

The Truth About

Thai Youth



INTRODUCTION

Gen Z is making older generations uncomfortable.

How? Primarily by refusing to adhere to the things other generations have typically associated with *being young*.

Not drinking alcohol? Not going out? Exhibiting conservative attitudes? Do Gen Z even know what it means to *be young*?

Perhaps some of this discomfort also comes from the fact that Gen Z has challenged some of life's fundamentals – from gender identity to relationships with work.

In fact, 1 in 2 Thai Gen Zs say influencers have had more impact on their life choices than their parents have!

But not everything has changed. In 2024, in our fourth wave of 'Truth About Youth' research, backed by over 16,000 participants across 26 different markets, we set out to unpack the enduring truths about being young and contrast those to the things that are uniquely true about young people today.

This extensive exploration into the evolving mindset of the youth spotlights Thai Gen Z in particular, offering crucial insights into their values, worldviews, and expectations from brands.

So how can brands better connect and engage with Thai youth today? We'll explore 4 truths extrapolated from our data.

1. **Creative Catalysts:** Unleashing Their Creativity for Social Change
2. **Depth Seekers:** Relentlessly Deciphering the Truth
3. **Rational Thought Challengers:** Bending Science and Logic
4. **New Realm Explorers:** Escaping Reality into a World of Their Own

CHAPTER ONE

CREATIVE CATALYSTS: UNLEASHING THEIR CREATIVITY FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Thai Gen Z is taking the mantle of change upon themselves, fueled by a deep sense of responsibility toward social causes. As trust in traditional institutions declines, they channel their creativity into addressing some of the most pressing issues of our time. This generation sees creativity not just as a form of self-expression but as a **tool for meaningful societal impact**, especially in areas like environmentalism and gender equality.

- **52%** of Thai Gen Zs consider environmental issues to be the most important social cause. This is the highest globally, compared to the global average of 40%.
- **95%** of Thai Gen Zs identify as feminists, significantly higher than the global benchmark of 78%.
- **69%** of Thai Gen Zs believe they are personally responsible for reversing climate change, exceeding the global benchmark of 37%.

Always Been True:

The youth have always pushed the edges of creativity and possibility.

More True Today:

They are using their creative power to spark meaningful social change.

Provocation:

How do we partner with the youth to unlock their creativity to support the causes that both consumers and brands care about?

CHAPTER TWO

DEPTH SEEKERS: RELENTLESSLY DECIPHERING THE TRUTH

Thai Gen Zs are distinguished by their unwavering commitment to **finding deeper meaning** in everything they encounter. In an era of information overload, this generation is not content with surface-level truths. They are skeptical of what is presented to them and thrive on investigative exploration, often becoming **active participants in uncovering the hidden layers** behind what they see and hear.

- **30%** of Thai Gen Zs identify as conspiracy theorists, ranking second highest globally, highlighting their tendency to question mainstream narratives.
- They actively immerse themselves in communities that cater to their passions and interests: **83%** identify as Empaths, **65%** as DIY-ers, **59%** as Potterheads, **48%** as Manga/Anime fans, and **45%** as Gamers.

Always Been True:

Young people have always been curious.

More True Today:

In a world where everything is easy to find, the 'hunt' for deeper truths has become more powerful.

Provocation:

How do brands encourage greater engagement by adding layers to their experiences?

CHAPTER THREE

**RATIONAL THOUGHT CHALLENGERS:
BENDING SCIENCE AND LOGIC**

With the rise of fake news and misinformation, **Gen Z's belief systems are evolving in unexpected ways.** Thai youth embrace a flexible approach to reality, where irrational ideas and whimsical beliefs coexist with their pragmatic concerns. The phrase "*Delulu is the solulu*" captures this generation's tendency to find comfort in beliefs that are not always logical, **allowing them to deal with the chaos and uncertainty of the modern world.**

- **66%** of Thai Gen Zs agree that it's fun to believe in things that aren't logical or scientific, slightly above the global benchmark of 62%.
- **66%** believe star signs can predict personality traits, well above the global average of 42%.

Always Been True:

Young people have always been dreamers.

More True Today:

Having an open belief system is a necessity to help them navigate a world of uncertainty.

Provocation:

How do we empower them during a time of uncertainty by bringing *solulus* (solutions) to their life?

CHAPTER FOUR

**NEW REALM EXPLORERS: ESCAPING
REALITY INTO A WORLD OF THEIR OWN**

Escapism has always been a part of youth culture, but for Thai Gen Z, it has **taken on a new form.** Many retreat into alternate, virtual worlds to escape from the pressures of reality, **with a focus on solitude rather than communal experiences.** This generation creates multiple online identities—such as *finstas*—to disconnect from their real-world pressures and explore new forms of self-expression.

- **79%** of Thai Gen Zs view escapism as a solitary activity rather than a communal one, compared to the global average of 60%.
- **43%** of Thai Gen Zs find a virtual reality fantasy world appealing as a form of escape, the highest globally.

Always Been True:

Young people have always forged new passions and cultures.

More True Today:

The youth have new avenues to create new realities.

Provocation:

How can we take part in their new realities that supports them in their journey to liberation?

CONCLUSION

The *Truth About Thai Youth* paints a picture of a generation that is redefining creativity, curiosity, belief systems, and identity. Thai Gen Zs are not just passive consumers; **they are proactive participants in shaping the future.** They expect brands to be more than just sellers of products – **they want partners in social change, truth-seeking, creative problem-solving, and personal exploration.**

Brands that can align with these values and respond to these provocations can form lasting, enduring connections with this dynamic and influential generation.

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To learn more about Truth Central and our Truth Studies, please visit:

www.mccannworldgroup.com/about/truth

Our Methodology

Wave 1: MW Truth Central, April 2019, 28 Markets [n= 32,204] Markets included: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, South Korea, South Africa, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Puerto Rico, Thailand, Turkey, UAE, UK, US. Gen Z sample: 5,572

Wave 2: MW Truth Central, April 2024, 16 Markets [n=16,112] Markets included: Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, France, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, Spain, UAE, Peru, Thailand, UK, US. Gen Z sample: 3,158