

- The Net Generation:  
Cool, Connected,  
Communicating...and  
Coming to a University  
near you...

“The kids don’t expect to settle for second best. These expectations have given rise to great pressure for a new system to be put into place, one that won’t fail, won’t leave anyone behind and will guide people in the right direction.”

# Who are they?

- Born between 1982 and 2002.
- “Digital Natives”
- “Connected”
- Social Learners
- Challengers – love to argue and debate



# Millennials Experience Base

- Ctrl+Alt+Delete as basic as ABC
- Photographs have always been processed in an hour or less
- "Spam" and "cookies" are not necessarily food
- There have always been ATM machines
- A "45" is a gun; not a record...what's a "record" anyway?
- Bert and Ernie are old enough to be their parents
- The Kennedy tragedy was a plane crash, not an assassination

# Optimum Learning Environment

- Digital
- Connected
- Experiential
- Immediate
- Social

# Unlike any other youth generation in living memory....

- Manifesting a new array of positive social habits: **teamwork, achievement, modesty, good conduct, “cool to be smart”**
- **Value honesty, caring, moral courage, democracy, and the Golden Rule**
- Have lots of gadgets, enamoured with technology
- Like to multi-task, capable of it
- Expect to control what, when, and how they learn
- Impatient with processes that are not interactive

# Millennials/Net Generation

- Pushed to study hard, avoid personal risks, and take advantage of every opportunity.
- Focused on grades and performance
- Have difficulty managing time, making good choices
- Highly competitive, yet cooperative
- More confident and optimistic about their future; expectation of success based on effort and planning

# Millennials/Net Generation....

- Identify with parents' values; feel close to parents and collaborate with them on decisions – 98%. They are accustomed to frequent contact with “helicopter parents.”
- Want independence, yet display dependence on parental wisdom, resources
- Like structured situations with rules; readily follow rules unless they can find loophole and not get caught

# Learning Preferences

- Teams, peer-to-peer, informal
- Interactive and experiential
- Real-world applications – must see relevance
- Mix on-line and face-to-face
- Support systems tailored to specific needs

# Learning Habits

- Web, not library, as first resource
- Multiple media – laptop is tool, so is cell phone, digital camera, webcam, VCR,
- Self-selection of material, remix, synthesize
- Learn through conversations, web surfing, social interactions, study groups, team projects
- Mingle, share, make connections

# Attitude towards academics

- ◆ Worried about succeeding, but...
- ◆ Take academics seriously, so...
- ◆ Recognize how competitive game is, and...
- ◆ Easily disappointed when performance falls below own expectations
- ◆ Focus on grade “deserved” rather than “earned”

# Perceptions of co-curricular involvement

- ◆ Useful for building resumes
- ◆ Important and highly popular, if...
- ◆ Promotes personal gain; connect with world outside
- ◆ Won't rearrange academic schedule
- ◆ Won't accept financial demands
- ◆ Seek prestigious leadership roles, and plan to achieve them

# Expectations of Student Services:

- ◆ Student is customer...always right!
- ◆ Service is rooted in what they deserve
- ◆ We should read their minds
- ◆ Want right answers, fast fixes to crisis
- ◆ Can't take no; will exhaust every avenue for appeal to get what they want
- ◆ “Drive-through mentality” – **quick, easy to access, anonymous**

# Willingness to Seek Help/Access Resources

- ◆ Academic services more important than personal support services
- ◆ Will be brought to them; won't seek them out
- ◆ Difficulty asking for help; don't know how
- ◆ Don't want to follow through on work required to fix problem – quick fix
- ◆ Wait until it's too late – swamped, booked solid
- ◆ Too busy studying to seek help
- ◆ Call parents to solve problems – parents are VERY resourceful

# Net Gen Consumers

- Increase in applicants can mean “shopping”
  - more options, delayed commitment, focus on best price
- No brand loyalty; marketing must be personalized, meaningful, and relevant to their unique situation.
- “Tell it like it is” generation

# Reaching them...

## SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

*Facebook, MySpace, You Tube*, permit control and personalize content

Allow two-way marketing communication and are permission-based.

# Reaching them....

- **BLOGS**
- honest, unedited, first-hand accounts by students who are attending classes and living on campus
- Reveals university personality +face and name to “connect” with
- Generates comments and debate; is interactive and personal

# Reaching them...

- **PODCASTS**
- More than 30 million iPods since 2001
- 12.3 million households by 2010, 45-75 million users
- Inexpensive to produce, timely, can include lectures, special events, alumni stories, student profiles, athletic events,

# Reaching them...

## INSTANT MESSAGING

- 24x7 customer service culture
- Service provided throughout admission process
- Faster than e-mail
- Set up IM schedule, promote it on Web site, in letters and e-mails

# Reaching them.....

## WEBSITES

- Still the most effective way to reach students
- Technology = Quality
- Web sites influence decisions-content is king
- Web is hub for all other electronic marketing, must meet the high expectations of Net Geners (and their parents)

# Reaching them...

VIEWBOOKS, CAMPUS VISITS, VOICE MAIL,

- ◆ Still part of mix – adjusted to fit technology
- ◆ Content must be timely, relevant, engaging
- ◆ Communication must be personal and create meaningful experience for prospective student (and parents)

# Reality Bite

- Accept the fact that the parents will be “at university” as long as the kids are here.
- “If you’re paying \$50,000 for a degree, you expect to call and get an answer.”