Millennial trends in photo and video

The comibination of digital and alternative processes – Penumbra

Photos are another tool for personal storytelling

Photos are no longer about remembering past times or events but for showing what they are doing now.

An overwehleming 79% of Millennials share photos of their own online—ones they themselves took. IF you include video that goes up to 81%

Millennials want to express themselves by creating their own new records of their experiences. It's not enough to upload something made by somebody else.

The nostalgia that Instagram taps is on full display in Millennials’ surging interest in film cameras. In [a recent survey](http://qz.com/348423/millennials-love-this-newfangled-photo-technology-called-film/) by photo film producer Ilford almost a third of film buyers were under 35. Picture taking has become its own important process, its own experience, for many Millennials.

**Photographing Events**  
Experiences are important to Millennials, as has been well documented. Millennials want to participate in special, often communal events. And part of how they experience these events is through documentation—they photograph the events—and share via social media.  
  
In a [recent poll of concertgoers](http://www.forbes.com/sites/hughmcintyre/2015/05/07/millennials-live-events-and-smartphones-a-look-into-their-behavior/) from TicketFly, 40% of Millennial women said they took pictures of concerts they went to, and 24% of men said the same. And 22% of Millennials share on social media about their experience while in attendance at the actual event.

What are Millennials photographing at an event like a concert? Well, whatever's onstage, sure. But they're also photographing themselves. Selfies let Millennials not only share the experience they're having, but also share their own place in that experience.

The selfie is a usefully symbolic gesture for people trying to understand Millennials, so it's no surprise Millennials have found themselves often tagged as [the "Selfie Generation."](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/08/opinion/blow-the-self-ie-generation.html?_r=0) At this point, [more than half](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/03/04/more-than-half-of-millennials-have-shared-a-selfie/) of Millennials have shared a selfie, according to Pew, while only a quarter of Gen Xers and a tenth of Boomers have shared one.

For Millennials, then, sharing photos happens widely, and sharing photos of oneself happens almost as widely. It's not surprising that [more Millennials describe](http://blog.iconosquare.com/instagram-important-millennials/) Instagram as a "friendly" website than as a "creative" website. A photo-sharing site isn't even automatically a social network, but Millennials have made it one, because they've made the act of sharing photos a personal act—and a very social one—and placed their own faces at the center of that act.

In the end, photography is really just another piece of how Millennials interact and socialize online. Millennials have used the Internet to build strong bonds between one another. A third of Millennials claim to be "close" to somebody they met online, according to a [survey by digital marketing firm Deep Focus](http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/241110/millennials-put-premium-on-digital-relationships.html). According to this same study, three quarters of Millennials have friendships that are entirely based on social media. This extends to photos, as half of Millennials now consider how their clothes will look in shared photos on Instagram when picking an outfit.

**The Bottom Line**  
Millennials are blessed with some of the greatest technical advancements in photography since its invention, and they're using that technology to participate in personal, and what-they-consider-meaningful interactions online. And, by doing so, they are sharing their own place in the larger world.

One of the major differences of the Generation Y group from other groups is that these young consumers are more "self-expressive, liberal, upbeat and open to change," describes Pew Research. They are more concerned about social issues and the environment and feel confident in their ability to make a difference. As 14-year-old author and speaker Adora Svitak stated at the Mashable Connect event in May of this year, "...my peers deserve more than products to buy wrapped up in advertising. We need ideas to share and causes to believe in — opportunities to lead and teach.” Levi's is one brand who is trying to reach the Millennial population in this way -- its ['Go Forth' campaign](http://www.trendhunter.com/trends/levi-s-legacy" \t "_blank) was developed to encourage youth around the world to participate in social and environmental initiatives.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/in-sight/wp/2016/03/28/artistry-and-chemistry-a-new-way-to-look-at-the-old-practices-of-photography/

The show is called “This is a Photograph,” exhibited at the Penland School of Crafts and curated by Dan Estabrook. An artist in his own right, Estabrook also teaches a popular workshop called “Photography in Reverse” in which he begins with digital photography and teaches older techniques back to the daguerreotype created in the 19th century.

Now that digital is the modern option for citizens and journalists alike, chemical processes have re-emerged in the art world. Daguerreotypes, wet collodion and photograms appear in the work of famous artists such as Chuck Close, Sally Mann and Adam Fuss.

“Just as some people say that photography freed up the painters to be impressionistic,” Estabrook said, “so has digital allowed photographers to be free to experiment.”

there’s a [culture of creating and making cool stuff](http://www.ypulse.com/post/view/dispatches-from-the-millennial-mega-mashup-mtvs-nick-shore-on-generation-in" \t "_blank) among Millennials. It’s just one outlet of their entrepreneurial spirit; one that has placed them squarely in the creative arts arena. The recent resurgence of photography as a hobby is tied to this maker culture, as well as Millennials' desire to share what they make. Digital photography has made it easy to customize and tweak images to truly put one’s personal stamp on the work before posting it widely on social media.

Sure, there are dozens of camera apps available for smartphones, but “real” cameras are cool again. The excitement is part throwback, and part technological advancement. Even amateur photographers covet vintage classics, from once-cheap Polaroids (if they can find film) to higher-end Nikons. And then there are hipster-approved Leicas and Lomography cameras — new or old — that will turn heads. At the other end of the spectrum, new camera technology is capturing the attention of young shutterbugs and getting them to think about photography in new ways. [Lytro cameras](http://gizmodo.com/5890028/lytro-light-field-camera-this-is-what-new-feels-like" \t "_blank), for example, use light field capture to allow the photographer to refocus pictures *after* they’ve snapped the shot. And now that cell phones can list some impressive megapixel numbers, camera makers are focusing on improving other technologies, shrinking the size of SLRs, boosting brightness and image quality, and adding filters and editing and HD video functionality.

As with any hobby, Millennials are exploring the full range of possibilities with photography, teaching themselves how to take better pictures, edit and tweak their photos, and even seam pictures into HDR images and panoramas, all thanks to the wealth of knowledge shared on the Internet.

And since these avid photographers are carting around their cameras on a regular…

YouTube is also an incredibly popular platform for Millennials. In fact, Millennials are now [watching more video content on YouTube and other streaming platforms than they are on TV](http://sandbox.break.com/acumen/Acumen%20Constant%20Content__ExecSum%20Booklet_Final2.pdf" \t "_blank).

And share they do. With a wide array of social channels to choose from, including Instagram, Snapchat, and Pinterest, today’s young snap shooters are all about sharing their photographic adventures. Even the social networks that aren’t as focused on photos—Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr—are now all clearly moving in a more photo/video-friendly direction.

And at the heart of that aforementioned sharing motivation, as Cursie mentioned, is storytelling. Millennials aren’t happy simply recording moments with their cameras, they need to do more than that – they need to tell stories.

Pictures speak volumes for millennials and this is why they like Instagram over Twitter, which is more reliant on words to share or get a message across. Millennials are [creative individuals](http://www.millennialmarketing.com/2014/01/2014-millennial-trends/" \t "_hplink) by nature, and therefore prefer and support brands that enable them to express themselves in creative ways. Doing so through photos on Instagram is a way millennials can connect with others who value the same brands, creating a community of sorts and an easy focus group for brands when launching new products.

one of the top reasons why users follow brands on Instagram is because they find their content interesting. That seems simple enough, but a key component is how the account is curated. Funnily enough, that social ego I mentioned earlier, also relates to which accounts they follow. If your Instagram account is visually messy, meaning it doesn't have a theme or some visual guidelines, you can expect people to flee, because your photos are messing up their stream. On the flipside, making the content align with your brand values, product and experiences and trends, you'll have higher engagement and organic growth.

Millennials love this newfangled photo technology called film

<http://qz.com/348423/millennials-love-this-newfangled-photo-technology-called-film/>

Film is dead. Long live film.

The nostalgic have been mourning the end of film photography for a while now. Kodak went bankrupt and photo labs have been closing all over. Film rolls are expensive (around $5 for 36 photos), and developing them is time-consuming—no contest for the infinite storage space and immediate gratification of digital photography.

But now film photography is enjoying something of a comeback, gaining popularity with the under-thirty set.

Hipster culture embraces all things retro—think thrift stores, mismatched dishes from grandma’s kitchen, and ‘antique’ Instagram filters. And just as this helped rejuvenate vinyl records (their sales are up 49% in 2014) and save Polaroid photos, it’s now bringing back good old print pictures.

In a survey of thousands of people from 70 different countries by Ilford, a producer of photo film, nearly a third said they were below 35—and 60% of that group said they had picked up film photography in the past five years.

Asked what first attracted them to using film, the new users commonly replied:

“It’s fun”

“It’s retro”

“I wanted to slow down […]”

Users also said they enjoy the craft element of developing film. And 90% said they go online to learn and discuss their skill.

<http://www.ilfordphoto.com/pressroom/article.asp?n=198>

**WHAT FIRST ATTRACTED YOU TO USING FILM?**

At the end of 2014 we conducted a comprehensive international survey to help us better understand film users. Thousands of users from over 70 countries completed the survey for us and the results were inspiring.

Our belief that support for traditional film is growing was confirmed by the 30% of respondents who were aged under 35, with 60% of them using film for less than 5 years.

For many of those the interest began after receiving a film camera as a gift from family or a friend. Canon, Nikon, Mamiya, and Pentax cameras all featured strongly in the survey, with a large percentage also being bought on EBay.

Around 84% of our respondents said that they had taught themselves how to use film with a little help from books and the Internet and more than 49% now develop and print their own pictures in a darkroom.

Of those who responded, 98% used black and white film with 31% shooting it exclusively. Just 2% use only colour film.

Interestingly 86% of respondents used roll film, and the Lomo and Holga cameras proved popular in this category.

On-line groups and Forums are used by 90% of respondents for product information and technical advice with a similar number finding what they need from www.ilfordphoto.com.

When asked "What first attracted you to using film?” comments included:

"It's fun"

"It's retro"

"I wanted to slow down and really think about what I was doing rather than just shoot 15 versions of the same shot to get it right. As I have grown into film, I also enjoy the craft aspects of it. Developing etc."

"The fact that there goes a lot more thinking in taking a photograph. Because of the "limitation" of 36/12 pictures on a roll you think more about a shot you take. While with digital you just shoot."

Steven Brierley, Director of Sales and Marketing at HARMAN technology/ILFORD PHOTO, commented “Thanks to the film users who took part in this survey, we have confirmed what we thought, which is that the recent growth in film sales can be attributed to the new users coming through. We are providing support to these new users and making it easier for them to find darkrooms should they wish to. It’s a year since we launched localdarkroom.com and we now have over 650 tutors and sharers in more than 60 countries around the world. Without the support and help from the film community who complete our surveys, this couldn’t have happened”

http://pdnpulse.pdnonline.com/2015/02/ilford-film-photographer-study.html

The photographic film business is a bit like the [Black Knight](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhRUe-gz690" \t "_blank) — it’s been remorselessly hacked into bits, but it’s not dead yet.

In fact, it’s enjoying something of a resurgence as the[Impossible Project](http://pdnpulse.pdnonline.com/2010/09/dutch-group-announces-new-color-instant-film-for-polaroid-cameras.html" \t "_blank), [Ferrania](http://pdnpulse.pdnonline.com/2014/12/filmisalive-ferranias-dream-100-years-analog-film.html" \t "_blank),[Lomography](http://www.pdnonline.com/Search-420.shtml?kw=Lomography&x=0&y=0&exposeNavigation=true&action=Submit&searchInterface=Keyword&matchType=mode%2Bmatchallpartial&an=superPdn&sb=score" \t "_blank) and others keep the flame alive.

It’s true that some millennials look like the people in my Google Images search. But many more look like the young professionals you interact with at ad agencies and dentist’s offices. Almost 20 million of them are young parents in suburbia.1 23 percent of millennials are enrolled in grad and undergrad programs across the country.2 Most millennials live outside big cities.3 And Walmart finds that 40 percent of their grocery business is with millennials.4

http://www.skidmorestudio.com/millennial-stereotypes-debunking-the-hipster-myth/

When marketers stereotype their millennial audience as “hipsters,” they immediately alienate the vast majority of the group they’re trying to attract. You can’t treat 79 million people in varying life stages, with varying interests as one clichéd person. Millennials won’t give you the time of day if you try to “sell” to them as a stereotype. They want partnership, not pandering. They want your brand to show that you truly get them. The only course of action is to get to know these amazing young people.

https://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/2015/05/27/generation-finds-comfort-ways-their-grandparents/wxI6HYookYlbQreEmp091M/story.html

Beaudoin says the DIY phenomenon, one of the most visible aspects of Generation Yawn, has really flourished thanks to the Internet, particularly with the rise of Instagram and with personal blogs growing into international brands.

“The whole do-it-yourself movement, which really stemmed from people wanting to save money around the financial crisis in 2008 or 2009, then moving along with social media,” she says. “Now it’s kind of chic.’”

“I think a lot of this is a reaction to the hyper-capitalist, sped-up 21st century,”

“Millennials harken back to their grandparents’ generation,”

http://millennialmagazine.com/why-hipsters-hate-being-called-a-hipster/

Part of the appeal of vinyl records and manual film cameras is that one can truly understand how they function, allowing a person to more deeply engage with these tools. If it broke, it could be fixed. It wasn’t necessary to buy a completely new product. This is where the root of the hipster lies. It is a pursuit of sustainability in the face of a consumer market based on constant obsolescence.