

Gen-Y have X factor

Lisa Toia

GENERATION Y, or Gen-SMS, business owners are catching on to innovative marketing techniques to build their businesses and counteract tough economic conditions.

These owners, and particularly those whose products and services target the late teens to early 30s demographic, are a "force to be reckoned with", says Gen-Y marketing expert Adam Penberthy.

Research conducted by Mr Penberthy's Fresh Marketing team found Gen-Y entrepreneurs were more willing than their older counterparts to adopt emerging or new marketing concepts.

And older generations should take note of these emerging trends when trying to engage a Gen-Y demographic.

"Gen-Y are constantly referred to as a 'connected generation', which is completely understandable when the majority of these people have grown up only knowing a world fuelled by technology and inter-connectivity," Mr Penberthy said.

He said the most recent phenomena included advertising on social networking sites such as Myspace and Facebook,

online viral campaigns, specially designed interactive websites, innovative experience marketing opportunities and the use of mobile marketing technology.

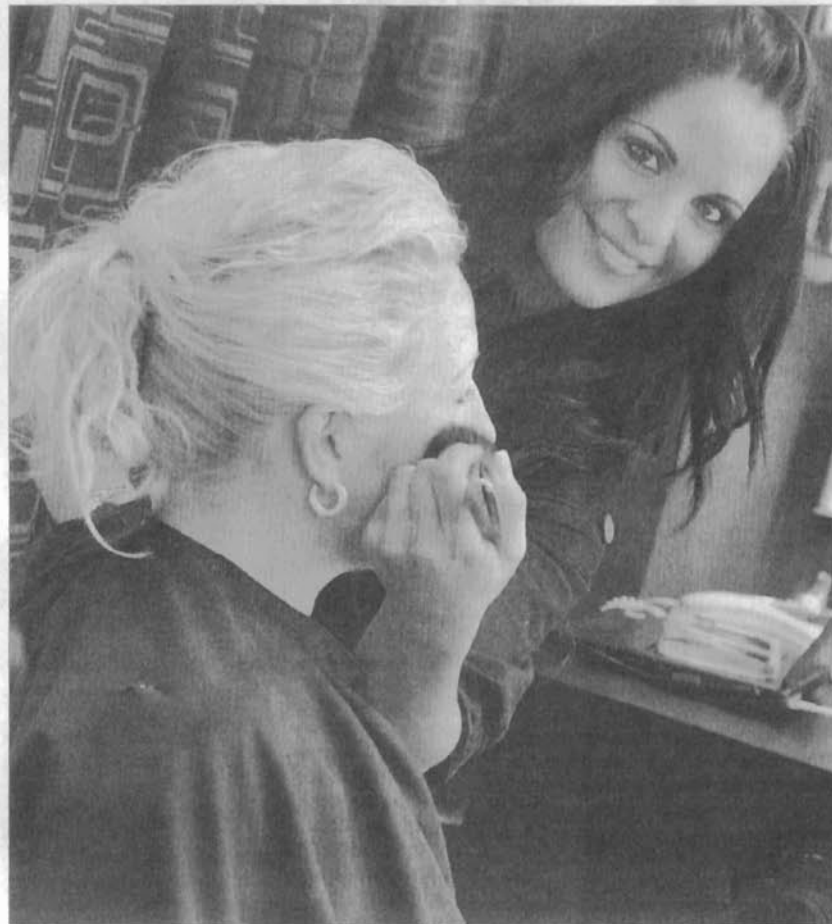
One of 150,000 Australian Gen-Y business owners, BoLinda Pyziakos, of Bodacious Spray Tanning & Beauty, has been using such techniques since she opened mid-year.

"We're trying all avenues to see what works for us," Ms Pyziakos said. "When we first opened we hired a PR and marketing company. We've done some targeted paid advertising. We have a Facebook business page - that's very helpful. The percentage of Gen-Y on there is phenomenal."

Facebook uses keywords within users' profiles to target advertising to those with specific interests, but Ms Pyziakos has hit on an even better method: she keeps a folder onsite for people to list their details and join the Facebook "group" when next online and they are offered specials and entry to a monthly draw.

"We've had more response out of our own ideas than Facebook advertising," she said.

Another key technique is using the ubiquitous Gen-Y attachment of mobiles. One Australian



GEN-Y therapist ... BoLinda Pyziakos in her salon.

Picture: Sarah Marshall

company offering integrated online and mobile marketing strategies is MainStreet International Marketing.

Its latest product, SMS

Rewards, is being used by Ms Pyziakos, who said she was clearly having more success with online and text messaging, than with traditional advertising.

"We have put up posters with our business name on them, asking people to send a message to an SMS number, and we text a message back with a special."

Marketers adapt to savvy clientele

Jenny Dillon

ON average, each Australian gets a staggering 4000 to 5000 marketing messages a day.

Everything is sending out a message, "pick me, pick me, pick me".

"It's fair to say that there is an incredible amount of white noise out there being generated by marketers screaming to be noticed," Maverick Marketing founder Glen Condie, who chaired a recent Experiential Marketing Summit, says.

"People in everyday land are getting more exposed every day but hearing the messages less and less."

And since slick advertising and marketing has become so instilled in our lifestyles, today's major target market for most

things out there, Generation Y, has grown up wise to the tricks of the trade.

"They are so much harder to reach via traditional methods and they are more marketing literate and less likely to be fooled.

"They have a higher level of sophistication when digesting marketers' messages."

Hence the evolution of "experiential" marketing.

"Yes, it's a horrible word," Mr Condie agrees. "But generally it's just a form of marketing with a live experience.

"It's nothing new, it goes back to branded entertaining or handing out packets of chips at railway stations."

But it's gained traction in the past couple of years to now be a significant sector in marketing methods.

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