

## Effective marketing to millennials starts with a plan

November 7, 2014 — At 80 million strong, the Millennial generation is transforming retail baking with its foodie mentality, high expectations and sophisticated palettes. According to a recent IDDBA report, Millennials are more likely than any other group to shop specialty stores for bakery items, meaning retail bakers who are willing to put the time, effort and investment into Millennial marketing will find themselves enjoying a new revenue stream.

### The Basics

Across the board, Millennials are smart, tech savvy, social and adventurous. They are more culturally aware and racially and ethnically diverse than previous generations. They also tend to be more food conscious and are careful with where they spend their dollars. They value time with friends and family.

But avoid the temptation to lump Millennials into a one-campaign-fits-all mentality when developing and marketing your baked foods. This generation boasts three subgroups, each with their own characteristics: Younger Millennials (ages 19-25), Middle Millennials (ages 26-30) and Older Millennials (ages 31-36). Bakers who create individualized promotions targeting each group will be more successful than those who stick with a generalized effort.

Evidence of this individuality surfaced in the results of a recent study conducted by Y-Pulse and The Culinary Visions Panel. The study revealed that Younger Millennials tend to forego regular meals, preferring instead to snack as they go about their day. Typically, they purchase those snacks, which include baked goods, on the go. Middle Millennials also purchase their snacks on the go, but do most of their snacking in the late afternoon. Older Millennials prefer mid-morning and late afternoon snacks and are more likely to pack snacks than purchase them while out and about.

Millennials gravitate toward interesting and different foods. In 2013, they helped make the Cronut (croissant + donut) cool, and the mashup trend has sprouted creations such as the Croger (croissant + cheeseburger), Crookie (croissant dough + cookie), Croclair (croissant + Éclair) and Croffee (coffee-stuffed croissant). Seasonal baked goods and treats tailored just for them also resonate with this crowd.

At the same time, they crave ramped up flavors with global flair, which is not surprising considering their love of international travel. But there's a catch. They prefer foods with locally-sourced ingredients, and they expect businesses to be transparent about their suppliers.