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# Who is MOJO Ad?

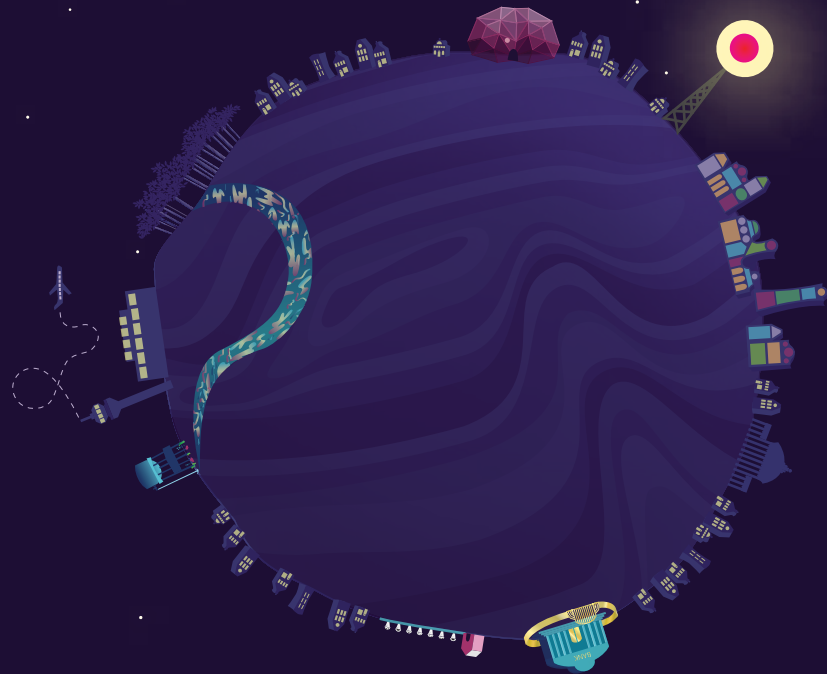


Far, far away, in a realm unlike any other, lies a world unexplored by those outside of this unique life stage. Resting beneath a blanket of stardust, this land is inhabited by the 18- to 24-year-old demographic. They are the Youth and Young Adult (YAYA™) market – a group that lives, works and plays in an ideal world constructed by them, for them. They are diverse in thought and action, and unique in lifestyle and lingo, making their world a mystery to outsiders.

Before now, no telescope could peer through the stardust that enveloped their world. Our mission is to bring you to their intricate land. Once there, you are sure to be awestruck by this complex and wonderful place. It is everything YAYA consumers are and hope to be. It is a YAYA Utopia.







MOJO Ad is the premier full-service, student-staffed professional advertising agency at the Missouri School of Journalism. We are specialists in all things young, specifically 18- to 24-year-olds, or as we like to call it, the youth and young adult (YAYA) market. We understand this group better than anyone else because, after all, we are them. We live in YAYA Utopia with them – sharing, laughing, eating, playing, posting and experiencing life together. It is our reality, and we're here to show you everything in it.

The State of the YAYA report is compiled and written by the MOJO Ad staff and is based on insights from secondary research, as well as our annual nationwide survey of YAYA consumers.

*A nationally representative sample of more than 400 YAYA consumers completed the survey through the e-Rewards Opinion Panel of Rewards Now.*

# THE YAYA DEMOGRAPHIC



In 2015, there was an estimated 31 million YAYA consumers, which is about 10% of the U.S. population<sup>2</sup>

49%  
51%

Male/Female



15% are married<sup>1</sup>



40% are politically neutral<sup>1</sup>



38% are currently enrolled in some college<sup>1</sup>



35% are financially independent from their parents<sup>1</sup>

\$12,429

Median income



29% work full time<sup>5</sup>



88% own a smartphone<sup>1</sup>



28% say social media is their main source of news<sup>7</sup>

There are roughly 31 million 18- to 24-year-olds that make up the YAYA market.<sup>2</sup> This isn't a generation, it's a life stage, and it is a crucial demographic for marketers to understand. These consumers are growing in number and in buying power, but most importantly, they are about to decide which brands will earn their loyalty.

With 40 percent enrolled in college<sup>3</sup> and almost 30 percent working full time<sup>5</sup>, YAYA consumers are diligent, intelligent and innovative. They know how to make the most of what they have in the present but will spend more as they age, changing the status quo and impacting your business for years to come.<sup>30</sup> Their knack for innovation and trendsetting gives them the potential to carry your business into the future. Your visit to YAYA Utopia will show you how to market to their world and learn some unique facts along the way.



## "ADULTING" IN YAYA UTOPIA \*

"Just because I'm making it on my own doesn't mean I'm independent. School teaches you a lot but it doesn't prepare you for the real world. Last week I blew a fuse in my apartment, and the power would still be out if I didn't call my dad for help. It's embarrassing. I usually figure it out, but I had no idea adulting would be this hard."

# “ADULTING” IN THE YAYA UTOPIA

Welcome to YAYA Utopia. I’m your Shadow Bot, and I will accompany you throughout your journey. I’m one of the many devices that YAYA consumers turn to for help as they make the transition into adulthood. After all, when it comes to life skills, the YAYA demographic wishes they knew more. They grew up in an era of Google and helicopter parents, so they find it tricky to navigate life’s daily tasks without aid. In times of self-doubt, they question the usefulness of a pricey education system that taught the quadratic equation instead of home economics. That’s why they have coined the term “adulting” to describe any activity related to being a grownup – from changing a tire to doing taxes. This time of “adulting” is exciting, but it also brings a mound of stress and amused frustration.

The YAYA population can’t help but poke fun when grown-up responsibilities like cooking don’t go as planned. They only had to text mom once in the grocery store about the difference between a chicken breast and a chicken thigh – a new record! But the minute the chicken burned to a crisp, they were left with a makeshift meal of Ramen and a side dish of angst. Despite their attempts to “adult,” YAYA consumers are optimistic about the future and actively voice their future aspirations.<sup>1</sup> It’s just when they need basic skills that their hands are tied, forcing most of them to turn to parents or Google.<sup>1</sup> Or, in YAYA Utopia, to Shadow Bots like me.



# UTOPIA AT A GLANCE



64% of YAYA consumers agree they rely heavily on their parents for adult tasks<sup>1</sup>



75% ask family members or turn to Google if they do not know how to complete a task<sup>1</sup>



Less than a quarter of 18- to 24-year-olds think of themselves as independent adults<sup>1</sup>



92% of YAYA consumers turn to online sources to educate themselves on topics that are interesting to them<sup>1</sup>



More than 2 in 5 indicated college did not prepare them for real world<sup>18</sup>



Nearly 2/3 said their parents are their primary source of information for financial management<sup>18</sup>

# THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS

The YAYA market lives and breathes immediacy and “how-to” help. It’s no surprise seeing that almost 74 percent of YAYA consumers think their education has prepared them for their chosen professions, but when it comes to everyday life skills, they either rely on their parents (64%) or the internet (92%) for “adulthood” situations.<sup>1</sup> That’s where marketers come in. They have the power to help them through their inevitable firsts using “how-to” digital content and help options, which is why Tasty by BuzzFeed is so popular. With over 72 million likes on Facebook, the recipe site curates short and simple videos pushed out across a variety of social media channels. This content offers YAYA “adulters” a digital community in which they can share and watch videos that teach them how to cook, peel vegetables and effectively store food – all in roughly 60 seconds.



## ON TOP OF BANKER'S HILL

"I'm not proud of it, but I'm really good at making the last \$17 in my account last until the end of the month. I've never balanced a checkbook, but juggling the cash left in my pocket, what's left in my account and my credit in Venmo comes second nature."



## ON TOP OF BANKER'S HILL



Upon entering YAYA Utopia, flowing streams and futuristic buildings greet you with a jovial welcome. As chirping Twitter birds flutter from tree to tree, all seems vibrant and lighthearted in the YAYA world. That is, of course, until an imposing building on the hillside up ahead comes into view. Banker's Hill is a sight to see with its thick stone walls and golden doors, but YAYA consumers rarely need to visit. With ingenuity and the swipe of a thumb, they skillfully use an array of payment apps as well as traditional debit and credit cards. These YAYA financial ninjas have learned how to split the price of a pizza three ways and have their friend pick up the cover charge at the bar with cash and then pay them back by buying their Uber ride home – all with an app.

Their goal is to get past the pain of payment and get back to having fun. When big expenses like rent come along, the stress gets real. Although they are right on the cusp of financial independence, these shortsighted YAYA spenders still struggle with managing budgets and balancing bank accounts. As long as they have enough money for spontaneous dinners out, they're set for the time being. Because they value convenience over conservation, it's no wonder they spend more per month at restaurants than at the grocery store.

Despite the lack of regular customers at Banker's Hill, the YAYA demographic does appreciate the banking institution, visiting their mobile banking apps several times a day. With all of their banking done virtually, the only reason to knock on the golden doors is for big "adulting" tasks, like applying for a loan. In fact, 53 percent of the demographic wishes Banker's Hill would better advise them regarding financial decisions.<sup>10</sup> But once these stressful visits are out of the way, it's back to their preferred virtual banking method.



# UTOPIA AT A GLANCE



65% of YAYA consumers agree they feel unprepared to manage their finances (includes moderately, generally and definitely agree)<sup>1</sup>



3 out of 4 YAYA consumers responded they would rather be debt-free than rich<sup>1</sup>



71% would rather go to the dentist than to their bank<sup>11</sup>



43% feel like they aren't saving enough money each month<sup>12</sup>

# THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS



Since YAYA bankers prefer a virtual relationship with their banks, marketers must meet them with instant pay options, optimized for mobile. Now more than ever, frictionless transactions are critical, and the more integrated payment options can be with social networks the better. These options allow YAYA spenders to interact and “bank” with one another, which is why apps like Venmo are so popular among the demographic. But since they also grow weary with the thought of debt, they appreciate when companies help them with budgeting. Apps like Mint help YAYA marketers manage their money and set up a budget, taking the stress out of “adulting” and finances with a step-by-step mobile process in the palm of their hand.

## THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS

UTOPIA







## IN THE CART CLOUDS

"I open my laptop to check on a project, but before I know it, I'm on Urban Outfitter's website with a full shopping cart. Sometimes I just need to take a little break and unwind for a second, and that break is made even better when the jacket I've been wanting is half-off. If I don't like it, I can always mail it back."

# IN THE CART CLOUDS



If you look up high in the sky, you can see YAYA Utopia's very own virtual shopping mall floating above the land. These Cart Clouds stretch across the Utopian atmosphere. Because YAYA shoppers spend the greatest percentage of their income online, there's not a huge need for many brick-and-mortar malls in the land of free shipping and endless websites. Over half (61%) will purchase their favorite brands even if they are not on sale.<sup>1</sup> This is why when the Cart Clouds fill up with purchases, the sky turns dark and rains down orders on shipping addresses across the land.

Online shopping is every YAYA consumer's cloud nine. They enjoy the casual, creative escape it offers, and it's not as daunting as taking a trip to the store, where salespeople corner them with the hard sell. YAYA shoppers will browse Facebook ads, spot the cute jeans they were scoping out last week and have a full cart within minutes. Whether or not they purchase everything in the cart is still unclear; after all, just because it's saved doesn't mean it's final. The YAYA market can rest easy knowing that the "confirm purchase" button is their "last out" during spontaneous spending sessions.

As long as hidden fees don't burst their bubble, YAYA spenders love the shopping spontaneity game – until they remember the Cart Clouds hovering over Banker's Hill. That's when the virtual carts start to pour, draining account balances across YAYA Utopia.

## UTOPIA AT A GLANCE



66% of YAYA consumers agree they shop online to relax<sup>1</sup>



77% agree they shop online for inspiration and new ideas<sup>1</sup>



55% say they buy online more than they should<sup>1</sup>



78% make spontaneous purchases online<sup>1</sup>



The biggest online shopping annoyances for YAYA spenders are: waiting for the product to arrive, shipping fees, the item not being what they expected, hidden fees and website glitches<sup>1</sup>

## THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS

Not only are YAYA shoppers spending their bucks online, they're critiquing websites along the way, which is why marketers must meet them with a pleasurable, effortless experience. The minute the process gets too complicated, the website gets glitchy or hidden fees creep into the bill, the YAYA demographic won't hesitate to close all tabs, so marketers must stay on their toes from search to delivery. Since YAYA consumers are spontaneous shoppers, brands can find success through retargeting and native advertising. Using information from previous searches and clicks, they can place ads on social media to recapture interest and inspire shoppers to follow through with a purchase. Unlike banner ads, they appear naturally in a news feed or timeline like a post or a tweet, meeting the YAYA market in their social media habitat with a subtle reminder.

## CHECKING IN AT THE WELLNESS BRAIN

"Mental health is an important topic, and it's hard to imagine a time when people didn't talk about it. My friends and I throw out words like depression and anxiety so much that they've become part of our everyday vocabulary."

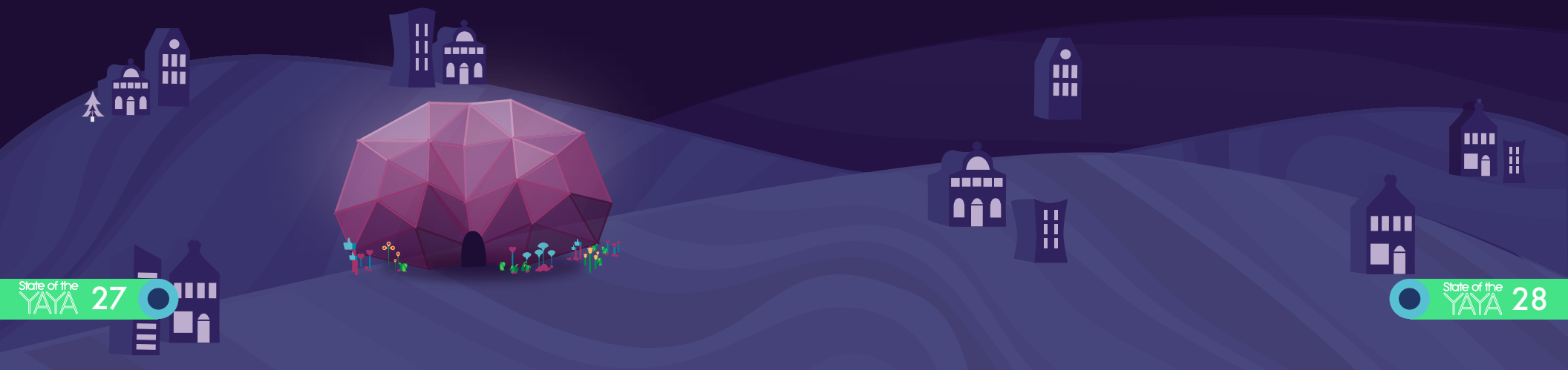
# CHECKING IN AT THE WELLNESS BRAIN



Just in case anyone in YAYA Utopia needs a check up, the Wellness Brain is just around the bend from Banker's Hill. It's a unique facility where doctors respect their patients' wishes to care as much for mental health as they do for physical health. YAYA thinkers are passionate about changing the negative stigmas associated with mental health stereotypes.

The walls of the Wellness Brain are completely transparent and reflect YAYA residents' acceptance of those who are open about their struggles. Digital screens are scattered throughout the city, featuring the latest Facebook status about a fight with anxiety or Instagram post documenting the before and after of an eating disorder battle. The online YAYA community supports each individual's vulnerability and acts as a safe haven, validating each other with likes, comments, shares and the 'thumbs up' button.

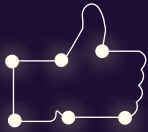
This ongoing discussion has made mental health almost trendy, sparking conversation on the streets of YAYA Utopia. Inhabitants walk to work and class while sporting unique tattoos – a semicolon, an infinity sign, or a meaningful quote – that serve as reminders of their journey to public ownership and acceptance of their struggles.



# UTOPIA AT A GLANCE



3 out of 4 YAYA advocates are comfortable discussing mental health with their peers<sup>1</sup>



YAYA consumers strongly agree (51% definitely agree) that mental health is just as important as physical health<sup>1</sup>



Although 35% say they're comfortable discussing their problems with peers, the majority (65%) still believe they need to hide their problems<sup>1</sup>



Between 2013 and 2014, the 18- to 25-year-old demographic was the only age group to see an increase in mental illness diagnosis, while all other age groups declined<sup>4</sup>

# THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS



Since the mental health conversation is trending, brands can seize the opportunity to make a difference with their messages. With 35 percent saying they are comfortable discussing problems among peers, YAYA shoppers appreciate branded messages that reinforce that it is OK for young adults to be vulnerable and authentic.<sup>1</sup> They have taken the concept of mental health from the shadows into the light. Celebrity advocates such as Demi Lovato have gained a considerable following among the YAYA demographic, who appreciate her vulnerability concerning her mental health. Skechers aligned with her message and, as a result, garnered a reputation of authenticity, gaining credibility in the eyes of YAYA activists.





## DRINKING FROM THE DIGITAL WATER SYSTEM

"I wish I could swipe a filter over my face in real life. It's frustrating to see how great I look with a Snapchat filter compared to how I look in the mirror. I just hope no one notices the difference when they see the unfiltered me in the grocery store."

# INSIDE THE DIGITAL WATER SYSTEM

No matter where you go in YAYA Utopia, you will find a beautiful stream of filters flowing throughout the land. This ever-flowing source is pumped through the Digital Water System, a massive water treatment plant that pushes social media content to its inhabitants on a consistent basis. The constant flow of filtered photos and videos makes it difficult for YAYA consumers to separate their real world from the filtered one that notifies their phones every minute. They've grown accustomed to perfecting their appearance for online followers, but are afraid that perception won't match up to the truth. This creates an inner conflict of distortion that motivates the YAYA market to seek quick fixes through beauty products and even cosmetic surgery.

The only time the Digital Water System stops pumping filtered content is when the two worlds collide on a quick Starbucks run or walk to class. At that point, YAYA consumers are thrust into a filter-free reality for just a second as their Facebook friends walk past them in real life. It's not until YAYA seekers look down at their phones again that their worlds go back to filtered perfection.



# UTOPIA AT A GLANCE



56% agree their physical appearance is more attractive online than in person<sup>1</sup>



76% would alter their body if money was not an issue<sup>1</sup>



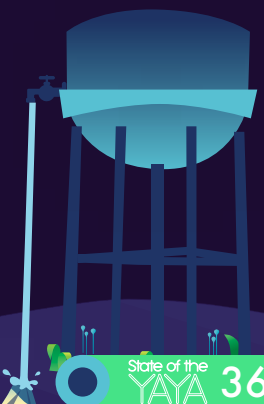
79% agree that advertising makes people feel badly about their bodies<sup>1</sup>



YAYA consumers are heavy purchasers of beauty products. More than 60% bought eight or more beauty items in the past year<sup>15</sup>

# THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS

Marketing beauty products and services to YAYA users is a balancing act. A brand's messaging should communicate a real-world version of a quick, digital fix, connecting the emotional and physical benefits along the way. The YAYA market is hypersensitive to anything considered over the top or fake, so playing up authenticity and natural enhancement is a must. Take L'Oreal's "Beaumojis" for example.<sup>16</sup> Utilizing social media to target consumers, L'Oreal created a complete keyboard of emojis that sported unique hair styles and eyebrow shapes, promoted ethnicity and authenticity, and visually communicated product benefits. Quick, emotionally stimulating strategies like this one meet YAYA consumers in both their filtered world and their real one.





## HUSTLING THROUGH OPINION CENTRE

"Most of the news I care about is on my social media feeds. That's why I log on to see what's up. For me, what's trending is just the beginning. The REAL story unfolds when I see what everyone else is saying about it."

# HUSTLING THROUGH OPINION CENTRE



The Digital Water System also pumps content directly through Opinion Centre, which makes Times Square pale in comparison. The constant glow of screens lights up the town as passersby walk to and fro. If you look closely, it becomes obvious that YAYA consumers live in a world of differing opinions. With only 28 percent loyal to a news source,<sup>20</sup> the YAYA demographic reads every article and tweet with a critical eye, constantly sifting through potential bias, author viewpoint and sources. They approach each post with caution, hesitant because they believe the media has made the world appear scarier than it is in reality.<sup>1</sup>

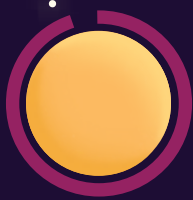
As 18- to 24-year-olds immerse themselves in multiple story perspectives, they also view news in real-time through their social accounts. From Facebook to Twitter to Snapchat, YAYA newshounds are 38 percent more likely to use social media – versus 17 percent who use traditional sources like TV – to gather breaking headlines.<sup>9</sup> And, because they follow friends, experts and organizations, they receive a constant feed of opinions. But despite the overload, social media adds to their news search with fresh, stimulating conversation and novel thinking. The majority of the YAYA market values alternative points of view, approaching other sources with an open-minded nature that frequently transforms their own opinions.<sup>1</sup>



# UTOPIA AT A GLANCE



The majority of YAYA consumers believe the news media makes the world seem scarier than it is<sup>1</sup>



95% of YAYA consumers agree it's important to hear other people's ideas, even if they are different from their own<sup>1</sup>



The majority of the YAYA demographic believes that the news is always biased<sup>24</sup>



For the first time ever, 28% of 18- to 24-year-olds say social media is their main source of news, compared to television (24%)<sup>7</sup>

# THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS

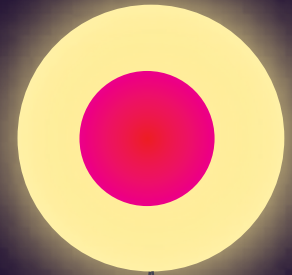
With only 28 percent of the YAYA population loyal to a news source, social media has become their go-to destination for news.<sup>20</sup> Suit-and-tie reporters don't carry the same weight that they used to, and the new voices of reason for the market come from social media influencers on popular platforms like Snapchat. With YAYA consumers three times more likely to search for news on Snapchat than in a newspaper<sup>1</sup>, marketers can capitalize on the platform to deliver news-based content. Depending on interest, YAYA watchers seek out Snapchat influencers that help keep them in the know, as well as consulting the 'Live Story' feature on the app that delivers news content by the minute. Because most YAYA consumers would rather find their news on social media, marketers now have immense power to leverage their brand and build awareness with simple solutions such as featured stories or social media influencers. But beware — it's easy to get lost in the information overload of social media. For this reason, marketers must brand their content in order to be properly sourced and accredited.





## BY THE LIGHT OF THE SUN TOWER

"A social life, a work life and sleep - I really only get to pick two. I'm constantly trying to cram as much as humanly possible into my day because down time is wasted time. When people check my Instagram, I want them to see I've landed a killer promotion and have gone out three times this week. Social media never sleeps, so why should I?"



# BY THE LIGHT OF THE SUN TOWER



We've reached our final stop in YAYA Utopia: The Sun Tower. It's a luminescent orb that clicks on when the real sun goes down, allowing YAYA workers to push through into the night. They are the embodiment of "carpe diem," not wanting to waste a single second of their day. These YAYA doers pride themselves in being busy, working multiple jobs at once and still finding time to stay out with friends until 2 a.m. Even if they have to deprive themselves of sleep, the fulfillment of proving their ability to handle a heavy workload justifies the sacrifice.

With 43 percent of YAYA workers saying that limited time keeps them from their ideal health and ultimate potential, it's no wonder they all wish there was more of it.<sup>17</sup> Why be nocturnal when you can be "all-ternal?" YAYA workers are always moving and on the go, striving to achieve equal amounts of work and play. This sense of strife can sprinkle their days with anxiety as they attempt to do it all. If "doing it all" wasn't enough to put on a resume, they feel compelled to share their feats with the world. As the social media stream flows past their offices, universities and Friday night hangout spots, they can't help but share their accomplishments or see the successes of others. After all, a job promotion wouldn't be complete without a Facebook announcement, and in the same way, a night out would fall flat if a Snap wasn't there as proof. In the process of posting achievements, they can't help but compare their success rate to that of their peers on social media. It helps define and archive their social and work successes.



# UTOPIA AT A GLANCE



86% of YAYA consumers agree that if they work hard, they should play hard<sup>1</sup>



1/3 had four or more jobs in their lifetime<sup>1</sup>

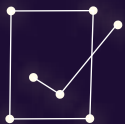


Free response: "In my daily life I'm most anxious about..."<sup>1</sup>



- Getting everything done on time while also trying to find time to engage in fun activities

- Balancing being happy and stress-free, plus doing well and succeeding



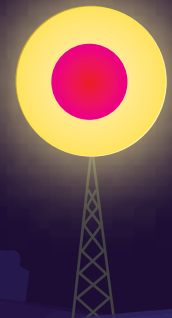
- My work-life balance



Less than half (48%) of 18- to 29-year-olds say they get as much sleep as needed<sup>21</sup>

# THOUGHTS FOR MARKETERS

When it comes to primetime marketing hours, there is no limit. Marketers can target this demographic any time, day or night. On Instagram alone, 39 percent of YAYA consumers use it right before they go to sleep and 33 percent scroll through it first thing in the morning. The YAYA market is so connected that one-third are most likely to sleep with their smartphone in bed.<sup>22</sup> Brands like McDonald's UK and Taco Bell have capitalized on consumer activity in non-waking hours. Whether it's posting photos of McDonald's All-Day Breakfast at 2 a.m. or Taco Bell giveaway submissions at 4 a.m.,<sup>19</sup> the content aims to trigger needs and desires in consumers who are busy scrolling through social media in the wee hours of the night (or morning).



# PICKING FROM THE FUN FACTS FOREST

You're nearing the end of your journey through YAYA Utopia with a walk through the Fun Facts Forest, lining the road to the exit. Here, a path of scattered trees and bushes grow golden nuggets of information in all shapes and sizes. These nuggets are always growing and replenishing travelers like you with fresh, fun information you can take on the road. We hope they remind you of the wonderful land beyond the stardust.



# FUN FACTS



When asked the open-ended question "Before I die I want to..." respondents mostly responded with answers relating to travel, self-fulfillment and financial stability<sup>1</sup>



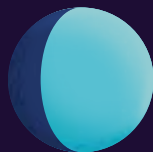
87% agree they regularly engage with people whose opinions are different from their own<sup>1</sup>



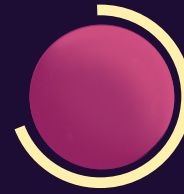
The top social media accounts checked on a daily basis are Facebook (59%), YouTube (51%), Snapchat (43%) and Instagram (37%)<sup>1</sup>



54% of YAYA consumers think scientific advancements will do more harm than good<sup>1</sup>



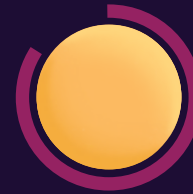
72% of YAYA consumers are willing to accept a lower standard of living to conserve energy<sup>1</sup>



69% agree they would make special effort to buy from buy products from businesses that are environmentally conscious<sup>1</sup>



87% say they agree that friends are part of their family<sup>1</sup>



84% of YAYA consumers like to try new foods when eating with friends<sup>1</sup>



80% of YAYA consumers share a meal with friends at least once a week while 20% say they share a meal more than four times a week<sup>1</sup>



The YAYA market outspends older demographics in the categories of dining out, apparel and services<sup>25</sup>

# FUN FACTS



In 2013, consumers under 25 years old had the highest share of overall spending on food away from home at 6.9%<sup>25</sup>



Less than half of YAYA consumers trust stores to protect their payment information<sup>23</sup>



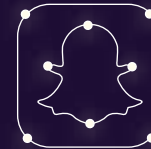
40% of Spotify's 50 million monthly active users and 12.5 million premium users are 18- to 24-year-olds<sup>26</sup>



Consumers ages 19 to 25 are more likely to see the latest news in their social media feeds (37%) than on TV (17%)<sup>9</sup>



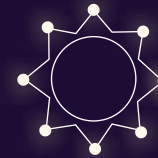
19% of 21- to 24-year-olds have admitted to borrowing someone else's food to post on social media<sup>27</sup>



Twice as many YAYAs watched the first GOP debate on Snapchat than on TV<sup>29</sup>



The YAYA market prefers to deal with finances via mobile or online<sup>24</sup>



The YAYA market is most active in the workforce during the summer<sup>22</sup>



In the 18-24 age group, 65% of consumers buy products and services with their smartphones<sup>28</sup>

# ATTRIBUTIONS

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