

3 Ways for Marketers to Play into Millennial Narcissism



By Dr. Paul Marsden, Consumer Psychologist and Digital Strategist at [SYZYG](#)

For years, Millennials have been marked by their reputation for being narcissistic. A sense of entitlement (real or perceived) has followed them through their education and, more recently, into their careers. As this generation has aged, some may have guessed that their narcissistic qualities would have trailed off as maturity increased. However, according to a new national [study conducted by SYZYG](#), adult Millennials are 16% more narcissistic than other generations and remain narcissistic as they age.

Given that Millennials now represent the core mainstream adult consumer, spending around \$200 billion each year in the U.S., marketers are searching for a solution to break through and meet Millennial expectations and experiences, which are defined by digital connectivity. In fact, the same study found that the majority (58%) of Millennials would rather give up a give up breakfast for a month that be without their smartphone. Based on Millennial's narcissistic tendencies and affinity for digital engagement, I believe marketers seeking to reach this audience should focus on what we at SYZYG call "EgoTech." This refers to a marketing strategy that informs the way a brand creates technology/apps that stroke the narcissists' ego. Here are a few best practices and examples:

1. *Utilize Platforms That Play into the “Cult of Self”:* Narcissists believe they are superior—smarter, more attractive and more important than others. Effective EgoTech can flatter the ego by playing to this sense of superiority. Consider technology that puts the user first and before others such as the [queue jumping app from Starbucks](#) or [Prime priority delivery from Amazon](#).
2. *Show Them How Your Brand Can Amplify Their Influence:* Narcissists believe they are authoritative, natural leaders with a talent for influencing people. Effective EgoTech will give narcissists a voice and platform to wield their influence over others. Look no further than [Quora](#), [Medium](#) or [Twitter](#) inviting us to share our wisdom and thought leadership with the world.
3. *Play into Their Vanity:* Narcissists are vain. The term “narcissist” comes from the Greek mythological character Narcissus who fell in love with his own image reflected in a pool of water. Think of EgoTech as vanity-ware, a digital mirror designed to make you look good. Examples are [Snapchat](#) or [Instagram](#) filters that flatter the looks of selfie-snappers, or [Houzz](#) that promises to make your home look as fabulous as you.

Digital technology, services and campaigns that flatter the ego is the key for engaging the Millennials – even as they age. Make it about them, or don't make it at all.

***About the Author:** Dr. Paul Marsden is a consumer psychologist, writer and researcher specializing in consumer behavior, technology and marketing. He is a digital strategist and brand planner for SYZGY group, working with brands to deliver digital solutions based on consumer needs, influences and motivations driving behavior.*