



TOP 5 BRANDING STRATEGIES FOR

GENERATIONAL BUSINESSES

TO SUCCEED IN 2025 AND BEYOND.

GENERATIONAL BUSINESSES

The branding landscape for generational businesses is evolving faster than ever, and it's no longer enough to rely on legacy alone. As we step into 2025, businesses that have thrived for decades—or even centuries—are facing an entirely new set of challenges. Consumers today expect brands to walk a fine line: honor the history that built their reputation while also embracing modern, innovative practices.

This balancing act is particularly challenging for generational businesses. These brands often carry a rich story and a loyal customer base, but they can find themselves at odds with shifting market trends or younger audiences who crave relevance and innovation. It's a tough spot to be in—how do you stay true to your roots while staying competitive in a world that's always looking ahead?

The answer lies in strategy. Thoughtful, intentional branding is no longer optional; it's essential. From updating visual identities to building digital-first experiences, businesses must adapt to meet the needs of a modern audience without losing what makes them special. And the good news? These changes don't have to erase your legacy. In fact, when done right, they can enhance it.

As branding experts who have worked with businesses navigating this exact challenge, we've identified five core strategies that will help generational brands not only survive but thrive in 2025 and beyond. Whether your business is preparing for a major rebrand, considering digital transformation, or simply trying to figure out how to connect with younger audiences, this guide will provide actionable insights to help you move forward with confidence.

Let's dive into what it takes to future-proof your brand and position it for success in a rapidly changing world.

STRATEGY 1: MODERNIZING WHILE HONORING LEGACY

Generational businesses often carry a wealth of history, tradition, and goodwill—valuable assets in a world where authenticity is a major differentiator. But even the strongest legacy brands can't afford to stand still. Modern consumers demand more than tradition; they expect innovation, relevance, and adaptability. The challenge for legacy brands is striking a balance between preserving what makes them unique and evolving to meet today's expectations.

So, how do you modernize without losing your roots? The key is to approach change as an evolution, not a replacement. Your legacy isn't a burden; it's a foundation. When you frame modernization as a way to build on your strengths rather than erase them, it becomes easier to navigate this transition.

Imagine you're a 100-year-old bakery known for family recipes and exceptional customer service. Your loyal customers keep coming back for the nostalgia, but younger consumers might bypass you entirely because they don't see your brand as "for them." It's not that they don't value tradition—they just want to see how that tradition fits into their lives today.

Modernization allows you to bridge that gap. It helps you speak to today's audience while reinforcing the timeless qualities that make your business special. Done well, it not only attracts new customers but also deepens loyalty among your existing base.

How to Modernize While Honoring Legacy

1. **Update Visual Elements Thoughtfully**

Start with your logo, color palette, or typography. A full redesign isn't always necessary; sometimes, a subtle refresh is enough to signal change while maintaining familiarity. Work with designers who specialize in legacy branding. They'll understand how to incorporate elements of your history into a modern look. For example, a classic script font might be paired with a cleaner, sans-serif typeface for balance.

2. **Evolve Your Messaging**

Language changes over time, and your brand voice should too. Review your messaging to ensure it resonates with current audiences.

3. **Introduce Modern Offerings**

Keep your legacy products or services but find ways to complement them with something new. For instance, a family-owned restaurant known for its traditional recipes might add plant-based options to appeal to today's dietary preferences. You can frame these additions as extensions of your brand's commitment to quality, not a departure from your roots.

4. **Leverage Technology**

Modernization often means embracing technology. This doesn't mean abandoning the personal touch; it means making it easier for customers to engage with you. Examples include adding online ordering, introducing a mobile loyalty app, or using QR codes to share your brand's story.



LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT STANLEY!

Let's look at Stanley, the iconic drinkware brand. Stanley, a heritage brand established in 1913, is renowned for its durable, vacuum-insulated bottles favored by outdoor enthusiasts and workers alike. While Stanley's heritage resonated deeply with Boomers and Gen X due to its durability and practicality, the brand successfully pivoted to appeal to Millennials and Gen Z by focusing on aesthetics and lifestyle content. They introduced vibrant colors and trendy designs while partnering with social media influencers who showcased the Quencher tumbler as both functional and stylish. By honoring its legacy of quality while adopting new marketing approaches, Stanley was able to expand its audience across generations, driving record-breaking sales.

Strategic Modernization Efforts:

- **Product Innovation:** In 2016, Stanley introduced the Adventure Quencher tumbler, a departure from its traditional product line. Initially, sales were modest, but by collaborating with influencers and expanding color options, the Quencher became a bestseller, propelling Stanley's annual sales from \$70 million in 2019 to an approximately \$750 million in 2023.
- **Audience Expansion:** Originally targeting a predominantly male, outdoor-oriented demographic, Stanley recognized the potential in appealing to a broader audience, including women and urban consumers. This shift was facilitated through strategic partnerships with influencers and a refreshed marketing approach that resonated with a diverse customer base.
- **Digital Engagement:** Stanley embraced social media platforms to engage directly with consumers, leveraging user-generated content and influencer collaborations to enhance brand visibility and relevance in the digital age.

By thoughtfully modernizing its product offerings, expanding its target audience, and engaging with consumers through digital channels, Stanley has successfully rejuvenated its brand. This approach has attracted new customers while retaining the loyalty of long-time patrons, exemplifying how a legacy brand can evolve to meet contemporary market demands without compromising its heritage.

Modernizing your brand isn't about abandoning who you are—it's about amplifying what makes you great in a way that feels relevant today. Start small if the idea of change feels overwhelming. Tweak your messaging, update your visuals, or pilot a digital tool. Every step you take brings you closer to bridging the gap between your legacy and the future.

By honoring your history while embracing modern practices, you position your business to thrive for generations to come. And that's a legacy worth building.

A hand is holding a piece of paper with a hand-drawn website design sketch. The sketch includes various elements like a header, navigation bar, main content area with two yellow boxes, and a footer. The text 'WEB DESIGN SKETCH #4' is written on the paper. The background shows other papers with similar sketches.

STRATEGY 2: LEVERAGING GENERATIONAL MARKETING

Generational marketing isn't just about identifying your audience by age; it's about understanding their unique values, preferences, and the way they engage with brands. Every generation—whether it's Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, or Gen Z—has distinct characteristics that shape how they interact with businesses. For generational brands, the challenge lies in appealing to all these groups without diluting your message.

The good news? You don't have to choose one audience over another. By tailoring your approach to speak to the shared values and specific needs of each generation, you can create a cohesive strategy that bridges generational divides while strengthening your brand's relevance.

Think about the evolution of the customer journey. Baby Boomers often rely on personal recommendations or trust built over years. Millennials and Gen Z, on the other hand, are more likely to explore brands on Instagram or TikTok, seeking authenticity and social proof through user-generated content. Ignoring these differences means missing out on opportunities to connect with each group on their terms.

For generational brands, leveraging this insight means creating tailored touchpoints that cater to the strengths and behaviors of each audience. This isn't about fragmenting your strategy—it's about integrating layers of relevance that allow your brand to resonate widely.



How to Leverage Generational Marketing

1. Understand Each Generation's Priorities

- Baby Boomers often prioritize quality, reliability, and personalized service. They want to feel valued and respected by the brands they support.
- Gen X appreciates straightforward messaging and practicality. They're loyal when they see value and efficiency.
- Millennials are drawn to experiences, social responsibility, and brands that align with their personal values.
- Gen Z values diversity, sustainability, and brands that are vocal about social and environmental issues.

Recommendation: Conduct customer surveys or analyze your audience demographics to identify the mix of generations interacting with your brand. Use these insights to shape your communication strategy.

2. Tailor Messaging for Multi-Generational Appeal

Speak to shared values while customizing the tone and delivery for each group. For instance, emphasize tradition and craftsmanship in your messaging for Boomers, while highlighting innovation and sustainability for Gen Z. Use platforms strategically. Facebook remains a stronghold for Boomers and Gen X, while Instagram and TikTok are more likely to capture the attention of Millennials and Gen Z.

For example, a family-owned coffee brand might use Facebook ads to promote loyalty programs for long-time customers and Instagram Stories to showcase eco-friendly packaging for younger audiences.

3. Diversify Your Marketing Channels

Meet each generation where they are. Baby Boomers respond well to email marketing and in-person interactions, while Millennials and Gen Z expect engaging video content and interactive online experiences. **Actionable Tip:** Invest in a content strategy that spans channels—combine storytelling blog posts with bite-sized reels or TikTok videos that capture attention quickly.

4. Highlight Inter-Generational Benefits

- Show how your brand connects generations. For example, a restaurant could feature content that celebrates family dining experiences, showcasing grandparents sharing a meal with their grandchildren.

Actionable Tip: Create campaigns that inspire shared experiences, such as multi-generational discounts or events that bring different age groups together.

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE: HOW SKIMS MASTERS GENERATIONAL MARKETING

SKIMS, the shapewear and lifestyle brand founded by Kim Kardashian, has become a powerhouse in the fashion and apparel industry by mastering the art of generational marketing. The brand's meteoric rise is a testament to its ability to appeal to multiple generations simultaneously, leveraging messaging, product offerings, and marketing strategies that connect with a wide range of audiences.

How SKIMS Excels at Generational Marketing

1. Tailored Messaging for Different Generations

- SKIMS speaks directly to younger generations like Gen Z and Millennials through social media and influencer partnerships, focusing on self-expression, body positivity, and inclusivity. Its campaigns frequently feature influencers and celebrities who resonate with these audiences.
- For older generations, the brand emphasizes comfort, practicality, and high-quality materials, which appeal to customers looking for dependable, everyday essentials.

2. Inclusive Product Design

- The product range caters to all body types, skin tones, and age groups, ensuring a broad appeal. From classic shapewear for professional women to trendy loungewear for younger consumers, SKIMS ensures every demographic sees themselves reflected in its offerings.
- SKIMS has also expanded into gender-neutral collections, further widening its audience reach and connecting with younger generations that prioritize inclusivity.

3. Multi-Generational Campaigns

- SKIMS often creates campaigns that feature diverse age groups. For example, their Mother's Day campaigns have included Kim Kardashian alongside her mother and grandmother, creating relatable and aspirational content that resonates across multiple generations.
- This multi-generational approach strengthens the brand's appeal to both younger audiences, who admire celebrity figures, and older ones, who appreciate the emphasis on family values.

4. Digital-First Marketing for Younger Audiences

- SKIMS excels at using platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube to connect with younger consumers. Short, engaging content showcasing the products in real-world scenarios helps the brand dominate younger-skewing platforms.
- At the same time, SKIMS ensures its website is user-friendly and streamlined, making online shopping easy for all age groups.

The Results

By understanding and addressing the unique needs and values of different generations, SKIMS has positioned itself as a brand that transcends age barriers. Its ability to market comfort, inclusivity, and style has turned it into a billion-dollar company, with customers ranging from teens experimenting with fashion to grandparents looking for high-quality basics.

SKIMS shows that successful generational marketing isn't about creating separate brands for different age groups—it's about finding common values and tailoring your messaging to highlight them. Whether it's through inclusive products, relatable campaigns, or digital-savvy strategies, generational businesses can create meaningful connections with audiences of all ages, just like SKIMS.

STRATEGY 3: EMBRACING FULL- SPECTRUM DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

For generational businesses, digital transformation is no longer optional—it's essential for staying competitive and relevant. While your history and legacy are valuable assets, they won't resonate with modern audiences if your brand isn't accessible, engaging, and functional in the digital world. The goal of full-spectrum digital transformation isn't just to have a website or social media presence; it's about creating an interconnected digital ecosystem that enhances customer experiences and drives business growth.

Today's customers expect seamless digital interactions with brands. From researching a business online to making purchases or scheduling services, convenience and usability are key. If your digital touchpoints feel outdated or disjointed, you risk losing potential customers—especially younger ones who rely heavily on digital channels to discover and engage with brands.

But digital transformation isn't just about meeting consumer expectations; it's also about efficiency. Leveraging technology can streamline operations, improve marketing precision, and even open new revenue streams. For generational businesses, this means more than just adopting the latest trends; it means creating a system that supports long-term growth while honoring the values and traditions that built your brand.

What Full-Spectrum Digital Transformation Looks Like

1. A Unified Online Presence

- Your website is your digital storefront, and it should reflect your brand's identity while being easy to navigate. Customers should be able to learn about your business, make purchases or bookings, and connect with you—all without frustration.
- **Pro Tip:** Use responsive design to ensure your site works seamlessly on any device. Mobile traffic accounts for over half of all web visits, so a mobile-friendly experience is critical.

2. Integrated Digital Tools

- Beyond your website, consider tools that enhance customer convenience. These might include online booking systems, loyalty apps, or digital payment options.
- **Example:** A family-owned restaurant might integrate an online reservation system or delivery app, making it easier for customers to dine on their terms.

3. Social Media That Tells a Story

- Social media isn't just for posting updates; it's a powerful storytelling tool. Platforms like Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok allow you to share your history, values, and day-to-day operations in an engaging way.
- **Tip:** Develop a content calendar that includes a mix of educational, entertaining, and promotional content to keep your audience engaged.



4. Data-Driven Decision-Making

- Digital tools allow you to gather data on customer behavior, preferences, and purchasing patterns. Use these insights to refine your marketing strategies and better meet your customers' needs.
- **Actionable Step:** Set up Google Analytics or a similar tool to track website traffic and conversion rates, then use this data to identify areas for improvement.

5. E-Commerce and Beyond

- If you sell physical products, an e-commerce platform can help you expand beyond your local market. For service-based businesses, consider selling gift cards, memberships, or exclusive online content.
- **Example:** A generational boutique could launch an online store to sell signature items nationwide, bringing their unique story to a broader audience.

Actionable Steps to Begin Your Digital Transformation

1. **Audit Your Current Digital Presence:** Review your website, social media channels, and on-line tools. Identify areas that feel outdated or disconnected.
2. **Invest in the Right Technology:** Prioritize tools that align with your business goals, whether that's an updated website, a customer relationship management (CRM) system, or a mobile app.
3. **Start Small but Think Big:** Digital transformation doesn't have to happen all at once. Begin with the most critical touchpoints and expand from there.

Digital transformation isn't about abandoning the traditions that make your brand unique—it's about enhancing those traditions with tools that keep your business relevant and engaging. By creating a cohesive digital ecosystem, you can meet modern consumer demands while staying true to your roots. When done thoughtfully, digital transformation becomes a bridge between the past and the future, ensuring your legacy thrives for generations to come.

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE: HOW MICROSOFT LEADS IN FULL-SPECTRUM DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Microsoft is a prime example of a legacy business that has fully embraced digital transformation to stay competitive and relevant in the modern era. Founded in 1975, Microsoft built its reputation as a pioneer in software, most notably with Windows and Office. However, as technology evolved and the demands of businesses and consumers shifted, Microsoft recognized the need to adapt—and they did so with remarkable success.

How Microsoft Excelled at Digital Transformation

1. Shift to Cloud Computing with Azure

- Microsoft identified early on that cloud computing would define the future of technology. The launch of Azure in 2010 positioned the company as a leader in cloud services, competing directly with Amazon Web Services (AWS).
- By transitioning its software offerings—like Office and Dynamics 365—to the cloud, Microsoft made its products more accessible, scalable, and collaborative for businesses of all sizes.

2. Subscription-Based Revenue Model

- Historically, Microsoft relied on one-time software sales. However, it transformed its business model with the introduction of subscription-based services like Microsoft 365.
- This shift not only ensured recurring revenue but also created a seamless user experience with continuous updates, cross-device compatibility, and integrations with other Microsoft tools.

3. Enhancing Collaboration with Teams

- With the rise of remote work, Microsoft Teams became a cornerstone of workplace collaboration. Teams integrated video conferencing, file sharing, and chat into one platform, addressing the needs of modern businesses and challenging competitors like Zoom and Slack.

- Microsoft's ability to quickly adapt and enhance Teams during the pandemic demonstrated its agility in responding to market demands.

4. AI and Machine Learning Integration

- Microsoft has incorporated AI across its products, from predictive text in Office tools to intelligent analytics in Power BI. The acquisition of OpenAI's technology (including ChatGPT integration in products like Word and Excel) further positions Microsoft as an innovator in digital transformation.
- AI has not only improved productivity but also enhanced the personalization and functionality of Microsoft's tools.

5. Redesigning Consumer Touchpoints

- Microsoft modernized its digital ecosystem to deliver a consistent, user-friendly experience across all its platforms. From its website to its support channels and app interfaces, every touchpoint reflects a commitment to meeting customer expectations in the digital age.

Through its digital transformation, Microsoft achieved a monumental turnaround. Once seen as a company falling behind competitors like Apple and Google, Microsoft is now among the most valuable companies in the world, with a market cap exceeding \$2 trillion. Its focus on cloud services, AI, and collaborative tools has positioned it as an essential partner for businesses navigating their own digital transformations.

Microsoft's success underscores the importance of a full-spectrum digital transformation. It's not just about adopting new tools—it's about rethinking your business model, product delivery, and customer experience to align with modern needs. By investing in technology, adapting to changing consumer demands, and delivering value across every touchpoint, legacy businesses can position themselves as leaders in the digital era, just as Microsoft has done.

STRATEGY 4: STORYTELLING THAT CONNECTS GENERATIONS

Every generational business has a story—it's what sets you apart from younger competitors. Maybe your story is rooted in how the business was started in your grandfather's garage during the Great Depression. Or perhaps it's about how your family has passed down recipes, craftsmanship, or values for decades. The key to storytelling is simple: make it matter to your audience. But how do you take a rich history and craft it into a narrative that resonates with customers across generations?

Great storytelling doesn't just focus on the past; it creates bridges between the past, present, and future. When done effectively, your story becomes a tool to engage older customers who already feel connected to your legacy while also inviting younger audiences to see themselves as part of your brand's future.

WHY STORYTELLING WORKS

Humans are wired for stories. They help us make sense of the world, connect with each other, and feel an emotional bond with something bigger than ourselves. For generational businesses, storytelling serves a dual purpose:

- It shows long-time customers that you're committed to the values and traditions they cherish.
- It invites new customers to engage with your brand by showcasing how your legacy aligns with their modern expectations.

Storytelling is especially powerful for brands that want to move beyond just selling a product or service. It's about creating a connection that fosters trust, loyalty, and advocacy—qualities that will sustain your business for decades to come.

How to Build a Story That Resonates Across Generations

1. Start with Your Roots

- Dive into the history of your business. What inspired the founders? What challenges did they overcome? Highlight the values and moments that shaped your brand.
- **Tip:** Keep it personal and relatable. Audiences connect with human stories, not corporate jargon.

2. Showcase Evolution

- A great brand story isn't static—it evolves. Highlight how your business has grown or adapted over time while staying true to its core values.
- **Example:** If your family-owned winery started with just a few barrels and now ships nationwide, share that journey. Include moments of challenge and triumph to humanize your brand.

3. Make It Relevant to Today

- Tie your story to modern values like sustainability, community, or innovation. Explain how the same principles that guided your past also shape your decisions today.
- **Tip:** Speak to issues your audience cares about, like using eco-friendly practices or supporting local communities.

4. Engage Future Generations

- Use your story to show younger audiences how they fit into the narrative. For example, emphasize the ways your brand's heritage can enrich their lives—whether it's through quality products, meaningful experiences, or a shared commitment to values.
- **Actionable Idea:** Share customer stories on social media. Encourage younger customers to post about how they engage with your brand.

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE: THE SUCCESS OF LEVI'S STORYTELLING

Levi's, the iconic denim brand, has mastered the art of generational storytelling. While their legacy as a pioneer of durable workwear dates back to the 1800s, their messaging today is just as relevant to a Gen Z audience. Levi's doesn't simply rely on its history; it ties its story to modern values, like sustainability (through their water-saving initiatives) and individuality (highlighting customer creativity with customizations).

The result? Levi's appeals to long-time customers who appreciate the brand's enduring quality and craftsmanship while attracting younger customers who value self-expression and environmental responsibility. By evolving their story, Levi's remains timeless yet current.

Levi's, one of the world's most iconic denim brands, is a masterclass in using storytelling to connect with multiple generations. Founded in 1853, Levi's has successfully evolved its brand while staying rooted in its rich history. Through authentic storytelling, Levi's continues to resonate with both longtime loyalists and younger audiences, bridging generational divides and maintaining its status as a cultural staple.

How Levi's Excels at Storytelling Across Generations

1. Celebrating Heritage While Staying Relevant

- Levi's storytelling begins with its origins. The brand frequently highlights its role in shaping American culture, from outfitting workers during the Gold Rush to becoming a symbol of rebellion during the counterculture movements of the 1960s.
- By anchoring campaigns in its heritage, Levi's reminds older generations of the role the brand has played in their lives, while introducing younger audiences to the brand's legacy as a cultural icon.

2. Incorporating Contemporary Values

- Levi's storytelling doesn't just rely on the past—it integrates modern values like sustainability, inclusivity, and self-expression. Campaigns like "Buy Better, Wear Longer" appeal to environmentally

conscious consumers, particularly Millennials and Gen Z, who prioritize ethical consumption.

- The brand also highlights diverse voices and experiences in its marketing, reflecting the modern world while staying true to its inclusive ethos.

3. Universal Appeal Through Personal Stories

- Levi's invites consumers to share their own stories with the brand. Whether it's a well-worn pair of 501 jeans passed down from a parent or a customized denim jacket that expresses individuality, Levi's encourages customers to see their products as a canvas for personal expression.
- Campaigns like "Live in Levi's" showcase real people and their unique journeys, creating an emotional connection that resonates across all age groups.

4. Using Cultural Moments to Connect Generations

- Levi's has consistently associated itself with cultural movements that unite generations. From collaborating with musicians and artists to highlighting its role in key historical moments, the brand positions itself as a timeless yet contemporary force.
- For example, the resurgence of 90s fashion trends has allowed Levi's to reintroduce vintage styles in a way that appeals to both younger consumers seeking nostalgia and older customers revisiting their youth.

Levi's ability to tell authentic, multi-generational stories has helped it maintain relevance in a competitive market. The brand's strategic balance of heritage and innovation has allowed it to thrive across cultural and economic shifts. Today, Levi's is as popular with Gen Z TikTokers sporting baggy jeans as it is with Baby Boomers cherishing their classic Levi's 501s.



Levi's success demonstrates the power of storytelling that connects generations. By celebrating your history while aligning with modern values and inviting consumers to see themselves in your brand's narrative, you can create deep, lasting connections. Authenticity, inclusivity, and cultural relevance are the keys to ensuring your story resonates across age groups, just as Levi's has done for nearly 170 years.

Actionable Steps to Craft Your Brand Story

1. **Interview Stakeholders:** Talk to your family members, employees, or long-time customers to uncover stories that might not be immediately obvious.
2. **Focus on Visual Storytelling:** Use photos, videos, and graphics to bring your narrative to life. Vintage photos, behind-the-scenes clips, or even a simple timeline of your brand's history can be powerful.
3. **Use Your Story Consistently:** Incorporate your narrative across all touchpoints—your website, social media, email campaigns, and in-store experiences. Consistency reinforces your brand identity.

Storytelling isn't about looking back—it's about creating a thread that connects your history to the present and future. When you craft a story that honors your roots while making it relevant to today's audience, you create a narrative that resonates across generations.

Your story has the power to inspire loyalty, attract new customers, and differentiate your brand in a crowded marketplace. Don't just tell your story—invite your audience to become part of it.



STRATEGY 5: SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Today's consumers care deeply about the values a brand stands for, and for many, sustainability and social responsibility are at the top of their list. This is especially true for younger generations like Millennials and Gen Z, who actively choose to support brands that align with their values. For generational businesses, integrating sustainable and socially responsible practices isn't just a nice-to-have; it's an essential part of remaining relevant in a world that prioritizes conscious consumerism.

But here's the thing: sustainability and social responsibility aren't about adopting trends—they're about building trust, showing accountability, and demonstrating a long-term commitment to making the world better. Generational businesses are uniquely positioned to lead in this space because they often have deep community ties and a history of doing right by their customers.

WHY SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY MATTER

For legacy brands, adopting sustainable practices goes beyond reducing environmental impact—it's also about future-proofing the business. From lowering operational costs to improving brand loyalty, sustainability can be a key driver of growth. Social responsibility, meanwhile, helps businesses strengthen their relationships with both their customers and communities, making them more than just a brand but a force for good.

For example:

- **Consumers Reward Responsibility:** Studies show that 88% of consumers want brands to help them make a difference. When you align your brand with their values, you create a stronger, more lasting bond.
- **Sustainability Can Save Costs:** Efficient practices like reducing energy use, sourcing local materials, or minimizing waste aren't just good for the planet—they're good for your bottom line.

How to Incorporate Sustainability and Social Responsibility

1. Start with What You Already Do Well

- Many generational businesses already embrace sustainable practices without realizing it. For example, sourcing from local suppliers or offering high-quality, long-lasting products. Highlight these efforts in your branding.
- **Pro Tip:** Conduct an audit of your current operations to identify sustainable practices you're already implementing or could easily adopt.



2. Be Transparent About Your Efforts

- Consumers value authenticity, so it's important to share what you're doing and why. Whether it's sourcing ethically, switching to eco-friendly packaging, or supporting local nonprofits, be open about your impact.
- **Example:** If your family-run restaurant composts food waste or sources ingredients locally, share those stories on your website or social media.

3. Engage with Your Community

- Social responsibility starts at home. Partner with local organizations, sponsor community events, or contribute to causes that align with your brand's mission.
- **Actionable Idea:** A bakery might donate surplus goods to food banks or offer workshops on reducing food waste at home.

4. Set Measurable Goals

- Sustainability and social responsibility initiatives work best when they're measurable. Set achievable goals like reducing energy use by 20%, sourcing 50% of materials locally, or donating a percentage of profits to charity.
- **Example:** A clothing brand could pledge to transition to 100% organic cotton within five years and track its progress publicly.

5. Involve Your Customers

- Make sustainability a part of the customer experience. For example, incentivize customers to return used packaging, bring reusable containers, or participate in donation drives.
- **Example:** A coffee shop could offer discounts to customers who bring their own mugs or donate a portion of sales to environmental initiatives.

REAL-WORLD EXAMPLE: HOW BEIS EMBODIES SUSTAINABILITY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Beis, the luggage brand founded by actress Shay Mitchell, has quickly become a favorite among travelers for its stylish, functional, and thoughtfully designed products. While Beis is a relatively young brand, it offers a powerful example of how businesses can integrate sustainability and social responsibility into their core strategy to build trust and loyalty among consumers.

Sustainability in Action

- **Eco-Conscious Materials:** Beis has made strides in offering sustainable options within their product line. For example, their recycled polyester and eco-friendly fabric choices reduce environmental impact while maintaining durability and aesthetic appeal.
- **Sustainable Packaging:** The brand uses minimal, recyclable packaging to ship its products, ensuring that their environmental footprint remains as low as possible.

Social Responsibility in Practice

- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Beis champions inclusivity by creating products that cater to a broad audience, from frequent travelers to occasional vacationers. They focus on practical features like expandable compartments, affordable price points, and transparent communication, ensuring their products are accessible to many.
- **Giving Back:** Beis is actively involved in charitable efforts. For instance, they've partnered with organizations that support underprivileged communities, donating products to those in need and contributing to social initiatives that align with their brand values.

Beis's sustainability and social responsibility initiatives aren't just checkboxes—they're woven into the fabric of the brand. Through transparent

communication on social media and their website, they consistently highlight their commitment to these values. This authenticity resonates with modern consumers, especially younger generations, who actively seek brands that align with their own ethical beliefs.

By prioritizing sustainability and social responsibility, Beis has positioned itself as more than just a luggage company—it's a brand with purpose. This approach has helped them build a fiercely loyal customer base while standing out in a crowded marketplace. Beis proves that doing good for the planet and society isn't just an add-on; it's a key driver of modern brand success. This case study highlights how even small steps toward sustainability and responsibility can lead to significant long-term rewards, making it an essential strategy for businesses looking to remain relevant and impactful in 2025 and beyond.

Actionable Steps to Get Started

1. **Identify Opportunities:** Review your operations to find areas where sustainability and social responsibility can be naturally incorporated.
2. **Communicate Clearly:** Share your initiatives with customers through your website, social media, and in-store messaging.
3. **Measure and Improve:** Track the impact of your efforts and update your audience on your progress.

Sustainability and social responsibility aren't about perfection; they're about progress. Even small steps can have a big impact, both for your business and the world. As a generational business, your history gives you a unique advantage: the opportunity to lead by example and inspire others to follow suit. By committing to practices that benefit the planet and your community, you're not just securing your future—you're honoring your legacy in the most meaningful way possible.



THE PAYOFF: THE BENEFITS OF APPLYING THESE STRATEGIES

Applying these five strategies isn't just about checking boxes or keeping up with trends—it's about positioning your business to thrive in an ever-changing marketplace. When executed thoughtfully, these approaches can create meaningful, long-lasting benefits for your generational business. Here's what you can expect:

1. **Strengthened Brand Relevance:** By modernizing your brand, you ensure it stays fresh and appealing to today's customers while still resonating with loyal, long-term supporters. Whether it's through updated visuals, refreshed messaging, or digital transformation, these strategies help you stay top-of-mind in a crowded market. A relevant brand is one that continues to attract new customers while keeping existing ones engaged.
2. **Expanded Market Reach:** Generational businesses often excel at serving a specific audience, but with these strategies, you can broaden your appeal. Leveraging generational marketing and embracing digital tools allows you to connect with younger audiences while maintaining your core base. This expansion ensures your business grows without losing its identity.
3. **Enhanced Customer Loyalty:** Customers are drawn to brands that feel authentic, innovative, and aligned with their values. By adopting sustainable practices, telling compelling stories, and creating exceptional digital experiences, you'll deepen your customers' connection to your brand. Loyal customers aren't just repeat buyers—they're advocates who help spread your story and grow your business organically.
4. **Improved Operational Efficiency:** Digital transformation isn't just about attracting customers; it's also about streamlining the way you operate. Whether it's automating reservations, using data analytics to guide decisions, or optimizing your e-commerce platform, these tools save time and resources. An efficient business is better equipped to focus on what matters most: delivering value to your customers.
5. **Increased Revenue and Profitability:** At the end of the day, these strategies are designed to drive growth. Modernizing your brand, embracing digital tools, and connecting with your audience on a deeper level directly translate into higher revenue. Sustainability and social responsibility can also open up new revenue streams by appealing to value-driven consumers who are willing to pay more for ethical products or services.
6. **Future-Proofing Your Legacy:** The ultimate goal for any generational business is longevity. These strategies aren't quick fixes—they're investments in the future of your brand. By evolving with the times while staying true to your roots, you ensure your business remains relevant and resilient for years to come. Future-proofing isn't just about survival; it's about thriving and passing on a legacy of innovation and success.



ON A FINAL NOTE

As a generational business, you hold something truly unique: a legacy built on trust, tradition, and resilience. But to thrive in 2025 and beyond, it's clear that legacy alone isn't enough. The marketplace has shifted, and so have consumer expectations. By modernizing your brand, tailoring your approach to different generations, embracing digital transformation, leveraging storytelling, and committing to sustainability, you're not just adapting—you're setting the stage for growth and long-term success.

These strategies aren't about turning your back on the past. They're about amplifying the values and strengths that have carried your business this far while ensuring they resonate with new audiences. It's about creating a brand that feels timeless yet forward-thinking, rooted in heritage but alive with innovation.

THE FOLGERS COFFEE EVOLUTION STORY

Take Folgers Coffee as an example. For decades, the brand was synonymous with tradition, comfort, and its iconic slogan, "The best part of waking up is Folgers in your cup." But as coffee culture evolved—with younger consumers favoring artisanal, sustainable, and specialty coffee brands—Folgers risked being left behind.

Instead of clinging to its old image, Folgers embraced change. The brand recently overhauled its marketing, unveiling a new campaign that plays off the nostalgia of its jingle while appealing to a younger, humor-loving audience. Their updated approach also focuses on sustainability, offering more eco-friendly packaging and showcasing their commitment to responsible sourcing. Folgers didn't abandon its roots; it reimagined them for a new era. The result? A reinvigorated brand that continues to connect with its loyal customer base while attracting a fresh audience.

The evolution of Folgers is proof that even the most established brands can grow and adapt while staying true to themselves. Your business has the same opportunity. Whether it's refining your messaging, transforming your digital presence, or exploring sustainable practices, every step you take toward modernization strengthens your legacy.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The benefits of these strategies are clear but implementing them can feel daunting without the right support. That's where SB Digital + Design comes in. Our expertise lies in helping generational businesses like yours navigate these transitions with confidence. Whether you're ready to modernize, embrace digital transformation, or craft a brand story that connects across generations, we're here to guide you every step of the way. Change can be intimidating, but it's also an opportunity. The steps you take today will determine your success tomorrow. Let's make 2025 the year your business not only adapts but leads the way in your industry. Ready to get started?

Let's build something unforgettable together.

The future of your brand starts with the decisions you make today. So, ask yourself: What's the next chapter of your legacy going to look like? Let's write it together.



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