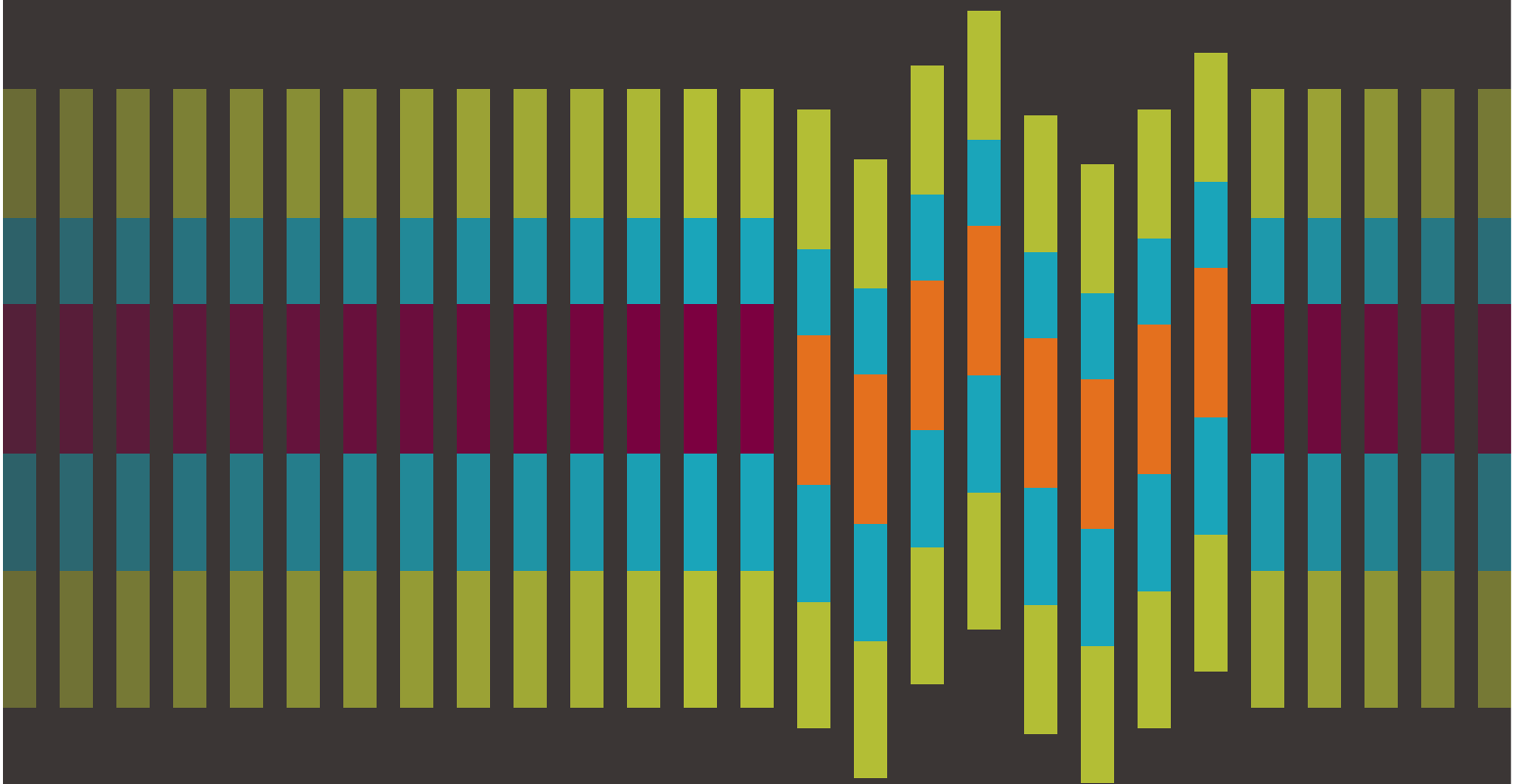




#whatthekidsareupto

What's trending for Millennials





At Shikatani Lacroix, we design compelling purchase moments that connect with consumers in the blink of an eye. Our philosophy and strategic design approach, the Blink Factor, is driven by a consumer's motivation to make a purchase decision. Everything we do is geared to owning the "at-purchase" moment. Our firm has a well-earned reputation for designing integrated branded experiences that effectively connect brands with consumers to drive measurable results for clients. We extend the branded experience through a consistent and coherent approach to omni-channel communication design.

About the Author

Lori Smale, Project Manager at Shikatani Lacroix



As project manager at Shikatani Lacroix, Lori works with packaging and retail brands such as PepsiCo Beverages Canada and Glentel Inc. A graduate of Retail Management at Ryerson University, Lori joined Shikatani Lacroix in 2011 as an intern and has grown with the accounts team ever since.

Lori works closely with the studio and clients to ensure all needs are met, while encouraging design and creative to go above and beyond expectations.

What's trending for Millennials

What is popular with the kids these days? Let me try and help you out. Of course, by the time you read this something else new and exciting has come along. Since their world moves so fast it appears the latest trends are obsolete by the time I finish writing this sentence.



As a millennial, born in 1990, I have first hand knowledge of what's trending with today's youth. I grew up on the internet. I had my first cell phone in middle school, and I check my social media sites more frequently than my email. I understand where the kids are coming from because, as much as I don't want to admit it out loud, I'm still one of those kids.

After shifting through the current trends of my generation, four over-arching themes emerged: self-expression, new media, the share economy, and the socially conscious consumer.

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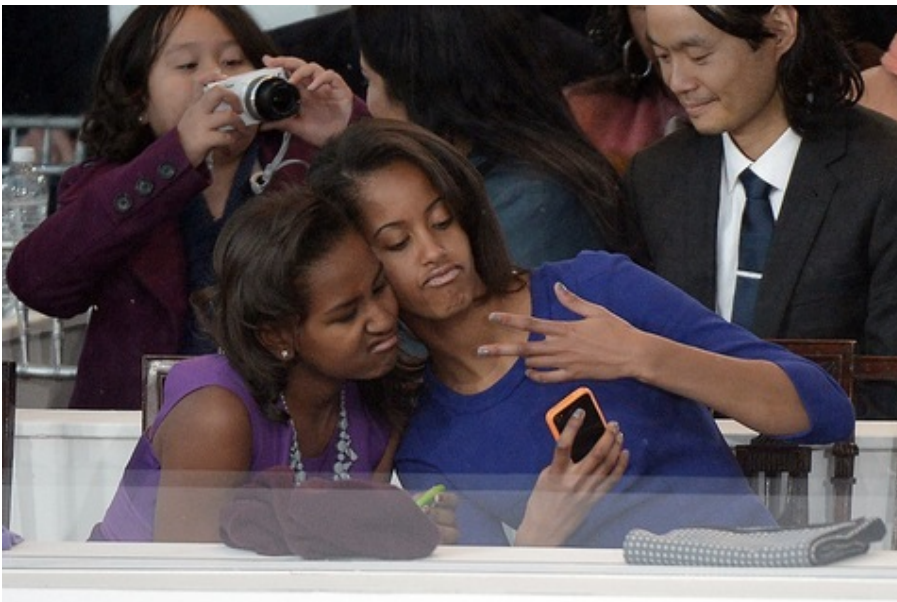
Self expression

The selfie cannot be stopped. It is the concept of taking a photo of oneself and presumably posting it on some sort of social media page. The word “selfie” has even become *Oxford Dictionary’s* Word of the Year in 2013. Who do we have to thank? Instagram.

Originally an app for the iPhone, the social media tool was created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger and launched on October 6, 2010. It allows users to post photos (including selfies) and gives the user the ability to add various filters to the images to allow for more creative input.

Instagram has exploded over the last couple years. As of last June, approximately 40 million photos were being uploaded each day, and that number has certainly increased

since then. It reached one million registered users by December 2010, roughly three months after its launch. In comparison, it took Foursquare one year and Twitter two years to reach that same goal. By September 2012, Instagram had over 100 million users. In fact, Instagram gains one new user ever second. In October 2012, Facebook acquired Instagram and its staff of nine for one billion dollars.



Now Instagram is not the only company to blame for the explosion of selfies. There are other culprits out there. Cases in point: Vine and Snapchat. Owned by Twitter, Vine is a video-sharing app that shares looping user videos that are six seconds or less. This app had 40 million registered users within seven months of its launch. Well known brands have jumped on the Vine bandwagon, including GE, McDonalds, Urban Outfitters, and Lowes.

Snapchat, another photo sharing application, allows users to send photos and videos to their friends, however its differentiator is that the app immediately deletes the photo or video once the recipient opens it. Seen as a safe way to send racy shots, this app might evoke great fear amongst parents but certainly not the kids. With over 50 million snaps sent per day and almost one billion sent to date, Snapchat is prepped to take the selfie to a new level...at least for the few seconds we are able to see it.

New media

Media are changing. The traditional forms of media, such as newspapers, television, and movies, are now competing with up and coming forms of information sharing. I don't have one friend who doesn't know how to watch their favourite TV show online for free and without commercials. Everyone downloads free movies and music and gets their news online through Twitter, Reddit or blogs. Companies have to evolve or risk becoming the next Blockbuster.

A great example of a company that is embracing new media is Netflix. Established in 2007, Netflix began as a subscription-based digital distribution company. It grew to more than 50 million subscribers worldwide by 2011. Netflix has had moments of highs and lows over its last six years in business, including an 88% fall in third-quarter profits in 2012. However, 2013 proved to be the year of change. Netflix began offering original programming to subscribers including the House of Cards, Orange is the New Black, and the fourth season of Arrested Development. Netflix knows how Millennials watch TV - we are time conscious and cannot be scheduled.



The share economy

Entrepreneurs rejoice! The business world is changing and there are many new and exciting ways to earn a few dollars, including renting out your couch to strangers. Let's delve deeper into some of the more popular concepts. Have you heard of Kickstarter and Indigogo? What about Airbnb? All these sites have one thing in common: they allow anyone to try and make some money.



Kickstarter and Indigogo are crowd-funding websites. Individuals or groups post photos, videos and descriptions of their projects, which range from music and arts projects to technology and environmental initiatives, to encourage pledgers to donate funds. It's a way for

these projects to be run independently rather than relying on corporate sponsorship or funding. What varies between Indiegogo and Kickstarter is their approach to funding. Kickstarter believes in an all-or-nothing approach; if the campaign does not reach its goal then the money is returned to the backers. Indiegogo has two fundraising options: one similar to Kickstarter's all-or-nothing approach and the other allows you to keep the funds raised but Indiegogo takes a percentage.

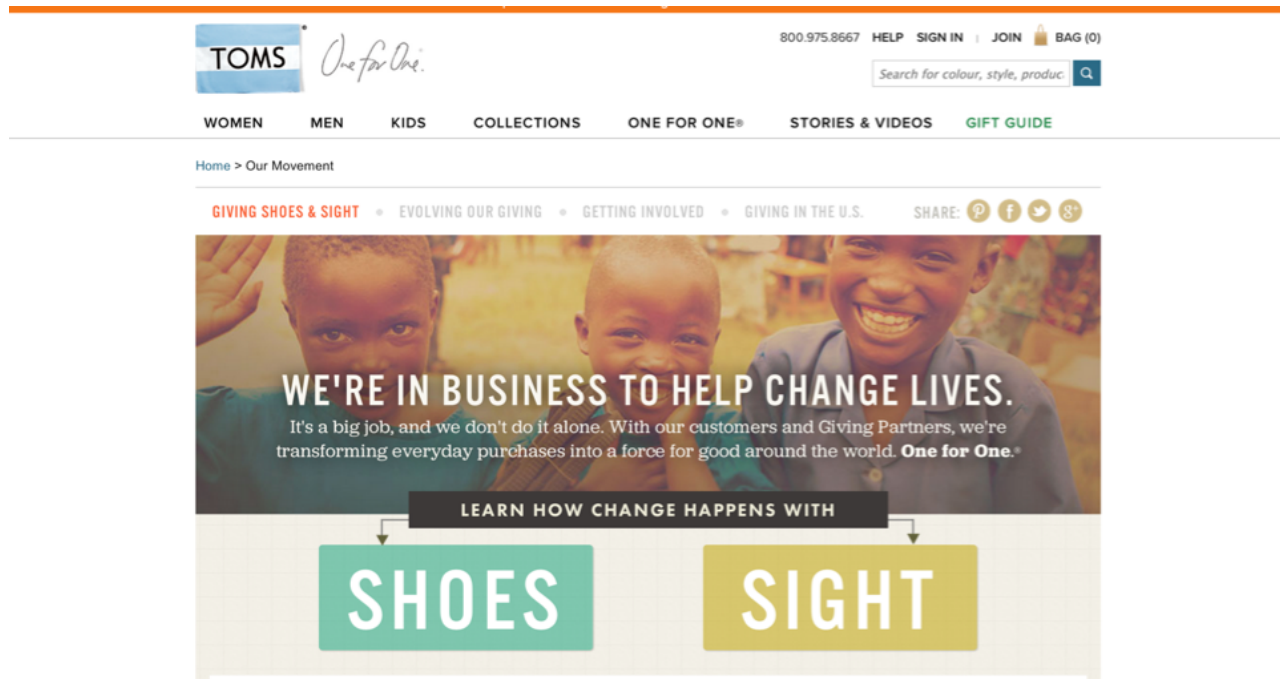
Notable campaigns funded on these sites include FORM 1, the world's first affordable, professional 3-D printer, Pebble e-paper watch for iPhone and Android, The Veronica Mars Movie project, and Canary, the first smart home security device.

For those of you who would rather make money in the hospitality sector, consider Airbnb. It's a website that connects travellers with unconventional accommodations. Rather than staying in a hotel, travellers can book rooms, apartments, houses, or castles from the owner. It is free to sign up and list your booking. Airbnb takes 3% of the profits once the proprietor has a successful booking and 6-12% fee from the traveller depending on the cost of the booking. By June 2012, over 10 million nights had been booked, with a night booked every two seconds. Travellers and hosts come from all over the world; the United States being the largest market, followed by Spain and Brazil.



The socially conscious consumer

Time is valuable. Everyone, not just youth, are struggling to balance work, home, and their social life. Giving back can be a challenge when faced with such a packed schedule. What is trending these days is giving back as a consumer. While Millennials have responded well to this trend, it is more universal than age specific. Here are three socially conscious companies that Millennials can't get enough of.



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LEARN HOW CHANGE HAPPENS WITH

SHOES **SIGHT**

Toms Shoes is probably the best-known socially conscious brand. Known for its one for one campaign, Toms donates one pair of shoes to an impoverished child for every pair of shoes purchased by a consumer. In addition, for every pair of Toms sunglasses sold, it provides the equivalent of eyesight for one person, through glasses, surgery or medical treatments. Toms has received its fair share of criticism, as does most charitable campaigns. However, that has not stopped people from purchasing its products. Toms Shoes has given over 10 million pairs of new shoes to children in need since 2006.

Warby Parker is a boutique U.S. eyewear brand that follows a similar business plan as Toms Shoes. For every pair of glasses sold, a pair is distributed to someone in need. Warby Parker believes in the importance of sight and knows the need is out there for affordable prescription glasses. Warby Parker has supplied over 500,000 glasses to those in need since its inception.

Method is a company that manufactures and sells a variety of household cleaning products. Method's philosophy is to produce clean, safe, environmentally friendly products that are beautifully designed. Its products are safe for the planet and safe for consumers. Method became a founding B corporation, which is a standard for businesses to produce the highest quality jobs and improve the quality of life for people in their community. The company prides itself on its high level of corporate social responsibility and markets those practices to consumers.

Millennials understand the importance of giving back. They support companies and brands that are willing to take an extra step to help out the world around them. This trend of social consumerism has encouraged more companies to get on board so that today it is more of a norm than an anomaly.

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For more information, contact:

Jean-Pierre Lacroix, President

Shikatani Lacroix

387 Richmond Street East

Toronto, Ontario

M5A 1P6

Telephone: 416-367-1999

Email: jplacroix@sld.com