

# A Young Mind

Every fifth person in India is a youth, which as defined by UN falls in the age group of 15-24. However, for reference in this story, we are talking about the 18-24 age group, which essentially is on the radar of every marketer in India.

How much do Indian marketers understand youth? Are they where the Indian youth is? Do they speak their language? Or is it mere lip service that the Indian marketers are giving? *Pitch* had some of these questions in mind and thought to test out this understanding.

With regular questions, we threw in some personal questions and a quiz too, which we thought would be fun. The fun turned out to be a Herculean task, as while everyone was excited to be a part of the story, the quiz got marketers opt out of the story. Of the 60-odd marketers *Pitch* got in touch with, only a few were willing to be a part of it. And no one scored a 10/10.

We'll anyhow give them the benefit of doubt based on the recent study that puts the blame entirely on Google for our poor memory.

Another let-down was our specific question to describe youth in 148 characters à la Twitter style. None complied to the request. Some answers were as large as 200 words or even more.

To understand the youth, you need to be where they are – educational institutes, cinema halls, pubs, restaurants, Facebook, and Twitter, surprisingly, not many have a Twitter account. That puts a doubt if these marketers even understand the medium well.

However, *Pitch* salutes the marketers who participated in the story and put themselves through the test. And do they understand the youth well, we'll let you judge that. Before we get into the minds of the marketers, let's try and decode the youth, an understanding based on the inputs of marketers.

By **Dhaleta Surender Kumar, Pallavi Srivastava & Ashish Jha**

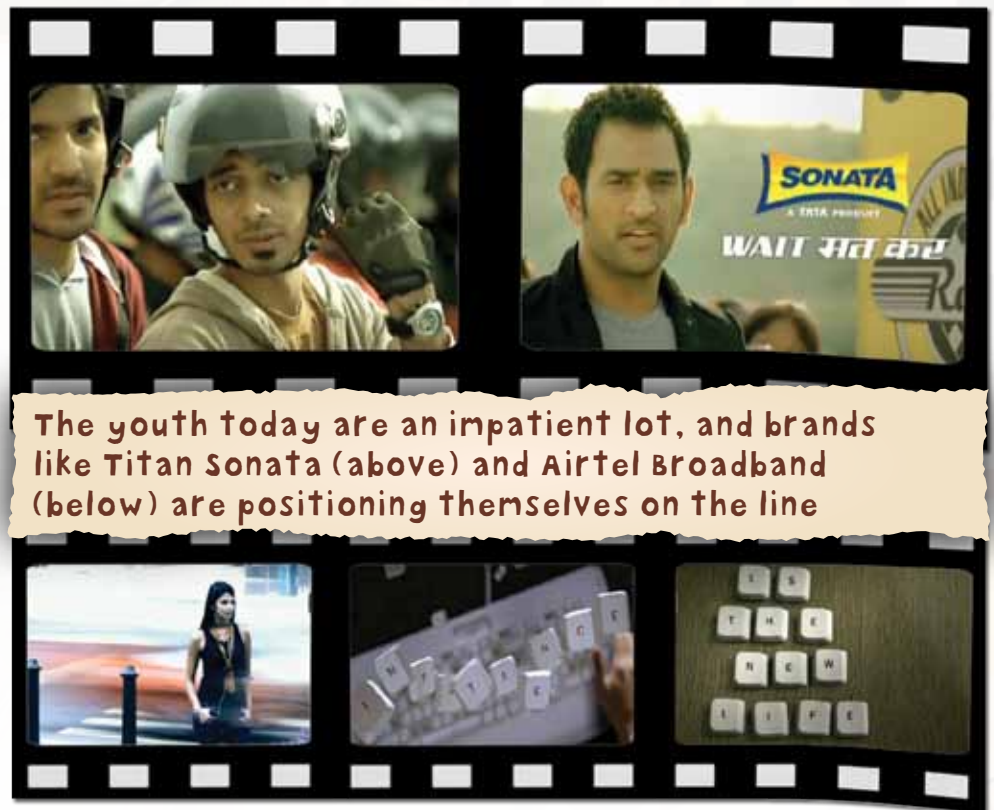
### Got it easy

What forms your character and social behaviour, which ultimately decides your choices, and your brand and product choices mostly depends on your upbringing. The current lot of 18-24, was born around the closing of the '80s and groomed in the '90s when the Indian economy was opening up and "one of the most prosperous period of Indian economy. It was a period when the de-controlled boom started exposing the youth of today to IT, telecom, bullish markets and economies.

K Ramakrishnan, President, Marketing, Cafe Coffee Day, sets the foreground for the attitude of the youth rightly, when he points out "They have not had to face anything called shortages or controls and whatever they wished or imagined has been in their arms length."

All adjectives – confident, demanding, multi-tasking, independent, aspirational and others – that qualify the 18-24 age group, are born of the affects of this era. Socially, this group, as Ranju Mohan, Director and Business Head, JK Ansell, puts it is radical and unafraid to challenge existing norms and taboos. While this present lot was growing up, the youth of that era often found themselves to muted televisions when family planning messages were on air.

However, the present youth has been overexposed to such messages and is more confident talking about them. "The youth of today has a libertarian attitude to everything, whether it is success, sex or even politics," says Mohan. That is exactly why engaging initiatives like kamalounge.in of JK Ansell are better accepted today. "Kamasutra is targeted at bold, risk-taking,



The youth today are an impatient lot, and brands like Titan Sonata (above) and Airtel Broadband (below) are positioning themselves on the line

assertive and free-minded people. Today's youth either is in this category or aspires to be there," adds Mohan.

He feels that youth are unpredictable and fickle but are clear about what they want. The definition of the word "cool" has different meanings across different sections. "Youth is not demography, but a mindset!" he says.

**"Today's youth hold a 'dual passport'. They blend the global influences with their own cultural values"**

**Arvind RP**

Marketing Controller, Denizen, Levi Strauss India

### Duality

The attitude cannot be termed regressive. And certainly is progressive. "Today's youth," as according to Arvind RP, Marketing Controller, Denizen, Levi Strauss India, "can be described as holding a 'dual passport' culturally. They blend the rich global influences with their own cultural and family values.

Media, especially the digital platform, facilitates this integration. We can observe on Facebook how the youth search for affiliations that make them comfortable." Adds Kunal Mukherjee, Marketing Head, UTV Broadcast, "Online 24X7, today's youth is a unique generation with unprecedented access to the world. They are characterised by both confidence and duality. They easily straddle both."



The most important factor, amidst this duality, according to Srinivas Murthy, Director, Marketing (Flavours), Coca Cola India, is that the youth today "is no more attracted to the West. They happen to enjoy both the world (east and west) here itself. They are a progressive blend of traditional values and materialistic world. They remain happy, they are rational and at the same time highly ambitious."

While highly motivated, Murthy feels that the youth today is money-minded too. "They have got enough freedom and they enjoy it to the fullest," he adds. Sameer Suneja, MD, Perfetti Van Melle India adds, "Not just money, they seek excitement too. They are extremely comfortable with debt too."

Meanwhile, Subodh Marwah, Director, Marketing, Carlsberg India feels that the youth could be described better in just seven characters, i.e. 'dynamic'. He feels that "They subscribe to just one tradition – what's new? The demographics of a 'youthful' consumer are being redefined as the market is moving towards more consumption oriented behaviour." And that's evident from the behaviour how they spend on leisure activities and want to make "quick" progresses on their career ladder.

Another adjective that describes the

**"While the youth from metros are seekers and strivers, the youth from smaller towns are aspirers"**

**Subodh Marwah**

Director, Marketing, Carlsberg India

youth best is 'impatient', a habit which has been ingrained by over exposure to electronic and digital mediums, and as a result, are losing interest in reading a hard copy. "But that does not mean that they lag as far as having a standard level of knowledge is concerned," warns Samir Valia, Vice-President, Marketing and Corporate Communication, Frankfinn, adding, "While the young today are apprehensive of their future, yet they come with an attitude that 'Yes it is possible and it can be done.'"

Suneja feels that impatience is a virtue for the youth today. "Deferred gratification is as uncool as the grey polyester safari suits," he says.

And brands like Titan Sonata are aligning their positioning with this attitude. Its new positioning, 'Wait Mat Kar' and subsequent campaigns featuring MS Dhoni just reflect that.

### Blurring lines

The attitude is not restricted to metros and Dhoni is an idol, who represents the aspirations of the smaller town youth. The differences are more of a demographic nature. From a behavioural or aspirational standpoint, there aren't much differences between the metro youth and the small town youth.

Marwah of Carlsberg puts the difference in detail, when he says that the youth from Tier-I cities are a mix of seekers and strivers (seekers earning between ₹ 2 lakh and ₹ 5 lakh and strivers with incomes of between ₹ 5 lakh and ₹ 10 lakh on a per year basis). "Rising disposable income, exposure to diverse media has led to rise of a new kind of youth that doesn't subscribe to the notion that they are a part of gen X or Y. The maxim - work hard, party harder has never been as true as today," says Marwah.

On the other hand, the youth from Tier-II & III cities are largely made of aspirers and their tastes are fast evolving due to wide media exposure. "Their tastes are fast evolving due to wide media exposure. The youth in tier II and III cities is slowly but surely engaging with brands, as international brands expand to these cities in search of new audiences. They want maximum bang for their buck. The idea of value for money still plays a big part in their purchasing decisions," he adds.

However, it would be overly simplistic to assume that youth of Tier-II & III markets as less-informed about trends and fashion as compared to the metros. "The variables may be more evident in terms of their purchasing power and access to retail environment. In terms of psychographics, youth in Tier II/III cities may be more group-based and conservative than their Tier I counterparts," adds Arvind.

Meanwhile, Suneja feels that the only difference lies in the expression of the need, and not in the needs itself, given the relatively lower exposure in the smaller towns. "However, ambitions for upward mobility are higher in Tier-II & III cities than in their Tier-I counterparts," he adds.



**The youth, today, has a libertarian attitude to topics, whether it is sex or even politics. Initiatives like kamalounge.in (above) are better accepted today**



## Brands an expression

A youngster belonging to a metro usually is better exposed to brands and hence is more brand-conscious and keeping with fashion. "They are clear about the choices they make as they are usually better informed. On the other hand, the youngster from Tier-II & III cities usually is more likely to be informed through social media platforms and likely to aspire to a certain lifestyle that they see their counterparts in metros follow," says Murli Desingh, Managing Director, Crocs India.

But do brands play a role in the life of the youth? According to Arvind, the youth connect with brands that create a sense of belonging, tapping into their shared interest, passion and communities. They admire brands that inspire them with creative ideas. "Brands are a badge for self-expression (what it says about them) and badge for affiliation (where they belong)," he says.

That said, ironically, the youth certainly cannot be trusted to be brand loyal. Gautam Dutta, COO of PVR Cinemas and CEO of Cinemedia, blames the experimental nature of the youth for that. "Youth today are self-centered and brand – promiscuous. They keep trying on new brands and there is nothing called brand loyalty among the youth," he says.

## No preaching please!

Also, what's common between the Tier-I and Tier-II/III cities is the fact that while they are ever ready to go out to get 'it', they want no preaching. Ramakrishnan of Cafe Coffee Day, aptly puts it, "The decisions are based on advice from friends and peers rather than faceless experts." In the past, most of the marketing was done primarily through advertising and other traditional means. However, today, with the emergence of social media, the youth is much better informed and well connected.

According to Desingh, "They need and value first hand information so that they can make informed choices, which is why these platforms work best to reach out to them since they get information directly from peers and brands and not through any other medium."



creating experiences in and around youth hang-outs - colleges, cinema halls, pubs - is a good way to find affinity and brand salience with the youth



## Knowing them better

The strategy to understand the youth better is "not to try hard and be something you are not." Be relevant and not intrusive. A corollary to this, according to Suneja "would be to listen more and talk less".

According to Arvind of Levi Strauss

**"Youth today are self-centered and brand-promiscuous. There is nothing called brand loyalty"**

**Gautam Dutta**

COO, PVR Cinemas

India, it is so important to be a 'part' of their experiences and not look at it from a distant lens, and what better place than the digital world for that, where the youth is most expressive. "Of course, this must be complemented with various conversations with them. In addition to mainstream research, we embarked on Ethnographic studies that include in-home visits, shop-along and in-depth interviews. We also have an online research panel called d-Zone. We engage the youth in dialogues for insights, and gain real-time feedback on brand marketing, retail experience and product offering," he says.



## COVER STORY

The other usual suspect places to learn about the youth are educational institutes, pubs, restaurants and cinema halls. "What work best are platforms that allow no pretence and no encumbrances to the youth, like in a Cafe Coffee Day or in the social space," says Ramakrishnan. In the same vein, he feels that there is no rule by which one can better engage with the youth. "Marketers are better off moving from a talk mode to a listen, engage and co-create mode in connecting with youth," he adds.

Meanwhile, Saurabh Gupta, Director, Vanesa Inc (Denver), feels that "Focus group sessions and informal brain storming sessions" too are a good way to learn about the youth and understand them better. Also experiential learnings by probing into their environment such as universities, cinemas and other hangouts go a long way in understanding the youth."

A gem of an advise, however, comes from Simeran Bhasin, Head, Marketing,

itate to brands that are not only differentiated, but stay connected with them. Relevant brands evolve - converse with them (evident with the rise of social media), and stays fresh with their respective product offering or brand experiences.

While there's no best way to reach out to youth, creating experiences could go a long way to let them associate themselves with the brand. The experience itself can become the badge of expression. "One big lesson for us at Carlsberg is that one can connect with the TG instantly by creating experiential platforms for youth. Never say 'never' to new opportunities," says Marwah, adding, "We are constantly looking for experiences that offer something 'different' to our audience. 'Different' - from a cliché has today transformed into a choice. This is reflected in the way consumers have accepted and enjoyed the packaging innovation offered by Tuborg in the form of its unique 'Pull Off Cap'."

**The youth connect better with brands that create a sense of belonging, tapping into their shared interest, passion and communities**

Fastrack & New Brands, Titan Industries. "I think, recruiting the right kind of people is important to know more about youth. The marketing team of Fastrack has young professionals and they live the lifestyle that the brand wants to project to its audience. No amount of research can help a brand learn about youth," she says.

### Marketing to youth

The youth connect better with brands that create a sense of belonging, tapping into their shared interest, passion and communities. According to Arvind, "youth tend to connect with a story. Ideally, one should go beyond personality and product features, but tell a compelling brand story. Most successful youth brands inspire or empower the youth."

He also adds that youth are at a life stage where they are evolving. They grav-

### The common DNA

Like any successful marketing story, some of the iconic youth brands reflect today's needs of the youth, and at times serve as lighthouses for the youth to navigate by. The common DNA amongst these iconic youth brands, according to Valia of Frankfinn, "is that they all exhibit great energy, exuberance, and positiveness. For example, Thums Up as a product remains the same for last two-three decades, but then its communication keeps it in tune with the youth. So a lot depends on how you communicate and advertise about your brand."

Meanwhile, let's delve deeper into the psyche of some of the youth marketers (listed on the right) to see how youthful they are and how well they understand the youth. ■

- [feedback@pitchonnet.com](mailto:feedback@pitchonnet.com)

## The Players

(In alphabetical order)

**Ahmed Rahimtoola**  
Gorbatschow

**Arvind R P**  
Benizen, Levi Strauss India

**Gautam Dutta**  
PVR cinemas

**K Ramakrishnan**  
café coffee day

**Kunal Mukherjee**  
UTV Broadcast

**Murali Desingh**  
crocs India

**Prasun Kumar**  
Sony Ericsson India

**Rajiv Bawa**  
Uninor

**Rajiv Mehta**  
Puma India

**Ranju Mohan**  
JK Ansell (Kamasutra)

**Sameer Suneja**  
Perfetti Van Melle India

**Samir Valia**  
Frankfinn

**Saurabh Gupta**  
Vanesa Inc (Denver)

**Simeran Bhasin**  
Fastrack, Titan Industries

**Srinivas Murthy**  
coca cola India

**Subodh Marwa**  
carlsberg India

**Sunil Gadgil**  
Bausch & Lomb India

**Tadato Kimura**  
GM, Marketing, Sony India



## Ahmed Rahimtoola

VP, Marketing, Allied Blenders and Distillers (Gorbatschow)

### How I see the Youth

optimistic, confident about future, want it now generation. Also interestingly, today's youth is not rebellious unlike the youth in the 90s.

It's a 5-10 second generation.. so if a brand can't impress them in that time it loses its chance.

The youth is moving from the 'me' culture to the 'we' culture. Also the youth is very self-expressive today. Marketers should use this insight.

Youth brand I admire  
Axe



### My favourite youth icon



Mahendra Singh Dhoni

one brand from my college days that I long for...  
None

My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?  
'We Are Like That only' by Rama Bijapurkar



What was your last tweet (and Twitter handle)  
NA





## Arvind RP

Marketing controller,  
Denizen, Levi Strauss India

**One brand from my college days that I long for...**  
Ferrari



**My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?**



[www.thecoolhunter.net](http://www.thecoolhunter.net)  
It focuses on trends around the world

## How I see the Youth

Today's youth can be described as holding a 'dual passport' culturally. They blend the rich global influences with their own cultural and family values. Media, especially the digital platform, facilitate this integration. We can observe on Facebook how the youth search for affiliations that make them most comfortable.

## My favourite youth icon

Lady Gaga is both a celebrity and a brand. Her music connects with the youth today and she embraces digital



media. She even released her latest album through FarmVille on Facebook

## Youth brand I admire

Apple is admirable. I also like TOMS shoes because of the one-to-one business model. They started a movement, that for every pair you purchase, TOMS will give a pair of new shoes to a child in need.



## My Twitter handle and my last Tweet

@Lancediaresco  
'Hiking Tomorrow'  
(8th July, 2011)



## Gautam Dutta

CEO of cinemedia, CEO of Bluio & COO of PVR cinemas

## How I see the Youth

Youth today are self-centered and brand -promiscuous. They are experimentative, they keep trying on new brands and there is nothing called brand loyalty among youths. At the same time they are also bargain seeker and look for great value.

## My favourite youth icon

Richard Branson



Youth brand  
I admire  
Apple



one brand from my college  
days that I long for...

Apple



My favourite book /  
article /  
portal on youth  
marketing?

Harvard Business  
Review, Wharton  
Business Review



My Twitter handle and my  
last Tweet

NA



## COVER STORY



**K Ramakrishnan**  
President, Marketing,  
Café Coffee Day

**Youth brand I admire**  
Scooty, Nike



**My Twitter handle and  
my last Tweet**

@ranki70

'Need a vacation to re-  
cover from my vacation'  
(20th May 2011)

### How I see the Youth

This is a set of people who have had their formative years during the most prosperous period of Indian economy. To explain they have not had to face anything called shortages or controls and whatever they wished or imagined has been in their arms length. As you know, post 1993 is when the decontrolled boom started exposing the youth of today to IT, telecom, bullish markets and economies.

**One brand from my college  
days that I long for...**

Suzuki Shogun; Yamaha RX 100

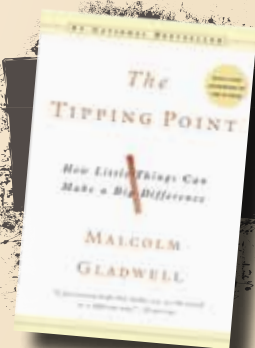


**My favourite youth icon**

Youth icons are ephemeral

**My favourite book / article /  
portal on youth marketing?**

I consider "The Tipping  
Point" as an insightful book  
into trends, which are great-  
ly applicable to a young con-  
sumer base





## Kunal Mukherjee

Head, Marketing,  
UTV Broadcast



Youth brand I admire  
Bajaj Pulsar

One brand from my college  
days that I long for...

Banta (soda with  
a marble also known  
as Goti soda)



My favourite book / article /  
portal on youth marketing?  
[www.lovemarkscampus.com](http://www.lovemarkscampus.com)

## How I see the Youth

online 24X7, today's Youth is a unique generation with unprecedented access to the world. They are characterized by both **CONFIDENCE** and **DUALITY**. They can easily straddle seemingly conflicting worlds and are yet rooted in tradition.

They are an **EVER CHANGING** bunch of people. Their life is full of **FADS** and they 'expect the unexpected'. It is a challenge to keep tracking them and providing them with **INNOVATIVE** content. What is new today may become old tomorrow. Also, the need is to be present across the various platforms and entertain them.

My favourite youth icon  
Sachin Tendulkar



My Twitter handle and my  
last Tweet

@mukherjee\_kunal

Hoping for the lord to lords at  
Lord's with a century of centu-  
ries at the centennial test be-  
tween India and England  
(18th July, 2011)

*As told to Ruchika Kumar*





**Murali Desingh**

MD, crocs India

**Youth brand  
I admire**  
Diesel



**My favourite youth icon**  
None

**one brand from my college  
days that I long for...**  
Reebok

**My Twitter handle and my  
last Tweet**  
NA

**My favourite book / article /  
portal on youth marketing?**  
None

### How I see the Youth

The youth today are well-informed and are very conscious of the choices they make across spheres. They are products of the digital media revolution which means fast and efficient communication and they are used to having information on their fingertips. The increased exposure to media and in turn information makes the youth very conscious and aware customers."

The best way to learn about today's youth is through educational arena i.e. colleges and university campuses, where they spend maximum time. However, with the emergence of social media, the youth has taken over these platforms in a large way. Youth today are completely hands on with social media; in fact they are the driving force of the entire phenomenon. Social media platforms allow the youth to receive and air uninhibited honest opinions about a variety of issues. These are the best forums to gauge the pulse of the youth today.





**Prasun Kumar**  
Head, Marketing,  
Sony Ericsson India

**Youth brand I admire**  
Levi's



**one brand from my college  
days that I long for...**  
Harley Davidson



## **How I see the Youth**

Well connected, on the move, fun loving,  
not to be taken for granted and technology  
oriented.

Never take the youth for granted and nev-  
er believe that you know them well because  
it's an ever evolving category."

The key too understand youth is to look  
around. I look into my family, into my  
neighbourhood... I look for young people  
around me and see what is their consump-  
tion behavior, how is there attitude shap-  
ing up etc.

**My favourite  
youth icon**  
Sachin Tendulkar



**What was your last tweet (and  
Twitter handle)**  
NA

**My favourite book / article /  
portal on youth marketing?**  
Facebook

**facebook**





### Rajiv Bawa

EVP, Corporate Affairs,  
Uninor

### How I see the Youth

"I see them as impatient, full of energy and ambition. I see many young professionals from smaller cities and towns of India succeeding in their profession - infact sometimes much more eager than those from bigger cities or more affluent backgrounds. It's almost as though an entire young India just got up and realized its potential.

Youngsters do not have patience and will not offer you a lot of time to get across and make your point. So it all has to be simple. They also pride themselves in being able to get the best deal. So it all has to be affordable too.

### Youth brand I admire

MTV-An example of a high end, sophisticated, very urban brand in an urban category that changed dramatically to create mass appeal.



### My Twitter handle and my last Tweet

NA

### My favourite youth icon



### One brand from my college days that I long for...

Gold Spot - As a brand, it did then that most brands struggle to do now - create a unique



niche and occupy it firmly. I'm not sure if I long for the brand, but it would be great to see Gold Spot come back.

I would say Mahendra Singh Dhoni. It's very hard to remember the time when Dhoni walked into the Indian team full of superstars and legends as a young lad from a not so big city. What's amazing is that it wasn't so long. In a very short time, he's a superstar in his own right.



**Rajiv Mehta**  
Managing Director,  
Puma India

## How I see the Youth

Fickle, loyal, impatient, intelligent, multi-taskers, & proud individualists

Youth brand I admire  
Apple



One brand from my college days that I long for...  
Ferrari



## My favourite youth icon



Rahul Gandhi

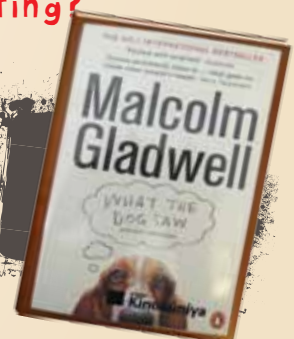
## My Twitter handle and my last Tweet

@rajiv78

Finally got my Puma email working on the iPhone... what a wait.... too much bureaucracy!  
(31st July, 2011)

## My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?

I think Malcolm Gladwell's books even though not directly about social media. All are relevant for marketing to the youth





## COVER STORY



### Ranju Mohan

Director and Business Head,  
J.K. Ansell (Kamasutra)

### How I see the Youth

The youth of today has a libertarian attitude to everything, whether it is success, sex or even politics. They are radical and unafraid to challenge existing norms and taboos.

The youth as a group is unpredictable and fickle but is clear about what it wants. Trends come and go in the flash of an eye. The very definition of the word "cool" has different connotations across different sections of the youth. Also, youth is not demography, but a mindset!



Youth brand  
I admire  
Apple iProducts

My favourite youth icon  
Mahendra Singh Dhoni



One brand from my college  
days that I long for...  
Harley Davidson



My Twitter handle and  
my last Tweet  
NA

My favourite book / article /  
portal on youth marketing?  
[www.tremor.com](http://www.tremor.com)  
[www.mtv.in.com](http://www.mtv.in.com)





**Sameer Suneja**

MD, Perfetti Van Melle India

**Youth brand I admire**

Nike, Apple



**My favourite youth icon**

Mahendra Singh Dhoni



**one brand from my college days that I long for...**

Wrangler



**My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?**

Facebook :-)



**My Twitter handle and my last Tweet**

NA

**How I see the Youth**

- Technology druggies
- constantly seeking "the new", optimistic - tomorrow is not a problem
- Self Reliance—Independent Thinking, a Do It Yourself approach
- Sky high aspirations - now willing to settle for less; not just money - seek excitement
- Emotional fallout: Nothing really surprises them, Low threshold for boredom, A-ha experiences are rare
- Impatience considered a virtue -Deferred gratification is as uncool as the grey polyester safari suits; extremely comfortable with debt

*To sum up they are the thought leaders of tomorrow*





### Samir Valia

VP, Marketing and corporate communication, Frankfinn

Youth brand I admire  
MTV



My favourite youth icon  
Mahendra Singh Dhoni



My Twitter handle and my last Tweet  
NA

### How I see the Youth

Youth today are apprehensive of their future. But they are much more confident than what the youth were 10 years ago. They come with an attitude that "Yes it is possible and it can be done". They don't have an inferiority complex. To me youth today belong to the age group of 08-25 years.

Today's youth are a little impatient. They are losing interest in reading text. Their reading habit is going down. But that does not mean that they lag as far as having a standard level of knowledge is concerned. At the same time they are more exposed to electronic and digital mediums which is a great source of information for them.

One brand from my college days that I long for...  
Nirula's



My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?  
Digital space- especially Facebook

facebook



**Saurabh Gupta**  
MD, Vanesa Inc (Denver)

## How I see the Youth

Today's youth is an absolutely new species which is more demanding. They are living in a highly developed communicating age where people are connecting and sharing their lives and experiences. This is the age of competence, survival of the fittest how we have always learnt, smarter and fitter!

If you wish to speak to the youth, you have to speak to them in their environment rather inviting them to your environment. For example, Facebook, BBM, iPod applications, internet gaming, music download, video download, Youtube...

**Youth brand I admire**  
Apple products - iPod to iPhone



**My favourite youth icon**  
Novak Djokovic



**One brand from my college days that I long for...**  
Edge

**My Twitter handle and my last Tweet**  
NA

**My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?**  
Quikr, ebay and facebook.





## COVER STORY



### Simeran Bhasin

Head, Marketing,  
Fastrack, Titan Industries

### How I see the Youth

The youth today is a dynamic bunch. They are the only audience who are very similar yet very different. The youth today can not be painted with the same brush. Therefore, they shouldn't be seen in the same light. They are ever evolving and the rate of change is much faster.

I think, recruiting the right kind of people is important to know more about youth. The marketing team of Fast track has young professionals and they live the lifestyle that the brand wants to project to its audience. No amount of research from outside can help a brand learn about youth.



Youth brand  
I admire  
Diesel

One brand from my college  
days that I long for...

Kipling bags



My favourite book / article /  
portal on youth marketing?

I like reading books on Vir-  
gin's story, Diesel's story or  
any youth brand's story

My favourite youth icon

None

My Twitter handle  
and my last Tweet  
@simbhasin

Enjoyed the Indian Ocean  
concert last nite  
(16 October, 2010)

As told to Purba Das



**Srinivas Murthy**  
Director, Marketing  
(Flavours), coca cola India

## How I see the Youth

"They are the progressive blend of traditional values and materialistic world. They remain happy, they are rational and at the same time highly ambitious. They are money-minded, highly motivated and confident. The most important thing that they are no more attracted to west as they happen to enjoy both the world (east and west) here itself. They have got enough freedom and they enjoy it to the fullest."

Today's youth are more open to expressing their views and opinion about products and brands. They are exposed to what happens globally and they have become more intelligent as consumers. Also, they are very quick in sharing their feedback to rest of the world through online social media.

**My favourite youth icon**  
No definitive youth icon

**One brand from my college days that I long for...**  
No specific brand

**My Twitter handle and my last Tweet**  
NA

**Youth brand I admire**  
Sprite



**My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?**  
New music albums and new movies



## COVER STORY



### Subodh Marwah

Director Marketing,  
carlsberg India

#### Youth brand I admire

Abercrombie & Fitch  
(garments - real cool!)



#### One brand from my college days that I long for...

Probably Thums Up



#### My Twitter handle and my last Tweet

NA

### How I see the Youth

Today's youth can actually be described in just 7 characters - dynamic. They subscribe to just one tradition- what's new? They are constantly looking for new ways to engage with the world around them.

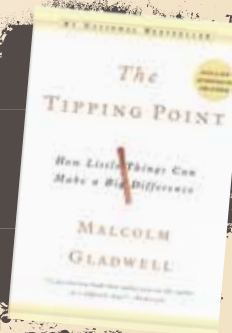
#### My favourite youth icon

Madonna and Sachin Tendulkar (Both have shown that great powers have a consistent positioning and performance as in the case of Sachin, but also need to constantly reinvent themselves to stay relevant, as in the case of Madonna)



#### My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?

Something which is out of 'Tipping Point' on 'Hush Puppies', which was reinvented when the 'cool New York hip-hop kids' started wearing them and the brand then took off all over again. A great case of finding a distinct positioning and using that to differentiate your brand and create a personality





**Sunil Gadgil**

General Manager, Marketing,  
Baush and Lomb India

## How I See the Youth

confident, demanding, lot of optimism. Also sel-promotion is considered right among today's youth, while until 10 years back promoting yourself wasn't considered good.

Today's youth doesn't like descriptive advertising. He doesn't want brands to tell him what to do? Brands should play a role of opinion supporter and enabler rather than opinion creator.

**Youth brand I admire**  
Garnier



**My favourite youth icon**  
Mahendra Singh Dhoni



**one brand from my college days that I long for...**  
Gold Spot



**My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?**  
None

**My Twitter handle and my last Tweet**  
NA





**Tadato Kimura**

GM, Marketing, Sony India

### How I see the Youth

The Indian youth is smart, intelligent and aware of what happens around them. There is growing consciousness about using life-style enhancing devices which are equipped with the latest technology and stylish designs that match global standards.

A quintessential for a brand to become popular, amongst the Indian youth, is to offer 'value-for-money' competitive products. Word-of-mouth from friends and endorsement by parents are also decision making factors while purchasing a new gadget.

Youth brand  
I admire  
Nike



one brand from my college  
days that I long for...  
It has to be Sony!

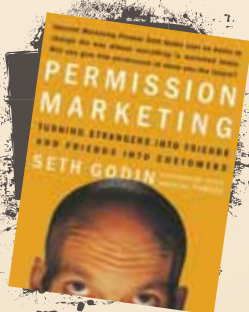
**SONY**

### My favourite youth icon



Mahendra Singh Dhoni because he is bold, stylish and has a vibrant personality

My favourite book / article / portal on youth marketing?  
'Permission Marketing: Turning Strangers into Friends And Friends into customers' by Seth Godin



What was your last tweet  
(and Twitter handle)  
No time to tweet

# Youth-o-meter











































Ahmed Rahimtoola  
Gorbatschow



Arvind RP  
Levi's



K Ramakrishnan  
cafe coffee day

	Questions	Answers			
1.	Who is the new female brand ambassador of Provogue?	 Sonakshi Sinha			
2.	Which Levi's brand had the zipper for the first time. Prior to this, button fly were used?	505 			
3.	Tic Tac mouth freshener is a product of which company?	 Ferrero Rocher			
4.	On which channel does "Date Trap" come?	UTV Bindass 			
5.	What does Gillette WALS stand for?	 Women Against Lazy Stubble			
6.	This brand was earlier known as Maxtouch and then Orange. What were the next two?	Hutch & Vodafone 			
7.	The name of this soft drink came from the German word for 'fantasy'.	 Fanta			
8.	The name of this coffee is from the Italian term denoting something prepared quickly.	Espresso 			
9.	Googly is the brand extension of which famous brand in the personal care category?	 Axe Googly			
10.	Who is the king of good times?	Kingfisher 			
		Total	6 / 10	6 / 10	6 / 10



Pitch tried to check, how updated Indian marketers are with the knowledge of some iconic youth brands. Only 10 agreed to participate. Here's their score



**Kunal Mukherjee**  
UTV Broadcast



**Prasun Kumar**  
Sony Ericsson



**Rajiv Bawa**  
Uninor



**Samir Valia**  
Frankfinn



**Saurabh Gupta**  
Denver



**Simeran Bhasin**  
Fastrack



**Srinivas Murthy**  
coca cola India

8 / 10	6 / 10	6 / 10	7 / 10	7 / 10	7 / 10	8 / 10