

# *FIND* BALANCE.

AGENCY 548

aaf<sup>®</sup> national  
student  
advertising  
competition



# VIRTUAL REALITY ISN'T COOL...YET

**WE WERE ASKED** to convince 18 to 24-year-old students and young adults to make the Quest 2 a part of their college starter pack by offering how the headset keeps students socially connected and entertained.

For two decades, Virtual Reality was suppose to be “the next big thing.” Yet it never quite gets there. Even in gaming, VR hasn’t gained mass appeal. It simply has not connected with most people. Specifically, skeptical college students who are not convinced that VR is worth the investment.

Students are more concerned about their mental health and overall well-being, than what seems like frivolous entertainment.<sup>1</sup> However, this generation is itching to experience new things and live life to the fullest.

## OBJECTIVES

### EMPHASIZE BALANCE.

Promote a healthy outlet for stressors without ignoring the importance of reality.

### ESTABLISH BRAND VALUES.

Be honest in how we go about talking to this audience.

### BUILD CONNECTION.

Bring young adults closer by connecting them through shared values.

**WHAT’S NOW.** The COVID-19 pandemic has exasperated existing stressors for college students. It has changed how they view technology and how they spend their time. After endless Zoom meetings and Slack notifications, the last two years have clearly shown that no one wants to be stuck inside (even in a headset).

**WHAT’S UP.** Due to a cumulation of events, Facebook/Meta have a credibility problem. Right now, Meta is seen as lame and shady to the younger generation. To address this, Meta needs to establish and communicate new brand values; values that mean something to Gen-Z.

**WHAT’S POSSIBLE.** This generation is the most belief-driven.<sup>1</sup> We believe this provides Meta Quest the opportunity to win over college students’ loyalty and become a part of their lives. We can do this by convincing them that VR is not an escape from reality, but a brilliant new addition to it.

# META, YOU'RE IN YOUR OWN WAY

**WE KNOW, YOU KNOW** — at least we hope you do — that your current ads aren't connecting with Gen-Z. The ads feel out of touch and out of date. They lack a connection to this generation as an audience because they don't address issues Gen-Z cares about.



students don't believe that Facebook is an authentic platform.<sup>4</sup>



This is actually terrifying in every way. I'd like this to never be on my TV again.

- User SamTheMan,<sup>3</sup> On Meta's "The Tiger & The Buffalo" commercial.



Nothing makes me want to put down my quest, and go outside more, than this commercial.

- User 04dram04,<sup>2</sup> On Meta's "Old Friends. New Fun" commercial.

## RESEARCH METHODS

We focused our research on student perceptions to determine what 18 to 24-year-old students think about VR, Meta Quest, and the college experience.

200

online sources looked at.

50

respondents to our survey.

15

participants in 2 focus groups.

5

class visits from VR industry leaders.

100

online headset reviews analyzed.

20

virtual spaces visited in VR.

12

team members visited a VR lab.

1

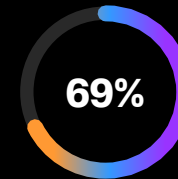
podcast feature discussing Meta Quest.

# WHO IS GEN-Z?

1

## DIGITAL NATIVES.

Gen-Z has only known a world with technology — it's their norm. Technology shapes their identity, experiences, and social community; but it also comes with consequences. There is a correlation between the time Gen-Z spends on their devices and their poor mental health.<sup>5</sup>



of Gen-Z becomes uncomfortable after being away from internet access for more than eight hours.<sup>6</sup>

2

## ANXIOUS.

Gen-Z is in a considerable transition period, which brings about feelings of anxiety. They have to balance academic responsibilities, social interactions, work, personal health, and, more recently, pandemic stressors and climate change.



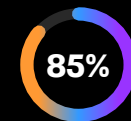
of respondents experienced anxiety at the thought of transitioning into college.<sup>4</sup>

3

## TRUTH SEEKERS.

Gen-Z is driven by authenticity and despises hypocrisy. They demand the truth. They are skeptical of large corporations and are prepared to fight for what they believe in. They value brands that are transparent about their product and mission.

When Gen-Z consumers know that a brand supports a social cause, they are:



more likely to trust the brand.



more likely to buy their products.<sup>7</sup>

4

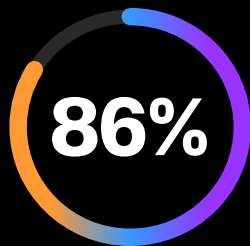
## SKEPTICS.

This generation is wary about VR's benefits to their college experience. Their phones and laptops already have everything they need. Gen-Z is suspicious of Meta, given its track record for controversy.

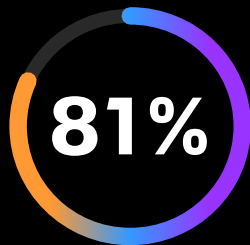
Virtual reality kinda scares me tbh, and I'd rather be in the moment bettering myself than disassociating with VR.  
– Survey respondent, college Freshman.<sup>4</sup>

# AUTHENTICITY 101

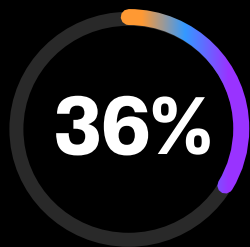
**ARE YOU FOR REAL?** This generation finds value in avoiding labels and rallying for causes they believe in. They are drawn to other people and brands who think like them.<sup>8</sup> Gen-Z makes decisions based on whatever brands best represent their shared values. They do not appreciate being lied to, and they can spot dishonesty without hesitation. This is why they're referred to as the "true gen."<sup>9</sup>



Gen-Z consumers say authenticity is important when deciding what brands they like and support.<sup>10</sup>



of surveyed Gen-Z consumers said that they need to be able to trust the brand to buy from them.<sup>10</sup>



of Gen-Z feels a strong connection or loyalty to any brand.<sup>11</sup>



## BRIDGING THE GAP.

If a brand synonymous with this new virtual world wants to resonate with our audience, it needs to be grounded in the most authentic version of itself.

# ESCAPE IN MODERATION

Meta Quest has a unique opportunity to promote a message of a

## HEALTHY BALANCE

between people's digital and physical lives.

Meta Quest should want people to experience life, not bury their heads in a digital void. Virtual Reality can add to the already abundant joys of life, not replace it.

There is so much possibility with VR. I'd be interested in seeing how putting myself in situations that would help my well-being would affect me if experienced through VR.

- Survey respondent, college Freshman.<sup>4</sup>

Sometimes when I'm really anxious, all I want to do is be in my bedroom from home, so if I could use VR to have access to the feeling of home while at school, that would be really cool.

- Survey respondent, college Senior.<sup>4</sup>

**BY ENCOURAGING A**  
*BALANCE BETWEEN YOUR  
PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL LIVES,*  
**META QUEST CAN HELP YOU  
GET MORE OUT OF BOTH.**

**PLAY** *OUT.*  
**PLAY** *IN.*