

Sesame Workshop Targeted Marketing Campaign

Who Is This Project Trying to Reach and Activate?

Since its inception in 1969, *Sesame Street*'s target audience has been children between the ages of three to five (Goodman, 2002). In 2020, children between the ages of three and five were born in 2015 through 2017, making the current target audience of the show to be that of the newest generation, Generation Alpha. *Sesame Street* is created by Sesame Workshop, a non-profit organization. The organization's mission is stated as "helping kids everywhere grow up smarter, stronger and kinder" ("Our Mission," n.d.). As such, Sesame Workshop's organizational goals are focused less on sales and more on benefitting the development of today's children. As a result, *Sesame Street* must innovate and find a way to reach this new, increasingly tech-savvy generation.

What Age and Gender Are These People?

Generation Alpha is mixed gender and are born between 2010 and 2025. By 2025, this generation is set to be the largest yet and will comprise of about two billion people (Fourtane, 2018). In the year 2020, people in Generation Alpha are all still young children, aged zero through ten years old. As the age range of Generation Alpha and the target audience for *Sesame Street* overlap and will continue to do so for ten more years, it is imperative that Sesame Workshop finds a way to reach this newest generation of children.

What Psychographics Tie Them Together or Separate Them?

Generation Alpha is the most tech-savvy yet, surpassing that of even Millennials and Generation Z. Generation Alpha was born with access to all modern technology, including iPhones, iPads, apps and more. Members of Generation Alpha learn how to operate this technology from a very young age, learning by doing through pressing buttons, using voice assist, etc. As Generation Alpha enters school, technological advancements are even shaping the way that these children learn (Fourtane, 2018). As much of the goal of *Sesame Street* is to help children learn, Sesame Workshop must find a way to incorporate their show and other materials outside of television, books and standard toys into the digital age.

Opinion Leaders

With the rise of Generation Alpha, so comes the rise of child influencers, also known as kidfluencers. Kidfluencers are children that have garnered such a strong social media presence that they attract sponsors and advertisers, thus earning a source of revenue and an even more pronounced form of internet stardom (Gates-Fleming, 2019). Kidfluencers typically attract fellow children as viewers, and with 81% of parents of children under age 11 allowing them to watch YouTube videos and about a third of parents allowing them to do so regularly, this is no small number (Smith, Toor, & Kessel, 2018). Due to the popularity of these kidfluencers, it would greatly benefit *Sesame Street* to partner with these social media stars.

Sesame Street has been known to include celebrities in their shows that are typically more well-known to the audience's parents, such as Whoopi Goldberg and Lin-Manuel Miranda (Daley, 2019). However, it would benefit the actual target audience of the show much more successfully if *Sesame Street* were to incorporate these kidfluencers into its own works.

At just eight years old, Ryan Kaji, better known as Ryan ToysReview, is arguably the biggest kidfluencer of today, with his YouTube page garnering over 29 billion views (Medeiros, 2019). *Sesame Street* could better engage its audience by inviting Ryan Kaji or another kidfluencer to be a guest star on the television program. In addition, in recent years *Sesame Street* has increased its YouTube presence in order to meet the viewing habits of Generation Alpha (Pham, 2019). Having a kidfluencer guest star on *Sesame Street*'s YouTube page would be the perfect way to engage Generation Alpha. As this generation is known for its connection to YouTube, using the platform in which most kidfluencers are already active would likely garner more views (Smith, Toor, & Kessel, 2018). Generation Alpha is arguably more familiar with YouTube than with standard television, so members of this generation would more easily stumble across *Sesame Street* content when searching for their favorite kidfluencer, eventually leading to more engagement and a stronger connection to *Sesame Street*.

What Is Specific to Your Company?

With Generation Alpha being defined by its connection to technology, it is imperative to the success of Sesame Workshop to adapt to the changing needs and wants of this generation. Sesame Workshop has already made strides to better engage Generation Alpha, including upgrading standard toys to "connected" toys and smart devices, an expanded YouTube page and uploading its popular picture books for purchase on the App Store (Cioletti, 2019).

However, more changes and updates should be made to the brand to best connect with Generation Alpha. Kidfluencers could be the secret to engaging more members of Generation Alpha. As *Sesame Street*'s YouTube page already has famous guest stars targeted towards older generations such as Zooey Deschanel and Amanda Seyfried, the next logical step would be to include kidfluencers in its video lineup. Utilizing a number and variety of kidfluencers as guest stars on the *Sesame Street* YouTube page would add name-recognition that is applicable to Generation Alpha. As a result of partnering with kidfluencers, children searching for these stars would likely stumble upon *Sesame Street* content as well. In addition, utilizing kidfluencers on YouTube rather than standard television would engage Generation Alpha through the technology that this generation is known to be adept with. By finding a balance between the classic *Sesame Street* brand while also making the changes necessary to remain relevant to this new generation, Sesame Workshop can continue to help kids grow stronger, smarter and kinder.

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