

UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS AND DREAMS OF TOMORROW'S BEAUTY PRODUCTS CUSTOMER

Our insights help L'Oréal in Mexico to craft better marcomms strategies for the millennial generation.

The client

The world leader in beauty, L'Oréal is present in 130 countries on five continents. The beauty company's mission is to provide the best in cosmetics innovation to women and men around the world, with respect for their diversity.

Situation

A quarter of Mexico's population was born between 1981 and 1995. By 2025, this millennial generation will account for 75% of the country's working population. Yet these young people are mistrustful of brand marketing. And many Mexican companies have yet to master the art of attracting and retaining them as customers.

Recognizing that they are the consumers of the future, L'Oréal wanted to learn more about millennials' attitudes, beliefs, aspirations and behavior. It needed to understand how its communications and marketing strategies would need to evolve to meet the expectations of these digital natives.

The beauty company wanted this knowledge to be presented in a striking way that would give employees across every department a deep, vivid understanding of the world of the youth.

Approach

In a five-stage research program, we targeted Mexicans aged between 18 and 25 years who are currently studying or both studying and working.

To immerse ourselves in millennials' lives and meet them on their own terms, we made heavy use of digital tools and technologies for our research. We interacted with 72 respondents on the client's Facebook page to get a flavor of their



interests, likes and concerns. In addition, we asked 16 millennials to write blog posts about health and beauty topics.

To find out more about the generation, their values and their views on family and work, we hosted six focus groups with eight participants, as well as eight immersions. A psychologist facilitated the focus groups, while an anthropologist observed from behind a one-way mirror, giving us expert insight into the participants' words and behavior. We held our immersions in a digital media office, a house, at a concert, a park, a university, a football field and at a party. This gave us a diverse, textured perspective on how the target audience navigates different settings, as well as an understanding of millennials with different interests and from varying backgrounds.

Finally, we did an extensive desktop review of existing research about millennials in Mexico and the rest of the world. This allowed us to compare the similarities and differences between young Mexicans and youth in other countries.

We concluded the project by holding a “happening”, where we shared the results with the client’s teams. This was not a traditional corporate workshop, but an engaging and interactive event. It painted a colorful portrait of young Mexico that remained in the audience’s mind. For example, we displayed music videos, interviews with the millennials, and beauty and fashion concepts on large screens in the venue.

The audience could browse wall displays about millennials in Mexico and the rest of the world, and even play with a meme* generator on an iPad. The event concluded with a catwalk parade of models representing different millennial nationalities, bringing the new generation of consumer to life for the audience.

Outcome

Our research left L’Oréal with deep insights on a customer base that is rapidly growing in size and importance. Tangible deliverables from the project included a set of practical and easy-to-digest videos about the millennial generation. These encompassed a 25-minute overview of the important concepts, as well as shorter clips on brand evolution in communication, fashion and beauty, music and memes*. We also created a comic that our client’s employees can consult for insight into the customer base.

The “happening” left L’Oréal’s teams with an enriched understanding of the millennial generation that help them craft better strategies for this market segment.

Some of the insights we shared included the following:

- The generation values straight talk and is deeply skeptical about boastful, product-centric marketing. They are more interested in the experience of the product and how it fits their lifestyle than its features and benefits.

*[An image, video, piece of text, etc., typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by Internet users, often with slight variations.]



Marketing has to be person-centric for a generation that doesn’t believe in over-sold miracle products.

- Young Mexicans don’t blindly follow celebrity endorsements because they know nobody is perfect. They accept their bodies as they are, and they want to create their own personal style. However, millennials respect social media personalities – such as beauty and personal care video bloggers – as they have grown up in the digital era and feel closer to digital personalities.
- Communication needs to be quick and direct to address an audience with a roving attention span. It should leverage social channels such as Twitter, Vine and Instagram.
- Millennials look for the human touch. They favor brands that have a well-defined personality.
- They look to brands to be socially and environmentally responsible, and see them as vehicles for doing good in the world.

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