Generation X given a new label — Screenagers

Marcelene Edwards
Oregon Daily Emerald

Barbie doll, Easy-Bake oven and *Gilligan's Island* references don't cut it with 18- to 24-year-old consumers, but marketing experts seem to think they have found the perfect tool to target this demographic group — computers.

Technology is the focus of this new group labeled "Screenagers."

Computers are a staple in the lives of most young people. Growing up with technology, consumers between 18 and 24 have invested heavily into the market, according to a survey.

The survey, conducted by Woolward and Partners, an advertising firm in San Francisco, found that while some advertising is supposed to be targeted to younger people, the traditional "Generation X" label does not apply to people ages 18 to 24. These people are interested in technology.

About 70 percent of these people use computers everyday. They make up the largest group on the Internet, according to the survey.

Screenagers are interested in new technology and "the Internet is their social revolutionary platform," according to the survey.

They also are the largest consumers of computers. The 26.3 million 18- to 24-year-olds in the United States will become the most active consumer market for computing products this year.

"Whether at home or work, Screenagers are probably the biggest single group driving the bulk of these PC markets," according to the survey.

These people spent about $49 billion on software and $736 million on PC games last year, and the figure is rising.

This group is characterized as the smartest, most cynical consumers ever. The number of magazines targeted at them has doubled to twenty in the last few years.

The label, Screenagers, was developed because marketing groups needed to find a way to connect with 18- to 24-year-olds, the group that owns the most computers and spends more than a billion a year.

The advertising and marketing companies put the label, Screenagers, on this group of people because they are the first adult generation to grow up with computers, said Roger Lavery, advertising professor.

The advertisers like to segment the market to find niches they can target. The type of advertising that is currently popular targets Generation X and leaves out the technologically minded consumer. Although some companies such as MTV and AT&T have targeted this group, other companies have a long way to go, according to the survey.

A lot of people realize that this age is very computer savvy.

"Computing isn't something they have to get into to like," according to the survey. "They're in it. They understand its implications."

Lavery said these types of labels can be ineffective.

"Who's kidding who?," he said. "What is going to be common among any age group? Everyone is different."

Lavery also suggested that Screenagers could be an attempt to stray from the Generation X label because "young people resented it so much." Generation X was so general it really served no purpose. Screenagers is more market specific, he said.

In a report published in the Feb. 6 issue of *Advertising Age*, consumers expressed their dislike for the title Generation X. The ads that are targeted to this group of people, which included some members of the Screenagers, are flat and insulting. This happens because "Baby Boomers" take assumptions from their generation and apply them to younger generations, according to the article by Laurie Freeman.

NOMINATION DEADLINE: APRIL 7, 1995

Faculty Awards For Distinguished Teaching

Now is the time to make nominations for awards which will be presented at Spring Commencement to University of Oregon faculty members for distinguished teaching. Graduate teaching fellows, who have their own competition, are ineligible for these awards. Each of these awards will be accompanied by a monetary prize. Students, faculty, staff and alumni can submit nominations. If you wish to make a nomination, you should send it to the following address using the form below or another sheet of paper:

Lorraine G. Davis, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
207 Johnson Hall, University of Oregon
Please send your nominations no later than April 7, 1995

Eligibility for Awards

Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching

The late Mr. A. J. Ersted established the Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching so the University of Oregon could annually honor faculty members "who have taught comparatively short periods and have demonstrated exceptional abilities to induce students to reason and not merely memorize." The Ersted Award can go only to faculty who are early in their teaching careers. This teaching may occur at the undergraduate or graduate level.

Thomas F. Herman Faculty Achievement Award for Distinguished Teaching

This award honors senior faculty members who have achieved outstanding records as teachers. The Thomas F. Herman Award can go only to faculty members who have held academic rank at the University of Oregon for at least seven years, and who have demonstrated excellence in teaching at the undergraduate or graduate level. The criteria for this award is similar to that used in the past for the Burlington Northern Award.

I nominate _____ for the
❑ Ersted Award
❑ Thomas F. Herman Award
(Check one)
The reasons for this nomination are as follows:
(Please feel free to attach an additional sheet, if necessary.)
_____
Signature of nominator _____
Address _____
Telephone _____
Please indicate your status: ❑ Student ❑ Faculty ❑ Alum ❑ Staff

Speaker from India talks of journey, spiritual values

Samantha Martin
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

Nearly 150 people gathered last Wednesday in the EMU Fir Room to hear an ex-monk discuss incorporating spiritual values and reverence for nature into everyday life.

Born in India, Kumar became a wandering Jain monk at the age of 9. Deeply affected by the death of his father five years earlier, Kumar joined the Jain brotherhood to be "free from the cycle of birth and death," in order to "pursue a path pure and spiritual."

Kumar abandoned monkhood nine years later after reading an essay by the late Mohatma Gandhi.

"I had tried to escape the world by keeping my face to God and my back to the world," he said.

Kumar then decided to devote himself to continuing Gandhi's vision of land reform for India. Walking from village to village, Kumar asked wealthy landowners to relinquish one-sixth of their land for the poor. Using this non-violent approach, Kumar succeeded in collecting four million acres of land.

"That," he said, "was spirituality in action."

Kumar was inspired to embark on an international peace pilgrimage after reading a news article about a 90-year-old man jailed for protesting nuclear arms in Russia.

With "faith in his heart" and no money in his pockets, Kumar began his journey — the United States being the ultimate destination.

Arriving in Moscow, Kumar met two tea factory workers who gave him four packets of tea, asking Kumar to deliver one each to the heads of the largest nuclear nations in the world: France, England, Russia and the United States. Accompanying the tea packets was the message "If you ever think of pressing the nuclear button, please stop a moment, have a cup of tea, and think about all the people who have done nothing wrong to deserve war."

With the exception of ships to cross the oceans, Kumar refused all modes of transportation, relying instead on his own two feet to cross the deserts of Iran, Himalayan mountains and the snow-covered villages of Europe.

Kumar said he had written in advance to President John F. Kennedy, informing the late president of his desire to deliver the "peace tea." Kennedy's office replied to Kumar asking him to write again when he arrived in the United States.

However, after landing in New York, Kumar said he received the news of Kennedy's assassination. Kumar decided to end his 8,000 mile trek at the grave of John F. Kennedy at Arlington National Cemetery, almost two years after starting his journey at the grave of Mohatma Gandhi in India.

After settling in England, Kumar he said helped to establish Schumacher College, an institution devoted to the study of ecological and spiritual values.

Kumar said he feels "universities are no longer universities, they are diversities." Claiming that universities are "too obsessed with personal knowledge," Kumar also said education needs to "show the link that everything is connected and depends on each other," instead of teaching subjects on a divided level.

"How can you fully understand ecology without knowing about sociology, or theology, or the arts?" Kumar asked the crowd last Wednesday.

Kumar's published autobiography, titled *No Destination*," details his experiences throughout his pilgrimage.

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