

Case Study

SAMPLE GROUP:

Members of the Generation Z Population
in the United States

STUDY SIZE:

500

METHODOLOGY:

The team created a survey on the Pollfish survey website to measure the three research questions. The survey consisted of 16 questions, which included a variety of multiple choice, free response, ranking, and sliding scale questions.

- Participants were informed that the survey concerned retirement planning and that they would be paid to take the survey.
- Participants were guaranteed anonymity, and they provided consent.
- Participants completed the survey over a 24-hour period.



How SmartPath Discovered Gen Z's Thoughts and Behaviors Around Retirement Savings

Overview

Generation Z (1997-2012) is the youngest generation in today's workforce, with a record-low attention span and unparalleled access to technology. How might these factors influence their mindset around saving for the future? By questioning their saving habits, interest in retirement planning, and media preferences, this study explores how easy access to information affects Gen Z's preparedness for retirement.

The study set out to answer three questions:

1. How much exposure does Gen Z have to conversations around retirement?
2. Does Gen Z recognize the importance of saving for the long term?
3. What are the most important influences and motivations around retirement for Gen Z?

Summary of Findings

1 How much exposure does Gen Z have to conversations around retirement?

- The study showed that 18.6% of participants frequently discuss retirement with peers and 30.6% of participants frequently discuss retirement with parents.
- Of those who frequently have retirement conversations, 70.6% have over \$2,000 saved for major expenditures in the next 5 years, compared to 24.4% of those who rarely have retirement conversations.
- The study showed that conversations about retirement are positively correlated with short-term savings, but are not correlated with long-term savings.

2 Does Gen Z recognize the importance of saving for the long term?

- Only 24.2% of respondents indicated that they prefer saving for the long term (i.e. retirement) rather than the short term, demonstrating an underappreciation for early retirement planning.

3 What are the most important influences and motivations around retirement for Gen Z?

- 49.2% of all Gen Zers surveyed said they would look to social media (Instagram, Snapchat, and TikTok) first to obtain information about various financial topics.
- While YouTube users seem to have the most accurate understanding of retirement realities, YouTube is not the most popular choice among Gen Z for financial research. The preferred platforms remain Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok. Although these platforms are not currently leading to a better understanding of retirement planning, they are key to captivating the next generation.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the terms “Short-Term Saving” and “Long-Term Saving” are defined as follows:

Short-Term Saving: Money saved for major upcoming purchases in the next 5 years (vacation, new car, or house).

Long-Term Saving: Money saved for retirement (comfortable lifestyle, travel, time with family).

About SmartPath

SmartPath is the leading provider of comprehensive financial education solutions in the country. Its robust offering includes daily educational classes, one-on-one coaching, and digital tools that empower individuals on the journey to financial freedom. Founded in 2010 and supporting over 700,000 individuals, SmartPath delivers its financial education solutions in partnership with financial institutions, fintech companies, and employers nationwide. For more information, visit www.joinsmartpath.com.



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