

Native Brand Deodorant: Consumer Perceptions and Motivations

Courtney White

IMC 603: Consumer Behavior & Insights

Professor Judy Davis

November 15, 2022

Introduction

Analyzing the consumer motives for both Millennial and Generation X demographics will identify a means-end chain for purchasing Procter and Gamble's Native brand deodorant. Focusing on the brand's attributes for each generational audience, functional consequences, psychosocial consequences, and values will initiate the analysis. Then, by understanding the key elements, linkages will be found to understand the consumer's motivation for purchasing this product.

Generation X

Brand Attributes: Generation X uses the "feel good factor." If something makes them feel good, they tend to invest. This generation likes to read up, they read everything, the labels of products, reviews for a product/s of interest, and the opinions from peers all influence whether a Gen X consumer chooses a product or not. Gen X cares about making a difference. Native provides that need through their cardboard alternative instead of a plastic container; long-term buying of biodegradable products helps the environment, which is one thing Gen X cares about. Also, Native deodorant is a cruelty-free & vegan product, and most importantly, this deodorant is made with all safe ingredients. Native deodorant is free of aluminum and parabens, which are known to cause cancer. Gen X enjoys using safe products for health and the environment, and the Native brand fits that need.

Figure 1

Generation X Attributes
(Iskier, 2022)

• Juggling a household
• Retirement is important
• List shoppers – love coupons and discounts
• Health-conscious
• Make the most unplanned purchases while in-store
• Love to vacation

Functional Consequences: A functional consequence of using Native brand deodorant for individuals within Generation X is the great protection against body odor. "Native deodorant comes in swinging with an effective formula that fights odor-causing bacteria while keeping your skin breathing easy. Both

Native's classic formula (baking soda and magnesium hydroxide) and Native's sensitive formula (magnesium hydroxide) utilize powerful powders that sit on the surface of the skin and raise the pH to prevent odor-causing bacteria from growing.

Not only does deodorant provide aluminum-free odor-protection, Native has a wide range of gorgeous scents to keep you smelling amazing. Plus, our classic formula has a sugar-based ingredient that will slowly release a fresh scent all...day...long" (Verdugo, n.d.). This brand of deodorant provides a variety of great scents to keep the user smelling fresh. At the end of the day, deodorant was invented to protect against body odor, and the Native brand does that.

Native uses natural and organic ingredients within their products so that their consumers can understand the components of their deodorant. Some ingredients in their deodorant options include shea butter, tapioca starch, coconut oil, and baking soda. For individuals in Generation X, as long as the deodorant they are using protects against body odor and perspiration, I'm sure they will be happy with it. As mentioned above, Native offers many different and desirable scents for both men and women, which would attract Generation X to begin using Native.

Psychosocial Consequences: For Gen Xers, finding safe and reliable products is more important as most of these consumers have entered the preventative health stage of their life. As with most of their purchases, Gen X consumers look for safe products for their long-term well-being. "Consumers are increasingly concerned with the potentially dangerous ingredients in their conventional body care products, such as deodorant. This awareness has opened the door for more independent natural brands to enter this competitive market space & give consumers the clean products they want. While consumer skepticism has plagued the natural deodorant market for years, sales continue to grow. This growth is driven by perceptions of increased safety and quality, with more consumers worrying about aluminum in their body care products" (Keller, 2019).

One of the psychosocial consequences of buying and using the Native brand deodorant is securing a feeling of safety. With an increase of aluminum-free, naturally derived ingredient deodorants in the market today, Native connects with its Gen X target market with its tagline, "We want to help you practice safe sweats." For a generation looking for harmless options for their health and body, Native provides that safety net.

Values: Generation X consumers value diversity, authenticity, and transparency and tend to think globally. This demographic "Can be cynical, skeptical, and cautious. That requires a company to prove their authenticity and relevance.

Gen X wants high value, cost-effective options. They expect good quality products at affordable prices" (Wagner, 2022).

Native brand deodorant appeals to Generation X consumers because, according to their website, "If you've ever read one of our ingredient labels you know transparency is sort of our thing" (Native, 2022). The all-natural ingredient quality of the brand goes back to several of Gen X's values, including being authentic and globally aware. Native is cruelty-free; its products were founded and created in the USA. Consumers of Generation X who display high consumer ethnocentrism would be even more inclined to align with this product. The Native brand also aligns with Generation X's value of affordability. They offer product bundles and subscriptions to make ordering easy, diverse, and affordable. The website states that the consumer will get anywhere from 17-25% off purchases when they become a subscriber, and they can change up scents and delivery dates whenever they choose.

Millennials

Brand Attributes: Millennials are stepping out as entrepreneurs into the business world; they are known to be organic or natural consumers. All natural organic are keywords when advertising to millennials. These consumers like to know where ingredients come from and their effect on a consumer's health. Millennials want to learn about products through research on their own or peer-to-peer feedback, not your traditional marketing channels.

Figure 2

Millennial Attributes

(Iskiev, 2022)

• Largest generation of entrepreneurs
• Least frequent in-store shopper
• All natural organic
• Love the "next best thing"
• Take new approaches to solving and dealing with issues
• Love discounts and reward programs

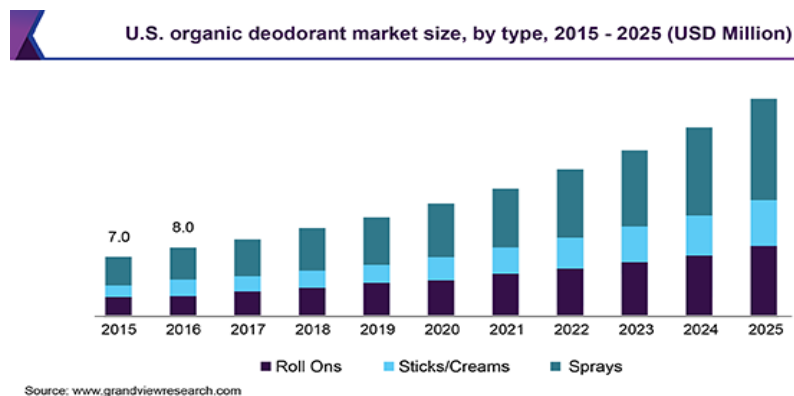
Functional Consequences: A functional consequence of using Native brand deodorant for individuals within the millennial generation is lower exposure to chemicals and potential toxins. "Beauty is closely tied to notions of wellness, we have found, particularly for millennials, defined as those 18 to 34 years old.

According to an AlixPartners survey, these buyers want beauty and personal care products with natural or organic ingredients that are sourced and manufactured following ethical and environmental standards. Consumers, across generations and countries, are increasingly focused on these issues, but demand from millennials is keenest" (AlixPartners, n.d.). The Millennial generation can be seen as "waking up" and taking more of an interest as to what exactly is in the products that they are using on their bodies daily.

With it being nearly 2023, consumers and brands have become more aware of what ingredients, chemicals, and toxins have been in their products for many years. Because of this, more and more natural brands have made their debut, and people love them because they work well, and there is no more need for the consumer to worry about chemicals or toxins leading to health risks. "This attention to healthy and clean products is driven by a number of factors. There is a growing awareness, as well as some confusion, among the general public regarding many ingredients in beauty and personal care products. Consumers have been warned by the media of top ingredients to avoid, such as BHA (butylated hydroxyanisole), parabens, phthalates, and coal tar. Much has also been written to remind consumers that beauty and personal care products are absorbed in varying degrees through the skin, the body's largest organ, increasing consumer concerns" (AlixPartners, n.d.).

Figure 3

U.S. Organic Deodorant by Size
("Organic deodorant...", n.d.)

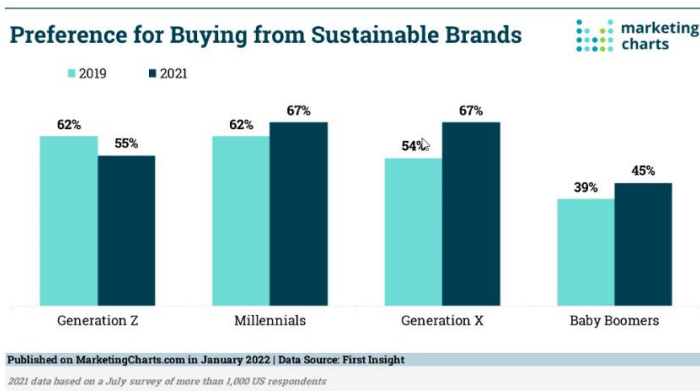


Psychosocial Consequences: One of the most important psychosocial consequences of Native deodorant for the Millennial generation is that it contributes to the feeling that they are helping the environment by using the product. Their efforts to lead a more sustainable life is the main trigger for purchasing Native due to the brand's focus on reducing the environmental

impact. “Sustainability has become more important to many consumers, with the majority of all consumers across generations saying they expect retailers and brands to become more sustainable. Although sustainability is important to consumers, what it means to individuals varies somewhat by age group. For the largest portion of Millennials (46%), Gen X (48%) and Baby Boomers (44%), sustainability means products made from recycled, sustainable and naturally harvested fibers and materials” (“2 in 3...,” 2022).

Figure 4

U.S. Organic Deodorant by Size
 (“2 in 3...,” n.d.)



Values: Millennials value unique, convenient, and socially responsible brands. “As a socially responsible generation, Millennials spend on brands and products that promote sustainability and social justice and while they do look for ways to save money, it’s also true that Millennials spend their money with brands that align with their values. Thus, Millennials will shop for products and services that help support socially responsible causes even if it costs them more” (31 millennial spending..., 2022).

Native products tout being natural and ethical but are also priced 2 to 3 times higher than most store-bought brands. The higher price point has not been a deterrent for Millennials - “Consumers are waking up; they want to know what’s on their body. They want to know everything. Transparency is key to them. Indeed, the natural beauty and body care market is expected to reach \$13.2 billion by 2018, due in part to millennial consumer behavior trends” (Raphael, 2017).

Native started as an online product in 2015. Their products were only available online, and the message and brand were spread via word of mouth and social media platforms. This unique marketing strategy had great appeal to the Millennial generation. After being acquired by P&G in 2017, Native was

exclusively offered to the retail store Target. “Native and Target have a long-standing relationship. Before Native deodorants rolled out to retailers such as Walgreens and Walmart, Target became the first to exclusively stock the brand's signature product at its stores in 2018” (Loza, 2021). By offering Native online and only one store, the brand maintained its unique marketing approach and exclusivity.

Meaningful Linkages

Audience	Brand Attributes	Functional Consequences	Psychosocial Consequences	Values
Gen X	Safe for health and environment	Great protection against body odor	I feel safer	Transparency Affordability Authenticity
Millennial	All-natural, organic	Lower exposure to chemicals and potential toxins	I can help save the planet	Uniqueness Convenience Social Responsibility

Sustainable product – great protection – I feel safe – more confident self

All natural formula – less exposure to toxins – body feels safe – cleaner, healthier body

Conclusion

Since P&G acquired Native, the brand has almost quadrupled in size and generated over \$100 million in sales, as Native is currently offered at most major stores, including Meijer, Walmart, CVS, and Walgreens. This statistic insinuates a rise in consumer likeability, especially Gen X and Millennial generations. These generations' consumer attitudes toward the brand can be understood better through the linkages shown above. It is clear that these demographics are aligned with buying safe and clean products to satisfy their underlying need to contribute to a safer planet and better well-being.

References

- 2 in 3 Gen Xers Prefer to Buy from Sustainable Brands. 2022, January 14. *Marketing Charts*. <https://www.marketingcharts.com/brand-related/csr-119473>
- 31 millennial spending habits & income statistics to know, 2022. Young and the Invested. (2022, November 7). Retrieved November 13, 2022, from <https://youngandtheinvested.com/millennial-spending-habits/>
- About Us. (n.d.). *Native*. Retrieved November 11, 2022, from <https://www.nativecos.com/pages/about-us>.
- Iskier, M. (2022). How each generation shops in 2022. *Consumer Trends Report*. <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-each-generation-shops-differently>
- Kassraie, A. (2022, August 1). Deodorants recalled due to cancer risks. *AARP*. Retrieved November 11, 2022, from <https://www.aarp.org/health/conditions-treatments/info-2021/deodorant-recall-cancer-risk.html>
- Keller, A. 2019, August 15. Consumer trends for clean & safe deodorants. *Twincraft Skincare*. <https://www.twincraft.com/twincraft-skincare-blog/clean-safe-natural-deodorant-antiperspirant-trends>
- Loza, C. (2021, December 9). Target gets P&G hair-care exclusive. *Store Brands*. Retrieved November 13, 2022, from <https://storebrands.com/target-gets-pg-hair-care-exclusive>
- Millennial preferences in beauty and personal care products. (n.d.). *AlixPartners*. Retrieved November 11, 2022, from <https://www.alixpartners.com/insights-impact/insights/millennials-preferences-beauty-personal-care-products/>
- Mothersbaugh, D. L., Hawkins, D. I., & Kleiser, S. B. (2020). *Consumer behavior: Building marketing strategy*. McGraw-Hill
- Organic deodorant market size & share: Global industry report, 2025. (n.d.). *Global Industry Report*. <https://www.grandviewresearch.com/industry-analysis/organic-deodorant-market>
- Raphael, R. (2017, February). Forget Avocado Toast: Millennials Are Flocking To Natural Deodorant. *Fast Company*. Retrieved November 2022, from <https://www.fastcompany.com/40441637/forget-avocado-toast-millennials-are-flocking-to-natural-deodorant>
- Verdugo, V. (n.d.). Antiperspirant vs. Deodorant: Native deodorant. *Native*. Retrieved November 10, 2022, from

<https://www.nativecos.com/blogs/news/battle-of-the-b-o-antiperspirant-vs-deodorant>.

Wagner, N. (2022, October 24). Generation X and brand loyalty. *Stevens & Tate Marketing*. Retrieved November 13, 2022, from <https://stevens-tate.com/articles/generation-x-brand-loyalty/>