

How OTT taps in Gen Z, providing advertainment as effective business driver

By **Dinesh Ratnam** - December 1, 2022 @ 12:01pm



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GEN Zs are a key demographic to tap into across the entertainment industry as these digital natives interact with the world in a very different way to preceding generations.

Understanding this generation and, in particular, their entertainment and viewing preferences has the potential to enable brands and content producers to better cater their offerings to the "always on" generation.

Smartphones and widespread mobile internet penetration were game-changing innovations for entertainment that fueled the rise of OTT platforms which allowed audiences to stream their favorite content on demand in a seamless, personalised manner.

According to Asia Video Content Dynamics 2022, Malaysian internet users streamed 2.4 billion hours of video content in Q1 2022, up 60 per cent year-on-year from 1.5 billion hours in Q1 2021. This represents a significant opportunity for brands looking to leverage OTT platforms to appeal to consumers.

Being born in the age of the internet where news, information and entertainment are right at their fingertips, Gen Zs not only have shorter attention spans, the core of their value system and identity is continuously challenged and shaped by a digital lens of global trends.

At a time when there is a need to toe the line of political correctness or risk falling victim to "cancel culture", understanding the digital behaviors of the Gen Z audience is vital to businesses.

Beyond viewing preferences, brands and content producers looking to capture the attention of Gen Zs need to relate to them on a deeper level that is intertwined with their sentiments and lifestyles to deliver what they want in a holistic way.

To that end, iQIYI - as the leading OTT platform for Asian content with nearly 50 per cent of international users aged between 16-24 and the largest TikTok account in Malaysia with 688,000 followers among all streaming platforms - knows what Gen Zs want.

Being able to tap into the insights of Gen Zs' streaming patterns has enabled iQIYI to provide exactly what they are looking for.

iQIYI has been curating content that is relatable and represents their lifestyle, as well as offers a "smart" viewing experience that is seamless, fast, and convenient, all while being able to enjoy the show and engage with fans much like the recent Love Between Fairy and Devil global fan-meet which surpassed 160 million live engagements in a single event.

Taking it a step further to offer audiences a holistic viewing experience, "iQIYI My Points" offers viewers a more interactive experience that incentivises loyal fun-seeking audiences to enjoy their binges while earning rewards on the platform.

My Ofis in Malaysia, an office-themed comedy-drama, takes this interactivity a step further by integrating it within the viewing of the show itself. It is the first show that facilitated an interactive brand engagement through the provision of QR codes for viewers to purchase products while enjoying the show.

iQIYI's local original Sorry Naik Lori that premiered recently is another example of how a show integrates relatable everyday experiences into the storyline.

The series is a first-of-its-kind script-to-screen adaptation in which a foodpanda rider is seamlessly integrated as a key character in the main storyline. This represents the modern Malaysian lifestyle where delivery services have become an essential part of daily life.

Gen Zs have never known or lived in a world without the internet.

Their digital nativity opens up ample opportunities for OTT platforms to offer content producers and brands new and innovative ways to connect with Gen Zs on a deeper level.

This also represents a unique opportunity to collaborate to not only build brand presence among the younger generation but to potentially shape the behaviors and habits of this generation by embedding values and messaging within the content itself.

We believe that this generation is poised to drive business growth for brands especially as their purchasing power increases over time.

It is now time for advertisers to start surfing the advertainment wave and look to OTT platforms as a partner for sustained growth and play a role in tapping into the Gen Z generation.

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