



## Gen Z Market, Themes & Messages

### The Gen Z Market

- Gen Z is the most racially and ethnically diverse generation yet, more than 50% diverse, and they also support diversity in terms of gender and sexuality.
  - Some of the causes they tend to care about include diversity, equity, and inclusion; LGBTQ+ rights; the environment; mental health & gender equality.
- Gen Z have always had the **internet** as part of their lives, and, as a result of this, they are extremely tech savvy.
  - 94% own laptops, and 75% said spending time online was the primary activity they engage in during their free time, with smartphones as their device of choice. 75% say they receive most information on social media.
- Authenticity and social impact in a brand matters. Gen Z tends to be **brand loyal** as long as the brand's mission, product quality, and service continue to meet their high expectations.
  - 60% of Gen Z said they are happy to be associated with their favorite brand. In order to earn this loyalty, brands must show that they have strong tech and market to Generation Z with clear, honest messaging.

### Theme #1: Air Force Value Proposition

- The Air Force is not a traditional 9-5 job where you're expected to keep your head down, stay quiet, and complete the tasks you're given. We value open, transparent communication throughout all levels of our organization, people who want to understand their "why" and sense of purpose, and Airmen who aren't afraid to express their opinions and ideas.
- The opportunity we offer to our members is unmatched – a deep sense of purpose working alongside a team, a tight-knit community where you feel part of something bigger than yourself, unmatched opportunities to learn and grow, and full benefits.
  - Opportunities to learn and grow include leadership and career training, college benefits, travel, and unlimited potential to advance within the organization.
  - We need out-of-the-box thinkers who can find new ways to problem-solve and streamline the way we do business.
  - We also have benefits to ensure quality of life and help manage work-life balance, including 30 days of leave each year and healthcare.
  - The Air Force values innovation speed, teamwork, competition, and technology.
- There are many misconceptions about what serving in the military looks like:
  - Misconception: most jobs in the military are combat-related.
    - The Air Force is focused on projecting airpower anytime, anywhere.
    - The majority of jobs we offer are similar to those you find in any U.S. city and span almost every career field imaginable: medicine, photojournalism, lawyers, engineers, cyber, and more.
    - Every Airman, regardless of career field, has a direct role in delivering, supporting, launching and driving airpower.
  - Misconception: The Air Force life doesn't allow for work-life balance
    - Many military jobs mirror typical civilian job working hours.
    - We offer 30 days of paid vacation vs. the 10-14 days offered in the civilian sector.
    - 12 weeks of paid parental leave for both the birthing and non-birthing parent.
  - Misconception: The Air Force doesn't have many benefits.
    - Joining the Air Force offers many opportunities to learn and grow.
    - Tuition assistance, training certificates, retirement benefits, and complete health care coverage.



## Themes & Messages

### Theme #2: We Need Generation Z

- Gen Z doesn't just fit into the Air Force and our mission/culture; we need them to be successful.
- This generation is passionate and driven - tapping into those attributes and applying them is critical to successful completion of our mission.
  - Understanding "Why?"
    - Our Airmen need to understand what their piece in the puzzle is. Gen Z is amazing at asking the question "why." Not to question authority, but to understand the big picture and intent for moving forward. If you understand intent, you can execute without asking permission.
  - Technology
    - Gen Z has been using technology their whole lives, and we need their different perspectives on our technological capabilities and how to take these efforts even further.
    - They will help us leverage technology to its full potential to keep us ahead of our strategic competitors.
    - Their digital literacy is an essential skill to separating facts from misinformation/disinformation.
  - Global Perspective
    - Global discovery is within reach - join and see the world on the Air Force's dime!
      - Airmen and dependents can travel for vacation using military 'Space-Available' flights to/from destinations around the world.
    - Gen Z's learned perspectives, both in-person and virtually, spanning different cultures on important issues, is and will continue to be vital to the Air Force accomplishing its mission.
    - Successful problem-solving relies on out-of-the box thinking from people of myriad backgrounds; they will learn to see problems through a different lens through the access and experiences they can have as they learn different ways of thinking around the world.

### Theme #3: Air Force Brand Recognition



- Gen Z is patriotic in different ways than the generations before them.
- Today's young person is not necessarily interested in a 20-year career anywhere, much less the military.
  - Thrift Savings Plan offers a 401-K like retirement benefit they can take with them when they separate.
- This generation wants to work with an organization and people whose values are compatible with theirs, giving them a sense of purpose.
  - The AF Core Values of Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do are ingrained in our culture and every thing we do.
- This generation deeply cares about others and strives for a diverse community while desiring a highly collaborative work environment.
  - The service continues to introduce efforts to increase diversity and inclusion across the Air Force.
- Gen Z is also defined by individuality, which can contradict the perceived 'military' image.
  - Recently revised policies include those designed to allow more individuality (ex: head and neck tattoo policy).