



Despite often grabbing absurd headlines for topics such as loving a very specific pink or gobbling up avocado toast to the detriment of their future, the truth is that Millennials have been up to a lot more than obsessing over trendy colors or foods. The Wall Street Journal notes, Millennials are "a group of people who are building major companies, altering the way we work and live, and challenging long-held notions of family and society." NBD. While that same publication recently opted to drop the term entirely due to its previous negative connotations, for our marketing conversation purposes, "Millennial" is still, for the time being at least, the best shorthand option for referring to people born between 1981 and 1997. But let's get a lijijittle more specific.

Within this group is a subset of women with children, a.k.a. Millennial Moms, and there may be more of them than you think. Representing about 1 in every 5 mothers and accounting for almost 90% of the 1.5 million new mothers within the last year, Millennial Moms carve out a unique market segment that is currently about 9 million strong. To put it simply, if you want to talk to a new or newish mom, she's very likely a Millennial Mom.



### **A NEW GENERATION**



### THE MISJUDGED MOMMIES

While this group is often sought after by marketers, many moms within the group say they do not feel understood by marketers, which could be a big miss for brands given this group's connectivity, spending power and influence. Just this holiday season alone, parents are in the midst of spending an expected average of \$1,711 each, taking the top spot for highest planned spending of any demographic. Missing an opportunity to connect with Millennial Moms could mean missing out on a valuable share of the market.

As a marketer with over 7 years of experience, and a newly minted Millennial Mom (six months and counting!), I'm grateful for the opportunity to be a voice for Millennial Moms and offer some guidance from a marketing perspective on how to better reach this valued, yet misjudged segment.

So, here are five keys to successfully marketing to Millennial moms.





(1)





### The proof is in the product

While nearly half of all Millennial Moms care that a company's values align with their own, and will do the research necessary to find out who is worth their time and attention, the real opportunity to build a lasting and meaningful connection is through a physical product that demonstrates one or more of those values. Millennial Moms are often coming to the shelf with a very specific set of buying needs and when she can pick up a product that not only meets those functional needs, but builds off values she can get behind, she will be more likely to purchase and then talk about that purchase.

There's a time and a place for brand storytelling, but it means so much more to her when a physical product is tangible proof of why that story matters.

### Target's Cat and Jack clothing lines introduces a limited selection of sensory-friendly pieces

Living up to their "Design for All" philosophy, Target expanded its in-house Cat and Jack clothing line with sensory-friendly pieces for kids that struggle with tags and seams and parents looking for a low-cost option to keep their kids comfortably clothed. The announcement this past summer was met with relief from parents who immediately understood how this would help alleviate the daily struggles of getting their child dressed and major applause from parents on the sidelines—and increased affinity for the master brand across the board.





# ALIGN WITH LIKEMINDED BRAND PARTNERS

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### You are who you partner with

It's no secret that Millennial Moms are less likely to trust so-called "experts" when it comes to seeking advice on parenting and more likely to trust the people they know have been there, done that: each other. 97% of Millennial Moms find social media helpful to their parenting, with nearly half of them turning to social media at least once a day for parenting purposes. Social media has become a core resource for these mothers on everything from swaddling techniques to how to get through airport security to product recommendations. With the rise of influencers across a diverse set of lifestyles, Millennial Moms are free to eschew relying on one goto source for information in favor of relying on and learning from many other women who look and act like them.

Aligning with the right partner and showing value can pose an opportunity to tap into existing fan bases and gain traction.

### Solly Baby X Jenni Kayne

Solly Baby is a line of wraps designed to easily and comfortably carry infants and keep them close during the early months. The wrap itself is one piece of sustainably made fabric dyed in solid colors and simple patterns that evoke a certain clean, minimalist aesthetic also showcased on the company's social channels, particularly Instagram. Recently, Solly Baby partnered with Jenni Kayne, a women's apparel and lifestyle brand with similar values, to create a limited edition wrap featuring a Jenni Kayne-designed pattern. The collaboration was further promoted on each company's owned channels, including Instagram, cross-pollinating fans and incentivizing engagement with a giveaway.

### HERITAGE PLAID

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sollybabywrap

sollybabywrap You spoke, we listened (plaid for fall!!). 🙌 Like your favorite plaid shirt, our limited edition #sollyxjennikayne Heritage Plaid wrap is full of soul and warmth and made with love so you can literally embrace this beautiful season you're in. 💗 Coming 11.8. Cant think of better timing--don't miss it!

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lularoetheolneys @ashleyhetzell keelybelding Yes!!!!! ♥♥♥♥♥ me





### Savvy searchers

Millennial Moms spend over 8 hours every day online across a mix of devices, but with smartphone ownership over 90%, more of that time is happening on mobile. She is also more than twice as likely to use her mobile device for search, a skill she developed as a new parent and honed during late-night feedings, phone in one hand and baby in the other. She knows how to search, so brands need to surface the right content where and when she's looking.

Considering Millennial Moms' search savviness, investing in an SEO strategy that implements a mix of long-tail keywords, like, "tips and tricks for teething babies," will drive lower, but more qualified volume. Not to mention the lower competition for long-tail keyword bids can make SEO a much more affordable prospect and provide for a more predictable, steady spend overall.

### Words from the wise

"SEO is really about the user and getting to know their searches," advises our Integrated Social Media Coordinator, Olivia Ghiz. "Metadata also plays a big role in SEO strategies. By capitalizing on the opportunity to describe what is on the page, Google can decide its search ranking. Then, brands can use the specific keywords they want to rank for." Ghiz also cautions brands that it's about finding the right balance with website queries and on-site content. "You don't want to overuse those keywords, otherwise you risk potentially annoying your audience with repetitiveness."

# Google

### Millennial Moms

millennial moms millennial moms blog millennial moms favorite brands millennial moms youtube millennial moms age millennial moms shopping habits millennial moms and social media









### Teach a mom to fish

Millennial Moms have forged their own path in finding creative ways to earn money and support their families. Digital has proven critical in helping Millennial Moms do more in less time, giving them the flexibility they want and income they need. 1 in 5 Millennial Moms have blogs with substantial followings, and more than half of Millennial Moms have plans to start their own business. Whether she's creating the content for her blog or consuming someone else's, the time she spends online is focused and purposeful.

As a brand, it's important to take a measured step back from only pushing product to gauge where utility can be offered instead. Showing expertise in and around the brand's category on topics that may involve products, but not overtly sell them is likely to be well received. Providing utility allows her to get to know a brand and its values and helps her engage with the brand even when she's not in the market for specific products.

### West Elm teaches the basics

With its #AskWestElm series, furniture and home décor retailer West Elm takes a break from straight campaign work to offer video tutorials on simple home management basics, like stylish napkin folding, properly pressing a tablecloth and organizing a linen closet. The tutorials are timely, focusing on seasonal needs, like how to set a buffet in November and spring cleaning tips in April, which asserts West Elm as a trusted resource in the home space.



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low To Decorate A Tree West Elm Stylist

3lack + White Fireplace

West Elm 🥝



## MAKE ROOM FOR MILLENNIAL DAD

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### We see you, dads

2 out of 3 Millennial Moms are married and/or living with Millennial Dads and, as a pair, they are blurring the lines between traditional genderspecific household roles. The amount of time Millennial Dads spend with their kids is nearly 3x that of previous generations. They are taking an active role, beyond household income, influencing purchase decisions and being responsible for daily child care. Although they are changing the role of dads at home, Millennial Dads are not becoming moms, they are carving out their own identity as parents and looking for resources to support them. 85% believe they know more than people give them credit for and nearly as many feel resentful that advertisers and marketers are so out of touch with their contributions to their families.

Millennial Dads are ready for a new narrative and will respond positively to a real reflection of their valuable role as partners to Millennial Moms. There is an opportunity for more brands to provide real guidance, support or simple acknowledgement of how engaged Millennial Dads are at home.

### The Cheerio Stack Challenge

In 2016, not wanting to disturb a sleeping baby on his chest, Patrick Quinn, co-founder of Life of Dad, passed the time by making a tiny stack of Cheerios on his son's nose. Quinn snapped a pic and uploaded it to the Life of Dad Facebook page challenging other dads, "How high can you go?" The response was so immediate and enthusiastic that Life of Dad had a hit on their hands just in time for Father's Day. They were quickly able to secure General Mills' support in digital, where the challenge went viral. Just one year later, Cheerios' latest brand spot, "Good Goes Around," incorporates Cheerio-stacking (0:21!) and multiple glimpses of dads being present at home.







# UNDERSTAND HER PERSPECTIVE



Millennial Moms have emerged as a distinct segment that is certainly acknowledged by marketers but is not as widely understood. On one hand parenthood makes them different from other Millennials, and on the other hand their Millennial status sets them apart from other parents. The result is a group of complex individuals who use technology, consume media and shop for their household in remarkably different ways than any other segment. For brands to connect with Millennial Moms, marketing doesn't need to be reinvented, it simply needs a healthy dose of looking at the category through her perspective, recognizing her needs and delivering when and where she has expectations.



### CONCLUSION







### DIANDRA SILK

Diandra Silk is a Senior Brand Strategist at GYK Antler. She has spent nearly a decade in the advertising industry finding answers to questions that help clients make confident decisions and move their business forward. Often those answers come through custom research projects designed to identify opportunity spaces ripe for growth and development. She has helped surface meaningful insights across several sectors including apparel, finance, spirits, education, technology, interstellar space travel and (her favorite) healthy CPG. When she's not in the office you can find her watching another video tutorial on how to put on a baby carrier.







### **GYK ANTLER**

Recognized by Forbes as one of America's top 25 small companies, GYK Antler is a mid-size, independent, full-service marketing agency. We are a hundred technologists, creatives, strategists, data hounds and media planners who understand what it takes to shift a brand into new territory. We never shy away from responsibly disrupting the status quo—even when it comes to our own agency. Whether it's revitalizing a textile mill to create our ideal content studio or bringing Emmy Award-winning video producers in house, we follow our passions to create positive, measurable change for our clients.

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