actually makes me angry when people say millennials are lazy. We CAN'T be lazy - we have student loans, debt, rent and we are making minimal wages. Many of my friends work full-time jobs and go to school. We are classified as "lazy" because we can't afford as much as our forebears but it is difficult to buy a house compared to back then when inflation has gone crazy and housing prices have sky rocketed - our dollar goes nowhere near as far as theirs did and for them to not understand this is maddening."

#### TECHNOLOGY LEADS TO EFFICIENCY

"I guess we are mostly being misunderstood by the previous generation [in that] they see us as lazy and they think that we are relying on the advanced technology which doesn't involve enough human efforts, but what they are not seeing or maybe not ready to accept is the increased efficiency in the output of the work being done. We are being misunderstood with people who run after money, [the] reality is that everyone wants to live a quality life but with the advancement of everything and with the increased demands the real life is not as simple as it used to be like 30-40 years ago. They do have points for some issues but overall I think we are being misunderstood."

#### MILLENNIAL PROBLEMS ARE EVERYONE PROBLEMS

"I think one of the major ones is the same old thing every generation runs into, that previous generations think the current generation is lazy or incompetent, etc. and that all the problems would be solved by "pounding pavement" or whatever. And of course the running joke, "Oh, you're a millennial? How many industries have you killed?" Implying that they're ruining things by preferring more viable methods. (Which isn't always the case either. Look at the inexplicable resurgence of vinyl records.) But [...] the biggest thing is that people seem to forget that "millennial problems" are "everyone problems", and that everyone deals with the same stuff, it's \*not\* super different. Everyone has new technologies, new realities, new expenses and political climates, fast-paced change. Half the reason millennials aren't likely to retire is because they can't get the good jobs because boomers can't retire either. Nobody is arguing that boomers aren't retiring because \*they\* didn't try hard enough, so it's silly to suggest that that's the problem millennials face."

#### **DEALT DIFFERENT HANDS**

"I think the biggest misunderstanding is the idea that millennials are playing with the same set of cards as generations past. Trying to understand younger generations through the life experiences of older generations is futile when the entire world is different. Take the perception that we're "lazy." How many in Gen X had a cell phone in their pocket that [their] work could use to contact them at any hour of the day? How many had work that could follow them home on a laptop? How many worked in the knowledge sector where it's nearly impossible to shut off from work completely since part of what you do is in your head? The perception that we're "entitled" is similar. We were sold the dreams of our parents and told how easy it was; "you can pay for school with a part time job," "you can afford a house with a full-time job," etc. Now we're called entitled because we're pissed that most of that is no longer true. We're no different than those who came before but we live in a different world and we're adjusting to it where appropriate and fighting it when fighting is right."

#### **BALANCE IS KEY**

"I think older people misunderstand my generation's work ethic. Back when baby boomers had to compete for work, they were forced to focus mainly on their work, whereas now people focus more on a balanced work and family life. I believe my generation is better at defining success and happiness."

#### HARDER WORK, SAME RESULT

"The articles about millennials killing some sort of product or service are dying down, but I still see and hear a lot of blame on millennials for not working hard enough to accumulate enough money to buy expensive crap that our parents could afford. The "participation trophy" analogy is still trotted out a lot too. While some millennials (like anyone else) may be entitled, most of my friends in my age group have to work harder than anyone from my parents' generation to stay afloat. It's not our fault that the world and the nature of "work" has changed, but people somehow act like it is."

#### **TECH SAVVY?**

"I think that the most misunderstood thing about my generation is that we are all tech savvy and able to do anything with technology. I often find at work that everyone assumes that being a part of this generation I am able to fix all computer or technology issues and this is usually not the case. Even though I have a minor understanding of technology I am not up to date on everything and therefore can not always troubleshoot the issues. I also find that they think people in my generation spend all of the their time on technology and prefer to forgo face to face contact. I do see a lot of people using technology this way but do not believe it is just linked to this generation."

#### NO STRANGERS TO HARD WORK

"That we're "entitled". People think we grew up with stuff just being handed to us rather than working our way up the ladder, which is the opposite of the truth for most people in our generation. We have had to work harder and longer to get the types of jobs our parents just stumbled upon. We have the worst job market in history and often even after completing university degrees people can't find work in their field."

#### **WE DO CARE**

"I think the most misunderstood thing about us is [the perception] that we don't care about the economy or the state that our world is in. We are told that we are making the economy go down and that it is our fault that the cost of living is so high. When really, we are working very hard at our jobs just to be able to afford a decent living. We are a product of the generation before us. We did not choose to have to work long hours just to afford rent and groceries."

# DO THEY STILL MAKE THOSE?

#### **MILLENNIAL ITEMS**



Millennials experienced the boom of the internet, and with it, the crazed early days of e-Bay auctions. Although some members of this generation may have been a bit older when people were bidding hundreds to thousands of dollars for the BEST Christmas gifts, millennials of all ages nonetheless had a smorgasbord of toys that are no longer on the shelves, despite being the best toys ever.

#### We asked: WHAT IS THE DEFINING TOY?

"Pokémon"

"Cabbage Patch Dolls"

"Music and old photo albums with captions"

"PS2/PS3"

"Tamagotchi"

"Tickle Me Elmo"

"Furbies"

"Lego"

"Nintendo"



#### WHAT IS THE DEFINING MUSIC STYLE?

"Grunge rock (Pearl Jam, STP, Nirvana)"

"90s pop, early 00's rock/emo"

"Early to mid 2000s cheesy party music"

"Electronic music and Pop 40"

"Hip Hop/Trap"

"Punk rock"

"Electro pop"

"Electronic"

"Folk bluegrass"

## WHAT IS THE DEFINING SONG THAT EVERYBODY KNOWS THE WORDS TO?

#### Most common answer:

"Hit Me Baby (One More Time)"-Britney Spears

#### Other notable mentions:

"Mr. Brightside"- The Killers

"All Star"- Smash Mouth

"Backstreet's Back"- Backstreet Boys

"Party Rock Anthem"- LMFAO

"Fishing in the Dark"- Nitty Gritty Dirt Band

"Wannabe"- Spice Girls

"Barbie Girl"- Aqua

"Call Me Maybe"- Carly Rae Jepson

"I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)"- The Proclaimers



#### THE DEFINING TV SHOW:

Answers ranged from nostalgic to new age, but despite the range some were more commonly mentioned that others. More common answers are listed at the top:

The Office

The Simpsons

**Friends** 

**South Park** 

**Breaking Bad** 

Fresh Prince of Bel-Air

**Jersey Shore** 

Seinfeld

**Game of Thrones** 

Parks and Rec

#### THE DEFINING MOVIE:

Most common answer was "Mean Girls", followed by "American Pie", "Clueless", "Superbad", "Harry Potter", and "The Matrix". Other mentioned movie include:

"Fight Club"

"Hunger Games"

"The Breakfast Club"

"Toy Story"

"Lion King"

"The Dark Knight"



The past had such unforgettable, deity-status celebrities (think The Beatles, Michael Jackson, etc.) that is was a no brainer who the most famous of celebrities were at a given time. But things shifted in the 80s and 90s, and the "most famous" became hard to define. We asked our group who they thought was:

#### THE DEFINING CELEBRITY

Some seemed pleased with who they listed, others did not. The most common answer was **Britney Spears**. Others included:

"Donald Trump"

"Beyonce"

"Kim Kardashian"

"Miley Cyrus"

"Jonathan Taylor Thomas"

"Justin Timberlake"

"Unfortunately Taylor Swift"



#### THE DEFINING FASHION:

"Skinny jeans."

"Gotta be blonde highlights. Maybe low-rise jeans."

"90s style (baggy pants, visors, etc.)."

"Hipster fashion."

"Athleisure."

"High-waisted pants".

"Punk or grunge."

"Distressed / sand-washed jeans either slim cut or boot cut, logo T-shirts".

"Multicoloured hair (blue, purple...etc.)."

"Butterfly clips."

"Those thigh high boots."

"Flannel shirts."

"Uggs."

## IN MY SHOES MILLENNIAL REALITIES

Sure, millennials are blamed for...well, a lot. But, being a millennial has many perks as well. We asked our participants what the best of the perks were:

#### WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF BEING A MILLENNIAL?

"Being around for evolving technology but remembering life before it."

"Access to information and instant communication."

"Most of the young people I hang out with know that it's unacceptable to be racist, sexist, or bigoted towards LGBT\* people. We all have great senses of gallows humour."

"The sheer number of things that we've seen go from science fiction and long-term dreams a lot faster than expected. I remember when mapping the fruit fly genome was huge. They had humans down in a couple years after that."

"Being so connected to others around my age through our use of technology; understanding that the world is changing quickly and being able to delve into so many different things - the possibilities seem endless given our world today."

"Young enough to know about new technology but old enough to not be dependent on it."

"We are making the rules for ourselves."

"I will remember all the hard work and the struggles I went through to reach such a stage."

"All the hard work I have put forth into raising my family."

#### **MILLENNIAL REALITIES**



#### WHAT IS THE WORST PART OF BEING A MILLENNIAL?

"Being grouped together as the lazy generation."

"Knowing that you won't have it as easy as your parents did, and that a university degree is only the starting line - not the golden ticket."

"I get to stare down the barrel of the climate change gun, and I know how badly the bullet is going to hurt me, and about half of the world has selective blindness regarding the gun."

"Being treated as a novelty; "My board is very forward thinking because our board has \*a millennial\* on it.""

"Being told we're entitled or lazy and that we're causing problems in the world today when we can't possibly gain power from the previous generation."

"People judging us and saying we are ruining the world."

"Internet bullies and trolls."

"Managing social pressures."

"Less job security and stagnant salaries."

#### MILLENNIAL REALITIES

Although the uniqueness of millennials is vast, there are many similar (and some stereotypical, even) traits and qualities shared by millennials.

We asked our millennials to complete the following sentence: YOU KNOW YOU ARE A MILLENNIAL WHEN ...

"...you are ready to change traditional values."

"...you can walk and text at the same time."

"...when you remember to pack your phone charger for a trip but forget your toothbrush."

"...you are still paying student loans in your 40's."

"...you say "smash"."

"...your generation is blamed for everything the previous one's started and are called out for trying to fix it."

"...baby boomers drive you a little crazy."

"...you live with your parents until you're 25."

"...you use Twitter to argue about why the world was better before Twitter."

"...you "literally just died laughing.""

"....you have less money and less equity than the last couple of generations, but said generations whine about how good you have it."

"...you remember having social profiles on all the sites prior to Facebook and using MSN messenger to chat."

### WHAT REMAINS

#### **DIARY MODE DISCUSSION**

The unique timing of the childhood of millennials, with the accompanying changes in technology, rights, and ideologies, has placed millennials in an important position. Many movements, inventions, and ideas stemmed from, or were influenced by, millennials. But, which is the most influential?

WE ASKED: "WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WILL BE THE LEGACY OF MILLENIALS?"



#### JUST TEXT ME

"I think our legacy will not necessarily be a positive one as people will view our generation as the one who broke down the known communication and relationships with people due to technology. We will be viewed as the generation who preferred to use technology to interact with others instead of face to face contact."



#### I'LL LOOK IT UP

""Just Google it". I think we will be remembered as the start of generations to come as not being able to problem solve for ourselves. We have become so technology based it's ridiculous. We will be known as not being able to survive without technology. Again, I don't want to put everyone under the same blanket description. All I can say is look at when the internet goes out or the power goes out, it's instant panic."

#### **DIARY MODE DISCUSSION**



#### **POLARIZATION**

"I honestly feel like the legacy left will be greater polarization or a division between people.

Not only have technological advances in communication and the proliferation of social media created massive echo chambers for every idea and opinion; People also seem quicker to define themselves by their positions on different questions. Any questioning of those positions therefore becomes an attack on the person rather than the idea and entrenchment ensues.

All the information in the world is at our fingertips but we seek the information that maintains our comfort zone. I see fewer and fewer moderates in our generation and more and more people firmly planted at extremes.

It's going to take a long time to deal with echo chambers and bias confirming behaviors and it will need to start early through education and the training of critical thinking and proper debate. This is the generation that instead of accepting a well reasoned argument will search the post history of the person who presented it finding some unrelated thing to discredit them with. It's starting to take over politics too and have serious consequences."



#### COMMUNICATION AND EQUALITY

"A new paradigm of human connection. While I can meet and get to know people on the other side of the world with more ease than previous generations (and become exposed to different cultures, ways of communicating, ways of thinking, etc.), you could also argue that it would be to the detriment of my real-life connections. We are also working towards real equality. We aren't there yet, but at least this generation knows enough to be mostly accepting of those who love people who aren't a different gender of them."

#### **DIARY MODE DISCUSSION**



#### **SOCIAL NETWORKING**

"This is a difficult question to answer as one needs to be very forward looking, but I believe that the legacy of millennials will be a more inter-connected and social world. We were the first generation to sign up for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and the various social sharing sites. Long before this, we were using LiveJournal, MySpace, and various forums to share ideas, information, and parts of our lives. As we grew up, the internet rapidly became a part of our daily lives. We used it for entertainment, education, communication, research, etc. As we were younger and more connected to technology, we learned how to best make use of this new tool in a variety of ways. We developed the websites, the apps we saw the power that the internet held, and still holds. We learned how to communicate across the globe in real-time, collaborating with like-minded people that we had never even met. This inter-connectivity amongst people has grown. We have made careers and livelihoods from it - YouTube stars, Twitch casters, Instagram models. It is our primary mode of sharing our work with the world and the main method through which we, ourselves, take in the world. Millennials are fickle and hard to pin down as a result, as we move from one viral fad to the next, but we certainly are never boring. Social networking will be one of the main legacies we leave behind, having fostered so many communities through the earliest versions of social networks such as early forums and now the iterations we see today such as Facebook and Instagram. Our generation has brought people together to share whatever they wish with the world. While this may be seen as a damaging thing (due to the online pit that comments sections can become), I see it as an amazing thing. Artists are able to collaborate and work together as never before. Writers can edit each other's works from countries apart. It is has really opened up our world and by examining the lives of those from places very different than ours, I think we can begin to understand each other a lot better. It is what you choose to make of it - you can either get caught up in the negativity that can seem so prevalent, or you can establish yourself in an online community that is excited to be helping others advance their skills/education/artistry/whatever."

#### **DIARY MODE DISCUSSION**



#### **ENGAGEMENT**

"[...] It will be interesting to be the last people who can speak to whether the "old ways" were better (they were not). A lot of very engaged people have come from this generation, and I like to think that it will end well. It's getting really bad now, but it always does this before it eventually sorts itself out in terms of societal progress. Society is becoming truly global and it will be neat to see how we handle it in the long run."



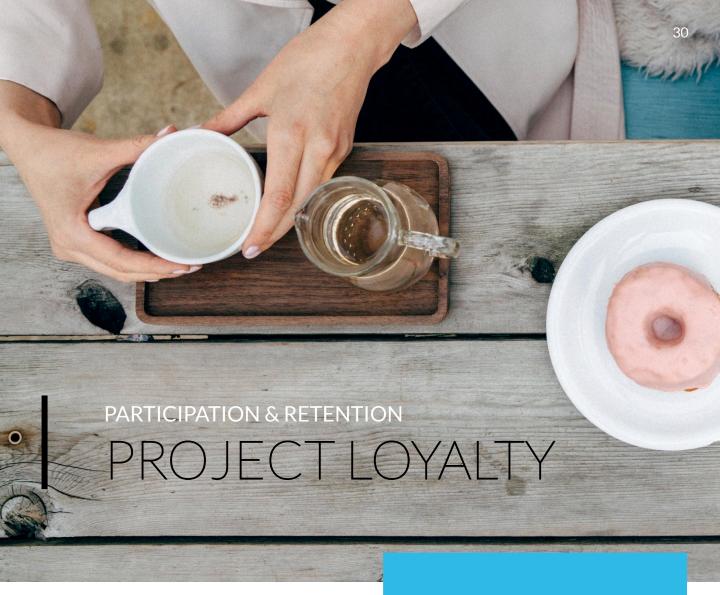
#### IMPROVED COMMUNICATION—AND ITS EFFECTS

"In my eyes, the legacy of millennials will be largely one around improved communications, both locally (technology leading to rapid response & community organization) and globally (knowledge transfer, and an understanding of issues outside our borders and how it affects us at home). However, like all things - this is a double edged sword. While it has been an overall net-benefit to society to amplify attention to injustices and shine the light on those who deserve criticism, it also serves as an echo chamber for the vocal minority to spread toxic mindsets on both ends of the political spectrum. This perspective is from that of a Western mindset, as for those who are less fortunate and live under more oppressive, dated regimes - access to information of virtually any kind and to have a safe, digital presence is positive."



#### **ACCEPTANCE**

"[...] Millennials are way more accepting of people's differences. Things like gender, mental illness, sexual orientation, etc. are no longer viewed with the same stigma and as a result society seems to be more understanding of differences. Sure, we have a long way to go, but this shift has certainly started with millennials and we will continue to work towards acceptance. We are certainly a much more empathetic generation than the previous and I am very proud of us for it."



Our high retention rate is another measure of success of our project. This month, we had another high engagement rate, with 20/20 participating in all three activities for the month! We couldn't have done it without the dedication of this group of millennials!

THANKS EVERYONE!

# WANT TO LEARN MORE?

### CONTACT INFORMATION

#### TALK TO US



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