

---

SELLING TO  
**Millennial Business  
Decision Makers**

**LinkedIn** Sales Solutions



# New Rules, New Game Plan

Millennials are the largest generation living today, and some would argue the most diverse. In fact, there is so much diversity that the world can't agree on how to define them. At LinkedIn, when we say 'Millennial', we're looking at those born between 1980 and 1995. This puts them in a bucket that spans from 22 to 36 years of age. For older Millennials, many of them have already been in the workforce building their careers for years. (And outside the office, Millennials have as many responsibilities as Gen Xers. In some countries, as much as 71% of the Millennial population already have children<sup>1</sup>.) As more Millennials join companies and get promoted, we see an increasing number having influence, if not direct control, over B2B purchases — which is why you're reading this.

**Even with the rise of the Millennial B2B buyer, the sales experience still makes or breaks a deal — but the type of experience that the Millennial buyer wants, and will respond to, may be markedly different from what you're used to providing.**

With Millennials, the game is the same but the rules are different. Through this eBook, we hope to offer you insights into the psyche of this unique demographic and arm you with the knowledge to engage and close deals with Millennials.



### Author

Jennifer Bunting  
Head of Content Marketing  
LinkedIn Asia-Pacific



### Contributor

Alex Hisaka  
Head of Global Content Marketing  
LinkedIn Sales Solutions



### Contributor

Alex Rynne  
Senior Content Marketing Manager  
LinkedIn Marketing Solutions

<sup>1</sup> The 2016 Deloitte Millennial Survey, Australia Country Report, 17 January 2016

# Understanding Millennials

01



# Making Sense of Millennials

The Millennial generation is a force to be reckoned with, just by sheer size alone. There's simply no avoiding them when these are their numbers.



**2 BILLION**  
MILLENNIALS  
GLOBALLY<sup>2</sup>



OF THE WORLD'S  
MILLENNIAL  
POPULATION  
**RESIDE IN ASIA**<sup>3</sup>

Millennials will account for **50%**  
of the global workforce by **2020**<sup>4</sup>

### Millennials are no longer students.

This audience includes people in a wide array of life stages given that, in 2017, Millennials include anyone aged **22 to 36 years of age**. At home, Millennials are thinking about growing their families and buying a home. At work, they are not necessarily people who are fresh out of university. They may now have significant professional

experience and important responsibilities — everything from making hiring decisions to business purchases.

LinkedIn, as the world's largest professional network, is now home to a sizeable population of Millennials, which makes it perfect hunting grounds for the savvy B2B sales professional.



**87M**

Millennials globally  
use LinkedIn



**11M**

of them are  
decision makers

Selling to them starts with understanding how they think and behave. While we admit that descriptions of Millennials tend to run the risk of sounding like stereotypes, especially since it is such a diverse generation, we believe that having a grasp of their overarching traits is immensely useful in guiding a sales engagement strategy.

<sup>2</sup> Where are the Global Millennials?, AT Kearney, 2016

<sup>3</sup> Millennials at Work: Reshaping the Workplace, PwC, 2011

<sup>4</sup> 3 Ways Asia's Millennials are Shaping the Region's Digital Economy, The Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, 2016

Let's take a look at the four types of Millennials that Carat Consumer Insights (2015) has suggested



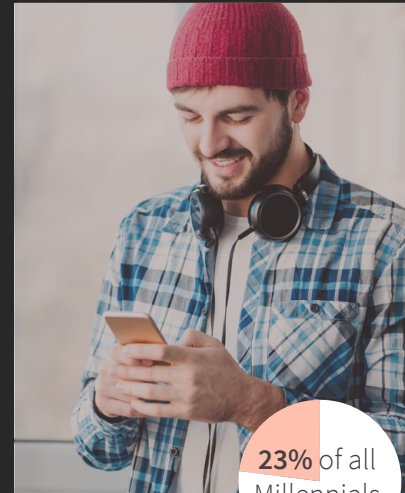
42% of all Millennials

## #TrendNetters

Median Age: 27

### Defining Traits

- They are digital extroverts
- They enjoy curating and sharing, rather than creating content
- They want to be seen as trendsetters by being the first to share something



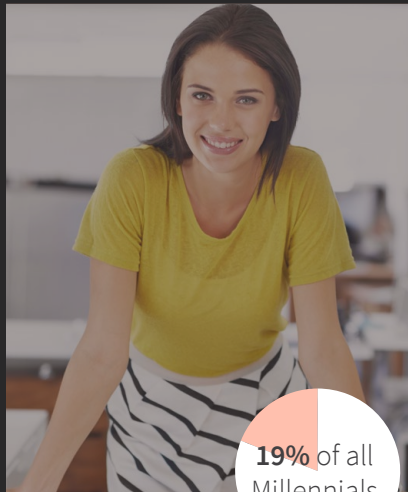
23% of all Millennials

## #AlterNatives

Median Age: 24

### Defining Traits

- They are quiet, introverted and concerned with privacy
- They are the most digitally savvy of all Millennial types
- They consume exponentially more video content than other Millennial types.



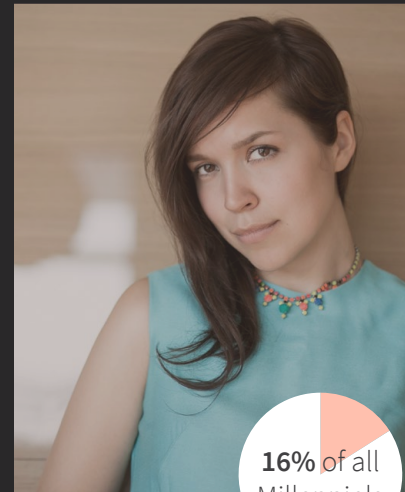
19% of all Millennials

## #LYFPreneurs

Median Age: 29

### Defining Traits

- They are ambitious and subscribe to the 'work hard, play hard' motto
- They are as digital as other Millennials but want to be able to 'turn off' and enjoy face-to-face conversations
- They enjoy creating or seeking out new experiences



16% of all Millennials

## #BetaBlazers

Median Age: 25

### Defining Traits

- They are extremely forward-thinking and believe that knowledge is an indicator of success
- They are ahead of the curve and tend to be very global in their outlook
- They value quality over quantity — that good content is better than more content



# Finding common ground

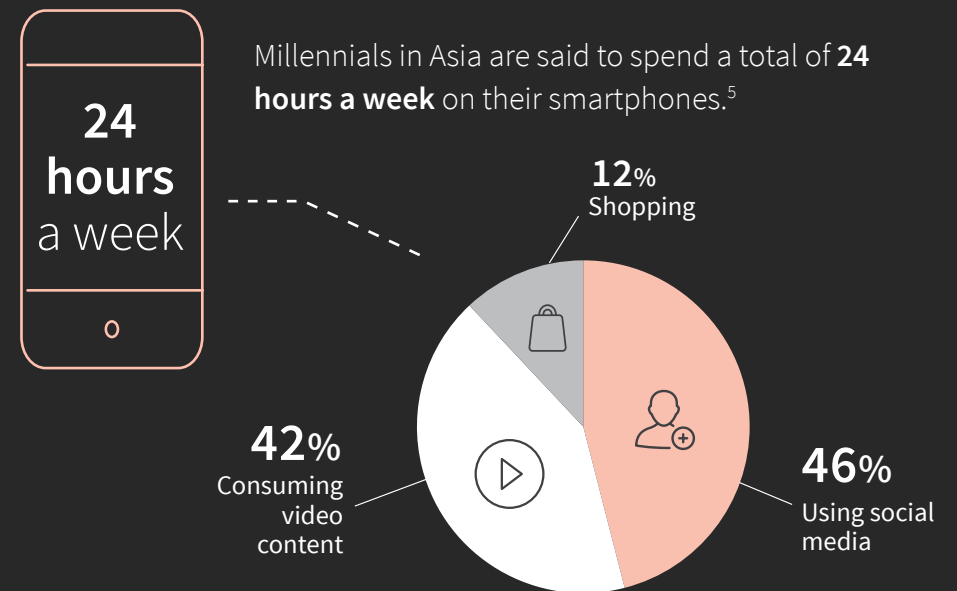
As diverse as Millennials are, our analysis shows two common threads that run through them.

## 1 A Penchant for Digital



Millennials are a highly digital demographic and it shows.

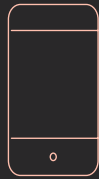
### Millennials in Asia



# Millennials on Mobile

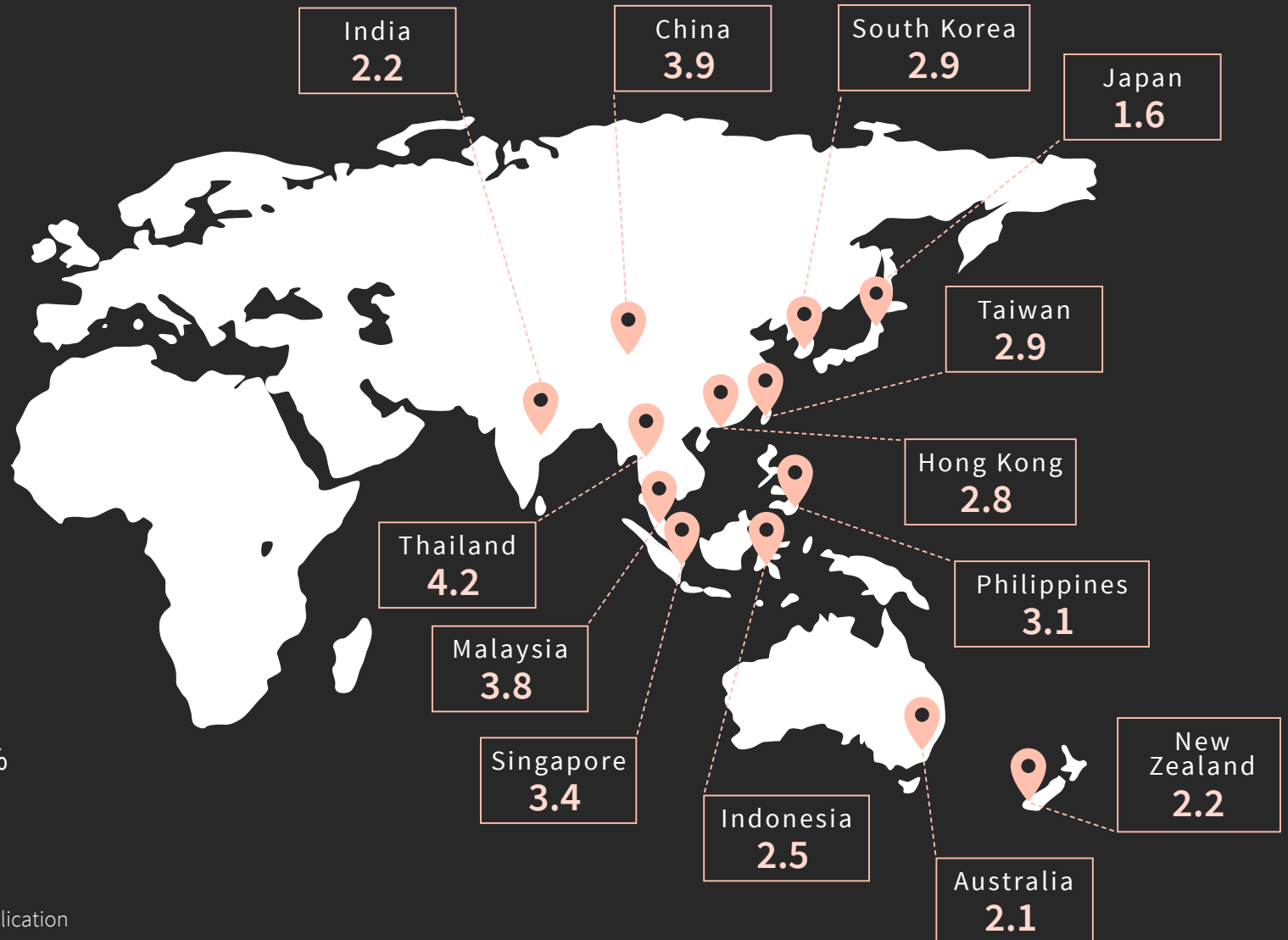
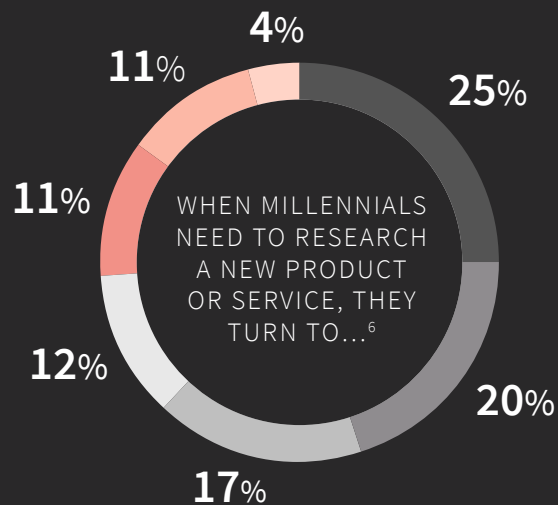
SELLING TO MILLENNIAL BUSINESS DECISION MAKERS | 7

Hours per day



**Global**  
3.2 hrs

**APAC**  
2.8 hrs



## Finding common ground

### 2 An Affinity for Authenticity



A study by Nielsen suggests that when Millennials interact with brands on social media, they value authenticity — “they want to feel like they have a personal, direct interaction with the brand—and in return, they’ll advocate and endorse that brand.”<sup>7</sup> While Nielsen made this statement in context of Millennials as consumers, it’s a highly relevant statement given the increasing consumerisation of B2B buying.

According to McKinsey & Company, more B2B buyers are being shaped by their consumer experience and this holds true particularly for Millennials who have grown up in a hyper-connected world.<sup>8</sup>

**Key Takeaway:** Cold calls and sales pitches don’t make the cut anymore. Instead, Millennials are looking for a sales experience that is insightful, trustworthy, relevant, and authentic.

<sup>5</sup> Connected Life 2015, Kantar TNS

<sup>6</sup> The Next Generation of B2B Buyers: How the Millennial Business Buyer is Changing B2B Sales & Marketing, Sacunas, 2016

<sup>7</sup> Millennials – Breaking the Myths, The Nielsen Company, 2014

<sup>8</sup> Do You Really Understand How Your Business Customers Buy?, McKinsey Quarterly, 2015



02

# Selling to Millennials



# It's Time to Ditch the Pitch



Stop selling to Millennials and start sharing — that's the best piece of advice we can give you. Buyers want a consultant, an advisor, and someone they can trust to help them be better at their work. By becoming that person, you'll be more likely to attain your quotas now and in the long term.



**70% of customers want their problems solved - not being sold to!<sup>9</sup>**

LinkedIn can help you reach out to people at the best time, with the right information, and do so with authenticity. Here are our top tips for selling to Millennials and how **LinkedIn Sales Navigator**, a business tool designed specifically for sales professionals, can help you achieve your sales goals.

<sup>9</sup> DemandGen 2014 Buyer Behaviour Survey

## TIP 1 Enhance your LinkedIn professional presence

This is a fundamental way to capitalise on all LinkedIn has to offer. Make sure your LinkedIn profile is complete and optimised, and presented in a way that showcases your skills and customer-centric successes.

With Sales Navigator's **Premium Profile**, you'll have more options to personalise your profile beyond just basic information. This is an opportunity to add content that really makes your experience and achievements shine. On a related note, we can't stress enough how important it is to make sure your profile is fresh — nothing tarnishes trustworthiness quite like an outdated profile.

Once you have polished your profile, start engaging with your prospects and sharing information in order to gain trust. For example, you can participate in LinkedIn Groups, which are communities where people with shared interests or business challenges are already having active conversations. Remember that when you add to the discussion, it's paramount that you're legitimately contributing to the conversation rather than making a hard sell.



**64%** of top sellers on LinkedIn  
participate in Groups

## TIP **2** Build your prospect list

With **87 million Millennial members**, LinkedIn is a treasure trove of prospects but it can also be a labyrinth without LinkedIn Sales Navigator.

1. Get **custom lead recommendations** based on your preferences.
2. Run **advanced searches** with over 20 demographic and firmographic filters to identify, save, and tag these contacts. When new results come in that match your search criteria, you'll get automatic alerts to help you keep up with new opportunities.
3. **Unlock the full profile** of LinkedIn members, even if they're not in your network.
4. **Reach out to any LinkedIn member via InMail.** They'll be notified on mobile, desktop and email, which explains why inMail has a 500% higher response rate than email alone.



**80%** of top sellers on LinkedIn **create highly targeted prospect lists**

## TIP 3 Forget cold calling, get introduced instead!


Once you have a highly targeted prospect list, you may be tempted to reach out to them right away — but don't be impatient. By putting a little planning into your outreach, your prospects will feel like the experience is tailored to them and you'll increase their level of trust with you.

1. **Always research your prospects**, like 87% of top sellers on LinkedIn do, to make sure you're prepared to have meaningful conversations with them. LinkedIn Sales Navigator helps by ensuring you get instant updates on your prospects and customers. Use this real-time information and tailor your conversations!

2. **Don't go in cold.** Ask for an introduction from others in your network. It's been found that if you have a second-degree connection on LinkedIn, there's a 50% chance of getting an appointment. Beyond this, it drops to 32%<sup>9</sup>.

**87%** of top sellers on LinkedIn **have meaningful conversations with their prospects**



 Save time uncovering common connections so you can request a warm introduction.

Within LinkedIn Sales Navigator, there is a powerful feature called **TeamLink** that you can use to uncover hidden connections in your third-degree network. Do a search on any prospect and TeamLink will immediately let you know if that person is connected to you or anyone at your company. Once you've uncovered a link, get your teammate to introduce you and raise your chances of getting a response.

<sup>9</sup> Cold Calling is Dead, Thanks to LinkedIn, Vorsight, 2013



## TIP 4 Showcase your expertise, show you care!

For many LinkedIn members, the platform is more than a social network, it's a community of professionals who are seeking value, knowledge and ideas. When you share and create content on LinkedIn, you're building a **personal brand** for yourself that will follow you for the rest of your career.

### Be authentic

Connecting with the Millennial B2B buyer is less about selling and more about authenticity. People buy from people they know and trust, so that should be your objective — to be a problem-solving resource.

### Be relevant

If you're a sales professional, you're familiar with the challenges that your customers face. These are issues worth addressing through your conversations. Relevance can also be time sensitive. What's buzzing among your prospects and customers right now? Create or curate content that's top-of-mind, and add value with your own opinion.

### Be there

Publishing one status update isn't going to get you very far, unfortunately. Building credibility and nurturing relationships is a process. Think of it as an investment of your time and make it part of your daily work routine.

**83%** of top sellers on LinkedIn  
**share relevant content**



If you're on the LinkedIn Sales Navigator Team and Sales Navigator Enterprise versions

You'd want to make full use of **PointDrive** as well. It's an innovative, easy-to-use application designed to help sales professionals create and share streamlined communications with prospects.



# Checklist: **From Cold Calls to Warm Leads**

## Checklist

### ☐ Be where your prospects are

Millennials are digital natives. **87 million** of them are on LinkedIn, and so should you.

### ☐ Create highly targeted prospect connections, not cold call lists

Use LinkedIn Sales Navigator to run advanced searches and identify hidden connections within your network. When you're introduced to a prospect by someone they know, chances of conversion are exponentially higher.

### ☐ Stop selling

Build meaningful relationships with Millennial buyers by being a trusted consultant and advisor to them, not a salesperson with a quota to hit.

### ☐ Start sharing and solving

Use authentic and relevant content to showcase your expertise and position yourself as an opinion leader and problem-solver to your Millennial prospects.

# LinkedIn<sup>™</sup> Sales Solutions

**ABOUT LINKEDIN** | LinkedIn members number more than 467 million professionals. That's over one-half of the 600 million professionals on the planet. This represents the largest group anywhere of influential, affluent and educated people.

**RELATIONSHIPS MATTER** | With LinkedIn Marketing Solutions, brands build relationships with the world's professionals by using accurate targeting to deliver relevant content and communications. As today's connected professionals seek out ideas and insights from the people and brands they trust, marketers use LinkedIn to target advertising and publish relevant content in a professional context. Brands extend reach through the social sharing that occurs naturally on LinkedIn.

