

## the yin and yang of gen y

By the time they've filled up their generational cup, Gen Y kids (or Millennials) will be almost as numerous as their Baby Boomer parents. What makes them different from their older Gen X siblings?

● **They're big spenders**—Although they account for just 7 percent of the U.S. population, Millennials account for 21 percent of all spending. The crucible of the hyper-affluent '90s produced "the most consumption-oriented generation in history," according to a far-reaching analysis by marketing consultants Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL).

● **They value diversity and individuality, but they crave their peers' respect and gravitate to groups**—In many ways, Gen Y kids are more comfortable embracing extremes than any generation before them.

● **They not only know how to multitask, they *can't* stop multitasking**—According to JLL, "They are addicted to motion, change, and constant activity. They are technologically savvy multitaskers who watch television while seated at their computers listening to MP3s, burning CDs

and instant-messaging with a group of friends."

● **They're expert cultural editors who can take in a lot of information and quickly sift through it for what they want or need**—The deluge of competing noise that floods their landscape has created a deep skepticism about information that targets them.

The marketers at JLL frame the unique characteristics of Gen Y kids by contrasting them with Baby Boomers and Gen Xers:

baby boomers	gen xers	millennials
Diversity as a cause	Accepts diversity	Celebrates diversity
Idealistic	Pragmatic/Cynical	Optimistic/Realistic
Mass movement	Self-reliant/Individualistic	Self-inventive/ Individualistic
Conforms to rules	Rejects rules	Rewrites the rules
Killer job	Killer life	Killer lifestyle
Became institutions	Mistrusts institutions	Irrelevance of institutions
TV	PC	Internet
Has technology	Uses technology	Assumes technology
Task-focused	Multitasks	Multitasks fast
Ozzie and Harriet	Latch-key kids	Nurtured
Other Boomers	Friends—not family	Friends=Family