

White paper

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# Millennial Moms: 4 Questions To Answer For Successful Brand Relationships

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## The Millennial Mom

Millennial Mom is all the rage right now. She is smart, savvy, and considers her options. She's loyal to companies that support her causes and can smell authenticity a mile away. She is elusive and rejects traditional advertising, preferring instead to build relationships. In 2014, Millennials (age 20-37) accounted for 24.5% of the US population. These 80 million consumers are not themselves a target market, but rather many market segments grouped together by date of birth and shared experiences. Their differences are based upon life stage and cultural diversity. They have been shaped by new technologies that have disrupted industries and unequivocally changed the way they connect and engage. Millennials are the largest and most diverse segment of our population, and Millennial Mom presents unique challenges and opportunities for brands wanting to reach her authentically and earn her long term loyalty. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the unique characteristics and behavior of Millennial Mom and help brands develop a strong relationship with her. As an influential group of consumers with buying power in the billions, Millennial Moms are the kinds of friends brands need to make and keep.

## Four Questions

To understand how to develop a successful relationship with Millennial Mom, we have to answer 4 key questions: Where does one find her online? What are her media consumption habits and behaviors? What matters to her? Once a connection is made, how do you keep her happy and engaged long term? If this sounds a little like dating, that's because it really is. Like any other relationship, building a brand relationship with Millennial Mom is about making connections, identifying something of value, keeping the relationship beneficial and dependable (with a few 'surprise and delights' along the way), and investing in it for the long term. **Let's get started.**





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## Where Is Millennial Mom Online?

Millennial Mom is highly digital, meaning she can be found throughout the day on multiple screens at multiple online destinations. Just scratching the surface:



Millennial Moms have 3.4 social network accounts on average and spend 17.4 hours on social sites, including Pinterest and Instagram.



Moms spend an average of 12 hours/week listening to online radio, with Pandora making up 56% of the usage.



Moms spend 63% more time streaming online than the general online population, and 83% visit video-sharing sites.



About 2/3 of online moms make purchases online, with Amazon as the favorite shopping app for 46% of moms.



Moms spend 60% more time on blogs and online parenting communities than the general population.

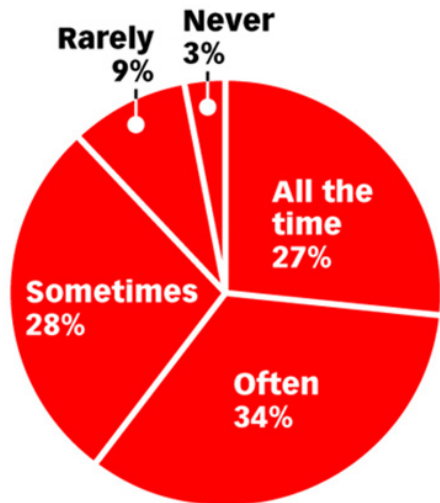
Millennial Mom is digitally connected more than any other demographic. She is online looking for deals and coupons, researching and buying products, checking social media, gaining ideas and inspiration, writing product reviews, and influencing other moms. As a digital native, going online is her preferred means for obtaining information and communicating with brands.





**Frequency with Which US Mother Smartphone vs. iPad Users Use Their Device While Watching TV, July 2014**

% of respondents



**Smartphone users**



**iPad users**

*Note: expectant females or mothers with children under age 9; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding*  
Source: BabyCenter, "US Mobile Mom 2014 Report: Mobile Powers Mom's Life," Sep 8, 2014

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## What Are Millennial Mom's Digital Habits and What Is She Consuming?

### Millennial Mom Visits Stores, but Uses Technology to Get the Best Deals

Millennials are comfortable sharing their personal habits and contact information with marketers, but only when the perceived value outweighs the risks. She's smart and frugal with her media consumption. She is willing to receive emails from brands in return for a discount, invitations to a special sale, or another compelling offer. She expects companies to communicate electronically and have a presence on social media.

### She Multiscreens

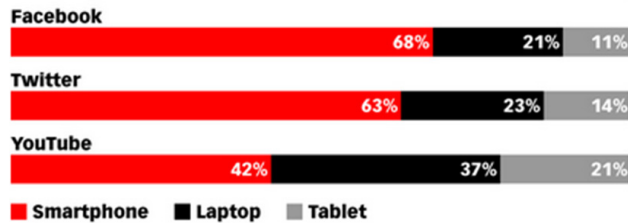
Millennials don't use their smartphones so much to make voice calls, but they do use them daily to go online. No surprise, texting and social media are their preferred methods of communication. There is no shame for Millennial Mom in switching screens; she uses different types of technology at the same time. This can include tweeting while watching TV, or playing Words with Friends while paying bills online, or true multitasking - working while listening to music and or checking email. Marketers can leverage multiscreen behavior by providing additional information online as a program airs or by inviting/encouraging social media conversations and participation.

Of course, in personal relationships, we communicate and interact in different ways with different people, based on what we know about them. That's why companies need to dig into social profiles to understand what Millennial Moms have in common and where their priorities and communication habits diverge. The more personal a connection that can be made, the stronger the bond. Without sensitive targeting and messaging, companies risk alienating their buyers through stereotyping. Millennial Moms are smart; they can smell inauthenticity a mile away.



### Primary Device Used to Access Facebook, Twitter and YouTube According to US Mother Smartphone Users, July 2014

% of respondents



Note: expectant females or mothers with children under age 9; used "most often"

Source: BabyCenter, "US Mobile Mom 2014 Report: Mobile Powers Mom's Life," Sep 8, 2014

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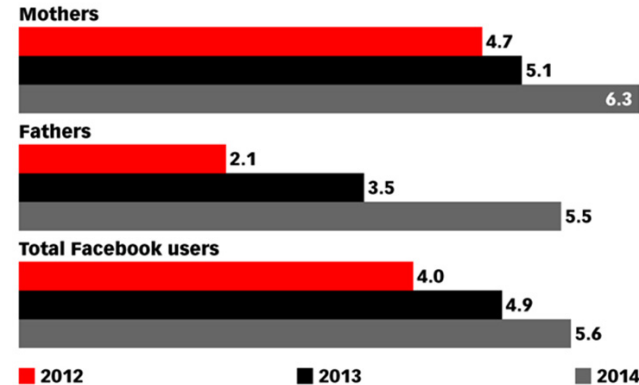
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## She's Mobile at All Times

BabyCenter's 2014 *"Mobile Powers Mom's Life"* report states moms are spending more time than ever on their mobile devices. Today's Millennial Mom is always connected. In fact, in an average day, moms check their social media newsfeeds 15 times and send close to 26 text messages. As you can see on the chart on the top left, smartphones are the primary device moms use to access Facebook and Twitter.

Moms keep their mobile devices with them not only for texting or checking social media, but also to play games, research products, watch videos, and entertain their children. The BabyCenter report states that moms are twice as likely to use their smartphone to entertain their kids than they were a year ago. Also, researching parenting information via smartphone increased by 9.6% year-over-year.

### Average Number of Times per Day US Mother and Father Facebook Users Check Facebook, 2012-2014



Source: Edison Research, "Moms and Media 2014," sponsored by Triton Digital, May 8, 2014

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## She is a Social Influencer, and is Socially Influenced

Moms engage online and influence other moms. Nearly 91% of moms use social media regularly, and they spend twice as much time online as the rest of the population. Moms rely significantly on the online recommendations of other moms, with over half indicating their purchases were influenced by information on social media sites. A 2014 Needham Insights study showed that women are review-loyal while not necessarily brand-loyal. 66% of those surveyed trust reviews from women they do not know. This brings a whole new meaning to the old adage, "Mom knows best". This also creates a substantial opportunity for brands to build and foster direct relationships with consumers who can impact purchase behavior and household brand loyalty.

## Video Consumption: It's Not All Entertainment

65% of moms use their smartphones weekly to view videos across many different types of content, and it's not all just for fun and entertainment. A large percentage is consuming practical information, such as tutorials/how-to videos, news, parenting, and product reviews.



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## What Matters to Millennial Moms?

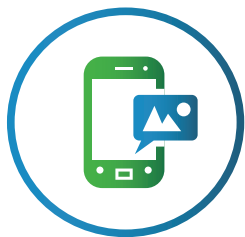
### Value and Positive Experiences are Very Important Purchase Decision Factors

Millennial Mom is not necessarily an obsessive bargain hunter looking for deep discounts. She's willing to spend more for products she deems worth the extra cost, and a wide variety of factors are considered when making purchase decisions. Buying something that makes her feel good about herself, receives positive online reviews, helps her stand out, or is based on a recommendation from others are all factors that influence her purchasing behavior. Think Amazon Mom.

### A Note on Deals/Coupons

Moms have been using coupons to save money since the early 1900's when Post Cereals first offered discounts on breakfast cereal. Today's Millennial Moms, however, are willing to spend more on products they think are best for their families and are looking to befriend brands that make them feel good about purchasing quality products. Of course, this does not mean that Millennial Mom has no interest in cost savings. Like anyone else, by saving money on valued items, Millennial Moms feel like they are "getting a deal" and that makes them feel good about their purchases. What this does mean is that cost-savings is not the only motivation, or even the primary motivation, behind Millennial Mom's purchasing decisions. While coupons won't necessarily influence loyalty to a brand she doesn't already love or believe in, they can influence her purchase behavior in respect to frequency, product trial, or where she buys her preferred products.





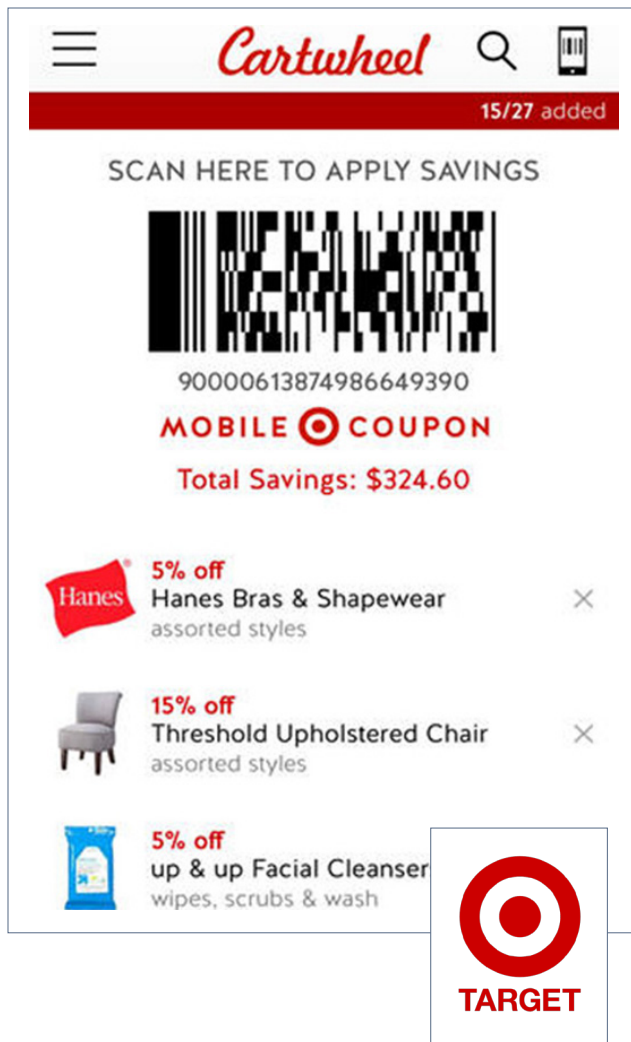
## Convenience and Timeliness

Millennial Moms are busy; 71% work outside the home. Companies that offer products and apps that will help her manage her family's schedule better will have an edge. The combination of time and money saved by utilizing mobile technology is attractive to Millennial Mom. As digital coupons on mobile devices proliferate in the marketplace, geo-targeting can further enrich the consumer experience. For example, if she receives a limited time offer in the form of a digital coupon when she's in the vicinity of a particular retailer/restaurant, then she'll be that much more likely to act immediately. The addition of beacon technology will be able to further enhance the distribution of digital coupons to the "right" consumer at the "right" time, providing even more value to Millennial Mom.

An example of a retailer doing this right is Target. Target partnered with Facebook to develop an engaging choose-your-own-offer savings experience called Cartwheel, a first-of-its-kind program that gives customers a new way to save on hundreds of items throughout Target stores. Consumers download the app and are then served special deals while shopping at Target. The app also includes a social component that involves sharing deals with your friends or comparing who's saving more. It's a win-win for both Target and the consumer. Target is likely increasing the average shopping cart dollar amount, and the consumer feels like they are getting "deals" and saving money. Target recently stated that since Cartwheel's release a year ago, 7.7 million users have saved more than \$84 million. Again, a win-win for Target and for Millennial Mom!

## Non-Profit and Cause Marketing

Millennial Mom makes an effort to buy from "good" companies that "give back" – meaning companies that support issues she believes in, take an active role in her community, and/or donate to charities and non-profit organizations. According to recent Mintel data, while it may not be a primary decision making factor, corporate altruism is meaningful to Millennials. When this is done authentically, it goes a long way towards influencing and securing brand loyalty.







## They Want to Preserve Family Values & Heritage

While Millennial Mom tends to consider herself cutting-edge and adventurous, she often finds herself seeking out familiar brands from her childhood. One reason for this is to preserve family values and heritage. Brands that were familiar to her as a child offer her a sense of comfort and stability in the globally connected and fast-paced world in which she is raising her children. She has a desire to connect her own children to her roots. The impact here is brands that were strong in Millennials' childhoods have the opportunity to reconnect to this key audience. For example, Fruit Loops recently launched a campaign to **"bring back the awesome"** targeted specifically to young parents. Brands should remember Millennial Mom has both progressive and traditionalist streaks and plan their messaging accordingly.

### Key Brand Attributes

According to Moosylvania's 2015 Favorite Brands Ranking Report, when asked what Millennials were looking for in a "right hand brand," the responses were as follows: "high quality products, would recommend, fits their personality, social responsibility, shares similar interests, offers convenience and says important things". Want Millennials? Here is the stickiness:

Make them look and feel good, and entertain them. Mutually beneficial relationships are key for Millennials. They want brands to "get them". Show the same interests, make them laugh and think, and back them up when they need it. Develop products and apps to help them manage their family's schedule. Help them find a healthy dinner option for their little ones. Tell them how important their family's safety is to your company. For a Millennial, this is the way to true brand loyalty and the way they evolve into a brand ambassador. Brands are rewarded with advocacy and loyalty: the key components to building a long-term relationship.







## 4 How to Make the Right Connection?

Millennial Moms feel like they are misunderstood and advertisers don't speak to them. Add that to the fact that 83% of today's new moms are millennials, and you have a great opportunity for marketers to reconnect in an authentic way to build brand loyalty. As Millennials become parents, they will define their own brand preferences and influence the relationships their children have with brands. Millennial Moms are always seeking out ways to improve the lives of themselves and their children.

### **Mom Is a Sponge for information**

They can't consume enough content regarding development of their baby during pregnancy or the later life stages of their children. When making brand content available online, it's important to have credible testimonies for your product, whether from a professional expert or another mom. Peer-to-peer influences play a big part in many decisions new and young moms make. Trusted friends who have recently traveled down this road are the most valuable resource they have after their own mom.

It's critical that marketers initiate a relationship with these moms as early as possible in this new life stage. Our experience working with child-related brands is that a CRM or loyalty program can deliver high returns on investment. This is a time when moms are bombarded and overwhelmed with these new brand decisions. If a brand can establish a one-to-one connection with a new mom at this juncture, brand loyalty should follow.

These ladies are also talking to each other on Facebook, Pinterest, and a number of blogs. It's estimated that these moms spend an average of 17 hours a week on social media networks, so get in on the conversation!



## Make Her Feel Special

To make a true connection, you first and foremost need her to realize that you believe she and her family are special. She is not her mother or grandmother, nor is she just another Snapchatting Millennial. While often portrayed as frantic women trying to “have it all”, 29% of Millennial Moms are self-identified homemakers and many feel that most advertisements are not geared toward them. Conversely 71% work outside the home and feel that most advertisements are not geared toward **them**. This generation of mothers is diverse and possesses a growing need to feel like the brands they support truly understand them.

Don't rely solely on advertisements and coupons. We've already learned that doesn't work on the Millennial generation. While a coupon will encourage her to try the product once, you haven't won her brand ambassadorship. Offer relevant solutions to help her manage her family's schedule, and provide content to help her make healthy and better choices for her children. Find a way to connect with things that are important to her. Your creative should be interactive, with content that taps into her interests and includes genuine ways to connect your brand with what's important to her such as charities, social causes, and community events.

## A FINAL NOTE

Millennial Moms are a growing and impactful force with an enormous amount of purchase power and influence, and they demand the attention of marketers. The good news is, with Millennials' affinity towards social media, they are sharing their interests and feedback constantly. The key for marketers is to connect and engage with Millennials when, where, and how they prefer it. Smart marketers will use data to harness the influencing power of Millennial Mom, creating mutually beneficial relationships through authenticity and technology that will pay off with credibility, advocacy, increased purchases, and growing market share for a long time to come. She is a powerful ambassador, as long as you can win her over.



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