

THE NEW

(MICRO) LEISURE

REDEFINING DOWNTIME IN A CONNECTED WORLD

MRY

June '15

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A white dog is lying down on a grey surface. A smartphone is placed on its ear, with the screen facing the dog. The dog's head is on the right side of the frame, and its body extends towards the left. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

INTRO DUCTION

FOR DECADES, MARKETERS HAVE FOUGHT TO OWN LEISURE TIME - THAT CELEBRATED CONSUMER MINDSET, BEHAVIOR, AND TIME OF DAY RESERVED FOR RELAXATION AND ENJOYMENT. BUT LEISURE AS WE KNOW IT IS RAPIDLY CHANGING, THREATENED BY OUR DAILY ONSLAUGHT OF TEXTS, EMAILS AND PUSH NOTIFICATIONS.

This report considers the notion that our constant connectivity warrants a redefinition of leisure time.

We first explore a surprising generational divide that exists between Millennials and their Gen-X counterparts.

While the younger group grapples with the push and pull of technology, the older cohort is better able to rise above it. We discover a millennial relationship with connectivity that is fraught with contradictions, a love/hate relationship we call **The Leisure Paradox**. The result is an end to the classic 9-to-5 as we know it, replaced by **The Millennial Grind**, a new blended reality of work and play.

Finally, we propose a new understanding of downtime: one that is rooted in bite-sized escapes and ephemeral relief. Welcome to the all new Micro-Leisure.

A black and white cat is lying on a white blanket, looking at a smartphone. The cat's head is on the left, and its body extends towards the right. The smartphone is held in its front paws, displaying a colorful game or application. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white surface.

METHOD OLOGY

THE BIG THREE

FIRST-PARTY RESEARCH

Online quantitative study run by Whitman Insight Strategies in December 2014; audience comprised of 820 full-time working smartphone owners aged 21-55.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

A series of discussion groups conducted through **MRY #YouThink**, MRY's proprietary millennial audience research panel.

LANDSCAPE AUDIT

Review of recent media and academic coverage on the topic of millennial leisure behaviors, in addition to audit of emerging technologies, startups and media solutions in this space.



PART I

THE GENERATIONAL DIVIDE

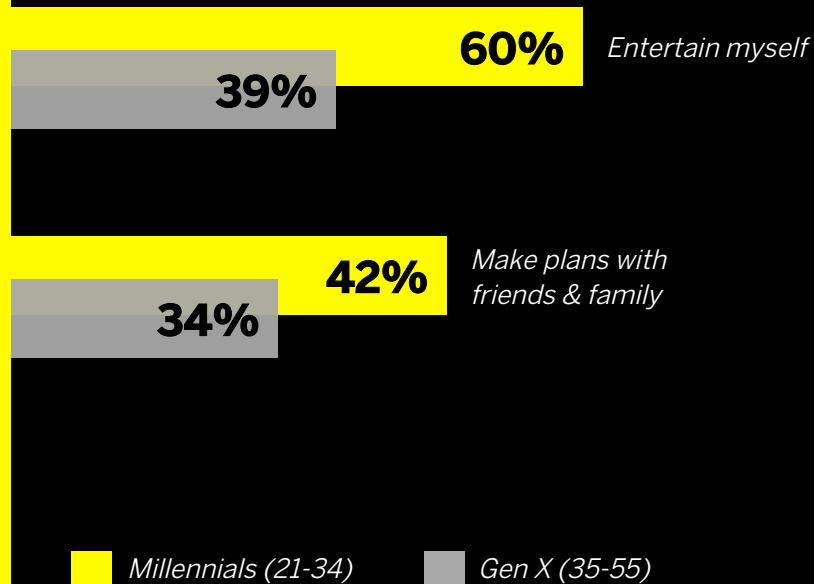
***THERE IS A CLEAR GENERATIONAL
DIFFERENCE IN HOW MILLENNIALS COPE
WITH OUR NEW CONSTANTLY CONNECTED
REALITY VERSUS GEN-XERS. AND IT'S NOT
WHAT YOU'D EXPECT.***

Millennials' constant state of distraction is causing nearly **half** of them to worry about spending too much time with their smartphones, compared with **32%** of Gen-Xers.

One would think these digital natives are better equipped to navigate our modern onslaught of swipes, beeps and buzzes, but the reality is quite the opposite. Their guilt and stress suggests a generational schism: a younger group grappling with the push and pull, and an older group better able to rise above it.

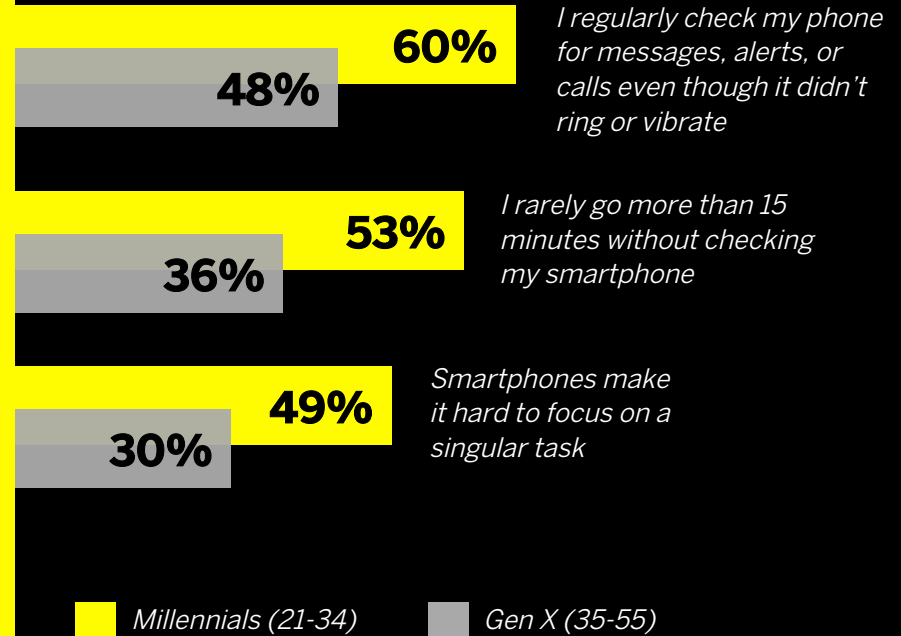
**MILLENNIALS
ARE MORE LIKELY
TO USE THEIR
SMARTPHONES FOR
ENTERTAINMENT
& SOCIALIZING
THAN THEIR GEN-X
COUNTERPARTS**

**MOST IMPORTANT THINGS YOU CAN
USE YOUR SMARTPHONE TO DO**



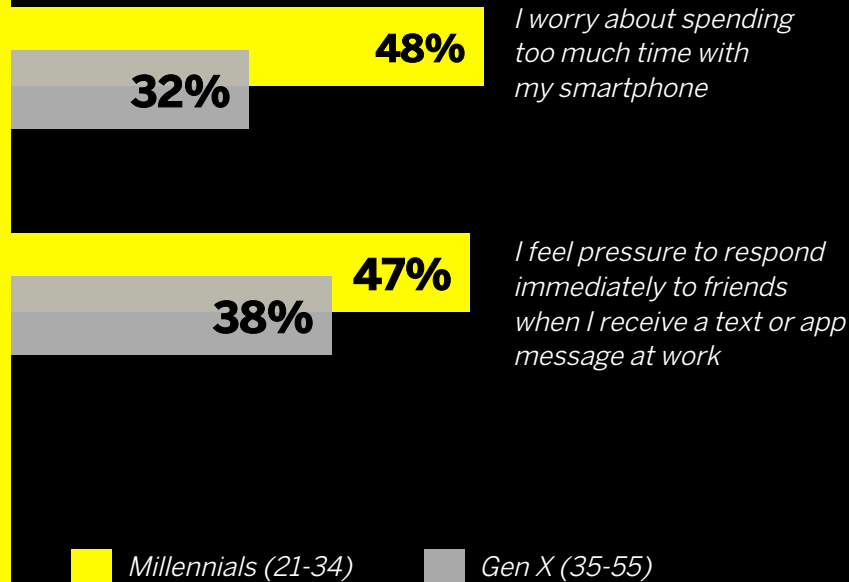
BUT THIS LEADS TO A STATE OF CONSTANT DISTRACTION. ONE THAT GEN-XERS ARE BETTER AT RESISTING.

SMARTPHONE-INDUCED DISTRACTIONS



**THE RESULT?
MILLENNIALS FEEL
GUILTY ABOUT
SPENDING TOO MUCH
TIME WITH THEIR
SMARTPHONES.**

SMARTPHONE-INDUCED STRESSORS



**DESPITE ALL OF
THESE STRESS-
FACTORS, THEY STILL
BELIEVE SMARTPHONES
ENHANCE THEIR
LEISURE TIME
OVERALL**

**IMPACT OF SMARTPHONES
ON LEISURE TIME**



Millennials (21-34)

Gen X (35-55)

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

**MILLENNIALS
ARE EXTREMELY
CONFLICTED ABOUT
TECHNOLOGY'S IMPACT
ON THEIR LEISURE TIME.
WE CALL THIS:
THE LEISURE PARADOX**

INSTAGRAM IS DOWN



**JUST DESCRIBE YOUR LUNCH
TO ME**

PART II

THE LEISURE PARADOX

***WHILE MILLENNIALS RECOGNIZE THE CRUCIAL
ROLE SMARTPHONES PLAY IN ENABLING
LEISURE TIME, OUR FINDINGS INDICATE A
RELATIONSHIP WITH TECHNOLOGY THAT IS
FRAUGHT WITH CONTRADICTIONS.***

On the one hand, they are increasingly concerned about the stress and unhappiness caused by connectivity: **47%** feel the pressure to respond promptly to messages and **49%** agree smartphones make it hard to focus on a singular task.

ON THE OTHER HAND,

they overwhelmingly recognize the major benefits of their smartphones on downtime - **66% agree** that smartphones have greatly enhanced our leisure time by giving us more access to leisure activities.

Brands seeking to deliver on leisure must be cognizant of the various tensions consumers are grappling with in order to adapt to today's shifting definition of "downtime."



TIME SUCK VS. TIME BOOST

Millennials express guilt over spending too much time with their phones, yet overwhelmingly view connectivity as an enhancer of their leisure time.

*Worry about spending
too much time with
their smartphone*

48%

60%

*Agree smartphones
enhance our leisure time
a great deal or somewhat*

IN THE MOMENT VS. IN THE FUTURE

Despite their efforts to disconnect and be more “present,” millennials are always thinking about what’s next.

*Have tried implementing a
“no phone at the dinner
table” policy with
friends & family*

48%

71%

*Agree smartphones have
made it easier to plan
things they like to do in
their leisure time*

DISTRACTOR VS. ENHANCER

Millennials worry about their smartphones hindering their ability to focus, yet appreciate the more frequent leisure occasions their devices provide.

*Agree smartphones
make it hard to focus
on a singular task*

49%

66%

*Agree smartphones have
greatly enhanced our leisure
time by giving us more access
to leisure activities*

ALWAYS WORKING VS. ALWAYS PLAYING

Smartphones may let work creep into playtime, but they also give millennials access to more frequent leisure occasions during work hours.

Agree smartphones make it difficult to get away from work at home or on the weekends

46%

51%

Agree smartphones provide a means to reduce stress during a busy work day

***SO WITH SO MUCH BLENDING OF
WORK AND PLAY, STRESS AND
RELIEF, TURNING OFF AND PLANNING
AHEAD, **IS LEISURE TIME EXTINCT?*****

Quite the contrary. With more frequent, bite-sized leisure occasions made possible by connected technology, leisure is more accessible than ever before. Here's how brands can help navigate this new reality.



PART III

IMPLICATIONS FOR BRANDS

**MILLENIAL
LEISURE TIME ISN'T
DISAPPEARING**

It just needs redefining.

THE GOLDEN HOUR

FOR YEARS, MARKETERS HAVE FOUGHT HARD TO OWN THE 5PM GOLDEN HOUR - THE CELEBRATED YEARNING FOR FREEDOM AND RELAXATION WE'VE COME TO KNOW AS THE END OF THE WORK DAY.

This traditional definition of leisure is one that no longer applies to the new millennial reality of work and play.

As the lines between personal and professional time increasingly blur, marketers must understand how to speak and engage with a millennial audience when making the promise of leisure and relaxation.



Welcome to the all NEW

MILLENNIAL GRIND

For millennials, the traditional 9-to-5 no longer exists. Rather, they are engaging in small bursts of leisure intermittently throughout the day, and engaging with work during their downtime.



9-5515
IDEAS

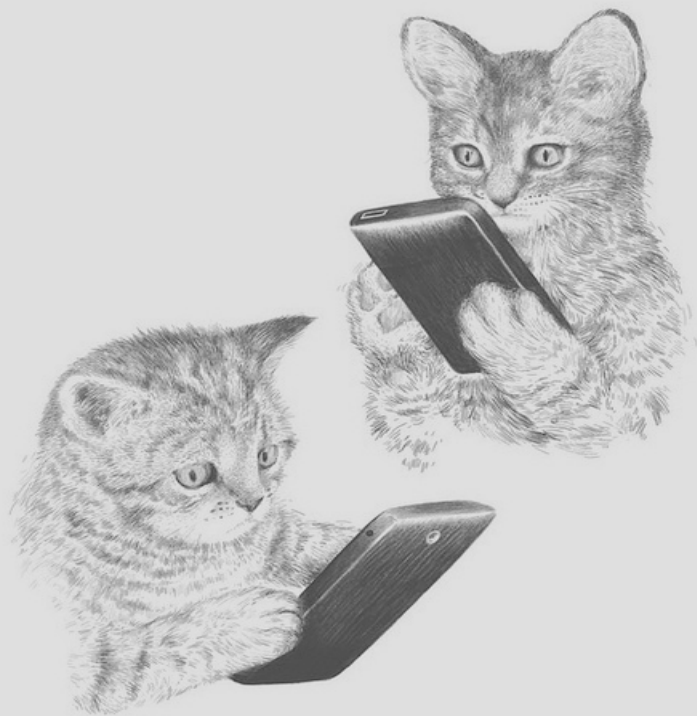
CONCLUSION

This new reality of downtime is what we've come to define as

MICRO LEISURE

A close-up illustration of a woman's face and upper body. She is holding a smartphone with a red, textured pineapple case that has a black top section with a camera cutout and green leaves on top. She is wearing a white tank top, a gold ring on her finger, and several gold necklaces. The background is a simple grey wall with a yellow chair partially visible on the left.

*I CHECK MY PHONE TO TAKE A BREAK,
REFRESH & CHUCKLE AT SOMETHING*

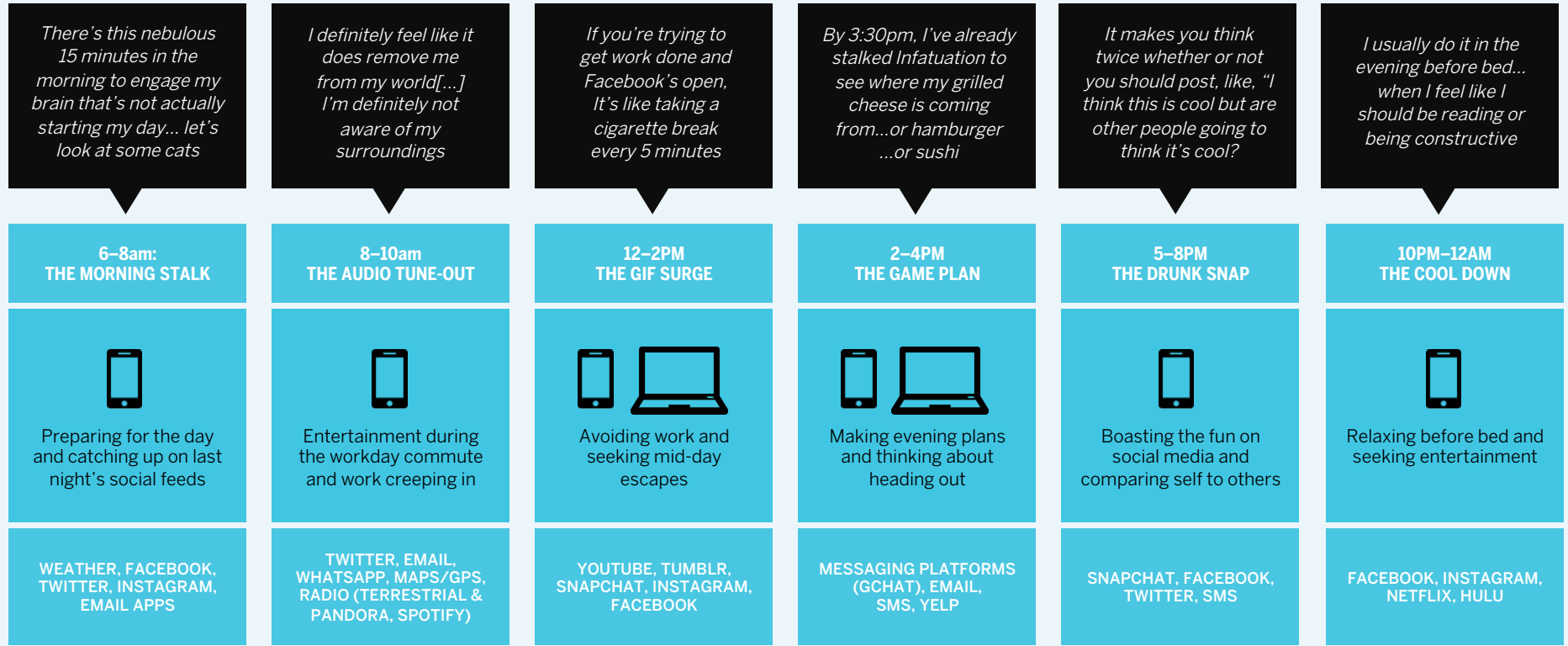


IT'S A NEW FORM OF RELIEF – AN ESCAPE THAT CAN BE OVER IN A MATTER OF SECONDS

- and it's more accessible than ever before thanks to the tremendous impact of mobile technology on our busy lives.

Better understanding of micro-leisure behaviors can help brands connect in a more meaningful and effective manner with a millennial audience.

KEY INFLECTION POINTS THROUGHOUT THE DAY MARK KEY OPPORTUNITIES TO FACILITATE MICRO-LEISURE

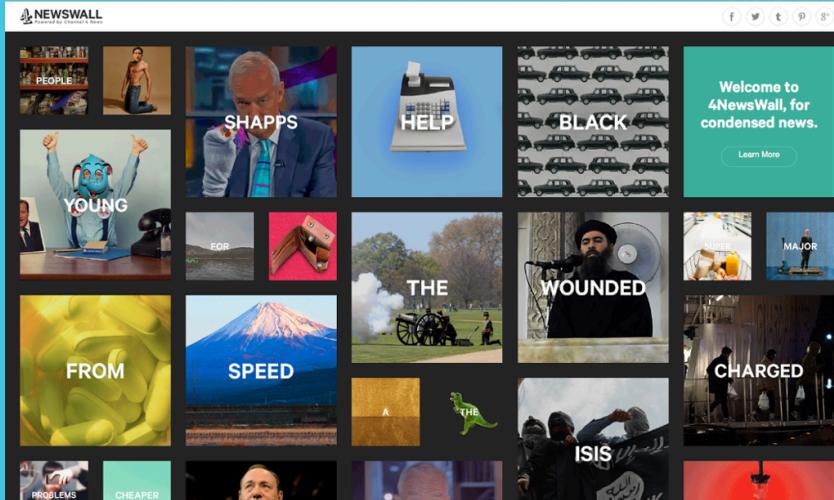


BITE-SIZE YOUR ***KEY MESSAGE***

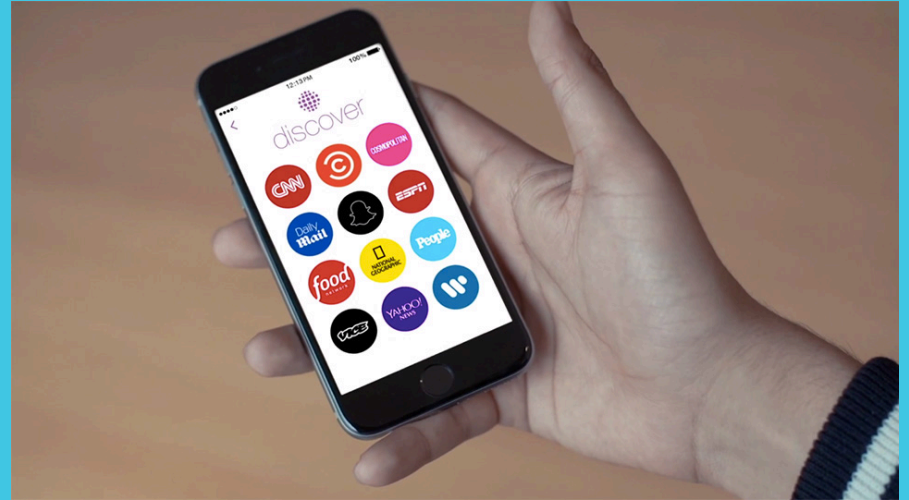
It's no surprise that the miniaturization of leisure time marks the miniaturization of content.

According to Pew Research Center, the majority (61%) of millennials report getting their political news from Facebook, compared with 37 percent who said they get it from local television. In order to keep up, publishers and **marketers are adopting short-form** as the **format of choice for millennial audiences**. This means brands must focus on communicating their key message in a matter of seconds.

SOME EXAMPLES



Channel 4's NewsWall brings Millennials headlines from the news in GIF-able form. Should they want a longer read, users can click on the animated GIFs to access the long-form story.



Snapchat's Discover feature provides easily digestible daily content from publishers like CNN, Vice News, and ESPN. Users can now send clips directly to friends within the app.

SPEAK IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE INTERNET #FTW

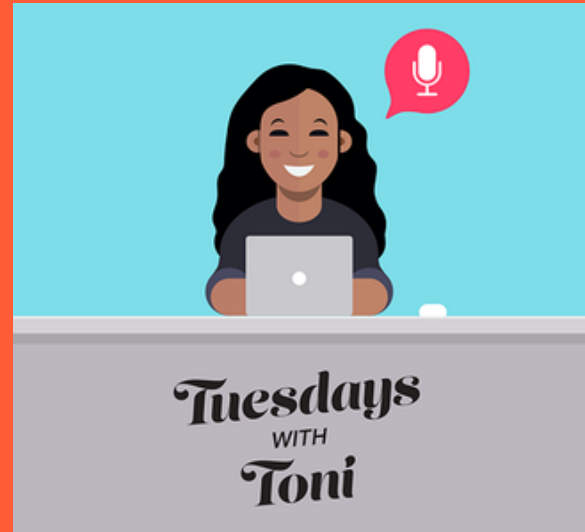
Owning micro-leisure also means communicating authentically within these moments.

Understanding the right “etiquette” within each channel is essential for brands looking to speak to Millennials in their own language. This means treading carefully, or risk being shamed on the infamous @BrandsSayingBae.

SOME EXAMPLES



Millennials in the United States who think pizza is bae can now order a fresh pie by tweeting the pizza emoji at the @dominos handle



MRY's recently launched podcast "Tuesdays with Toni" leans on its youngest strategists to brief marketers on the latest memes in the millennial landscape.

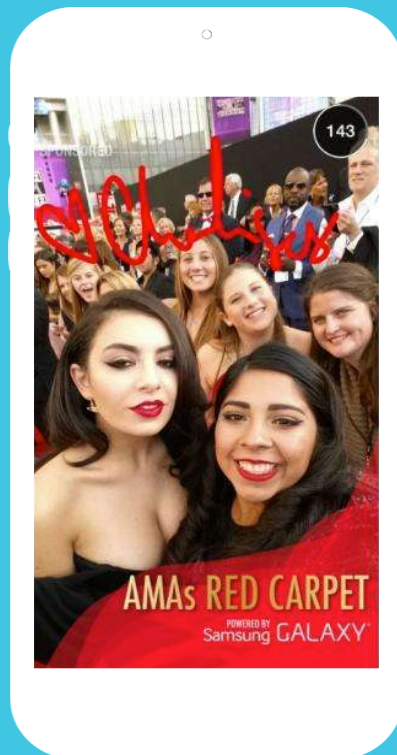
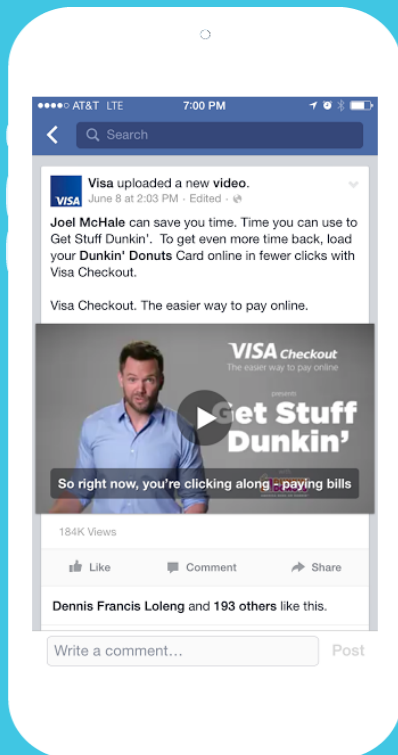
DESIGN FOR THE FINGER TAP

Brands should capitalize on emerging mobile ad formats designed to tell stories the way millennials are used to: with option to flick, click, tap, etc.

Two-dimensional banner ads won't always cut it with Millennial audiences that expect mobile experiences to **both entertain and seamlessly integrate** into their native smartphone experiences.

NOTABLE EXAMPLES

Visa along with their partner Dunkin Donuts recently launched Get Stuff Dunkin, a smart media play that utilizes Joel McHale to distill the pop trends of the day into fun, digestible sound bites. The content contains subtitles to workaround Facebook's auto-mute feature and motivate consumers to click for audio.



Apps like Snapchat, Meerkat and Periscope are urging advertisers to frame their video ads vertically rather than the traditional widescreen format. Snapchat has reported up to nine times more completed views on vertical videos than their horizontal counterparts.

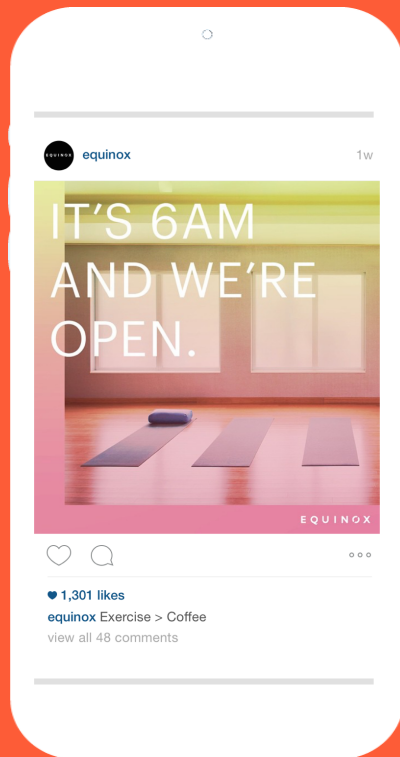
TIMING IS EVERYTHING

What does content look like for morning micro-leisure? Stuck-at-your-desk micro-leisure? Bathroom-time micro-leisure?

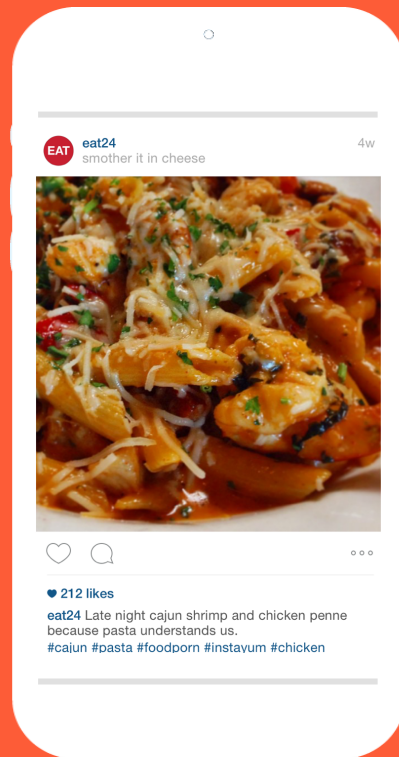
Satisfying millennials' micro-leisure fix is all about timing. Brands who have mastered this **cater their content to the context of the time of day** in which they are posting or speaking to their audience.

SOME EXAMPLES

Equinox's well-timed early morning workout posts intercept people while they're mindlessly perusing their social feeds in bed, with the goal of inspiring them to head to the gym.



Online food delivery service Eat24 appropriately targets late-night cravings with food porn on Instagram.



ERMAHGERD



THANKS

memegenerator.net

THANK YOU

ABOUT MRY

MRY is a culture-fueled creative and technology agency headquartered in New York with additional offices in London, Seattle, and San Francisco. MRYS is a Publicis Groupe agency.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

As substantial as this deck is, there is even more research that wasn't included here. We know that the most important takeaways are going to be the ones relevant to your business.

If you'd like to discuss this report in more detail or how it relates to you, have questions about the research, or would like to dive deeper into any part of this, please reach out to us via the accompanying contacts, or through MRYS's site and channels.

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HOW TO REACH US

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A close-up photograph of a brown and white tabby cat lying on its side on a white, wrinkled blanket. The cat is looking towards the camera with a slightly sleepy expression. In the lower right foreground, a smartphone is held up, displaying a colorful cartoon character on its screen. The cat's white paw is visible near the phone. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue-green color.

***THE
END***