

Pandemic paradigm shift

**How the brand-consumer
relationship is changing**

What's coming up today

- 01 Who is GWI?**
- 02 Brand loyalty is at an all-time low**
- 03 Quality over quantity**
- 04 The end of the curated self**
- 05 Experimentation, novelty, and change**
- 06 The search for meaning**
- 07 Key insights**
- 08 Questions**

Who is GWI?



The world's largest study into the digital consumer

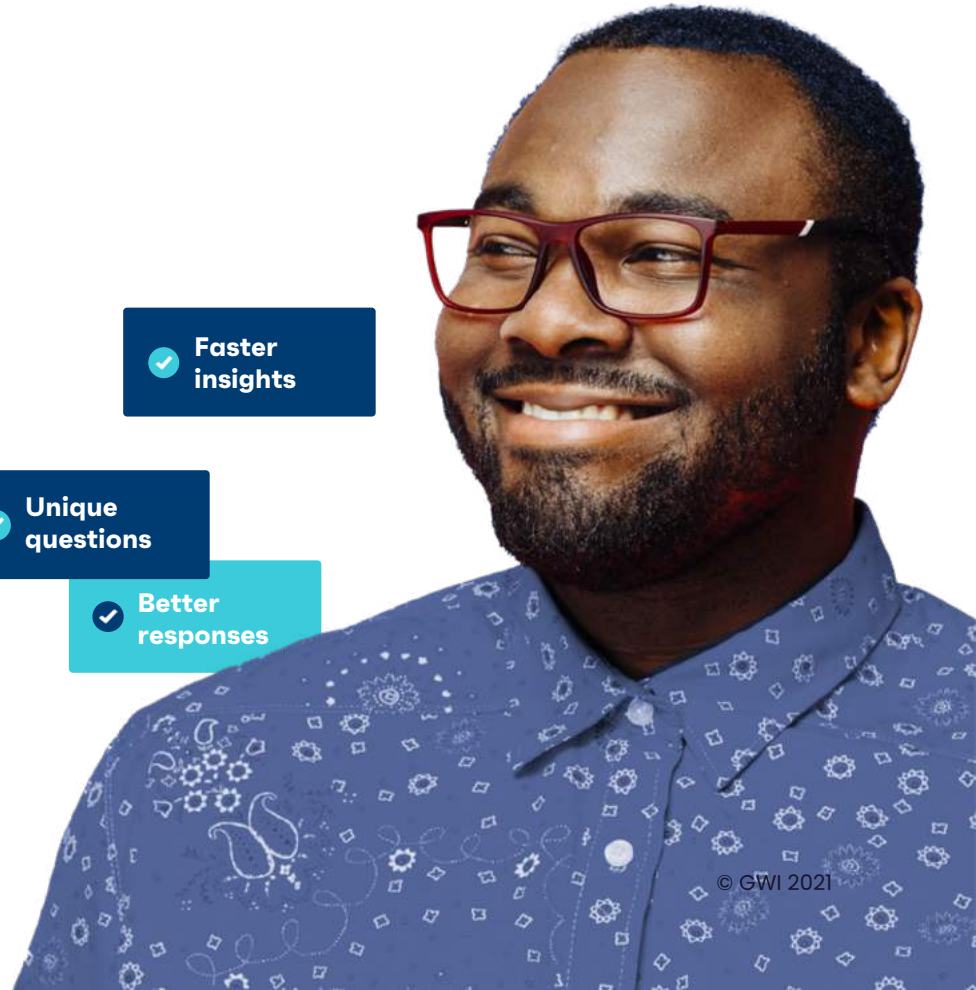
✓ Faster
insights

✓ Unique
questions

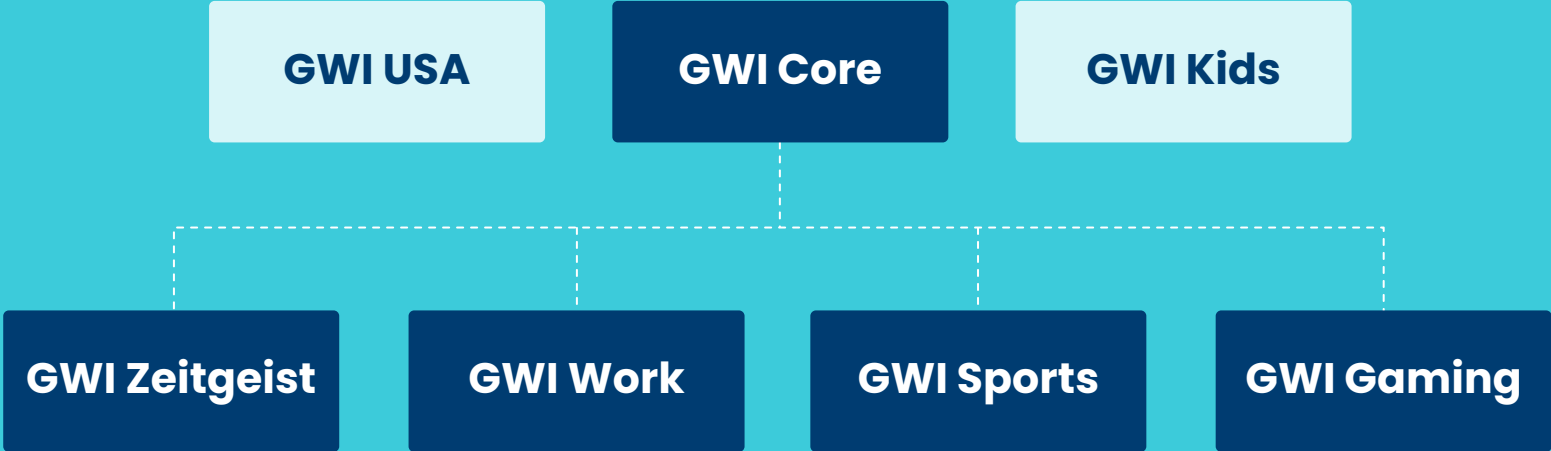
✓ Better
responses

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Our data sets

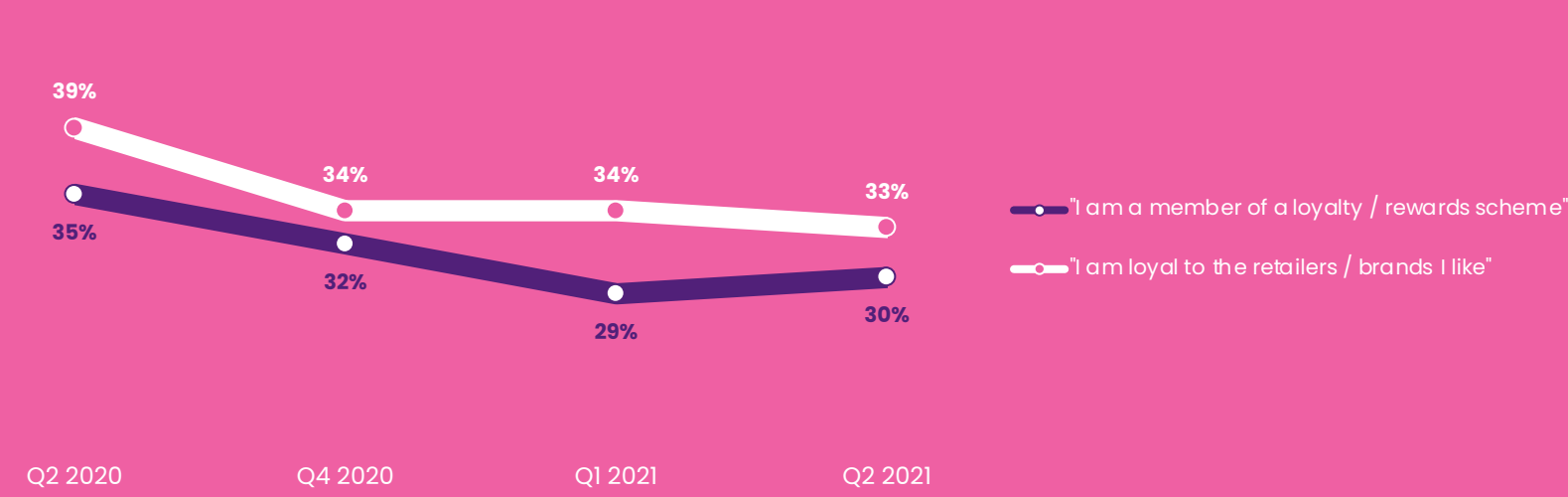


Brand loyalty is at an all- time low



Brand loyalty is gradually declining

% of U.S. internet users who agree with the following statements...

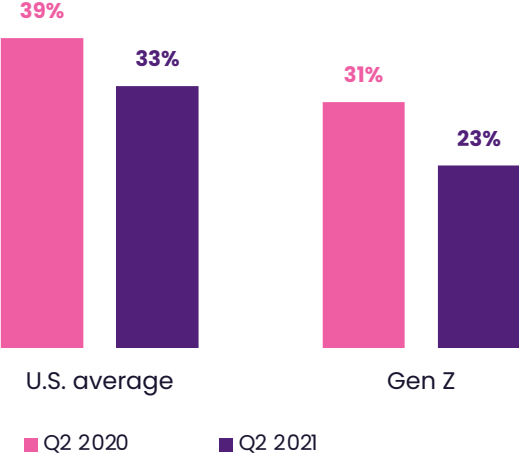


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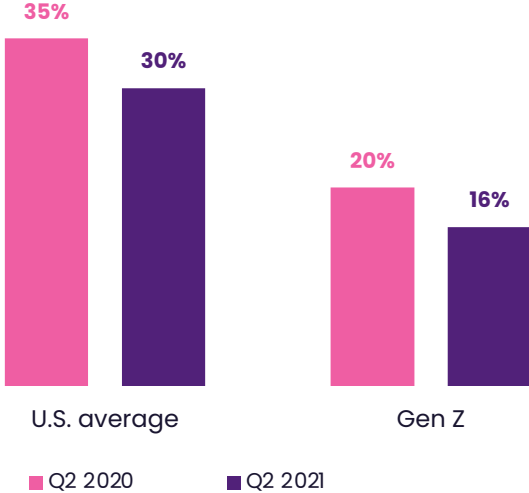
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And lowest among the youngest consumers

“I am loyal to the retailers / brands I like”



“I am a member of a loyalty / rewards scheme”



Quality over quantity



The inclination to spend time & effort saving money is declining

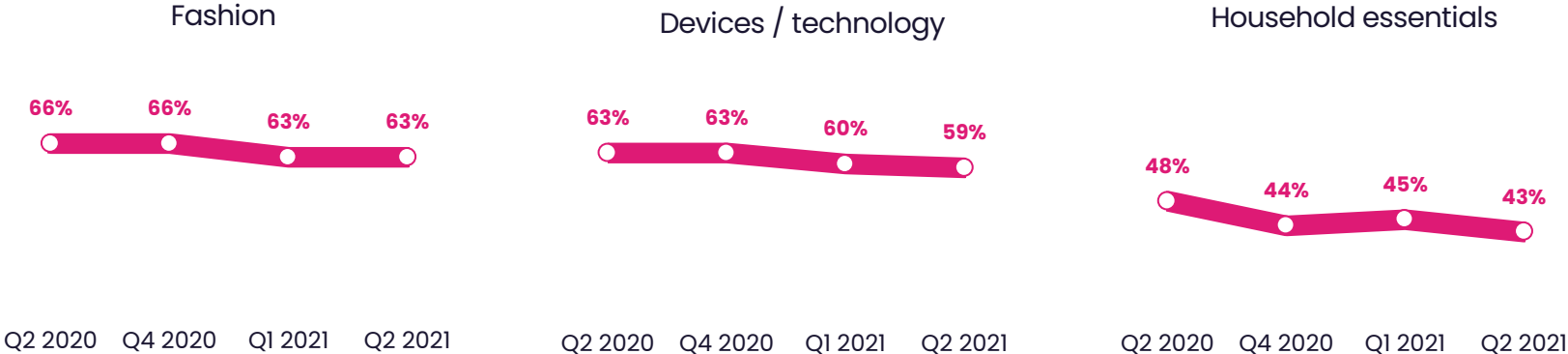
% of U.S. internet users who agree with the following statements...

■ Q2 2020 ■ Q2 2021



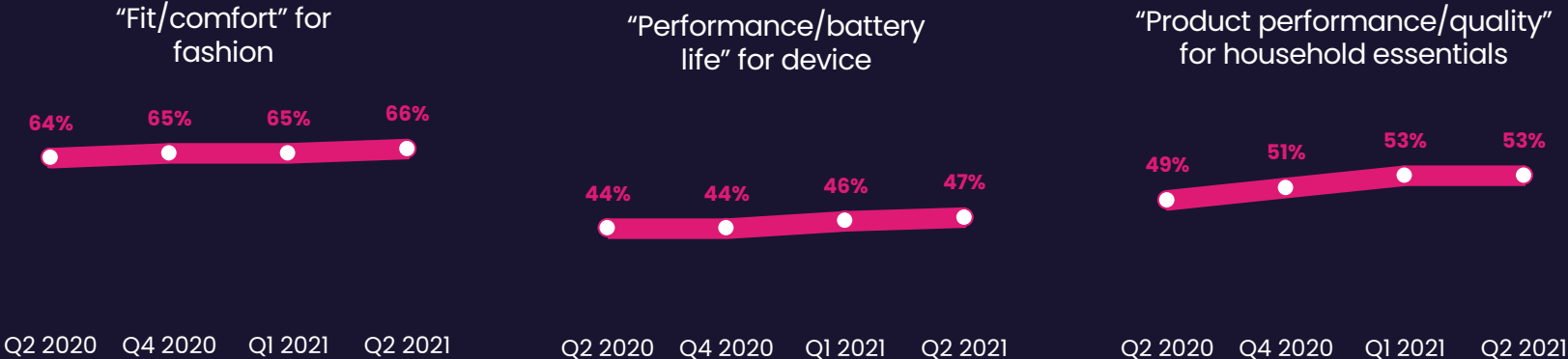
Price as a purchase factor is declining across categories

% of U.S. internet users who say "price" is an important factor when making purchase in these categories:



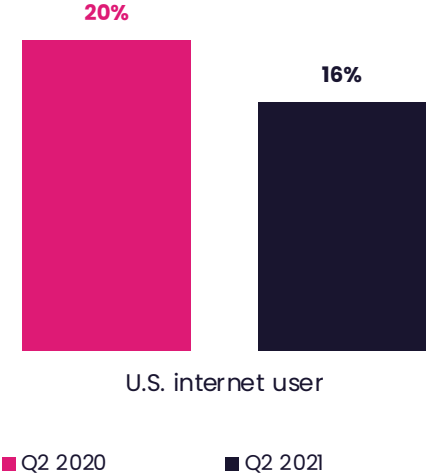
While markers of quality are becoming more important

% of U.S. internet users who the following are important factors when making purchases in these categories:

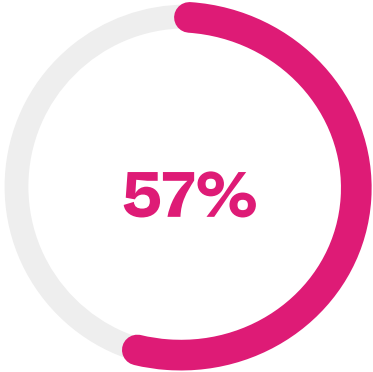


Fervor for big shopping events has fallen

"I wait for events like Black Friday to make major purchases"



"I don't plan to shop during Black Friday / I'm not sure yet"



Brand implications

As consumers re-evaluate their lives and look for more meaning, brands should focus on emphasizing:



**Quality and
longevity of their
products**



**Simplification of
buying, customer
care, returns**

End of the "curated" self

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“

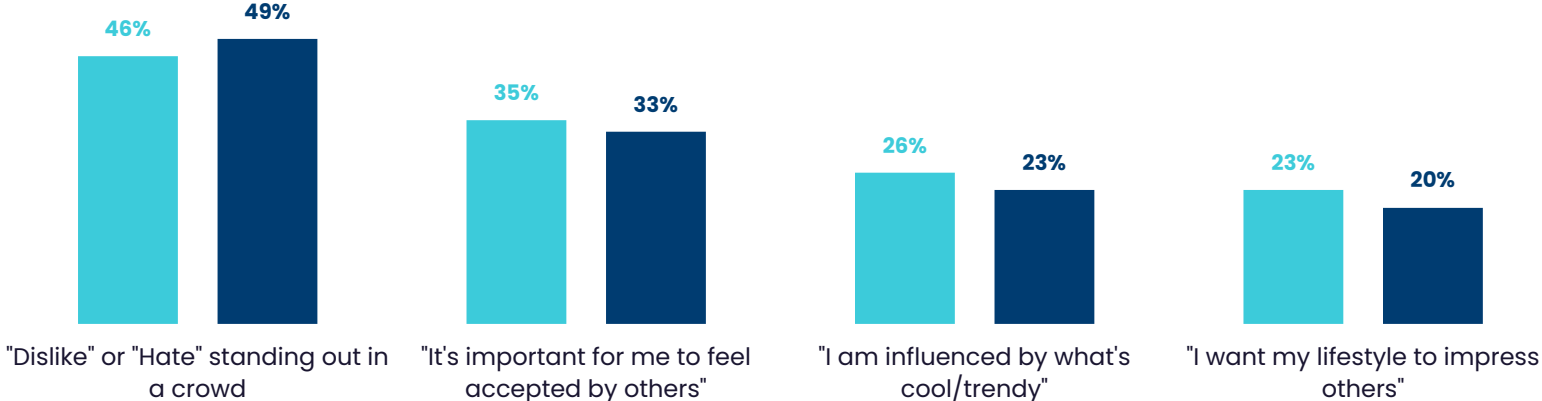
**With so much upheaval around us,
I think we all started to crave real,
meaningful connection over the
fleeting thrill of social validation.**

Sean Herman, Founder & CEO, Kinzoo

For young people, the importance of others' perceptions is declining

% of U.S. Gen Zs who agree with the following statements...

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Being open, vulnerable, and “yourself” is valued

% of U.S. Gen Zs who agree with the following statements...

■ Q2 2020 ■ Q2 2021



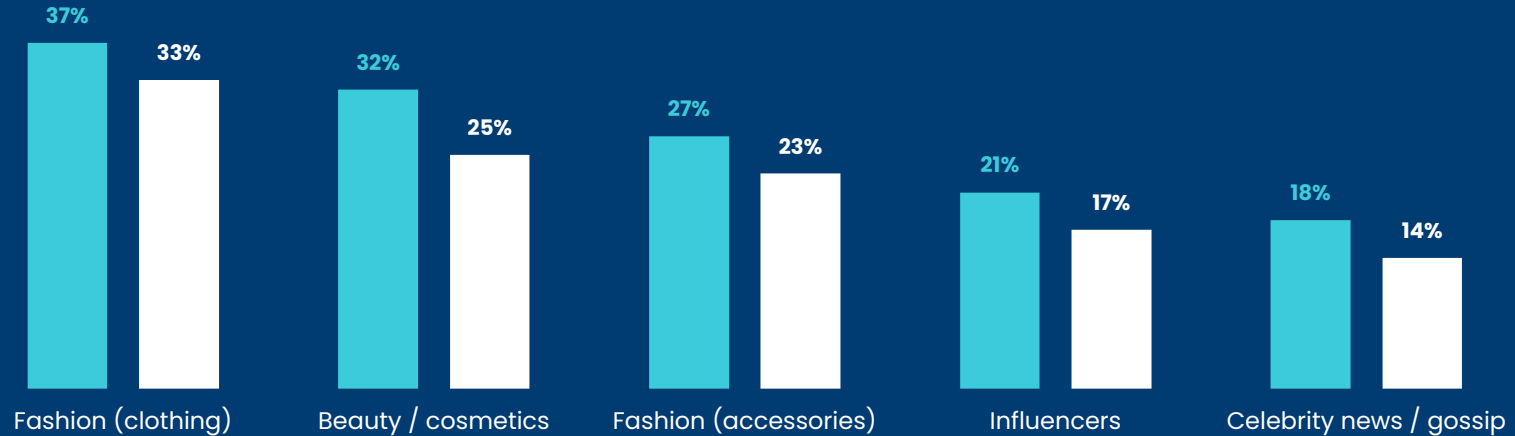
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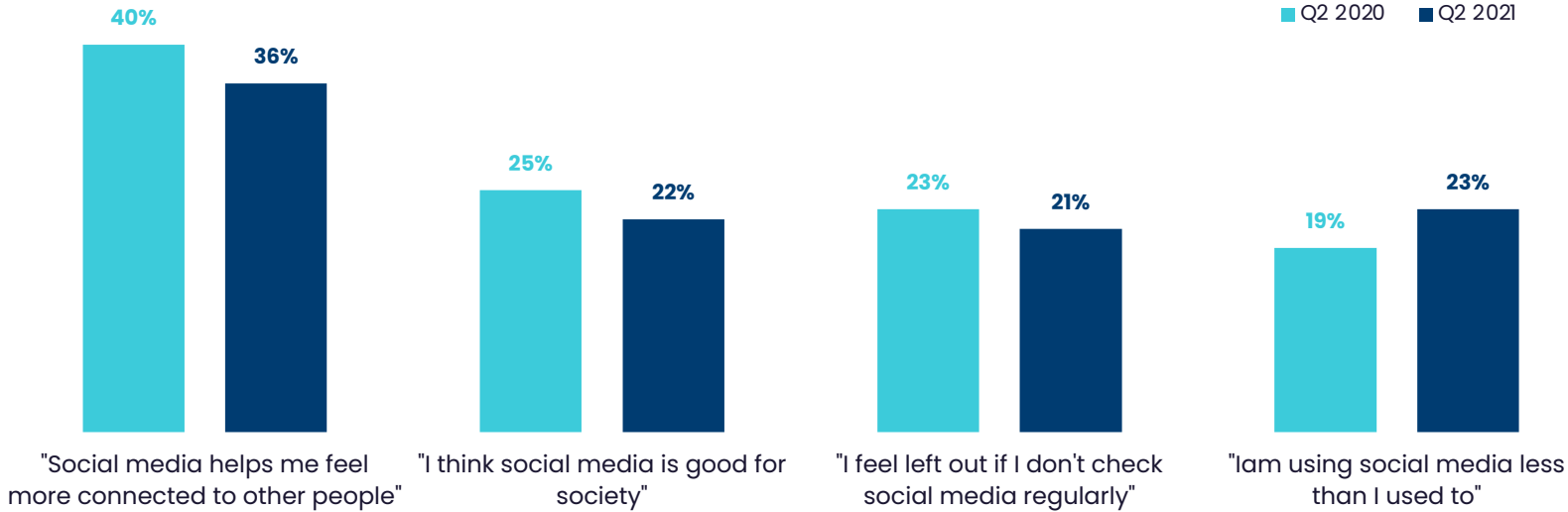
This is reflected in a shift away from image-based interests

% of U.S. Gen Zs who say they're interested in the following topics...

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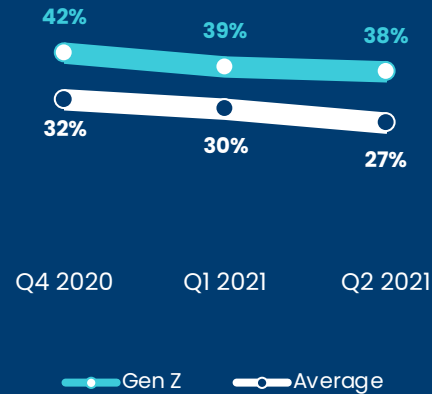


Gen Z's view of social media is growing more negative

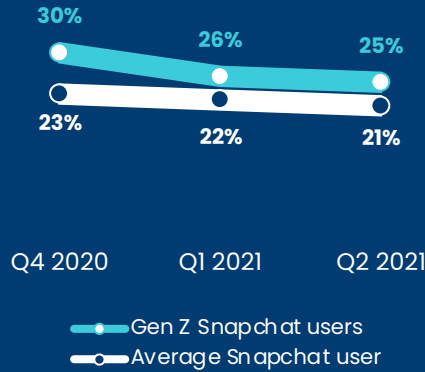


Reflecting a decline in filters and similar features on social media

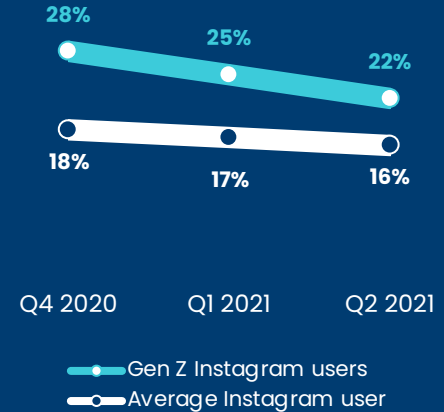
% of Snapchat users who have used "filters/geofilters" on Snapchat



% of Snapchat users who have "used lenses"



% of Instagram users who have "used filters" on Instagram



The top 10 genuinfluencers to watch

01

@aimeesong
5.8M followers
USA

02

@chrisellelim
1.4M followers
USA

03

@agatheaproux
813k followers
France

04

@diamond_april
427k followers
Russia

05

@rachelstyliste
303k followers
France

06

@ariadneartiles
530k followers
Spain

07

@munroebergdorf
575k followers
UK

08

@frankiebridge
1.3M followers
UK

09

@hannahbronfman
764k followers,
USA

10

@mandycaprist0
655k followers
Germany

Brand implications

As young consumers drive a trend toward realness, brand messaging must follow suit:



**Practice
transparency**



**Be informative
rather than
performative**



**Choose
ambassadors
that are relatable
to normal people**

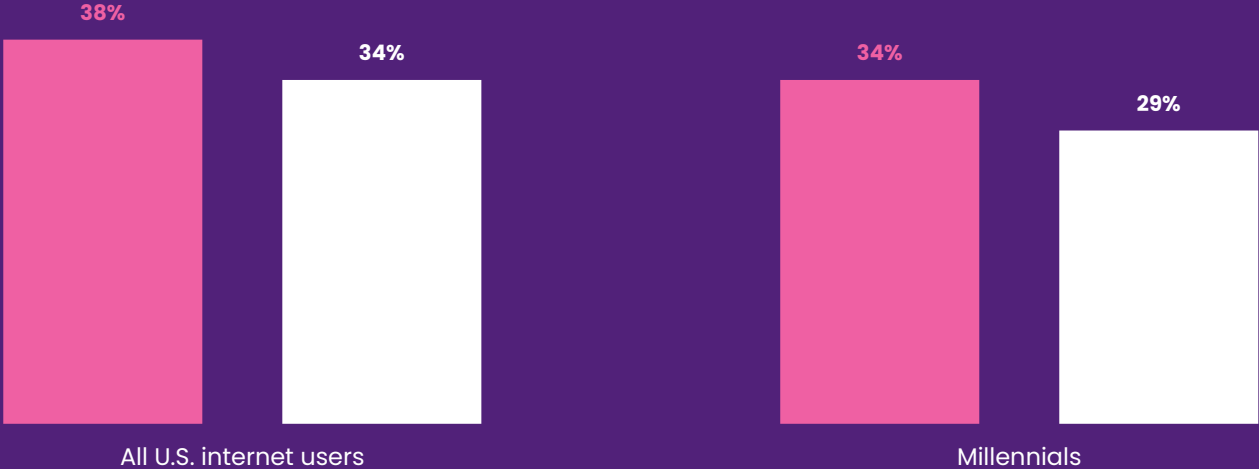
Experimentation novelty and change



The importance of routine is declining

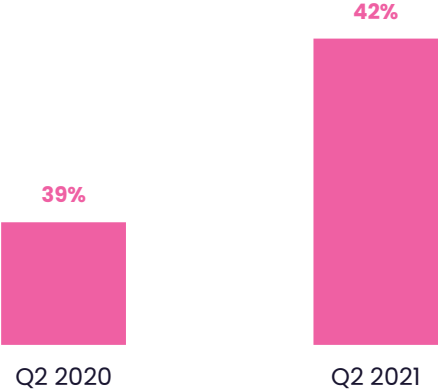
% of U.S. internet users who say "Having a routine" is important to them...

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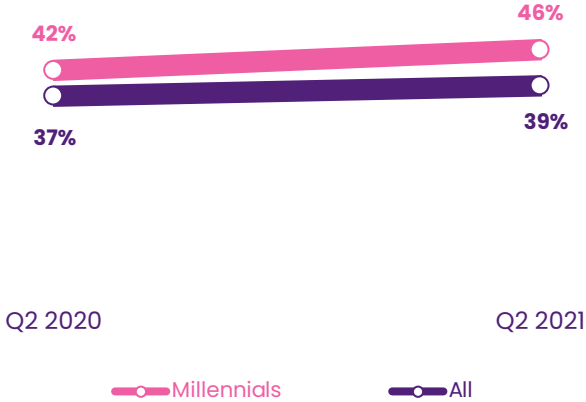


While exploration and experimentation are becoming more important

% of **Millennials** who say “exploring the world” is important to them



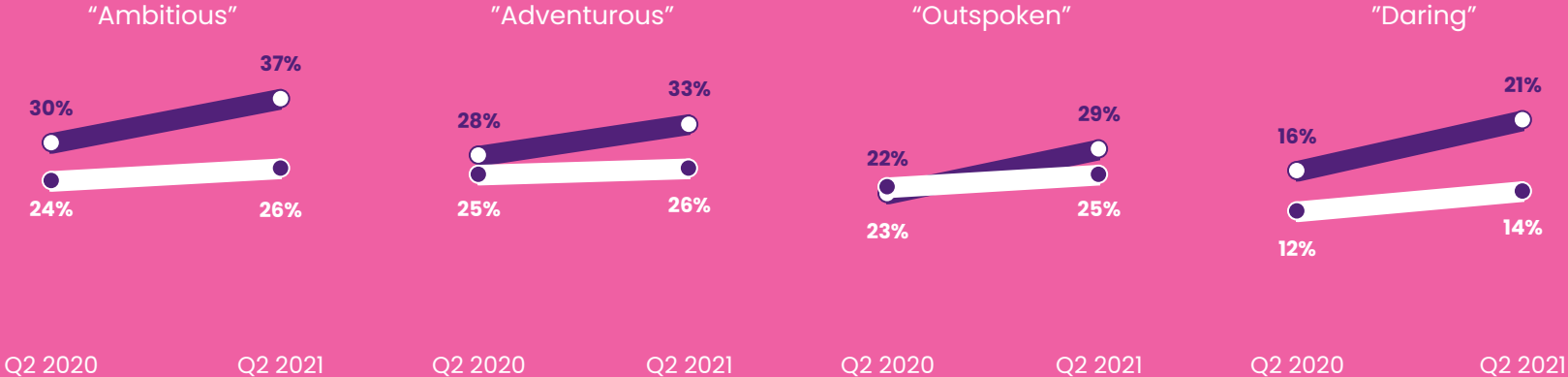
% who say “learning new skills” is important to them



Consumers increasingly identify with bolder, more adventurous character traits

% of U.S. internet users who say the following character traits describe them

■ Millennials ■ All

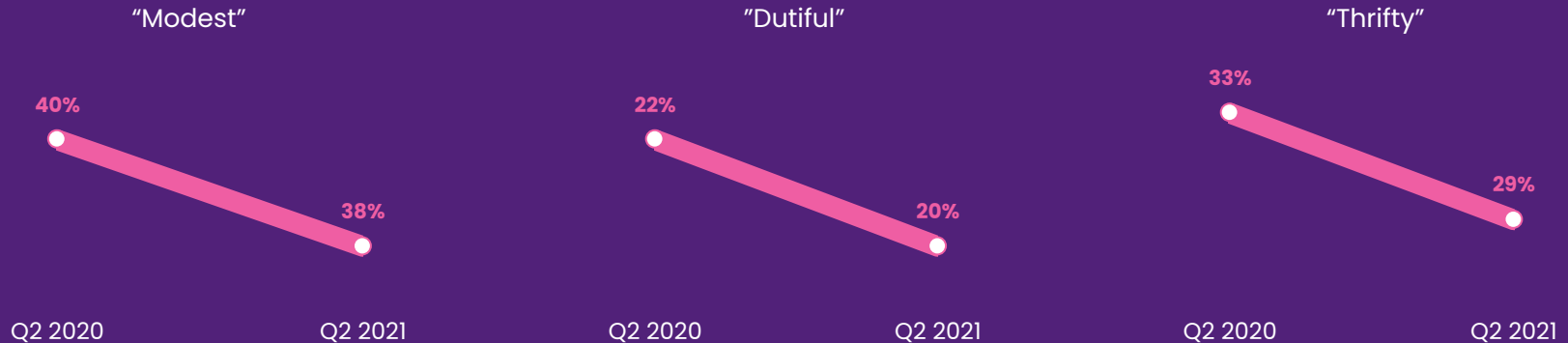


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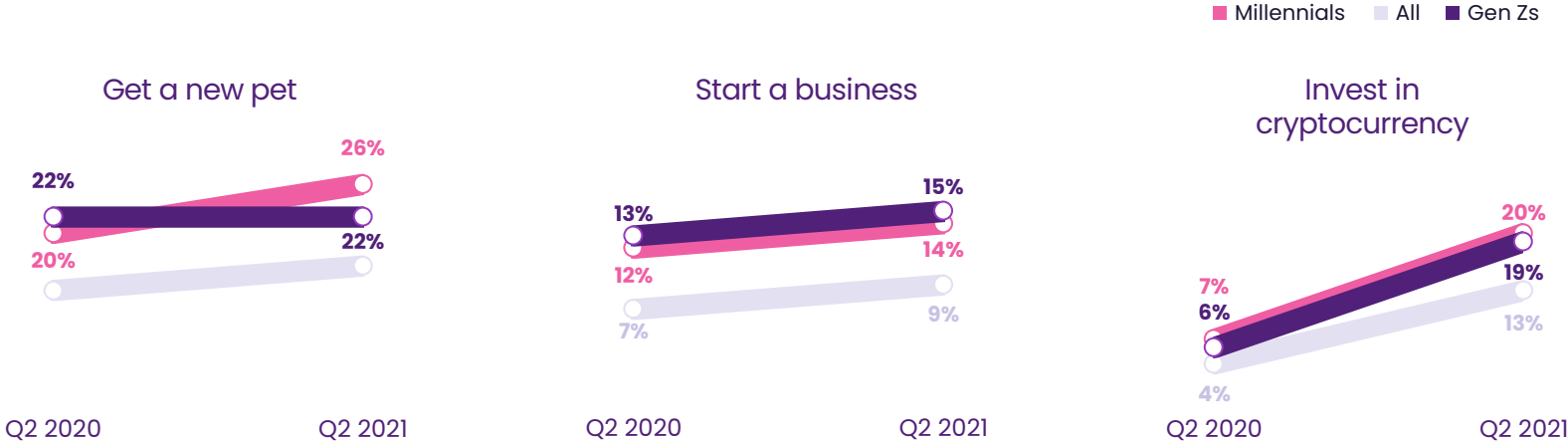
And identifying less with conservative traits that reflect fulfilling obligations

% of U.S. internet users who say the following character traits describe them



Decisions and life-changes show a higher risk tolerance

% of U.S. internet users who say they are planning on doing the following in the next 6 months



“

The Clock-Out Cure
For those who can afford it, quitting has become the ultimate form of self-care

THE CUT

“

The 'YOLO Economy' —
How Millennials are
Reimagining Life Post-
Pandemic

yahoo!

“

The Yolo economy
paradox

The Washington Post

“

Welcome to the
YOLO Economy

The New York Times



The importance of family, parenthood, and major life milestones are increasing

% who say that “raising a family” is important to them



% who say that “being a good parent” is a top 3 life aspiration

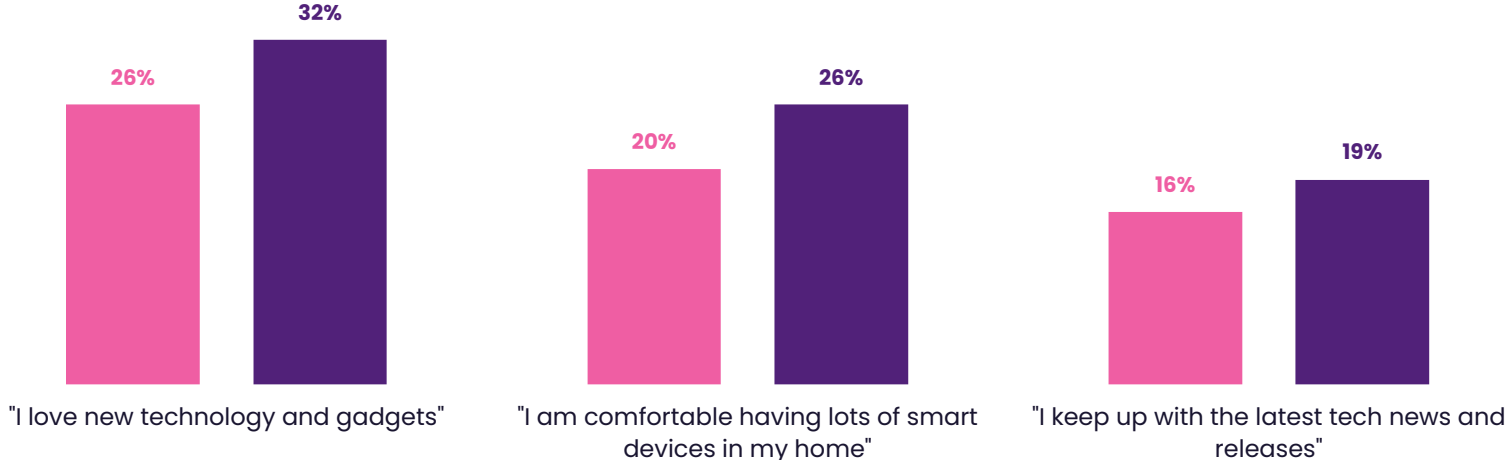


■ Millennials ■ All

Experimentation also shows up in how we're adopting technology

% of U.S. internet users who agree with the following statements

■ Q2 2020 ■ Q2 2021



Brand implications

How brands benefit from the consumer spirit of change largely depends on the industry:



**Innovators can
take their own risks
with new products,
features, and services**



**Brands focused on
reliability can
further cement that,
helping consumers
feel better about risk**

The search for meaning



Interest in social justice, diversity, and inclusivity has grown

% of U.S. internet users who say the following

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This is reflected in what consumers' demands of brands

% of U.S. internet users who say they want brands to do the following



How people choose to invest their money

Compared to investors 45+, investors under 45 are...



nearly 2x

more likely to say a company's **social impact** is a consideration when investing



1.5x

as likely to say a company's **mission & values** are a consideration when investing

“

**The Activist: reality TV show to be
'reimagined' as documentary
after backlash.**

**The
Guardian**

“

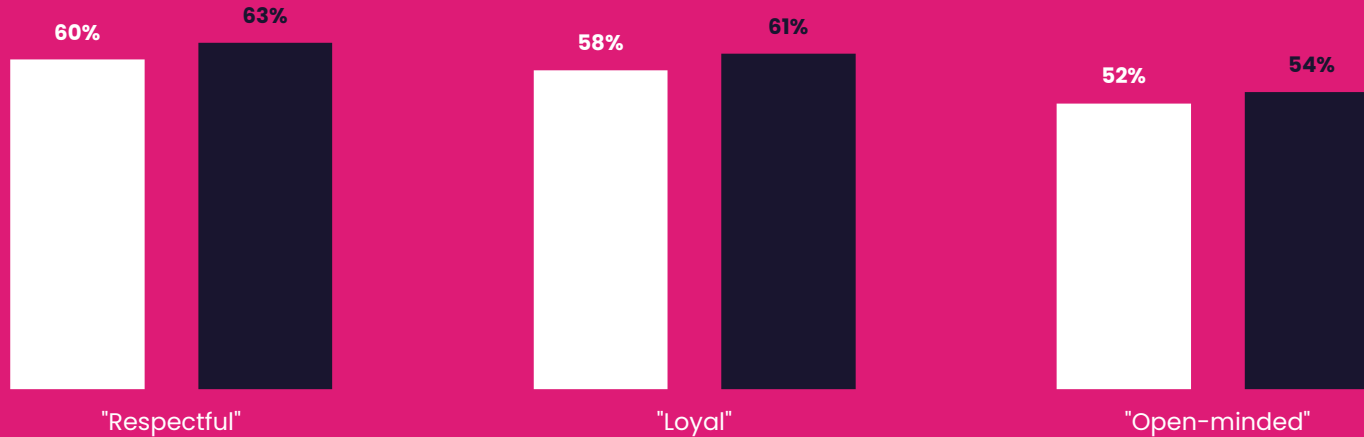
We're heading towards a post-purpose marketplace, where people are no longer buying what you make – or why you make it – but instead who you can help them become.

Thomas Kolster, Branding & sustainability professional,
Author of “The Hero Trap”

Self-identification as “altruistic” is rising

% of U.S. internet users who say the following character traits describe them

■ Q2 2020 ■ Q2 2021



Brand implications

In the context of this broader search for meaning brands should:

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**Be careful not
to fall into the
“hero trap”**



**Enable consumers to
fulfill their need to be
altruistic through
information and
education**

Key insights

Brand loyalty is on the decline

And is lowest among the youngest consumers; brands need to understand the movement of major consumer mindset shifts to realign

Quality over quantity

Time is finite, and consumers increasingly want to focus less on spending it trying to save money, seeking to simplify the material aspects of life

The curated self online is waning

Young consumers want brands and influencers to be honest, informative, and unafraid to be vulnerable

The YOLO economy is coming

But it's about more than chasing pleasures; it includes taking career or financial risks, re-evaluating relationships, and prioritizing big milestones

The search for meaning continues

And will see consumers wanting to live their own values, being drawn to brands that empower them to do so authentically - not exploitatively

Want to know more?



Talk to me – I'm here to help.

apalmer@gwi.com

GWI.