



It's lit

a guide to what teens think is cool



Google





COOL MATTERS

The purpose of this magazine is to provide a glimpse into the world of teens in the US through the lens of what they find cool. Cool is an indication of what people pay attention to, what gets them excited, and can often act as a manifestation of their hope and dreams. Unlike millennials, this group is ambitious, engaged, and feel like they can change the world. For Generation Z, what's cool is also a representation of their values, their expectations of themselves, their peers, and the brands they hold in the highest regard. What you're looking at is proprietary research conceived and executed by the Brand Team for Consumer Apps at Google. We hope it serves as glimpse into the minds of the most informed and connected generation yet—Gen Z.

[COOLBOOK@GOOGLE.COM.](mailto:COOLBOOK@GOOGLE.COM)

GEN Z,

IN SIZE AND POWER, IS NOT TO BE

UNDERESTIMATED

Generation Z includes those born between the mid-1990s to early 2000s, however this research is focused on 13-17 year olds.

OF TEENS

- Estimated 60 million^{1,2}
- More than a quarter (25.9%) of the US population³

PURCHASING POWER / WALLET SHARE

- \$44B in the US annually⁴
- But it could be closer to \$200B annually when you factor in their influence on parental or household purchases⁵

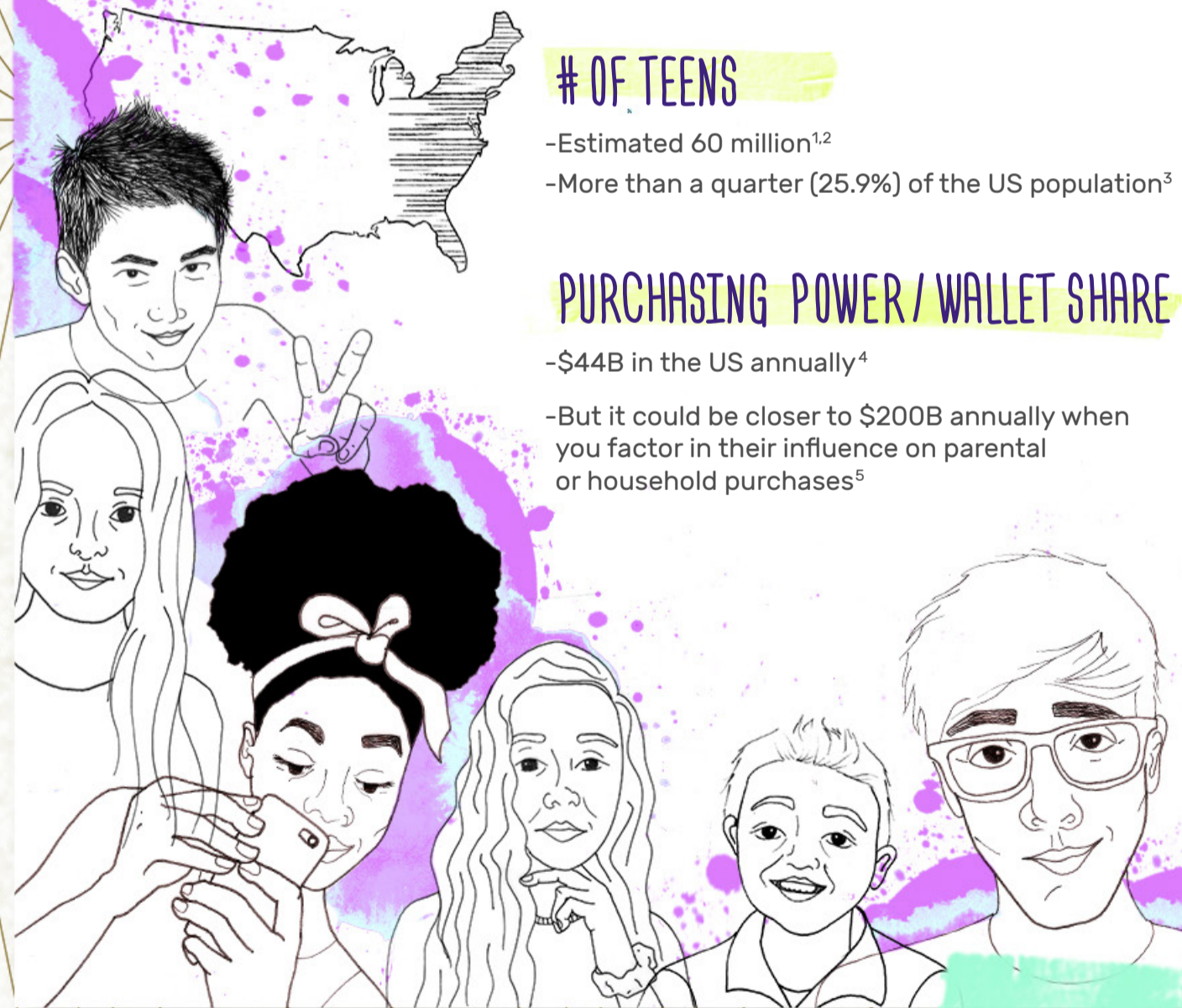
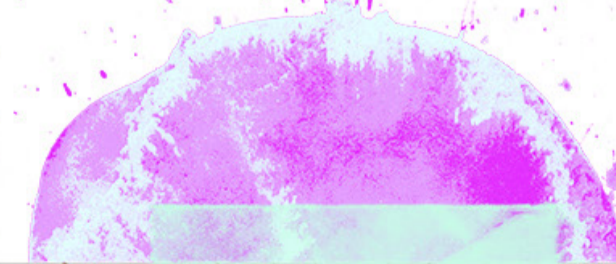


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Gen Z has an enlightened definition of what it means to be cool.

DEFINING COOL

Teens feel that being cool is about just being yourself, embracing what you love, rejecting what you don't, and being kind to others.

The activities they think are cool represent their generational power struggle between technology and RL (real life).

Teens feel something is cool if it's unique, impressive, interesting, amazing or awesome. Something becomes "cool" when it brings joy or happiness or is unique enough to stand out from everything.

GENDER DIFFERENCES:

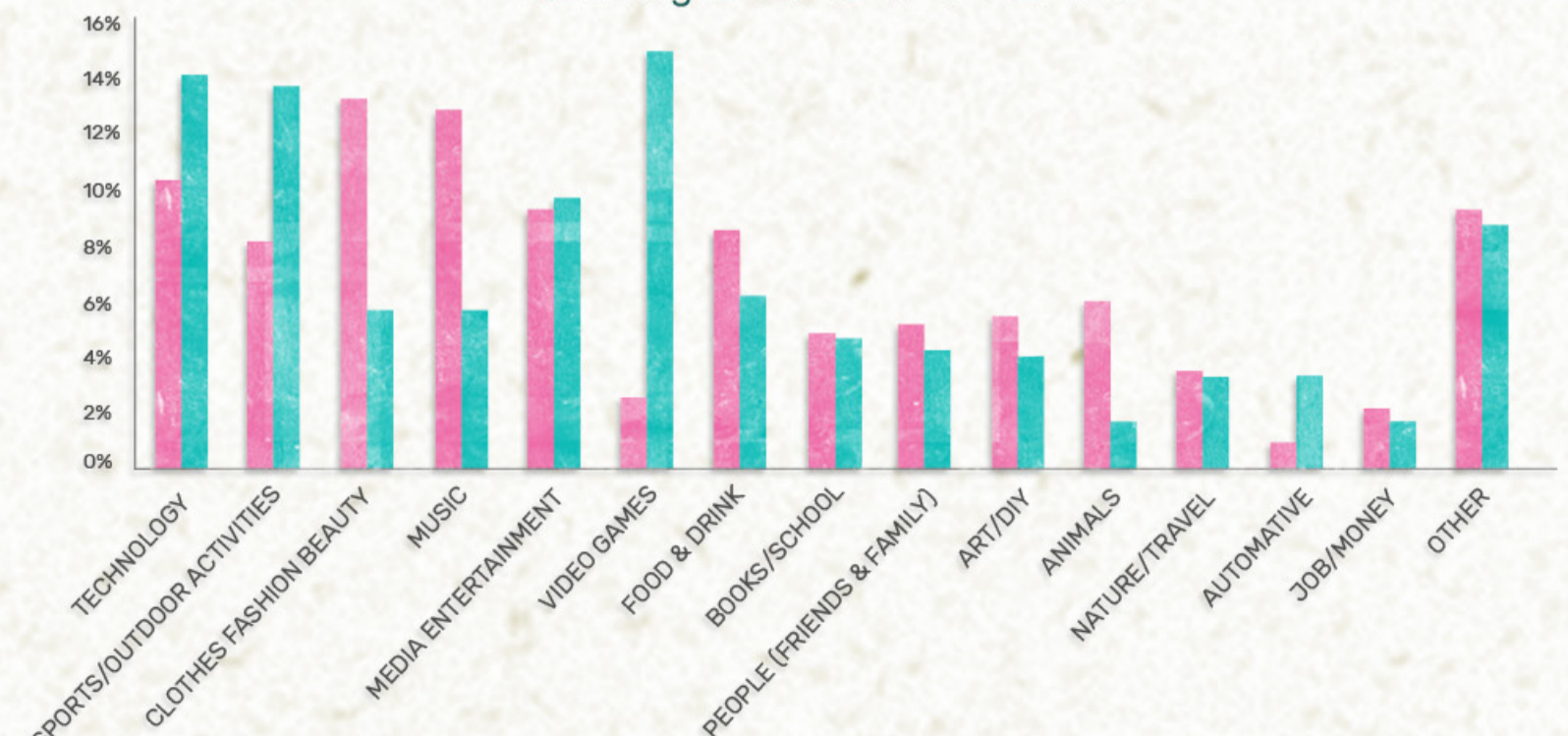
Research suggests males and females decide what's cool in different ways.

Male: More likely to be persuaded something is cool by fads/friends.

Female: More likely to determine something is cool based on how it makes them feel.

What's Cool?

According to 400 13-to-17 Year Olds



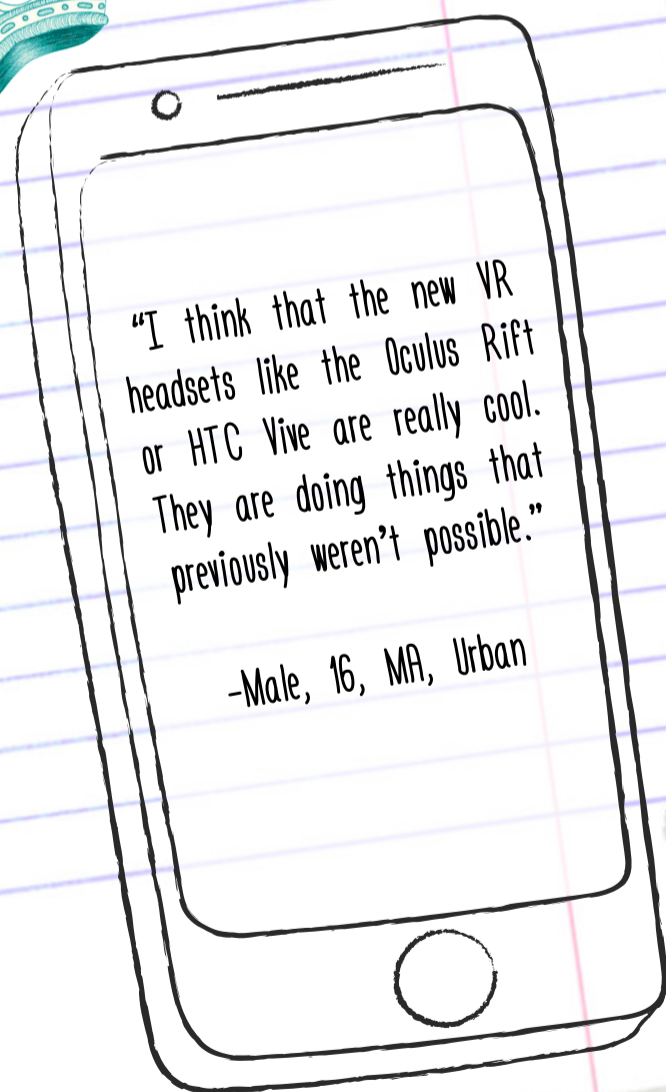
Source: Google/YouGov web-based, U.S., PollingPoint panel: n=1,100 respondents age 13-17, June 2016.

COOL TECHNOLOGY

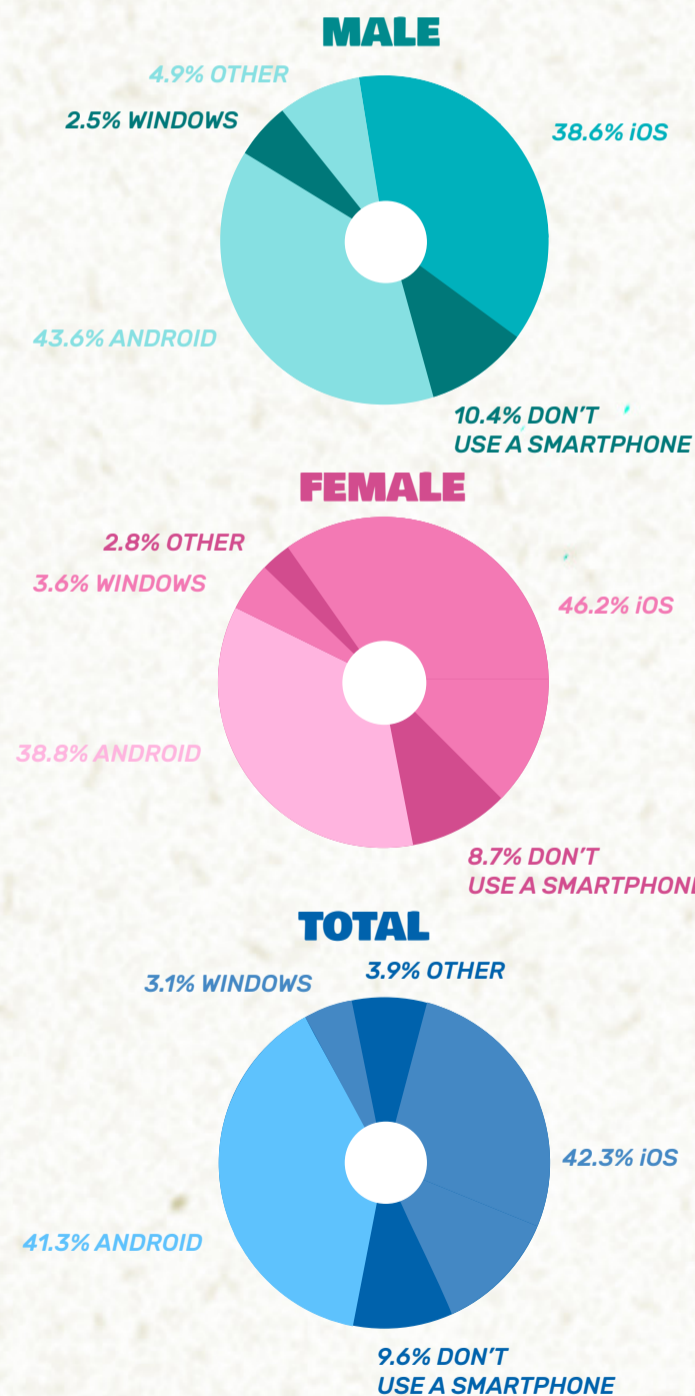
SOCIAL MEDIA

MOBILE IS STILL KING

Smartphones, all-things iOS, and VR/Augmented Reality are the coolest things in tech.



GEN Z SMARTPHONE OWNERSHIP



Source: Google/YouGov web-based, U.S., PollingPoint panel: n=1,100 respondents age 13-17, June 2016.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS FOR CONSUMING AND CONNECTING, NOT SHARING.

Snapchat, and Instagram are the coolest platforms. Facebook is still a daily habit for most teens for consumption and stalking, but they rarely post and it's not seen as cool.

Snapchat gives a medium to connect with friends in a fun way, without having to worry about them sharing your thoughts (unless they screenshot!).
- Female, 17, GA, Suburban

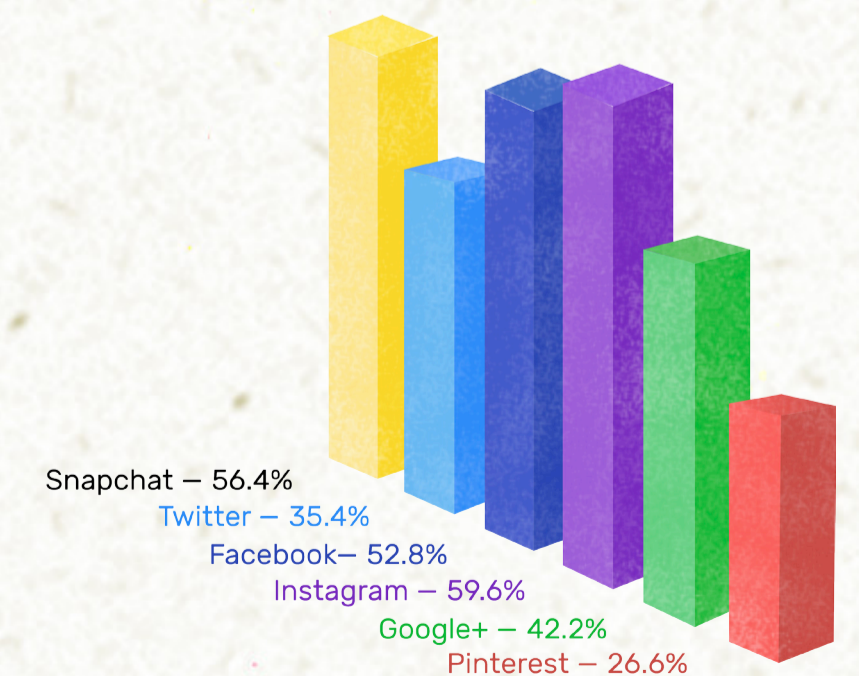
SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE BY GENDER

GENDER BREAKDOWN

	Male	Female
Snapchat	46.6%	66.7%
Twitter	35.9%	34.9%
Facebook	57.6%	47.7%
Instagram	51.9%	67.9%
Google+	44.0%	40.3%
Pinterest	9.0%	45.4%
Total:	468	532

Source: Google/YouGov web-based, U.S., PollingPoint panel: n=1,100 respondents age 13-17, June 2016.

% OF GEN Z ON EACH PLATFORM



BEAUTY

IT'S COOL TO BE YOU. BEING BEAUTIFUL IS BEING YOURSELF.

But, teens also acknowledge that appearance is another way to be 'beautiful' and their favorite brands to help them do that include: MAC, Clinique, NARS, Maybelline, Neutrogena, Tarte, and Too Faced.

“Confidence is beautiful. Or having emotional strength and integrity. Beauty isn't just someone's outward appearance.”

-Female, 17, NC, Suburban

CLOTHES & FASHION

SHOES ARE THE CURRENCY OF COOL FOR GEN Z.

Teens are obsessed with shoes. Within the clothes/fashion/beauty category almost 30% of the responses of what is cool were 'shoes.' To Gen Z, the top 3 coolest shoe brands are Jordan, Converse, and Vans.



CELEBRITIES

MUSICIANS TOP THE CHARTS OF COOL CELEBRITIES. CELEBRITIES THAT ARE PHILANTHROPIC AND GENUINE ARE THE COOLEST.

Most mentioned celebs:

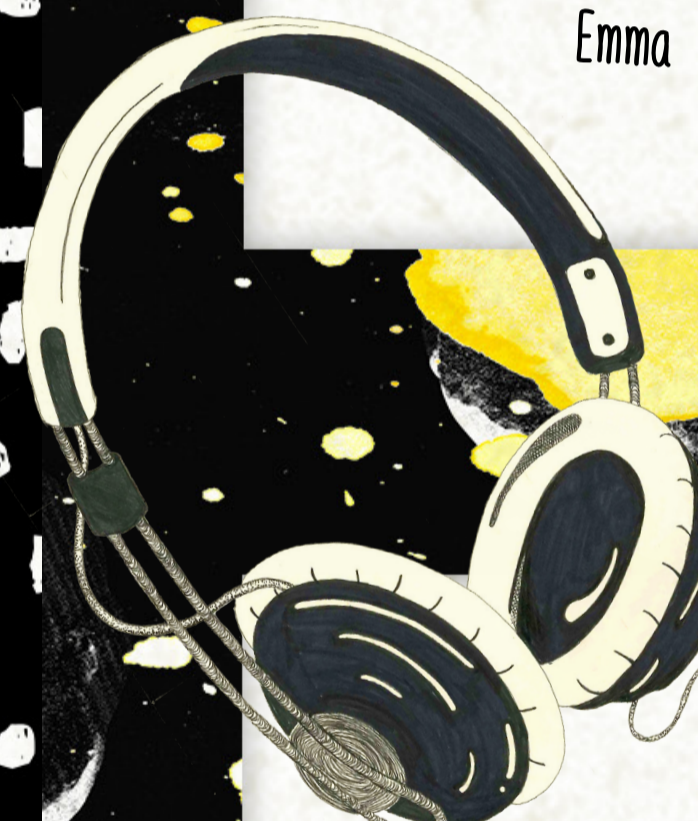
Steph Curry

Selena Gomez

Ariana Grande

Emma Watson

Chance the Rapper



MUSIC

TEENS THINK MUSIC THAT MAKES THEM 'FEEL' SOMETHING IS COOL.

Gen Z would rather listen to music than make it, but many teenage boys are interested in making music. Teen Playlist would include a mix of newer artists with a few oldies:

Twenty One Pilots

Drake

The Beatles

Panic at the Disco

Fall Out Boy

Beyonce

Coldplay (yeah, yeah...we know)

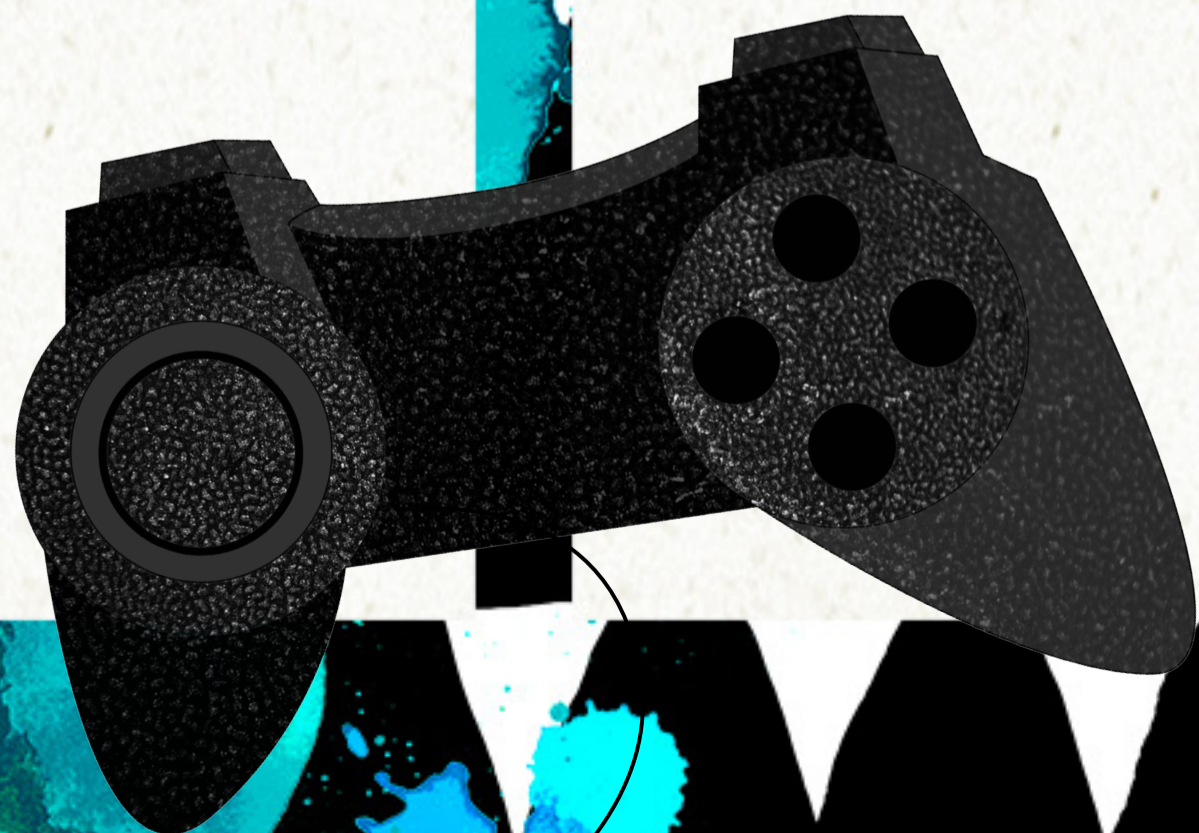
VIDEO GAMES

GEN Z IS THE MOST AWARE GENERATION IN RECENT HISTORY, SO IT'S NO WONDER MOST TEEN BOYS SEE VIDEO GAMES AS A COOL ESCAPE FROM REALITY.

Video games were on top of the coolness scale for boys. They think video games are cool not only for their storylines, wide variety, and ability to escape to a virtual reality, but also for the ability to connect with friends.

MOST POPULAR GAMES:

- THE LEDGEND OF ZELDA
- COD BLACK OPS
- GRAND THEFT AUTO
- POKEMON
- MINECRAFT
- CS:GO



MEDIA ENTERTAINMENT

REAL-TIME MEDIA IS A MUST. STREAMING VIDEO AND MUSIC BRANDS ARE AT THE TOP OF THE LIST OF OF COOL FOR GEN Z, WHO EXPECT AND AVIDLY CONSUME ON-DEMAND INFORMATION AND ENTERTAINMENT.

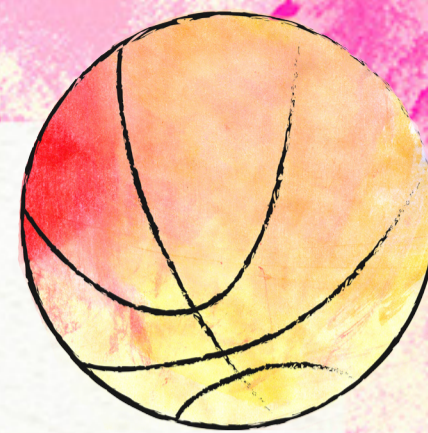
TOP 4 COOLEST STREAMING MEDIA PLATFORMS:

1. YOUTUBE
2. NETFLIX
3. SPOTIFY
4. HULU

SPORTS/OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

TEAM SPORTS ARE THE COOLEST AND MOST COMMON WAY FOR GEN Z TO CONNECT IRL, AND SERVES AS THE ANTIDOTE TO TECH-OVER-KILL. TEENS LOVE SPORTS FOR THEIR TEAMWORK, COMPETITIVENESS AND THE RELAXING OUTLET THEY PROVIDE.

Football and Basketball are the most watched sports by teens, but Soccer, Basketball and Running/Track are the most played sports.



FOOD & DRINK

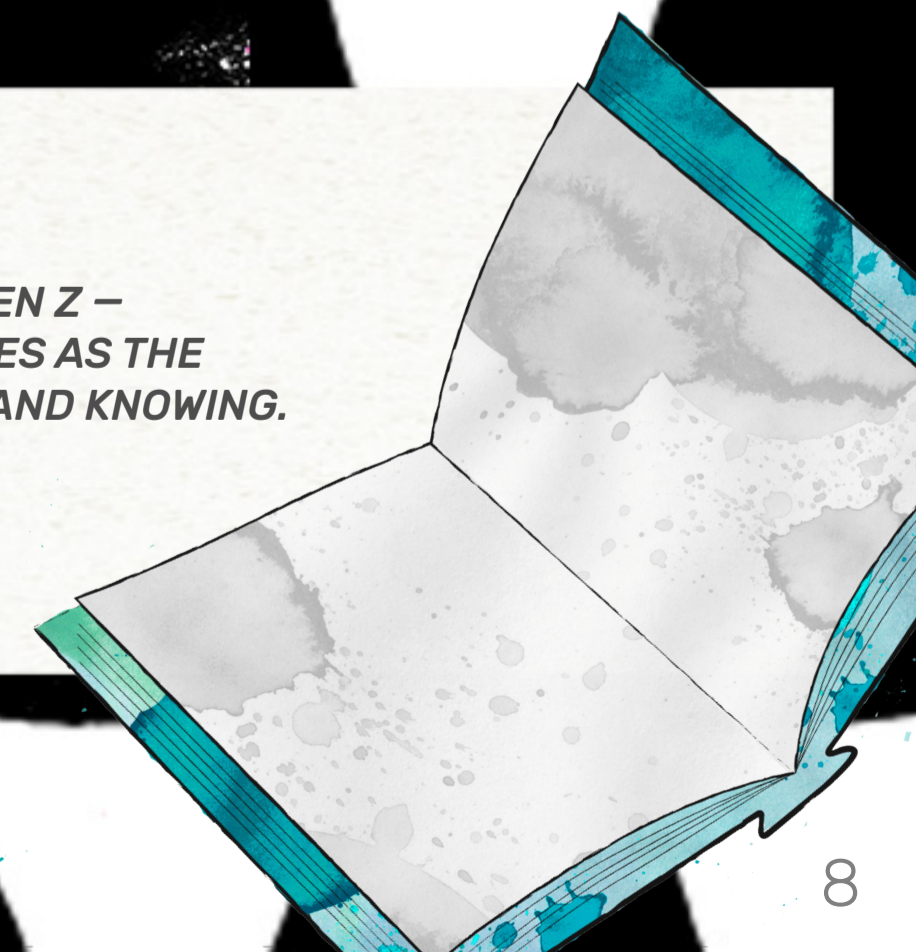
GEN Z MAY BE THE MOST EVOLVED GENERATION, BUT THEY'RE STILL PIMPLY TEEANGERS WITH CRAVINGS.

According to teens, pizza, Oreos, chips, and ice cream are cool. Teens love junk food and get almost 17 percent of their calories from fast food.⁶



READING & KNOWLEDGE

YOU DO YOU! THERE ARE NO AIRS AMONGST GEN Z — READING IS RIGHT UP THERE WITH VIDEO GAMES AS THE COOLEST ACTIVITIES. TEENS LOVE LEARNING AND KNOWING.



“When I think “cool” I imagine companies that do great things for customers/employees or beautiful/unusual products.”

-Female, 17, UT, Urban

GEN Z

**BELIEVE AND RELY ON
BRANDS
TO SHAPE THEIR WORLD**

AND THE TOP 10 COOLEST BRANDS ARE... (DRUM ROLL PLEASE!)

01. YOUTUBE

02. NETFLIX

03. GOOGLE

04. XBOX

05. OREO

06. GOPRO

07. PLAYSTATION

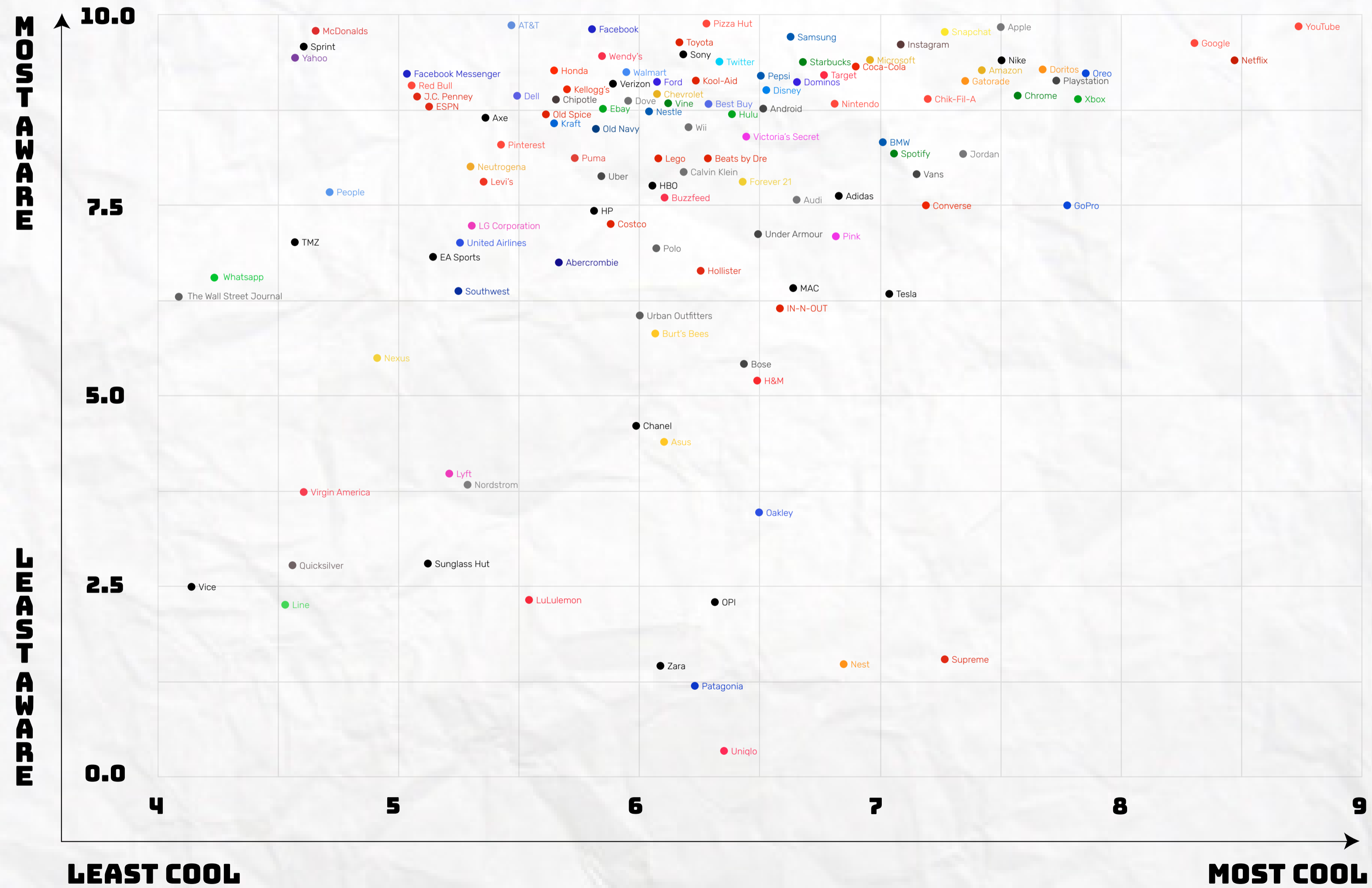
08. DORITOS

09. NIKE

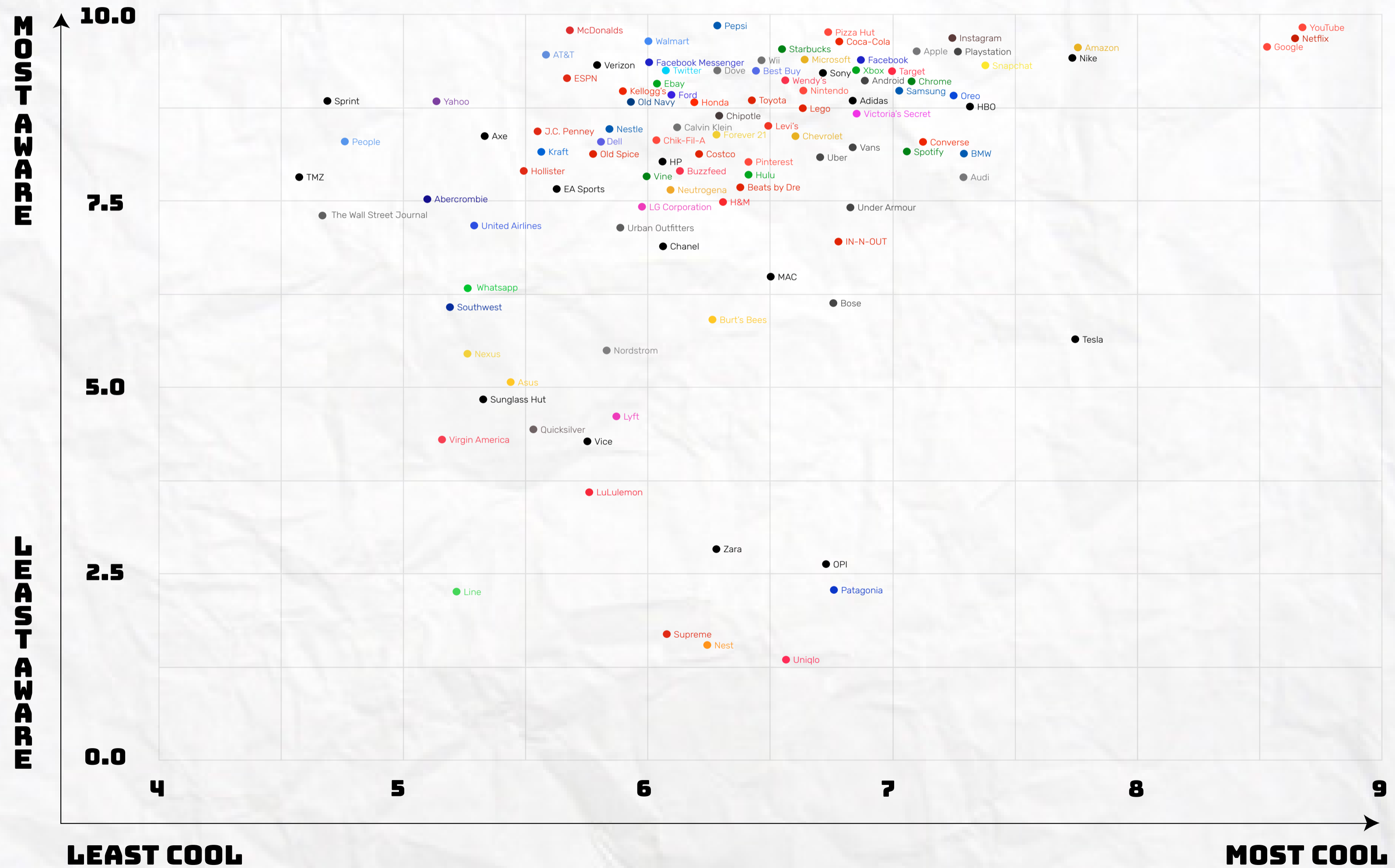
10. CHROME

BRAND COOLNESS BY AIDED AWARENESS: GEN Z

1,100 TEENS (13-17) WERE ASKED TO RANK 122 BRANDS BASED ON HOW COOL THEY ARE. HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID:



BRAND COOLNESS BY AIDED AWARENESS: MILLENNIALS (18-24)



GEN Z VS. MILLENNIALS

800 MILLENNIALS WERE ASKED TO RATE THE SAME BRANDS ON COOLNESS. THERE WERE SOME SURPRISING DIFFERENCES:

SOCIAL MEDIA:

- X WhatsApp is cooler to Millennials than Gen Z.
- X Although from the same mothership, Facebook is seen as cooler than Facebook Messenger across Gen Z and Millennials

FOOD:

- X In-N-Out is the coolest fast food to Millennials, to Gen Z it's Chick-fil-a
- X Coke is cooler than Pepsi for both Millennials and Gen Z
- X McDonald's is cooler to Millennials than Gen Z

CARS:

- X Car brands across the board are cooler to Millennials than Gen Z
- X Millennials think Tesla is cooler
- X Uber is cooler for Millennials than it is for Gen Z

X STREAMING:

Millennials think HBO is cooler than Gen Z does, but YouTube and Netflix are still king

– Gen Z: YouTube, Netflix, Spotify, Hulu, HBO

– Millennials: YouTube, Netflix, HBO, Spotify, Hulu

VIDEO GAMES:

- X Millennials think Playstation is the coolest video game brand
- X Gen Z thinks X-box is the coolest video game brand

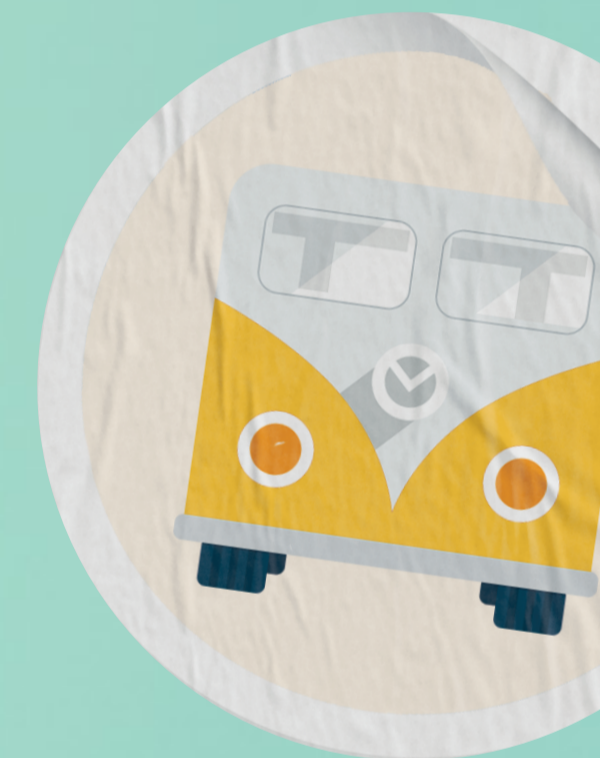
OVERALL:

Least Cool:

TMZ
Wall Street Journal
Sprint
Yahoo!

Least Aware:

Uniqlo
Patagonia
Supreme
Nest



GOOGLE DIFFERENCES

MILLENNIALS AND GEN Z HAVE DIFFERENT IMPRESSIONS OF GOOGLE:

TO MILLENNIALS:

Google = serious + functional

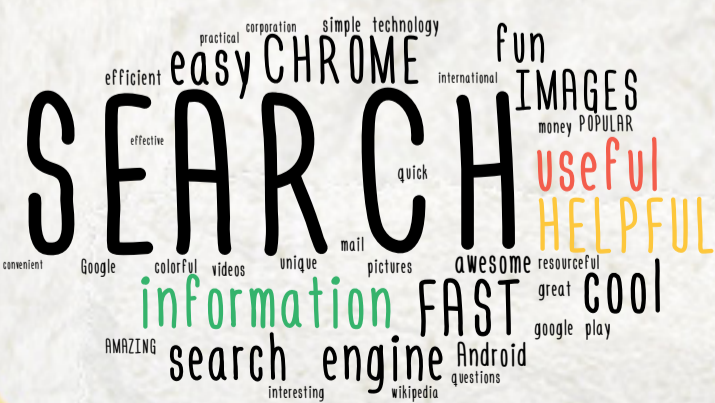
TO GEN Z:

Google = fun + functional



WORD ASSOCIATION...

Millennials



Teens:



TO GEN Z, GOOGLE = SEARCH AND THAT'S PART OF WHAT MAKES IT COOL.

To teens, Google means having all the information you could ever need at your fingertips, which is remarkable. Teens also think Google is cool because it is popular (search engine), innovative (self driving cars, glass), creative (Google Doodles and easter eggs) and has good values.

"Google is really cool because it is an innovator. A trend setter. Google is not only a powerful search engine, but great at everything it does, from email to documents. Google products are easy to use and work well. As a company, Google also stands for education and creativity, shown by the science fairs and doodles contests they host."

- Female, 17, FL, Suburban

YOUTUBE

YouTube is cool because of its variety and breadth of videos. From DIY to makeup tutorials to news, YouTube keeps Gen Z connected and in the know. The price is right too!

NETFLIX

#netflixandchill is how teens...um, 'connect.'
Netflix is cool because it is well used, well loved, well priced and well stocked.

OREO

Teens go crazy for Oreos! Oreos are cool because of the variety of delicious flavors and the cute/funny marketing.

CHROME

Finding information quickly is important to busy Gen Z. They think Chrome is cool because it's fast, reliable and easy to use.



WRAP UP

Gen Z never knew the world before the internet - before everything you could ever need was one click away. They never knew the world before terrorism or global warming. As a result, Gen Z is the most informed, evolved, and empathetic generation of its kind. They value information, stimulation, and connection, evident by their affinity for YouTube, Google, and Netflix.

They also have high hopes for the brands they choose. From Nike to X-Box, they expect big things. As professionals, we should see this as our challenge—to live up to the standard Gen Z has set for us and to continue to inform, inspire, and create products and marketing that facilitate the world in which they want to live.

THOUGHT STARTERS

LET'S NOT STOP HERE! Ask yourself:

1. What surprised you and why?
2. What are you dying to know more about?
3. Are there any ways you can use this information to evolve your current work efforts?
4. What did we miss? Are there any categories you would have included?
5. Look back to the coolness graph—was anything surprising?

WANT TO CHAT? CONTACT US AT: COOLBOOK@GOOGLE.COM



METHODOLOGY

WE COMMISSIONED 3 RESEARCH STUDIES IN THE UNITED STATES TO GATHER THE DATA FOR THIS MAGAZINE.

YouGov administered a study using its web-based PollingPoint panel to a nationally representative sample of 400 teens ages 13 to 17 and 800 millennials ages 18-25 from May 25 to May 31, 2016. This primarily quantitative data was used for most of our brand insights and comparisons between teens and millennials.

YouGov administered a second study using the same web-based PollingPoint panel to a nationally representative sample of 1100 teens ages 13 to 17 from June 30, to July 11, 2016. This survey provided more detailed information around teens attitudes towards the specific brands we discussed in this magazine.

Gutcheck administered a qualitative survey via an online Instant Research Group (IRG) where 67 teens ages 13 to 17 answered open-ended questions and follow-ups posted by a trained moderator from June 27 to July 1, 2016. This research provided many of the insights for the activities teens think are cool and most of the teen quotations used throughout the publication.

FOOTNOTES

1. ["Meet Generation Z." CBS News.](#)
2. [Williams, Alex. "Move Over, Millennials, Here Comes Generation Z." The New York Times. September 2015.](#)
3. [Oster, Erik. "This Gen Z Infographic Can Help Marketers Get Wise to the Future Here come the social natives." AdWeek. August 2014.](#)
4. [Lane, Sylvan. "Beyond Millennials: How to Reach Generation Z." Mashable. August 2014.](#)
5. [Heller, Laura. "Move over Millennials, Generation Z Is In Charge." Forbes. August 2015.](#)
6. [Sundee Vikraman, M.D., M.P.H. "Caloric Intake From Fast Food Among Children and Adolescents in the United States, 2011-2012." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. September 2015.](#)

