



Pete Cashmore founder of Mashable

MASHABLE FOUNDER DIAGNOSES MILLENNIALS

Pete Cashmore created Mashable, the unrelentingly popular online news source for the “Connected Generation.” And in a bait-and-switch article for Time Magazine titled “Top 10 Things My Generation Likes” (he promises a list, but never delivers), Cashmore pries back the Otter Box facade of a demographic he calls “The Connected Generation” and both confirms and denies the broad labels slapped on young people:

“Are we politically engaged and civic-minded Twitter addicts? Or narcissists with a penchant for Instagramming our food? We’re either the most socially-connected generation thus far with hundreds of Facebook friends, or we’re an anti-social bunch who would rather tap away at our smartphones than strike up a conversation.” Here’s how Cashmore answers his own questions:

1. They crave a “participation” culture. Cashmore says: “Perhaps the fundamental change in modern media consumption is a desire to participate. A generation of consumers now perceive themselves as content creators, with the material they publish competing with more traditional outlets for attention... In media at least, ‘community’ trumps ‘consumer.’”

2. They crave a give-and-receive data culture. “There is more data about this generation than any other,” says Cashmore. “We receive so much feedback from our community that increasingly our challenge is to make sense of it all.”

3. They crave a humorous culture. “Making your friends laugh is as desirable online as it is in person.”

4. They crave an uplifting culture. Cashmore says: “...Uplifting news and articles about human acts of kindness are shared a great deal. Does this tendency reflect my generation’s willingness to help others or simply a desire to promote a positive self-image? Probably both.”

5. They crave a nostalgic culture. “We’re often surprised to see another category that performs well: Nostalgia,” he says. “My fellow Millennials... have developed a great fondness for sharing their favorite pastimes like arcade games, cassette tapes, and 1990s pop culture.”

6. They crave a visual culture. “The connected generation loves images and videos,” he says. “This is... because we’re so bombarded by information these days: Visual mediums are faster to consume.”

7. They crave a “listed” culture. In a snarky dénouement to his article—an essay that’s billed as a list—Cashmore says: “For reasons we can’t fathom, Millennials love lists. My friends and I will read anything that starts with ‘Top 10.’”

Rick Lawrence