



## **Generation Z reveal expectations for a digital future in global study by Habbo Hotel**

- *Young people share their views that will shape trends in content consumption, online safety and interactive education*
- *A third of young people never pay for content online whilst on the internet*
- *Generation Z doesn't see a place for traditional print media in the future, but TV and radio will remain important*
- *61 per cent feel online safety will become increasingly important*

**Amsterdam, The Netherlands, June 16** - Research conducted worldwide to mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of teen virtual community Habbo Hotel, reveals how the internet will continue to impact the future of today's teenagers. Over 49,000 digital natives aged 11 - 18 shared their predictions of how the internet will shape content consumption, online safety, language and education in the future.

### **A Digital Content Diet**

As the debate over how to make money from online content continues, it is clear that for the generation who has grown up in a digital playground, the future is mostly free. Almost a third (3%) of respondents stated that currently they never pay for content, whilst a further 26% are only willing to pay if there are no free channels available. In Spain and Italy 48 per cent of teenagers claim to never pay for content, compared to the UK where only 21% are determined to access all of their content for free.

Once young people have accessed their content, sharing doesn't seem to be a big priority, with only 23% of respondents regularly sharing content online and 39 per cent rarely or never sharing. Of those that do share, the majority of content shared is music (54%), games (3%) and images (35%).

Habbo hotel residents expect to access content through a range of mediums, with the majority unable to imagine a world without traditional TV or radio. The TV also joins the mobile phone as the device that Generation Z would be most upset to live without – ranking higher than content streaming or the downloading of MP3s.

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However, whilst the TV remains a relevant and important medium to this media-savvy generation, traditional print media (newspapers, magazines and books) won't fair as well with 55% of respondents saying that they will be extinct either very soon or some day in the future. Only 18% feel that printed media will always have a place.

### **Digital Safety**

Online safety is a concern for Generation Z. The survey findings show that schools and parents have the most influence in terms of educating young people about responsible and safe online behaviour. The Habbos surveyed stated that they learn most about online safety at school (29%) or with family (2%). Friends only represented 10%.

55% explained that they feel fairly safe in most online environments, yet 19% state that they don't feel safe in lots of online spaces. 61% of those teens questioned felt that online safety would become increasingly important in the future; whilst a quarter feel it will be as important in the future as it is now.

### **A Digital Community**

For Generation Z, interacting online is second nature and is as important as interacting in the real world. Over a third (34%) of those surveyed thought that in the future physical meetings would decrease to be replaced with online interaction. When asked about where virtual worlds could be utilized in the future, 55% of respondents said 'home' – suggesting that we may soon be creating a virtual home where we interact with our families online rather than just visiting a virtual world.

The study also shows how teens are incorporating a new internet vernacular within their vocabulary. SMS and online chat abbreviations are being used alongside more traditional language. Over a third of those surveyed (34%) felt that the informal language they use online could be transferred into offline situations and used as they grow up. 29% still believe that they need to speak more formally in offline contexts while 31% felt that they needed to stop using abbreviations outside of the internet.

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Beyond the impact on language, the teens questioned felt that the internet is having an impact on education, with 46% of teens believing that virtual worlds will one day be used regularly in schools. Teens also prefer the digital approach to learning with 43% of those questioned finding it easiest to learn from the internet. Only 16% chose books as their preferred way of learning new things whilst 38% liked to use a combination of the two.

With 64% of the teens questioned claiming that online interaction has improved their confidence, it comes as no surprise that Generation Z are building social networks beyond those which are physically within reach - the majority of teens having between 100 and 200 online friends.

Mark Stockx, Country Manager The Netherlands commented, "This global study provides a clear indication of the way the internet is impacting the lives of Generation Z and how it will go on to shape the future. In the past ten years we have seen the digital landscape change dramatically and it is the current generation of teenagers who are at the forefront of this."

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