This report looks at the following areas:

- Gen X outlook and self-perceptions – they’ve worked hard, followed the rules, and are underwhelmed by the payoff.
- Gen X health status and priorities, as the group inches toward senior territory, opening opportunity for products and services that help them contend with the reality of aging.
- Gen X financial situation and attitudes, and the impact repeated economic downturns have had on retirement plans and savings.
- The role tech and social media play in the lives of this non-digitally native, but extremely tech reliant group.

Gen X – currently aged 44-58 and representing 60 million Americans – is often seen as the forgotten generation, sandwiched between the sizeable Baby Boomer and Millennial groupings. And while a larger share of this cohort identifies as rule followers and aims to fit in, there’s an active subgroup that wants to stand-out, providing strong fodder for brand outreach. The ways in which Gen X express themselves is shifting with age, with the tie between identity and the role in the family giving way to physical appearance. As such, personal care products show the strongest resilience when cost cutting is considered.

While Gen Xers are in prime earning years, a majority feels their life isn’t where they thought it would be at this point. Quality and experience play strong roles in Gen X spending, with a large majority of respondents expressing willingness to invest in items that will last a long time, versus lower cost items that require more replacement. Recent inflationary pressures have hamstrung savings efforts, leading to concerns with levels of both savings and investments. What’s more, this group is more likely to anticipate prolonging retirement due to the need for financial security, suggesting a perception of feeling trapped by circumstance. Brands that can help in savings and financial security pursuits will resonate.

“Marketing to Gen X requires adeptly navigating a budget-conscious consumer that values quality. Gen X likes nice things, but they want to feel responsible about spending on them. They are a generation that gravitates toward following the rules.”
– Carol Wong-Li, Director, Consumers & Culture

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