

So Many Tools, So Many Options Teens Are Bored of Choosing



Source - "East of Eden", Warner Bros.

"It's the worst thing in the world. Don't ask me - even if you could - how I know that. I just know it." – **Abra, "East of Eden", Warner Bros., 1955**

The lazy days of summer are gone and I'm kinda glad.

For some reason I had a new job assignment this year... fill our kids' hours.

I grew up on a farm (something I'm happy is behind me) and being bored was never an option.

Dad always had something we could do; but fortunately, I was able to be too busy.

Not our kids; and they don't even have to dodge work. They're too busy being bored.

And for some weird reason, they aren't unique; according to a recent MTV study.

They found:

- 97 percent of the 12-24 year-olds were bored, 2/3 weekly, 1/4 daily
- Owned six connected devices – computer, tablet, smartphone, game system, etc.
- Access to a world of content, social media may be fueling boredom, rather than solving it
- Mindless browsing was more boring than school (39 percent), work (33 percent)

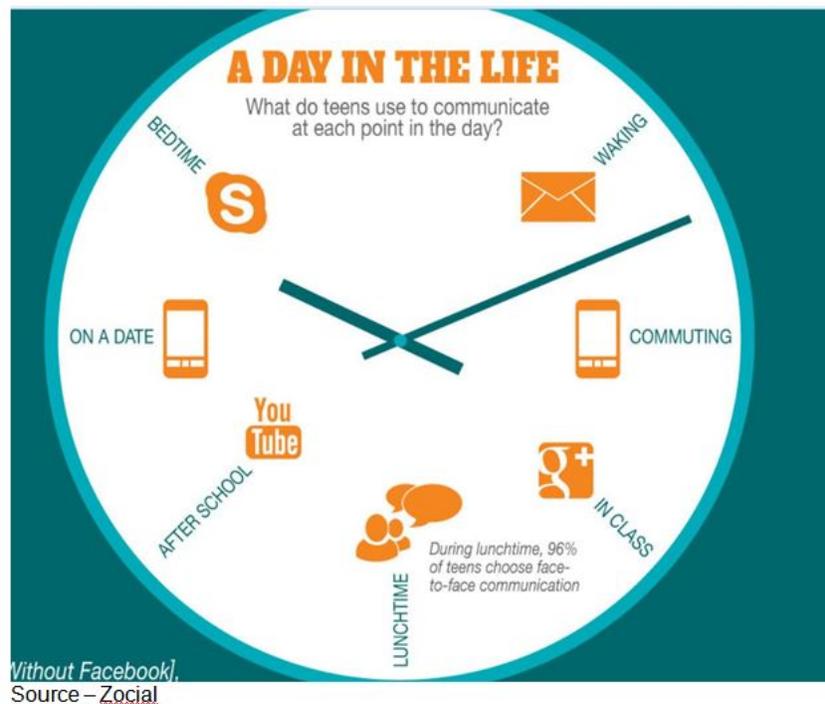
Isn't that something like banging your head against a wall?

If it hurts ... don't do it!

We offered to have the kids go to summer school – *no freakin' way!*

We offered to help them find summer jobs – *duuhh!*

MTV suggested that technology has actually raised their expectations – getting what you want, where you want, when you want.



***Not Enough Hours** – Mobile devices, the Internet and social media have always just been there for today's Gen Zers. Thinking twice about being online and connecting is just something that is done, even without thinking today.*

These digital/social natives don't know of a time before devices and access was available. As Ofcom pointed out, they were three- to nine-years-old when Facebook first appeared on the scene.

They were born into it!

Some blame the new services and new devices because they are on/connected (8 hrs, 41 minutes) more than they sleep (8 hrs, 21 minutes).

Researchers suggest that the up-and-comers minds are rewired to handle the volume of stuff they view and have to deal with.



Source – [Gamesphere](#)

Rewiring – *With information coming at them from every source, every direction; today’s teens’ brains are wired different from the rest of us, according to some researchers. True, they have a relatively short attention span; but they’re able to move instantly from one device to another, one subject to another and often work in both areas simultaneously. Multi-tasking is just a learned trait.*

They note that the so-called 5th lobe is responsible for empathy, self-awareness and norm violations; and that neurons are sending messages to other parts of the brain in a constantly changing fashion.

That’s probably why they are better at multi-tasking on different devices than “older folks.”

Ofcom found most of us squeeze 11 hours of media/communications into our day, which is two hours more than their last study in 2010.

But Gen Zers can cram over 14 hours of that activity into nine hours and eight minutes every day.

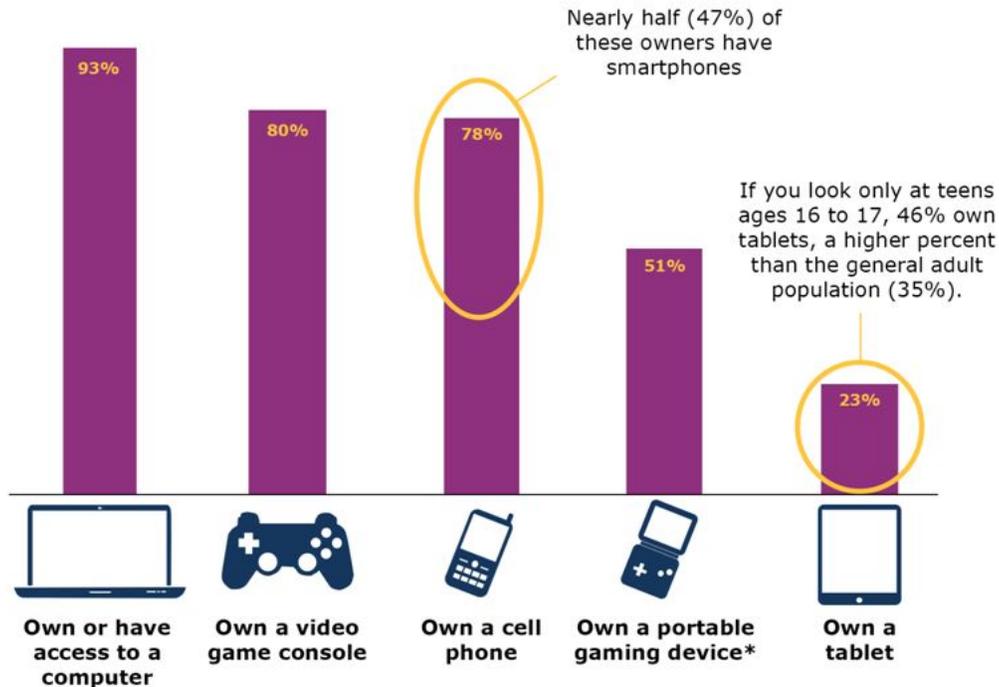
Device Arsenal

Older generations relied on their desktop/notebook computers and desk/wall phones for their communications/contact.

But today’s teens are really into the ease of use and portability of tablets (which for over half has become their primary computing device) and smartphones.

Young adults are glued to their devices for 3 hours and 36 minutes each day--nearly three times the 1 hour and 22-minute average across all adults.

Media Device Ownership among 12 to 17 Year-Olds



Source – hhs.gov

Multi-Talented – Despite the fact that they have an average of six devices, teens often say they are bored. Cruising multiple sites on multiple devices isn't the solution for them when they are over-informed, over-stimulated.

You can blame (or credit) that content growth on today's do-everything, be-everything smartphone. Nearly three-quarters of teens have or have available a smartphone and 30 percent have a basic cellphone.

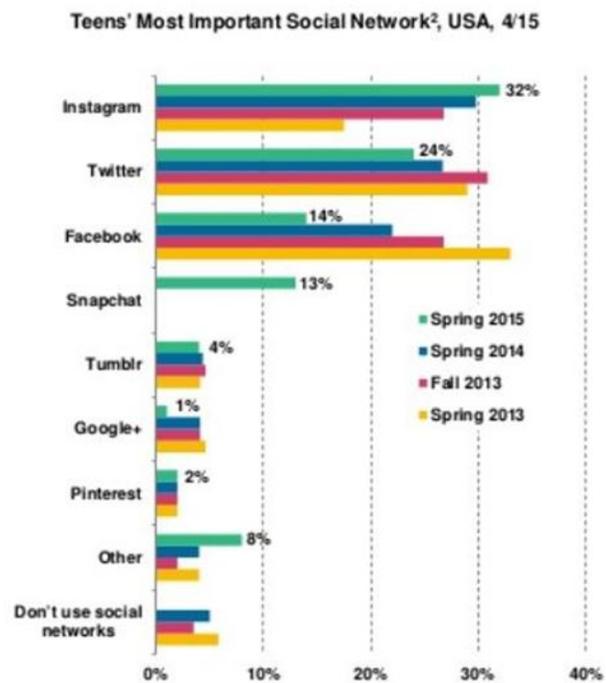
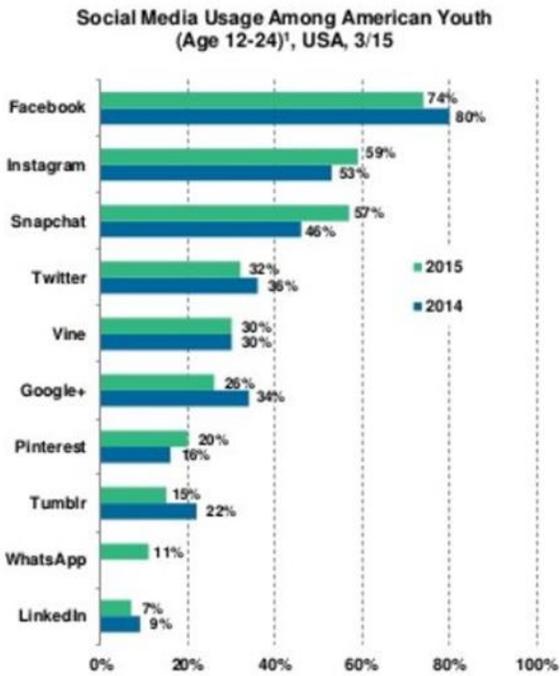
Ten percent of the teens have no cellphone of any type.

Talk about deprived!

For the teens, the smartphone has become their primary connection to the Internet and "their world."

Ninety-four percent go on daily or more often to text or use messaging apps. Ninety percent exchange texts and typically send/receive 30 texts a day, while 73 percent use apps like Kik or Whats App.

When they aren't chatting, they're on social media and although there has been a slight shift in usage, it's not going away any time soon.



Source – KPCB

Multiple Sources – Teens don't have one online site where they hang out; they have three, four and more. There's a different site, different service they use if they're having fun, sharing information, being serious or researching.

And when they aren't on Facebook, they're probably on Instagram or Snapchat, which Facebook owns, so does Zuck really care about a little dip? ... Nope.

As a matter of fact, they like variety in their lives, so most (71 percent) use more than one place to land.

Teenage girls use social media sites and platforms to share information (61 percent vs. 44 percent for males). Boys are more likely to be into games (84 percent vs. 59 percent of girls).

But because of their increased concern about security and privacy, more than two in five (42 percent) say they're sharing less online than they did just a few years ago.

Still, they seem to share a helluva' lot more than I do.

Types of Content Shared on Social Media by US Teen and Young Adult Internet Users, by Demographic,

% of respondents in each group

	Gender		Age		Total
	Female	Male	13-17	18-22	
Pictures of myself	65%	55%	59%	61%	60%
Pictures of friends and/or family	64%	43%	52%	54%	53%
Information about what I am doing	55%	46%	51%	49%	50%
Information about school and/or work	51%	37%	41%	47%	44%
Messages of love and support	45%	27%	32%	40%	36%
Information about vacations	31%	24%	27%	28%	27%
Videos of friends and/or family	28%	21%	24%	24%	24%
Rants when I'm upset about something	28%	20%	20%	28%	24%
Videos of myself and/or the things I am doing	22%	19%	23%	18%	20%
Information about my love life or significant other	25%	13%	12%	26%	19%
Angry messages to people	9%	11%	9%	11%	10%
Other	16%	17%	19%	14%	16%
None of these	12%	18%	17%	14%	15%

Source – Camp Mobile

***Sharing** – While teens are concerned about security and privacy, they still freely exchange information on what they're doing, where they're doing it, how they're doing it – usually in a visual fashion. They are also very likely to strike out at others online.*

Photos (selfies, I suppose) still top the list on the stuff they like to share but they are also willing to share personal information, good news, angry messages and rants.

Since they're constantly connected and online, the good news – for marketers – is that they're constantly shopping, according to The Intelligence Group.

The bad news is they focus on items, not brands.

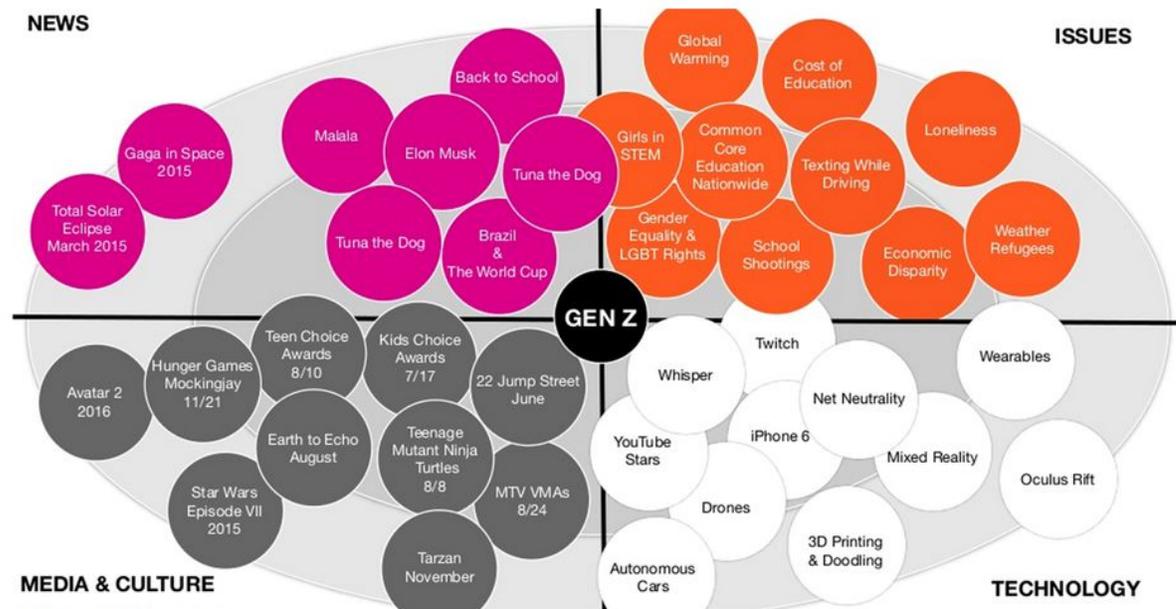
Just as they move smoothly from device to device and platform to platform, they also move from brand to brand to find the best possible price.

They're buying pretty consistently, but very selectively; so there goes brand loyalty.

In addition, Ipsos Media found that 60 percent share their knowledge/information with others.

For most, sharing news/information is less about feeling good about themselves or showing that they are smarter but that doing it is to entertain, have fun and learn new things.

The two billion teens worldwide represent the next generation of consumer and already have \$44B plus to spend. And their influence/areas of interest are growing.



Source – [BusinessInsider](#)

***Don't Miss Out** – Gen Zers multitask over multiple screens, multiple sites because they don't want to miss out on anything. Being culturally connected is vital to them, according to a report by Sparks & Honey.*

GenZers have strong influence on packaged/fast foods and technology brands – iPhone/iPad, Subway, Doritos, Mountain Dew, Pizza Hut. Interestingly low on their “influence” list are eco-friendly products and wholesome foods or beverages.

Getting through the digital clutter – Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter – isn't easy.

Niche and Communispace have suggested that to reach teens, organizations have greater success if they show the kids their relatable/human side and put the brand more in the background.

Believe it or not, today's kids are more serious, more careful than millennials; and wanting to know what they're doing will make a difference--at least in a small way.

That means showing you care about the same issues they care about, as Coke did during the Super Bowl with their anti-bullying commercials (very positive feedback, results).

Remember, teens were born on the Internet/social media so they're darn good at collecting, sharing and remixing online information.

True, they're distracted, over stimulated and overscheduled so I have a tough time seeing how they can be so damn bored.

It sure isn't the caffeine.

Maybe it's because they have too much access to everything, everywhere; and their expectations are just more than we can deliver.

Just remember, they have available to them a horrendous amount of information and that they're very good at binge-watching, searching, finding stuff ... all at the same time.

If brands can't be creative, relevant and fun, Gen Zers will simply tune them out.

Maybe we are the cause of their boredom?



Source - ["East of Eden"](#), Warner Bros.

As Abra said, *"It makes you mean, and violent, and cruel. All his life! Maybe you didn't mean it that way - but it's true... You never asked for his. You never asked him for one thing."*

###