Generation Z

New insights into the mobile-first mindset of black teens
## Methodology

To help marketers better understand the digital behaviors of black teens (13 to 17 year olds), and how they compare to the general population of teens, Google and Ipsos teamed up for this research report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Survey via online panels by Ipsos</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Sample representative of online population 13 to 17 (classified as teens), 18 to 24 (classified as young adults)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>13- to 17-year-olds n=1,000; Black 13- to 17-year-olds n=1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>U.S.</td>
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<td>Fielding Date</td>
<td>August 2016</td>
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Key Findings

1. The first-phone milestone.
Getting a phone is one of the top life events for black teens. And they are getting them at an increasingly younger age—today’s black teens get their first phone around 13 years old, while black young adults (18 to 24) got their first phone at 16.

Above all else, black teens use their phones to listen to music. Eighty-six percent do so on their phones every week, significantly more than all teens, and nearly 6 in 10 say they spend more than three hours every day listening to music on their phones.

3. When they shop, they’re mobile.
Two in three black teens make purchases online, and of those, more than half are making purchases on their phones.

4. Keep it personal.
Black teens are more likely to have positive attitudes towards brands, and to consider them ‘cool,’ if they feel as though the message is personalized to them.
Phones introduce GenZ to the world
Getting a phone is regarded as the second most important life event for black teens

Most important life event for 13- to 17-year-old black teens

1. Graduating from school
2. Getting a phone
3. Getting a license

13

The median age at which black teens get their first phone (vs. 12 for all teens)

I6 Which of the following was the most important in your life until now? Please select one
Base: All respondents 13-17 Main sample (426), black teens sample (387)
Like all teens, smartphones are the most-used device for black teens

But compared to their peers, they are lighter TV watchers.

Top devices used by black teens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Device</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smartphone</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laptop Computer</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaming Console</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iPad/Tablet</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M1 Which devices do you currently use? Please select all that apply
Base: All respondents 13-17s: Main sample (426) / black teens sample (387)
Phones connect and entertain today’s teens
Black teens are more likely to listen to music on their phones than anything—or anyone—else.

Top 5 smartphone activities for black teens
Past 7 days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listen to Music</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text (SMS)</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Games</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Networking</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch other videos</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: M3 What have you done in the past 7 days on your smartphone? Select all that apply
Base: Smartphone users 13-17s: Main sample (335), black teens sample (394)
In fact, they are huge consumers of all forms of mobile media.

8 in 10 black teens say they spend 3+ hours per day watching online video.

Time spent on activities on a smartphone in an average day: 13- to 17-year-olds

- **Online Video** (TV online, movies online, videos online):
  - Black Teens: 81%
  - All Teens: 71%

- **Listen to music** (SMS):
  - Black Teens: 59%
  - All Teens: 40%

- **Social Networking**:
  - Black Teens: 56%
  - All Teens: 51%

- **Messaging Apps**:
  - Black Teens: 52%
  - All Teens: 52%

Source: M3a How often do you use your smartphone on an average day to do the following? Base: Those who use a smartphone on M1 – base varies by activity.
To communicate with others, black teens are avid text messagers

**Preferred method to get in touch with someone**

- **Call on Smartphone**
  - Black Teens: 15%
  - All Teens: 15%

- **Face to Face**
  - Black Teens: 16%
  - All Teens: 18%

- **App Messaging**
  - Black Teens: 38%
  - All Teens: 38%

- **Text Message**
  - Black Teens: 43%
  - All Teens: 38%

*C1 How do you get in touch with someone?*  
*Base: All respondents 13-17 Main Sample (428), African-American sample (500)*
For black teens, social media does not hold the same social pressures

% who agree: "I feel pressured to constantly check my social media accounts."

Black Teens: 38%

% who agree: "I feel pressured to constantly post something on my social media pages."

Black Teens: 26%

% who agree: "The number of followers/subscribers I have on my social channels is important to me."

Black Teens: 49%

All Teens:

% who agree: "I feel pressured to constantly check my social media accounts."

50%

% who agree: "I feel pressured to constantly post something on my social media pages."

39%

% who agree: "The number of followers/subscribers I have on my social channels is important to me."

53%

Source: B18 Thinking about social media, how much do you agree with the statements below? Base: All respondents 13-17 Main sample (428), Boost sample (500)
Black teens are mobile-first shoppers
Two-thirds of black teens make purchases online, while 85% make in-store purchases.

**Black teens purchase behaviors**

- **Purchase online**: 66%
- **Purchase in-store**: 85%

S1_bis For each type of product, which of the below best describes you?  
Base: All respondents 13-17 black teens sample (500)
When shopping online, black teens are more deal conscious than their peers

The main reason teens shop online: I can find better deals online

60% Black Teens

49% All Teens

S1b. What are the main reasons you choose to shop online?
Base: Online shoppers 13-17 Main sample (287), Boost sample (323)
Compared to all teens, black teens are much less reliant on digital payment services and more dependent on debit cards.

Payment method most often used by 13- to 17-year-olds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment Method</th>
<th>Black Teens</th>
<th>All Teens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debit Card</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit Card</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PayPal</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other includes digital payment options (Android Pay, Apple Pay, etc.)

SSa: What payment method do you use most often when you shop?
Base: Main sample (382), black teens sample (307)
When it comes to 'what's cool,' black teens are most likely to be influenced by peers and personalization.

Aspects that make a product “cool” – 13-17s

- **Black Teens**
  1. #1 If friends are talking about it
  2. #2 If it’s something personalized to me
  3. #3 If I see or hear on social media

- **All Teens**
  1. #1 If friends are talking about it
  2. #2 If I see an ad about it
  3. #3 If it’s something personalized to me

B3 What makes you decide if a product is cool?  
Base: All respondents 13-17 Main sample (426), black teens sample (500)
Teens say something is cool if it's unique, impressive, interesting, amazing, or awesome.

Which brands fit the bill?

Find out in our new report

*It's Lit: a guide to what teens think is cool*