

## Does Generation Y believe in advertising?

Generation Y can be described as a force to be reckoned with. These consumers have established themselves as an important consumer group with a deep appreciation for communication. Generation Y consumers are always switched on and always-connected, waiting to use the latest technology to engage with each other.

Let's face it, Generation Y is different and their media usage follows suit. They are resistant to advertising and are split across various media channels. As consumers, Generation Y like purchasing and have a tendency to spend money freely and quickly. Generation Y are the techno savvy generation, growing up with media and being extremely knowledgeable on a wide variety of it.

This begs the question: how do these millennials perceive advertising and its credibility? This credibility is the perception held by individuals regarding whether an advertiser can deliver on the information provided in an advertisement or not. Previous research is conflicting regarding the media credibility of broadcast and print media as well as new versus traditional media advertisements. There is also debate as to whether Generation Y has really accepted new media as credible information sources.

There is much uncertainty as to how Generation Y feels, especially regarding new media replacing traditional media. Prior research shows that the South African Generation Y consumer interacts more with broadcast media than with print media and newspapers, relying more on radio, television and magazines for information.

New media, accompanied by the information age, is the new way of communicating in the digital world. People are able to stay connected to the world at the touch of a button. New media offers a variety of online channels through which Generation Y can socialise and communicate such as blogging, twitter and social networks. With so many new media channels, resulting in a greater array of lifestyle choices, it is no wonder that marketers are struggling when advertising to Generation Y consumers.

A study was undertaken by [Prof Yolanda Jordaan](#) and Dr Lene Ehlers (staff members in the [Department of Marketing Management](#)) to explore the credibility of different types of media advertising. The study also went as far as to explore the relationship between the credibility of Internet advertising and the likelihood of Generation Y consumers to shop online.

The results indicate that Generation Y consumers, interestingly enough, regard the credibility of traditional media higher than new media and print media has higher credibility ratings compared to broadcast media. The study also found that the credibility of cell phone media advertisements is higher than the credibility of Internet advertisements. Unfortunately, despite expectations, there is no relationship between internet credibility and likelihood to shop online. Ultimately, marketers need to carefully consider their target market, especially Generation Y, before moving from traditional means of advertising to online.

The full reference for this study is:

Jordaan, Y. & Ehlers, L. 2009. Young adult consumers' media usage and online purchase likelihood. *Journal of Family Ecology and Consumer Sciences*, Vol 37:24-34 – also available via [UP Space](#).