

Four things you can learn from Afrillennial smartphone preferences

There's more to the youth's product choices than meets the eye and one industry that has the most tell-tale signs about the youth market is the mobile industry.



Brands like Samsung, Apple, LG and Alcatel continue to battle out phone capabilities and win over the youth market. Students are hunting phones for the camera, battery life, storage space, system capabilities and design but the real question isn't "What are they looking for?"

Instead we asked *why* they're looking for it and found four things you can learn from [Afrillennial \(African Millennial\)](#) smartphone preferences.

Cameras are not negotiable

The culture of self-promotion is global and ever growing, with new camera applications and social media platforms like [SnapChat](#) and Periscope emerging often. So it's no surprise that students want the best camera capabilities with all the bells and whistles in order to relay the best version of themselves to the world through their digital personas. In a busy world, students need to keep up appearances and share their lives with their peers. Using social media combined with amazing visuals is the best way they can do that.

What brands can learn from this is that students generally go for products that enhance their day, whether it's by making simple tasks easier or more pleasurable or to impress their peers. Image is everything to Afrillennials with pressures from around the globe to conform to certain trends and lifestyle standards. Living a filtered life on social media gives the youth their daily euphoria and escape from pressures, as they try to become a better version of themselves in real life.

They want the power to stay connected

What could low battery issues possibly tell you about the youth? You'd be surprised. Students are on their phones more than any other generation and don't want to be huddled around a power source to get a battery boost every few hours. Mobiles are an extension of who they are and for that reason they need a more permanent solution so they can keep moving ahead.

According to Pocket-lint.com, battery technology hasn't seen significant innovation for years but the youth can look forward to possibly charging in seconds, have batteries that last months or get powered over air. This is with new Wi-Fi charging prospects and alternative battery materials being developed.

The learning here is that students are always looking to streamline their lifestyle and find ways of eliminating simple hindrances that irritate the natural flow of their day. They also want to be empowered in their efforts and will connect with brands that support their mantra.

They want to look the part

We're not talking about their zombie-like phone-groping behaviour, walking in groups not speaking to one another, but rather sharing experiences on their phones and interacting with each other's content. They may seem distracted but they pay great attention to detail. We're talking about mobile phone design and how finicky the youth can be about their interactive technology. From looking for modern, sleek and classy devices to choosing the colour phone they prefer, choosing the right look for their mobiles will help them amplify their desired persona.

This could apply to anything from the type of first car they buy, to the stores they shop at. If your brand can't offer what the trends prescribe, they will move on swiftly to find a brand that does. Our recent Res Room Research shows that students go as far as caring about the colour of the shopping bag they carry and how that could affect the way they are perceived by their peers.

It's all about user experience

From Android to IOS, operating systems are getting cheekier by the day. iOS 9 and Marshmallow are just some of the names of mobile operating systems developed to promote the evolution of technology. These systems are what we use to control our phones and process requests efficiently. It's the equivalent of Windows for PC in the mobile world, and in that context it's easy to see why it should be upgraded to ensure the user experience is always in top form.

Students have less tolerance for unfavourable experiences and prefer to be in control of their reality. The less fuss Afrillennials experience, the more positive they will feel about their phones and the more likely they are to boast about it to their networks. Word of mouth remains the most powerful marketing tool amongst the youth who trust the experiences of their friends.

Hitting all the right buttons

Using the mobile industry as a trait identifier for the youth market can be applied to any other industry to see what it is that students want. This exercise also goes to show that Afrillennials can be a great mouthpiece for brands but can also be their worst critics depending on how supportive brands are of their aspirations and personal life goals. Gen-Y is brands' first experience and exercise of having to pay close attention to consumers and adapt to their needs.

Consider this the warm up for preparing to deal with Generation-Z who are practically born with technology in their hands.

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