



They're Heeeeere! The Great Millennial Takeover You Were Warned About

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There has been so much press about the ubiquitous Millennial that even Millennials are sick of hearing about their generation, born between the early 1980's and late 1990's. Once known as Generation Y, Millennials, just like Gen Xers, Baby Boomers, and probably other generations before them, have had labels slapped onto their collective foreheads and been called the "me" generation and [been blamed for the downfall of society](#). 2016 is where it all changes, however, as Millennials have [officially become the largest generation](#).

With their numbers comes great consumer spending power. There is no denying Millennials will have a big impact on many aspects of society, but one interesting facet for us at Alliance Data is their impact as consumers. Here are 4 ways Millennials are already impacting retailers:

1. Digital or Bust

Check books? Don't even think about it. For Millennials, it's all about the digital focus. The majority of Millennials rely on mobile payments and plastic to pay for things, and rarely have, or pay using, cash or checks. Millennials will determine whether Apple Pay, Samsung Pay and other mobile payments will succeed, and retailers who figure out how to attract these digitally savvy shoppers whether they are online, near their stores, or already in their aisles will have the best chance to earn a piece of their digital wallets.

2. No Help Needed (Unless They Want It)

Self-service kiosks/checkouts and shopping directly from a phone or tablet are the preferred shopping method of many Millennials who don't want to interact with a cashier. Yet they still want to visit the store: Deloitte recently found that 82% of Millennials still prefer visiting brick-and-mortar stores, with online sales contributing only 10% of retailers' bottom lines. The in-store experience is one powerful method to grab Millennials to bring them out of their phones and into a physical store. Millennials have shown they are [more likely to book an appointment before shopping](#), more than any other age group, as they like speaking with a knowledgeable retail employee when making shopping decisions. The slow growth of online shopping will continue, but brick-and-mortar won't disappear any time soon, and retailers who provide in-store experiences will have a definite advantage to attract Millennials.

3. Clear the Clutter

The fastest way to lose a Millennial is with an e-commerce site or app that creates frustration. Millennials just don't have time for that. Retailers need to offer clear, uncluttered, short and, most importantly, a fast purchasing process, to please them. Additionally, [they expect pricing and promotions to be the same online as they are in-store](#). Many times, millennials will want an online or mobile-scanned coupon to also be available in the store, making clear, easy-to-read websites and apps even more valuable to retailers.

4. Long Live the Activewear. Goodbye Logos.

The past couple of years have seen many retailers scrambling to add activewear lines to their stores, to capture [Millennial consumers who prefer yoga pants over jeans](#). But the impact of Millennials on fashion doesn't end there. A huge number of [Millennials don't like logos](#), and brands previously famous for their logoed products, including Abercrombie & Fitch, Coach and Michael Kors are launching lines with discreet logos and changing directions with new lines to counter slowdowns in sales.

The impact of the Millennial generation is only beginning. For retailers, predicting how to capture the attention of the young and the fickle has been a concern and top priority with the arrival of every new generation. Some retailers will tap into the knowledge they have about their customer base to ensure that they stay connected to them, no matter where they are. The fight for the Millennial will be a battle that takes place in the digital and physical realm, often at the same time. The Millennials are here. Buckle up, it's about to get **very** interesting.