

Majority of US youngsters feels happy

Just under six out of ten (57%) of US youngsters aged 15 to 25 consider themselves to be happy. Only 1 out of 8 feel unhappy. This is revealed by the results of a large-scale new youth survey by InSites Consulting amongst more than 4,000 respondents in 16 countries. The top 3 countries with the largest share of happy youth are Brazil, India and China, where just under 7 youngsters out of 10 feel happy. Sweden and Russia are the numbers 4 and 5. “You can definitely say that this Generation Y is an overall ‘happy generation’”, says Joeri Van den Bergh, youth expert and co-founder of InSites Consulting. “We did not find less than half the youth to be explicitly happy anywhere, and in general only 1 out of 10 youngsters claims to be unhappy.” The highest number of unhappy youngsters was found in the UK (almost 1 out of 5 (18%)), and Italy and France were both near this number.

Music and making something out of life make the youth happy *Parents divorcing decreases the happy feeling*

Good music makes the USA youth the happiest. Being challenged and getting somewhere, and contacts with friends and family come in second and third. Learning something new, sex and holidays are the last items in the top 5 of sources of happiness.

“We sometimes underestimate current Generation Y’s eagerness to learn”, says Joeri Van den Bergh, Gen Y expert at InSites Consulting and author of the book ‘How Cool Brands Stay Hot. Branding to Generation Y’. “These days a youngster no longer stands out by his or her looks, but by being able to do something others can’t do”, so says Van den Bergh. “Our youngsters have been raised by their baby-boom parents with the advice to become extremely good at something and thus making it in life. Their parents of course gave them all the opportunities and means for their hobbies and passions. The Y generation is also called the triumph or trophy generation.”

In this survey InSites Consulting asked the youngsters to describe the days in their lives that they would never forget, and which emotions they felt on that specific day. Out of the 401 stories shared by US youngsters, no less than 45% were linked by themselves to a happy feeling. About 16% were sad and about equally 14% were surprises. The most recurrent special occasions making youth happy were: meeting the love of their life, getting married, getting a degree or a driver’s license, an extremely good sports achievement (medal, champion...) and the very first kiss. “These are not just very emotional events in their lives, these are also moments where they achieved something special for the first time”, explains Joeri Van den Bergh. “And again: this is evidence that they reached something that someone else hasn’t done or hasn’t experienced yet.”

Events that made youngsters unhappy were: their parents' divorcing, being diagnosed with a serious illness, being cheated on by their partner and losing someone they care about. Extreme physical experiences like mountain climbing or skydiving, and meeting the love of their lives, were the most frequent surprises in our youth's lives. US youngsters linked a mere 12% of unforgettable experiences to a feeling of fear. They link this emotion with aggression, changing schools or the risk of losing their job. Aversion (5%) and anger (7%) were least present in the stories of our youth's lives. In the first one youngsters talked about the TV footage of 9/11 or being involved in a fight. Anger was most linked with the end of a relationship or the bereavement of someone they cared about.

Youth the happiest on a summer Saturday between 8 and 10 p.m. *And the least on a January Monday Morning*

It is not really surprising that youth in the US feel the happiest in the summer. Only China, India and Brazil generate diverging results. Youngsters in Brazil feel little difference between the seasons, although autumn makes them slightly less happy. This same season is the happiest time in the year for Chinese youth, whereas Indian youngsters prefer the winter. In the holiday month of August the US youth feel the happiest. January and February are depressing months for many, but thanks to the festivities the winter month of December manages to do better than the autumn months of October and November and the spring months of February and March.

Most youngsters all over the world consider Saturdays to be mainly happy days. Only in India Sunday comes first, whereas Swedish youngsters dislike the Sunday as much as the typical Monday dip. Whilst most areas see their youth aged 15 to 25 at their best between 8 and 10 in the evening, the Spanish, Chinese and Russian prime time is slightly later: from 10 until midnight. Everybody seems to experience the lowest level of happiness between 6 and 8 in the morning.

Technology and food brands bring the most happiness to Gen Y *M&M's and Coca-Cola are still the kings of happiness*

More than seven out of ten American youngsters connect the emotion of 'happiness' with the brands M&M's and Coca-Cola, which makes both American brands score slightly better than Doritos (66%). "These brands have been focussing on the Y generation for quite some time through great co-creation campaigns that they actively involve the youngsters in. That is how they fully answer this generation's need to realise something and to be heard", says Joeri Van den Bergh, author of *How Cool Brands Stay Hot*. Another remarkable fact is that some technology brands – Microsoft, Sony and Nintendo – are present prominently in the top 5 linked to happiness. "Generation Y is not called the technology generation for no reason", says Van den Bergh. "Previous generations saw car brands as the unlimited freedom, whereas this generation chooses mobile phone brands, gaming, internet and computer brands." Furthermore brands and gen Y expert Joeri Van den Bergh states that it is crucial for a current-day brand to appeal to the happiness emotion. "Thirty % of the US youth think it's important for a brand to make them feel happy. That turns it into one of the main brand characteristics for this generation of consumers. And that's what M&M's and Coca-Cola understood a long time ago", so says Van den Bergh.

THE SURVEY

This press release's facts and figures are based on a **global research** organised by InSites Consulting amongst 4,065 respondents aged 15 to 25 (Generation Y) in 16 countries: the USA, Brazil, Russia, India, China, the UK, Germany, France, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, Romania, Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Belgium. The sample is representative for the Gen Y population of each country.

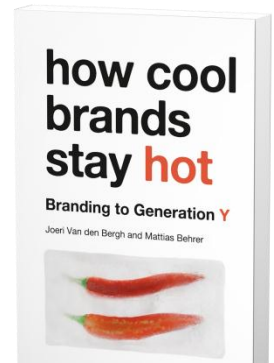
THE BOOK

How Cool Brands Stay Hot is about connecting with a new generation (Generation Y) which will determine the evolution of society and the consumer markets in the coming three decades. The book is based on five years of intensive market research, inspired by insights and case studies by MTV teams all over the world, and offers insights in the psychology and the behaviour of “the Millennials” as consumers. The book describes the five main characteristics of successful youth brands and will help companies to get in touch with this new generation of consumers by understanding their *likes* and *dislikes*. The book is interspersed with case studies and interviews with global marketing executives of international brands such as H&M, Coca-Cola, Levi's, Nike, Nokia and Jack & Jones. It hands its readers creative ideas on how to position, develop and promote brands and how to make them relevant to Generation Y.

More info and updates on <http://www.howcoolbrandsstayhot.com>

The book just won the ‘Marketing Book of The Year’ award. A professional international jury nominated it as one of the 10 best of 2011. Afterwards 2,153 marketers from 85 countries named ‘*How Cool Brands Stay Hot*’ as best marketing book of the past year.

More info on this award on <http://www.marketingbookoftheyear.org>



JOERI VAN DEN BERGH

Joeri Van den Bergh is author of the book *How Cool Brands Stay Hot* and co-founder of InSites Consulting, a global ‘new generation’ research agency with offices in the US, the UK, the Netherlands, Romania and Belgium. During his entire career he has focussed on research and marketing for children, teens and young adults. His customers include international brands such as Lego, Nokia, Sony, MTV Networks, Danone, Unilever and Coca-Cola, whom he did research for. He also advised them on how to approach the market of the youngsters. As author and contributor to numerous magazines he also gives lectures about marketing subjects all over the world.

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InSites Consulting

InSites Consulting was founded in 1997, and although a market research agency its founders never really had the ambition of being market researchers. InSites Consulting is in fact a crazy mixture of academic visionaries, passionate marketers and innovating researchers, all determined to tackle the status-quo van of market research.

In the past 10 years the company has grown an amazing 35% every year. Today they are more than 130 collaborators in 5 offices (Belgium, the Netherlands, the UK, Romania and the US). Their energy is generated by assisting world brands in the improvement of their marketing and in reaching consumers all over the world. The InSites Consulting work has already been rewarded with no less than 15 international awards.

The recipe to success: constant enthusiasm, a lot of hard work, a sharing culture, and permanently innovating research methods and leading marketing ideas. And last but not least: positively surprising hte customers on a daily basis.

More info: www.insites-consulting.com
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