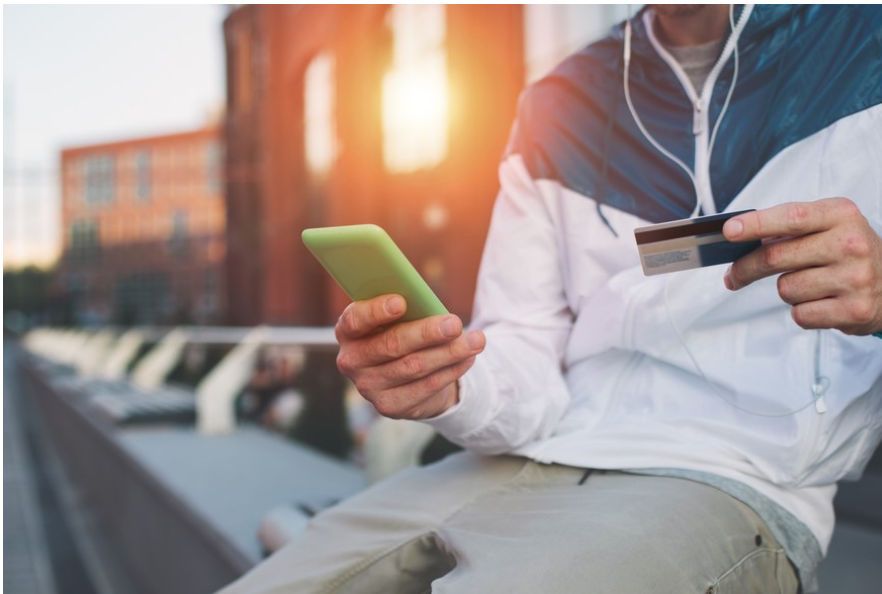




## Sales & Marketing

### 3 ways hotels can connect with millennial travelers and drive sales

by [Brett Tabano, MediaAlpha](#) | Apr 25, 2018 11:45am

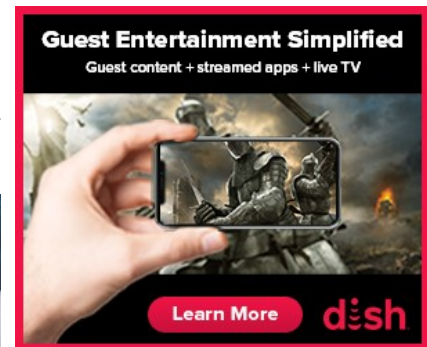


Millennials must be reached in a unique way, or you won't get their attention. Photo credit: Getty Images/littlehenrabi

Millennials represent the largest living generation in the United States, making them prime targets for any marketing campaign. But because they have altered what has been considered the norm through their new purchasing patterns and social behaviors, hospitality brands are having to reinvent their marketing strategies to engage this group.

For example, one of millennials' defining traits is that they place more value on traveling and new experiences than they do on tangible items. In fact, millennials make up more than one-third of the world's hotel guests, and it is anticipated that they will reach more than 50 percent by 2020.

Therefore, hotels and hospitality brands need to ensure their marketing campaigns create a sense of experience for millennials because traditional marketing is not as enticing.



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## About the Author



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Developing and executing a comprehensive strategy designed to reach and engage millennial customers at multiple touchpoints is the best way to generate the greatest number of sales this year.

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Here are three ways hospitality brands can jumpstart millennial marketing today:

### 1. Align with Social Causes

Not only do millennials want to support the causes they deem worthy of their attention, but they demand that of the brands they support, as well. While millennials certainly want to make a positive societal impact on a local level, they also are interested in bettering the world on a broader scale. For this generation to feel truly connected and interested, hospitality brands should consider attaching their name to a just cause. For example, host a gift drive at one of your more popular hotels. Throughout the day, brands can invite customers to donate small gifts to local charities. Or make it a brandwide initiative by offering eco-friendly towels and sheets in all rooms and banning plastic food containers and straws from the entire hotel chain. These efforts convey that your brand is socially responsible, which is a big factor in whether or not a millennial will support it.



*Millennials are always connected, which means there are always opportunities to get your message in front of them. Photo credit: Getty Images/ViewApart*

## 2. Focus on Content Marketing

Creating engaging content should be a focus of any campaign, but it is especially important when trying to reach millennials. A long-form blog post on the history of your hotel brand might work for older generations, but someone under the age of 30 will likely lose interest before the second paragraph. Because of this, each piece of content distributed needs to grab their attention early on and keep it.

For example, to help millennials engage and relate with your brand, share attractive and compelling Instagram videos of the amenities and excursions your hotel offers. You could also share video sound-bites of positive reviews and quotes from previous guests to help build a more sincere brand image and brand loyalty. These kinds of social-media posts show that your brand personalizes the experience to the needs of its guests to create something memorable, but in a way that is relatable to millennials. Additionally, since this generation is more budget-conscious, hospitality brands need to offer prices and experiences that are feasible for an array of budgets. Remember—even though someone might have a lower budget, they still could become a loyal customer with a strong lifetime value and are therefore definitely worth pursuing.

## 3. Create a Strong Mobile Presence

Millennials are always connected, even on the go. Because of millennials' constant access to mobile devices, marketers need to ensure their strategies include mobile-friendly aspects. From initial search to complete sale, the journey a mobile user takes can be completely different than that of a desktop user. It's best to start with a mobile-friendly website, focusing on the look of it, but also the speed of the site and the overall user experience. For the best experience, content should be broken up and kept short through the use of subheadings and bullet points to ensure it is easily digestible on the small screen. Since the average human attention span is only eight seconds, it's very important to distribute easy-to-read, short-form content.

The mobile strategy doesn't have to be centered around an internet browser, either. Millennials live on social media and other apps, therefore promoting social content is just as important for mobile as it is on desktop. Paid ads on Instagram or Twitter are more likely to catch the eye of this generation than a commercial or newspaper ad.

Social-media platforms, like Facebook, also let marketers target via first-party demographics and location, which help hospitality brands ensure their ads are reaching the intended audience.

Marketing to millennials doesn't need to be an intimidating task. This generation may be unique and far different than those that came before it, but this group still sees a need when it comes to hospitality—perhaps even more so given members' affinity for investing in experiences over products. If brands focus on developing a strong a mobile footprint, creating engaging content and aligning their campaigns with social causes, they'll be able to reach millennials and drive sales with this generation like never before.

*Brett Tabano is SVP of marketing at advertising technology company **MediaAlpha**.*

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