How do Millennial retail shopping habits for animal
feed differ from that of other generations?

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ABSTRACT

Competition in the retail animal feed business can be challenging. Millennials are emerging as an increasingly important consumer group. Companies want to attract Millennials as new customers while at the same time retaining current customers of Baby Boomers and Gen X generations. Consequently, an important question is how do Millennial retail shopping habits for animal feed differ from that of other generations. To help answer this question the thesis research utilizes customer survey data obtained, from the Kent Nutrition Group. The data was collected through an online survey which was conducted with customers from Company W's customer list. The total sample consists of 1068 customers. The data is analyzed using exploratory data analysis to gain insights on key differences and important attributes related to marketing and selling to customers from different generation groups. The results indicate that word of mouth serves as the largest initial source of awareness for all customers. Not surprisingly, the results show higher tendency to shop online and a preference for social media as a source of information by Millennials compared to Baby Boomers and Gen X customers. Knowledgeable staff and a positive in-store shopping experience continue to be a high priority for all customers. In general, e-mail or a mailed newsletter were identified as important communication methods by respondents of all generations. The results also show high preference by customers of all generations for receiving sales circulars and tips for animal and pet care. Sales circulars, direct mailers and newspaper ads are the core communication channels that customers view advertising from Company W. Three quarters of Company W's customers expressed some level of interest in shopping online

through Company W if the option were available. This implies that offering online shopping options will not only enhance the current customers' experience but also attract new customers. The gained insights will be used by Company W to adapt and enhance their marketing and sales strategies to a) effectively engage and attract more Millennial customers and b) improve retention and service for customers of Baby Boomers and Gen X generations. The researcher will use the insights gained from this study to improve marketing efforts for the Kent Nutrition Group.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

As the world's population continues to increase so does the demand for animal production agriculture to feed the population. In addition to growing demand for food animals, global demographic shifts such as increasing middle class incomes in Brazil, India, China, and other emerging economies are driving demand for companion animals. These forces in turn affect the structure and competition in the animal feed industry. To keep up with the growing demand animal feed companies need to devise marketing and sales strategies that more effectively attract and retain customers. In the animal feed industry, there are global, national, regional, and local feed companies. National brands cover a majority of the United States compared to smaller regional companies that only cover a specific region of the United States. Local feed mills will also service customers with private label brands of animal feed. National and regional animal feed companies continue to grow and gain market share. Some smaller local feed mills thrive in their markets while others close due to lack of a succession plan.

The animal feed industry has to evolve to keep up with the needs and preferences of customers from different generations. The Baby Boomers and Generations X customers are seen as traditional feed customers. Increasingly, customers of the Millennial generation are becoming an important customer group. In the agricultural industry, companies are focusing on how to more effectively target new and current customers. Currently, Millennials are a large target audience for the agricultural industry. The Center for Generational Kinetics describes Millennials as "people born between 1977 and 1995"

(Kinetics 2016). As companies target Millennials working in the agricultural industry, it can be important to have a good understanding of Millennials to produce quality and precise advertising strategies that target Millennials wants and needs. Consequently, many animal feed companies need to re-evaluate their marketing and sales strategies in order to a) more effectively engage and attract Millennials and b) continue to effectively serve Baby Boomers and Gen X customers. Doing this requires improved understanding of differences in purchasing habits, needs, and preferences of customers of various generations. A report from the Farm Industry News that surveyed millennial farmers states that "Young farmers are early adopters of the latest technologies and they are transforming how the business of agriculture is done. These technologies reduce costs, increase yields, and are more environmentally sustainable." (Farm Industry News 2016). Animal feed companies will need to adjust their product offerings and marketing campaigns to target young farmers' wants. If they are reluctant to adapt and understand their shopping habits they may risk to fall behind competitors and lose market share and revenue.

Millennials have been a topic that appears frequently in the news recently, from how they shop, when they buy houses, to their eating habits. Many studies have begun to understand Millennials and their buying trends. Competitors fight to gain a share of the market. Understanding customers' wants and needs are critical to gaining market share. For this thesis, several areas of how agricultural customers shop and consumer preferences in the pet and animal feed and food retail industry will be reviewed. The main objective is to gain insights on how Millennial retail shopping habits for animal feed differ from that of other generations? Also, looking into who is a Millennial, how Millennials in the animal

feed industry shop differently, Millennials shopping habits compared to other generations, and how they use online shopping and what communication channels they use and prefer.

Understanding the difference between the generations can be critical to drive sales effectively especially online. There are drastic differences in consumer preferences between generations. If Millennials are a company's target consumer, then knowing if they need to change their efforts to reach Millennials compared to other generations is necessary.

Customers of different generations have unique wants and needs, and their views of their individual shopping experiences are different. For example, parents could have a different set of shopping preferences and standards than their children. For an animal feed company, it is important to understand the differences in shopping preferences. By understanding the consumer preferences, a company can tailor advertising efforts to reach their target customer. Shopping experiences can be enhanced if the target consumers wants and needs are considered and obtained. For example, identifying the specific media channels to best reach Millennials will allow companies to expand their brand and product awareness. If a company does not adjust to Millennial shopping behaviors, then a substantial amount of opportunity can be missed. By not knowing Millennial buying habits for animal feed, shopping preferences and favorite media channels, time and funds can be wasted with decreased market returns.

The objective of this thesis is to provide insights on how Millennial retail shopping habits for animal feed differ from that of other generations. To reach this objective thesis research utilizes customer survey data obtained from the Kent Nutrition Group. The data

was collected through an online survey which was conducted with customers from Company W's customer list. The total sample consists of 1068 customers. The data is analyzed using exploratory data analysis to gain insights on key differences and important attributes related to marketing and selling to customers from different generation groups.

The rest of the thesis is organized as follows: in chapter two, background is provided about Company W, the Kent Nutrition Group, the researcher, the farm supply channel and products the Kent Nutrition Group sells. Chapter three provides an overview of background information and current studies. This chapter explores current relevant research for understanding Millennials, knowing what farm supply stores are, online shopping and digital trends, and perceived benefits of buying local products. Studies and research focused on the animal feed industry are not always readily available. The researcher also looked at studies from the pet industry to help compare customer demographics that best match up with the target customer. A study was also reviewed from Millennials in the food retail industry. Chapter four outlines the methods including the description of data and analysis. Chapter five presents the results. The thesis is concluded by Chapter six which presents a discussion of key findings, limitations, and further research directions.

CHAPTER II: BACKGROUND

2.1 Overview of Companies

The client for this thesis is the Kent Nutrition Group, the researcher and Company W. The Kent Nutrition Group is a regional animal feed company made up of two master brands located in Muscatine, IA; Kent branded products in the Midwest and Blue Seal on the East coast. The Kent brand was founded in 1927 in Indianola, Iowa and Blue Seal was started in 1868 with the Webster family in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Figure 2.1 illustrates the regional brand strategy of the Kent Nutrition Group. The red states represent states that sell Kent branded products and blue states sell Blue Seal branded animal feed. The Kent Nutrition Group continues to gain customers by focusing on their three characteristics of quality, service and trust. They strive to produce a quality animal feed product, provide excellent customer service and be the most trusted and preeminent regionally focused animal nutrition company. Cattle, swine, goat, sheep, rabbit, dairy, poultry, equine, llama, alpaca, and rodent feed were some examples of species for which the Kent Nutrition Group manufactures feed.

At the Kent Nutrition Group, "fleet" stores are known as a chain of farm supply stores that have multiple retail locations. Within the last five years, the fleet channel has grown more than any other agricultural market. To better understand customers and buying habits, research and customer surveys have been done. The Kent Nutrition Group always looks to provide an excellent customer experience whether in person, online or through social media. By understanding Millennials shopping habits and favorite media channels they can adapt marketing efforts appropriately. The target feed locations for this research are fleet/retail farm supply focused stores.

Figure 2.1 Kent Nutrition Group Regional Animal Feed Brands
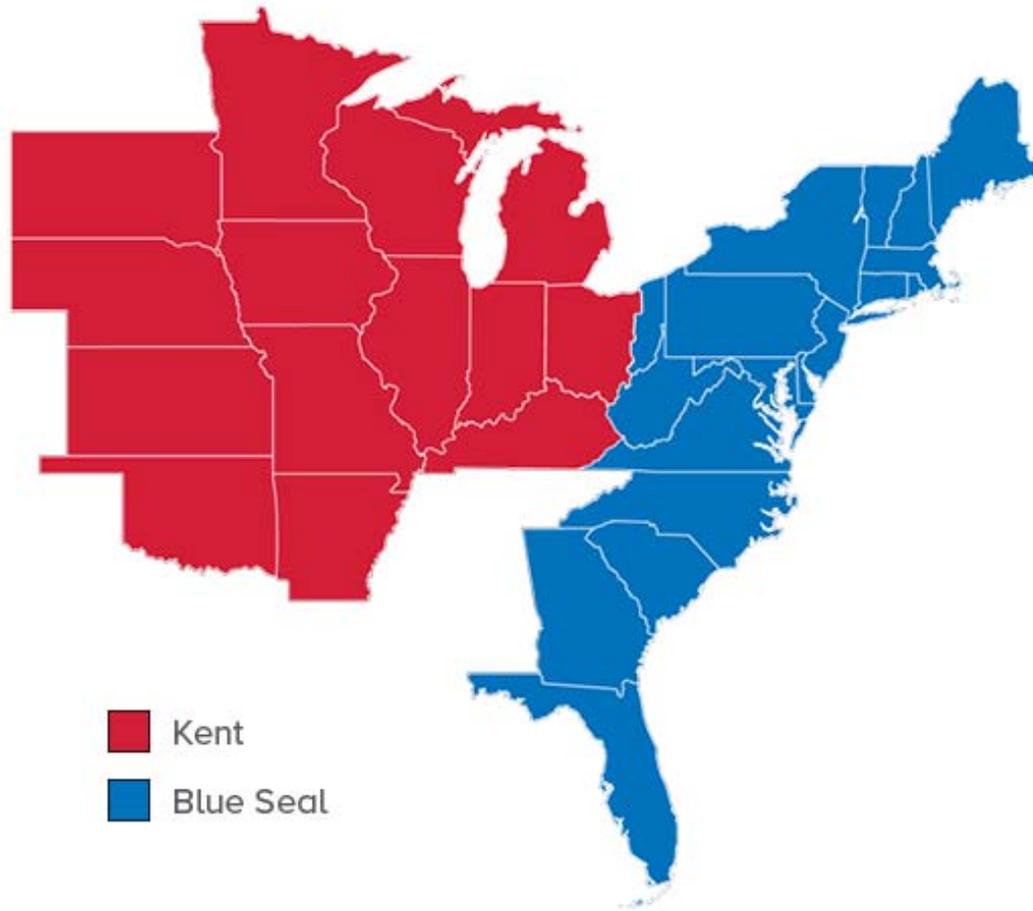
Source: (Kent Nutrition Group 2018)

Company W is located in the New England area. The company started out in the 1920's as a small feed store and now today still sells feed but also expanded to offer hardware, pet supplies, home and garden supplies and many other items. An expansion to include pet grooming services also was added to the store. Company W has expanded their retail floor several times to expand their retail business. They sell Blue Seal branded animal feed with a wide variety of other products. A website and social media pages are also offered as a way to connect with customers. The survey was conducted around meeting the needs of their consumers. The primary objectives of the survey were to understand the key

drivers and important attributes related to customer experiences, as well as how to reach their customers effectively. Another important focus area from the study was to identify the relevant advertising channels and the type of content that consumers prefer especially online experience.

The researcher for this thesis is Jennifer Lincoln. She is employed by the Kent Nutrition Group and falls under the generational category of a Millennial in the marketing department. To perform her job properly, understanding Millennial shopping trends and preferences are essential. From the research provided, marketing efforts can be tailored and adjusted to enhance Millennials shopping experiences and sales revenue.

2.2 Industry

Farm supply stores or "fleet" stores are different than feed dealers and big box stores. They tailor their product offerings around farmers, ranchers, and consumers that live in rural areas. For over 80 years, farm supply stores have offered a wide variety of equipment, home improvement supplies, housewares, clothing, tools, lawn and garden equipment, and animal feed for pets and livestock. They still have similar strategies to the box stores by being a one-stop-shop, but by targeting a different set of consumer needs. Farm supply stores usually have longer business hours than dealers. Many are open six or seven days a week and do not close until eight or nine o'clock at night. The farm supply channel in the United States in 2016 had a revenue of $15.9 billion recorded by a report from IBIS World (McCormack 2017, 3). Due to growth in sales revenue, accounts are hiring more employees to keep up with customer demand. In 2016, 75,587 workers made up the farm supply channel workforce up 1.3% (McCormack (2017, 7). With a growth in

employment, farm supply accounts need to increase their training efforts to keep up with customer requirements.

A majority of farm supply accounts sell products online and offer other services in addition to the listed products. For example, many have dog grooming or vet practices in the location or host certain days customers can bring their animals in for grooming or treatments. Several farm supply accounts offer seminars on raising animals, growing a garden, lawn mower and outdoor power equipment maintenance, and many other customer support opportunities. All accounts can be different and provide involvement in their local communities in different ways. An example of a farm supply account would be Tractor Supply Company. The IBIS World report states that in 2016 Tractor Supply Company has 43.3% of the market share for the farm supply store channel (McCormack 2017, 3).

E-commerce websites have been important to farm supply accounts. They offer their customers the option to purchase products online, or to order online and pick up in the store. Customers can research products and compare brands before they even enter the store. The trend provides that more and more customers enter into a store knowing what products they want and why by doing online research ahead of time. To keep up with busy customers' lifestyles online ordering, ordering online and picking up in the stores, monthly subscriptions, and drive through windows continue to become popular offerings to keep customers moving.

2.2.1 Supply Chain for Animal Feed

The supply chain for manufacturing and selling animal feed for the Kent Nutrition Group and similar companies in the farm supply store channel starts with the raw materials. The raw materials are sourced and purchased by the Kent Nutrition Group from local

farmers or companies depending on the products and region. All the raw materials must be approved by specific guidelines set by the Kent Nutrition Group for ingredients. If the ingredients do not meet the required specifications, then they would be rejected. Examples of raw ingredients can be corn, soybean, minerals and vitamins. After the raw materials have been received by the plant, they can be processed into animal feed. The raw ingredients are mixed together by the formulas developed by the nutritionists. After the formulas are mixed and processed to the proper form of feed. For example, pelleted or textured feed. The form of the feed depends on the type of animal and their life stage. The animal feed then can be processed into appropriate packaging. The bags can be stored in the warehouse and shipped out to the accounts on trucks to various distribution centers or the stores directly for the farm store accounts. Feed also ships to dealers, online customers, and direct to farms. If the feed goes to the distribution center then the account would then send the feed out to the stores. Once the feed has been received at the store, the feed will be moved to the store floor to be purchased by the consumer. Figure 2.2 demonstrates the process of the supply chain.

Figure 2.2 Kent Nutrition Group Supply Chain for Manufacturing Animal Feed

Raw Materials	Manufacturing	Shipping	Consumer Purchases
• Sourcing • Purchasing • Receiving	• Formula • Mixing • Form • Packaging	• Stored in warehouse • Account distribution center • Direct to customer	• Brick and mortar • Online
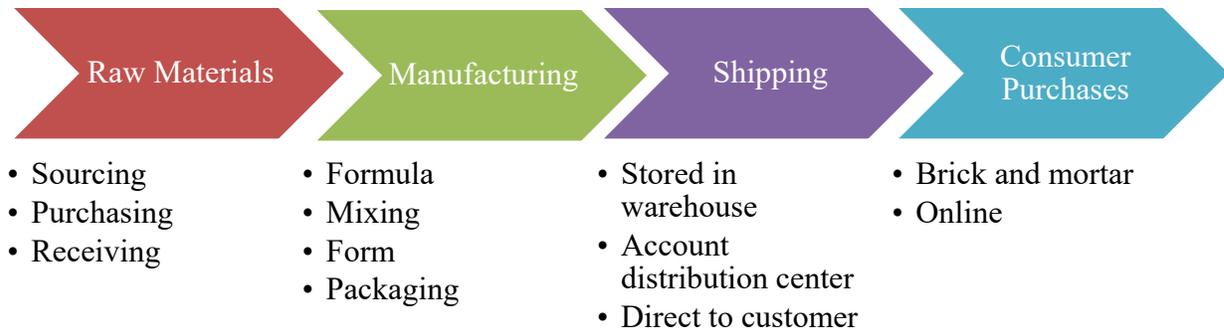
Source: (Kent Nutrition Group 2018)

2.3 Products

Products that the Kent Nutrition Group offer in the fleet or farm supply channel

covers a wide variety of species. They offer products for swine, cattle, goats, sheep, equine,

rabbits, llama, alpacas, dogs, cats, and poultry. Most products are complete feeds or are

supplemented with forage depending on the animal. The Kent Nutrition Group's product

offering can be separated into several product categories. The two categories that have been

mainly used in the farm supply channel are lifestyle and commercial feed products.

Lifestyle products are more specifically for the farm supply retail market. The species

include rabbits, poultry, equine, wild birds, dogs, cats, llama, alpaca, and back yard sheep,

goats, pigs and cattle. A lifestyle customer usually does not rely on their animals for their

livelihood. These customers care about their animals and want to know where their food

comes from. The Kent Nutrition Group references to commercial customers as larger

producers that make their living off of their production animals. Larger cattle farms,

ranches, commercial swine, poultry and dairy operations represent some examples of commercial customers.

A majority of products that have been offered come in self sell poly woven bag. Self-selling bags are important in the farm supply chain as an employee could not be available at all times to help recommend and assist customers. Customers need to be able to read the bag and gain insight of the product without the help of a store employee. By having easy to read and understand bags, this also helps train store employees about the products to help them educate customers.

Competitors also strive to have eye catching easy self-selling packaging to attract consumers. Many companies including the Kent Nutrition Group continue to transition many products from paper bags to poly woven bags. The poly woven bags are easier to handle, look nicer and do not rip as easily. In the farm supply channel bags could be handled up to four times before they enter the customers shopping cart. Distribution channels vary depending on account but for example, products leave the manufactures plant, arrive in the accounts distribution center, then are shipped to the store, may sit in the backroom then be loaded out onto the retail floor to be purchased. Products need to be in sturdy bags to reduce bags from breaking.

Not all products offered to dealers are offered to farm supply accounts. More education and required services can be needed for larger commercial customers. For example, farm supply accounts usually do not carry medicated animal feed products that require a VFD from a veterinarian to purchase the feed. Some farm supply stores cannot keep all the proper documentation required to sell VFD products and provide the best service to their customers and animals.

Another way products have been divided into categories identify by life stage. For example, the Kent Nutrition Group offers a chicken starter and a poultry layer feed. Depending on the life stage of the animal, that animal requires a different feed to promote growth and development. By properly naming products and showing the product difference on the feed tag and bag customers can easily purchase the proper product for their animals for every stage of life. There are different forms of animal feed. The types of animal feed that the Kent Nutrition Group manufactures are pelleted, textured, crumbles, extruded and biscuits.

CHAPTER III: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Who are Millennials

In the agriculture industry, companies have been focusing on how to more effectively target customers. Currently, Millennials are becoming an important emerging customer group as they are entering the workforce. Millennial Marketing describes Millennials as "25% of the US population, 1 in 4 are already parents and they make up 21% of consumer discretionary purchases" (Fleischner 2009). "Almost 50% of Millennials would be willing to make a purchase from a company if their purchase supports a cause" stated Millennial Marketing (Fleischner 2009). Companies will use cause marketing to attract customers but also to support charities and organizations in need. Millennial Marketing reports that 46% of Millennials have over 200 Facebook friends and are 2.5 times more likely to be an early adapter to new technology (Fleischner 2009). By knowing important characteristics of Millennials, companies can tailor marketing strategies to increase brand and product awareness.

3.2 Fleet (Farm Supply) Stores

"Pet and livestock feed is one product that is highly nondiscretionary; consumers cannot forgo purchases of this product when their income is low" (McCormack 2017, 8), reported Ryan McCormack in a report by IBISWorld report. By selling nondiscretionary products customers need to purchase these products on a regular basis. Sales for nondiscretionary products also help keep revenue consistent even when consumer disposable income is low. Figure 3.1 shows the breakdown of goods sold in farm supply stores. 28.2% makes up pet and other animal feed and supplies. This is important for

animal feed companies like the Kent Nutrition Group to be aware of to help drive sales for the farm supply stores.

Figure 3.1 Products and Services Segmentation in Farm Supply Stores 2016
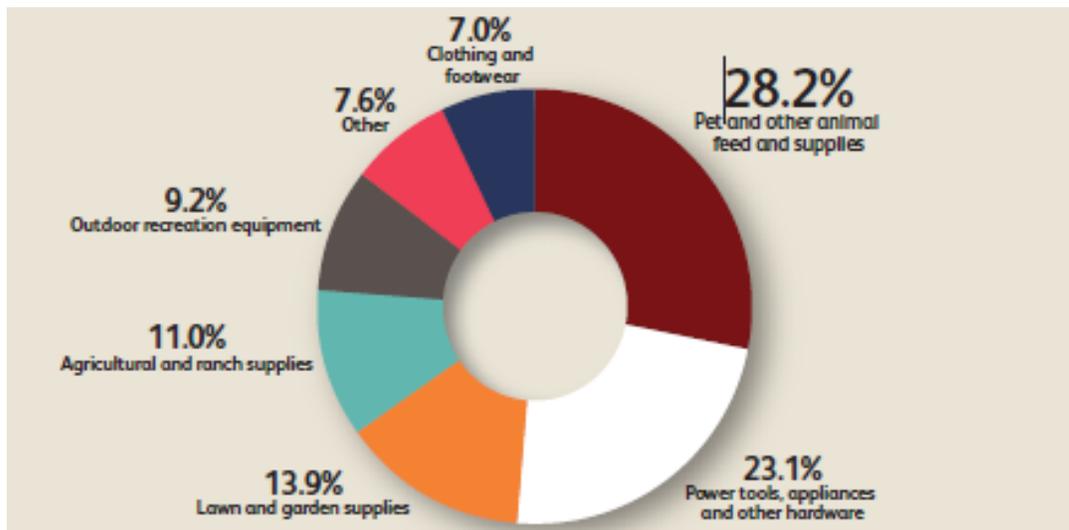
Source: (McCormack 2017)

McCormack states that "a rapidly growing national interest in self-sufficient living, organic foods and the rural lifestyle has formed a new group of consumers that now command the largest share of industry revenue. Known as rural enthusiasts and hobby farmers, these consumers are regular American households with a personal interest in small-scale noncommercial farming, horse riding, outdoor recreation or other rural activities. This segment has been the key driver for growth for this industry over the past five years as industry operators increasingly focus their resources on serving this market niche." (2017, 14). With new consumer interest groups emerging, farm supply chain stores have the advantage to gain new sales by offering educational support and great customer service.

Producers and ranchers continue to be a consumer audience that farm supply stores work closely with to supply the right products to meet their needs. Over the years, the demand for knowing where consumers' food comes from and sustainable living has increased especially with Millennials and is not decreasing interest anytime soon. McCormack states that, "Demand from this market is expected to rise over the next five years as more Americans pursue recreational farming activities for personal pleasure, including backyard organic farming, chicken and other livestock raising, beekeeping or horse riding. This rise in demand will be further driven by a growing national interest in self-reliance and sustainable living." (2017, 15). Figure 3.2 shows that 39.2% of farm supply customers are hobby farmers, 32.1% are rural lifestyle consumer and other enthusiasts, and 19.5 are business farms and farmer cooperatives.

Figure 3.2 Major Market Segmentation for Farm Supply Consumers 2016
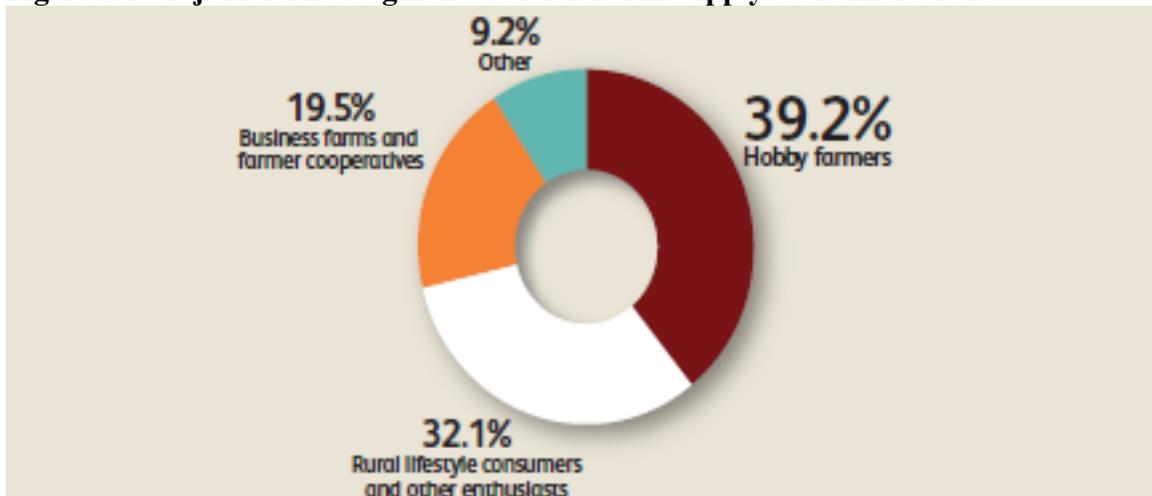
Source: (McCormack 2017)

3.3 Digital Adverting and online shopping in the Agricultural Sector

        Does digital marketing work in the agricultural industry? A study from Farm Journal shows that over 96% of survey respondents take their smart phones with them to do farm work (Farm Journal 2015, 5). By knowing that farm producers have their cellphones with them, companies can take advantage of having access to customers through email, social media, text messages and applications. From a survey, 74% of respondents from Farm Journal's survey use their phones for emails, 72% for online research and 36% for social media (2015, 7). This research tells companies that to keep up with the busy pace of society, jobs, families, and other responsibilities customers need to use their phones to receive information.

3.3.1 Online Shopping

        More and more consumers are purchasing pets than ever before. Cohen states that, "Over the five years to 2021, IBISWorld forecasts that industry revenue will continue to rise, increasing at an annualized rate of 5.0% to $6.3 billion" (Cohen 2016, 5). With the increase in revenue in mind Cohen also goes on to state, "However, online pet retailers will experience increasing competition from the brick-and-mortar stores that sell pet food and supplies, including grocery stores and big-box retailers. Such stores are able to offer additional services, such as grooming and training, and use these value-added offerings to siphon consumer demand from the online-based companies that operate in this industry." (2016, 5).

        Cohen mentions that, "Currently, over 80.0% of retail pet stores have a website, according to Pet Business' 2013 Retailer Handbook; about 30.0% of those stores use their

website for online sales" (2016, 9). More and more retail stores will continue to host online website and expand their product offerings in e-commerce capacities. By adding more retail friendly websites, it will be easier for consumers to do research on companies and products. With more consumers online, there are new and increased opportunities to market companies and products to new and current customers. The convenience and price of shopping online are large factors to if customers purchase products online.

Figure 3.3 demonstrates online selling habits by generation for pet consumers. "Consumers aged 34 and under account for a combined 31.8% of the industry's demand. This demographic group accounts for a relatively low share of spending on pets as they are often subject to busy schedules, making it difficult for them to own pets. However, e-commerce sales are the highest among younger demographics, which inflates spending by this segment" (2016, 15).

Figure 3.3 Market Segmentation in E-commerce Sales for Pet Consumers 2016
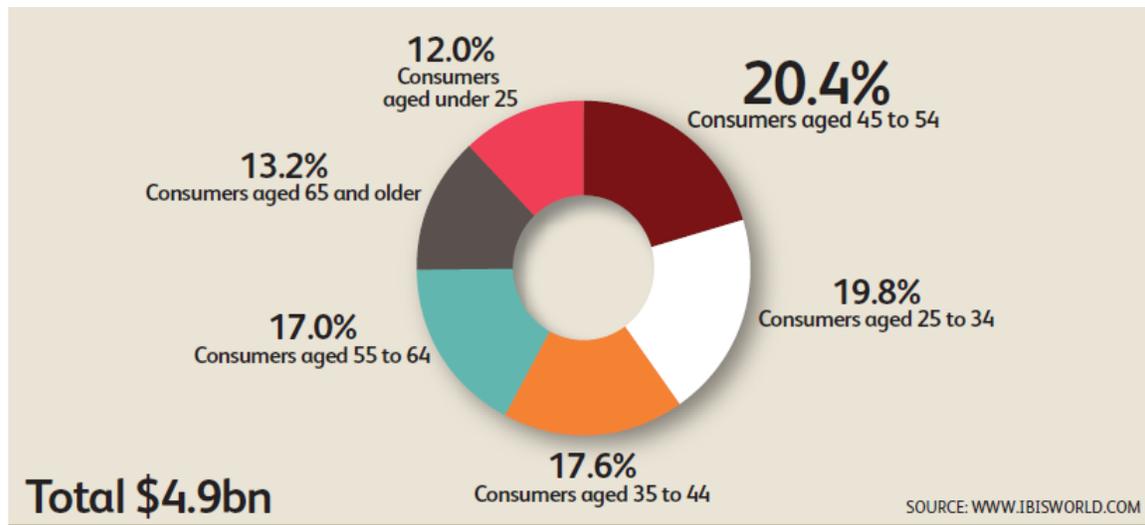
Source: (Cohen 2016)

Figure 3.4 Reach for Shoppers Online and In-Store Pet Consumers

Source: (Cullen 2018)

Figure 3.4 reviews pet owners shopping preferences for shopping online and in-store from Pet Store Retailing (Cullen 2018). With online shopping preferences increasing retailers will need to increase Omni-channel shopping that provides full service customer satisfaction. Cullen states that "While more than a quarter of pet product purchases occurred on Amazon in the past year, the majority of sales still take place in a store" (Cullen 2018). Approximately, 22% of pet owners research products online ahead of making a purchase. Retailers and product manufactures need to provide an excellent online experience for customers to help them make the best educated purchasing decisions for their animal.

3.3.2 Digital Marketing

Figure 3.5 looks at consumers over all generations engagement with social media in the food retail channel from the Food Marketing Institute (Harig 2016). The study looks at how technology and consumers are transforming the food retail landscape. Millennials in the agricultural industry consume food just like any other segment. Using

their data and statistic of 73% of Millennials use social media to plan and research their food retail purchase helps the researcher and Company W adjust their social media campaigns (Harig 2016). Companies need to adjust their social media campaigns to help educate consumers on their products as more consumers are researching products online before they purchase.

Figure 3.5 Consumers by Generations Using Social Media to Explore Retail Food

53%	73%	59%	38%	20%
of TOTAL shoppers	Millennials (18-37)	Gen-X (38-51)	Boomer (52-70)	Mature (71+)
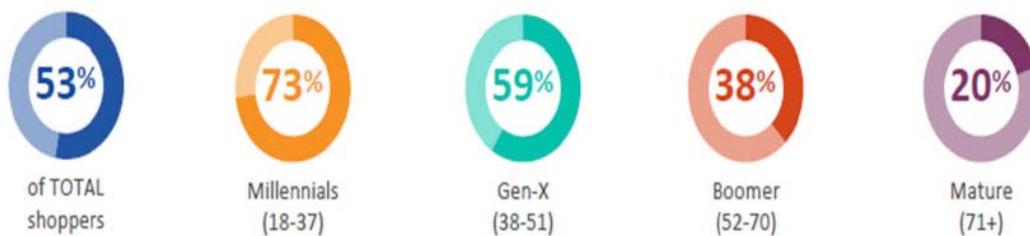
Source: (Harig 2016)

Figure 3.6 Online Tools Usage by Generation for Food Retail

Used a phone app that my grocery store provides
- Total: 17%
- Millennials (18-37): 24%
- Gen-X (38-51): 17%
- Boomers (52-70): 13%
- Mature (71+): 4%

Followed/liked my store through an online social network (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)
- Total: 9%
- Millennials (18-37): 17%
- Gen-X (38-51): 9%
- Boomers (52-70): 4%
- Mature (71+): 1%

Provided my phone number for text messages
- Total: 6%
- Millennials (18-37): 10%
- Gen-X (38-51): 5%
- Boomers (52-70): 3%
- Mature (71+): 1%

Legend:
- Total
- Millennials (18-37)
- Gen-X (38-51)
- Boomers (52-70)
- Mature (71+)

Source: (Harig 2016)

Millennials use online tools to gather research, review products, and explore

different services. Figure 3.6 shows how each generation ranks a grocery store app, the

store's social media network, and having the store send text messages to the consumer.

Millennials use these tools the most compared to any other generation (2016, 8). If

companies interact with product apps, social media networks and text message alerts they

will not only interact with Millennials but with other generations as well.

3.4 Perceived Benefit of Buying Local

Millennials have been known not only for buying local, but buying products that

support a call to action. Trade Ready summarized several reasons Millennials buy local or

"Made in USA" products such as it is better for the environment, the quality of products is

better than foreign goods, it helps the economy, supports the local community, and gives

shoppers an "unique experience" (Hyatt, 2016). These are a few of the top reasons that

help explain the typical Millennial's buying pattern.

Millennials buy local because they want a custom and unique product that big-box

stores can't provide. Buying local and "Made in USA" products is currently trendy and

Millennials have been on the purchasing band wagon. "Gen Xers, Millennials, and Gen Z

are more likely than baby boomers are to look for brand and retailers that do good for the

world" (Long 2017). Consumers are looking for the added value and shopping

experiences. They want to know the product they are buying has an added value or the

revenue is going to a good cause. Companies that volunteer for charity, donate profits, or

have been active in the community remain highly likely to sell more goods to local

Millennials.

One would think that with all the reasons Millennials like to buy "Made in USA" products they would be willing to pay a premium for goods. Actually, that is completely wrong. Millennials do follow in their parents' footsteps in regards to their consideration about the purchase price of a product. Forbes states that, "almost 80% are influenced by price. Even as much as they are looking for other values from their products like authenticity, local sourcing, ethical production and a great shopping experience, nothing beats a discount no matter how old you are" (Kestenbaum 2017). Millennials want to purchase "Made in USA" products, but only when the product has the right price. The Chicago Tribune stated that, "nearly 75 percent of Americans prefer to purchase American-made goods, but only 30 percent are willing to pay more for them" (Long 2017).

Consumers state that they have a passion for supporting local and domestic producers, but are not willing to pay more for their products. Forbes also goes onto say that "Two-thirds of Millennials say they will switch brands if they are offered a discount of 30% or more" (Kestenbaum, 2017). This is not shocking as most consumers want the best deal for their dollar at the end of the day. Companies cannot rely on brand loyalty as much as they have in recent years. Feed companies experience this issue daily. Feed prices go up and down constantly, and farmers are always looking for the best way to maximize their outputs and reduce their inputs. Many producers have brand loyalty to a company that they have been with for any length of time. However, in recent years the industry has found that when the market is in an unstable condition a producer's price per good could be more important than a brand name. Even though Millennials will not pay a premium for "Made in USA" products, the trend to purchase them as well as locally produced products is not going away anytime soon.

CHAPTER IV: METHODS

4.1 Data Collection

The data for this thesis is obtained from the Kent Nutrition Group and Company W. An online survey was conducted with customers from Company W's customer list. The 45 question questionnaire was emailed out to customers of all ages to complete. The results have been complied into a dataset to be analyzed. The main objective of the study for Company W was to understand the key drivers and important attributes related to customer experiences as well as how to reach out to customers more effectively. Company W would use the received data to adapt and grow their business and customer experience. The researcher could use the key findings to improve marketing efforts for the Kent Nutrition Group.

From Company W's customer list, 1,068 participants in the New England area completed the questionnaire. Participants age ranges from 18 to 92. Both female and male customers responded to the survey, with 76% being female. A majority at 72% of the customers live in a single-family home. A larger percentage of customers are married with no children. In the sample, 71% of customers do not have children and 66% of customers make less than $149,999 in annual household income. The online survey covered questions on demographics, animals they own, preferred communication channels, shopping frequencies, online shopping habits, if Company W has adequate store hours, knowledgeable employees and many other questions based on Company W.

The 45 question questionnaire was arranged in three large categories. The questionnaire appears in Appendix A. Customer demographics, the customers review of Company W and customers shopping preferences and habits. The customer demographics category breaks down consumers shopping for animal feed characteristics. These questions covered age, gender, marital status, if they had children, how many animals they own, what animals they own, how long they have been a customer, race, where they lived, and others. The demographics category was important to understand as the information provided helps Company W, the Kent Nutrition Group and the researcher find target consumers moving forward. All parties can improve customer service and marketing efforts to provide better services to their target consumers.

The next category of questions were the customers view and preference of Company W. Customers were asked a variety of questions about Company W's product offering, services they provide, and staff. Examples of questions were how often customers shop in the store, comments about the products they were buying, reviews on the dog grooming services, if they were interested in the hydroponics gardening products, reviews of the loyalty program, knowledgeable staff, and many more.

The last category of questions that the animal feed customers were asked was about the most effective marketing channels and preferences. Questions in this category covered the proper communication channel, how frequently customers wanted to hear from the store, online shopping habits, and attributes regarding shopping preferences and behaviors. This category helped the marketing representatives from each company tailor their campaigns and marketing spend more efficiently.

4.2 Summary Statistics

The raw data is categorized based on age to define generational groups. Five groups are defined based on age. Group one demonstrates respondents born from 1996 to present also referred to as Gen Z, group two or Millennials were born in 1977 to 1995, Generation X or group three were born in 1965 to 1976, Baby Boomers or group four were born in 1946 to 1964 and the Traditionalists and group five were born in 1945 and before. Out of the 1068 participants 6 were Gen Z, 271 were Millennials, 275 were Generation X, 448 were Baby Boomers and 68 were Traditionalists. The youngest participant was 18 and the oldest was 92. Almost all participants, 99%, of participates lived in Vermont or New Hampshire.

The target customer for this project focus on Millennials so, the population of inference were Millennials that were born between 1977– 1995 that buy animal feed. They live in the New England area, specifically VT and NH. Millennials made up 25% of the respondents and own at least one animal. Out of 271 Millennials respondents, 26% live outside of town/rural. From the survey, 83% lived in single – family homes. Out of the Millennials respondents, 56 respondents were male and the majority were female with 215 respondents.

Question Q5.5b in Appendix A references a few of the attributes the customers ranked on a Likert scale. They ranked the attributes based on options of completely dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, somewhat satisfied and completely satisfied. Figure Q5.5b helped Company W be able to see how their customers feel about product prices, store location, store hours, knowledge of staff, selection of brands, and friendlessness of staff. Over 87% of customers purchasing animal feed were somewhat or completely satisfied with the knowledge of Company W's staff. By

knowing if customers think the staff of a company is knowledgeable or not a company can adjust their training programs accordingly.

Figure 4.1 references the forms of communication that customers purchasing animal feed from Company W prefer to be communicated with. Question Q6.3 in Appendix A asked customer what forms of communication channels they would like to hear about upcoming sales, new products, and helpful tips. Email communication was the preferred channel at 73%. Printed newsletters at 34% and printed ads at 24% were lower preferred communication channels compared to digital emails.

Figure 4.1 Customers' Preferred Forms of Communication from Company W
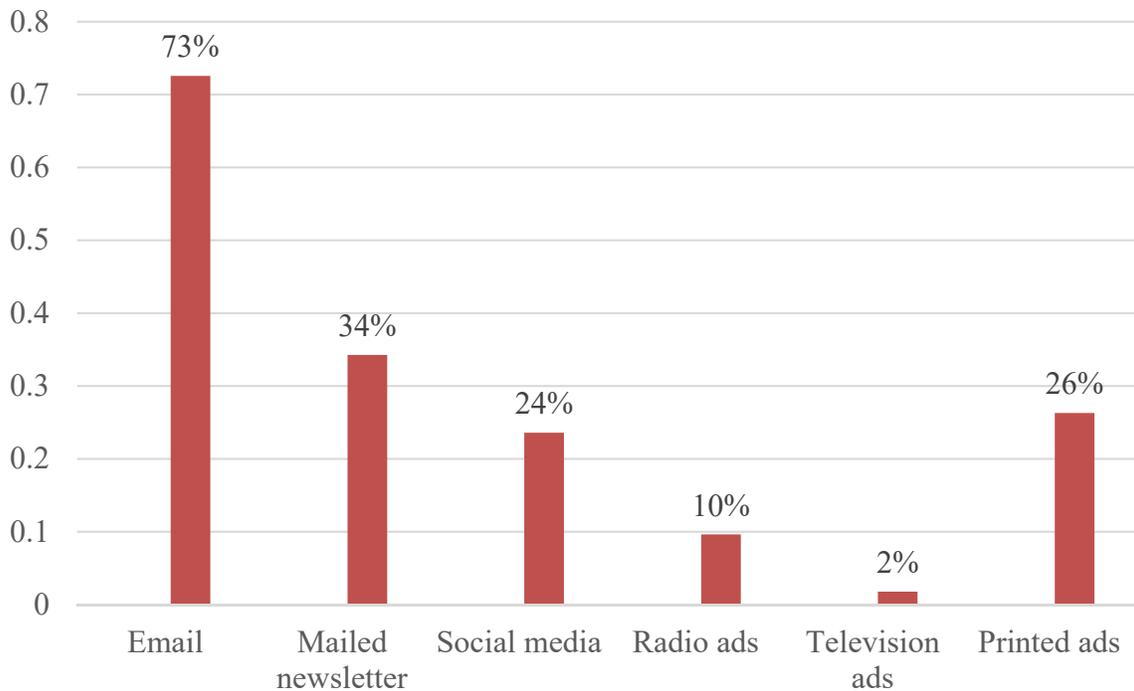
Figure 4.2 describes how likely customers that purchase animal feed from

Company W would be to purchase products online if Company W would offer an

ecommerce website. When the survey was conducted Company W did not have the option

to purchase products online. Customers responded to be less likely to shop online for

products from Company W than the researcher assumed. This could be that Company W

does not have the option for consumers to purchase or research products online, so it would

take time to convert consumers to using their website to make purchases. Approximately,

72% of customers would be likely to shop online.

Figure 4.2 How Likely Company W Customer's are to Shop Online
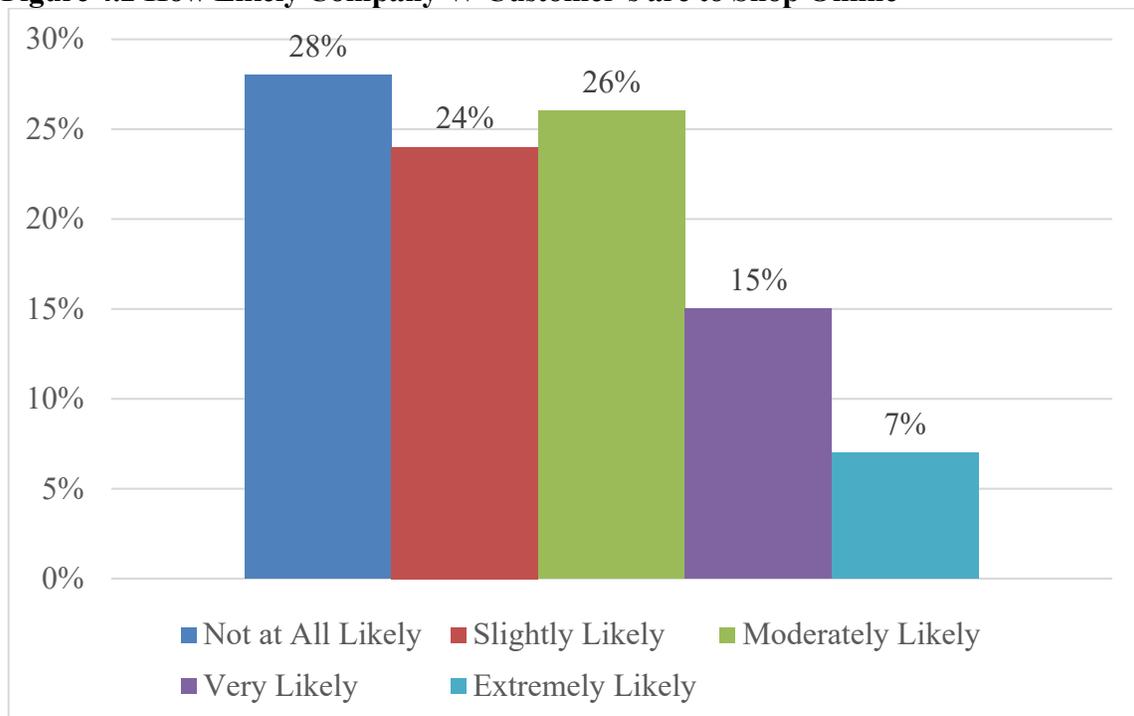
Question Q7.4 in Appendix A reviews a few of these attributes under the effective marketing behaviors and channels category. Customers ranked the attributes by strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, somewhat agree and strongly agree. Customers responded on if they prefer to shop locally, if it was important that a business be involved in the community, if they buy on quality not price, if price can be more important than brand names, if they shop around before making a purchase, if they rely on employee advice when buying an item that they are not familiar with, reading product reviews on an item before purchasing products, if they like a brand will they stay loyal, do they compare prices across different stores, if they prefer to shop at stores that specialize in a specific style of products, and if they purchase impulse buys on sale.

From question Q7.4, Figure 4.3 shows that 98% of Millennials prefer to shop locally. Buying locally was important to Millennials as they feel they support their local community. By buying products locally they can support smaller businesses compared to larger companies. This buying decision makes Millennials feel good and responsible for their buying habits.

Figure 4.3 Percent of Millennial Farm Supply Consumers that Prefer to Shop Locally

■ Strongly Agree ■ Somewhat Agree ■ Strongly Disagree ■ Somewhat Disagree
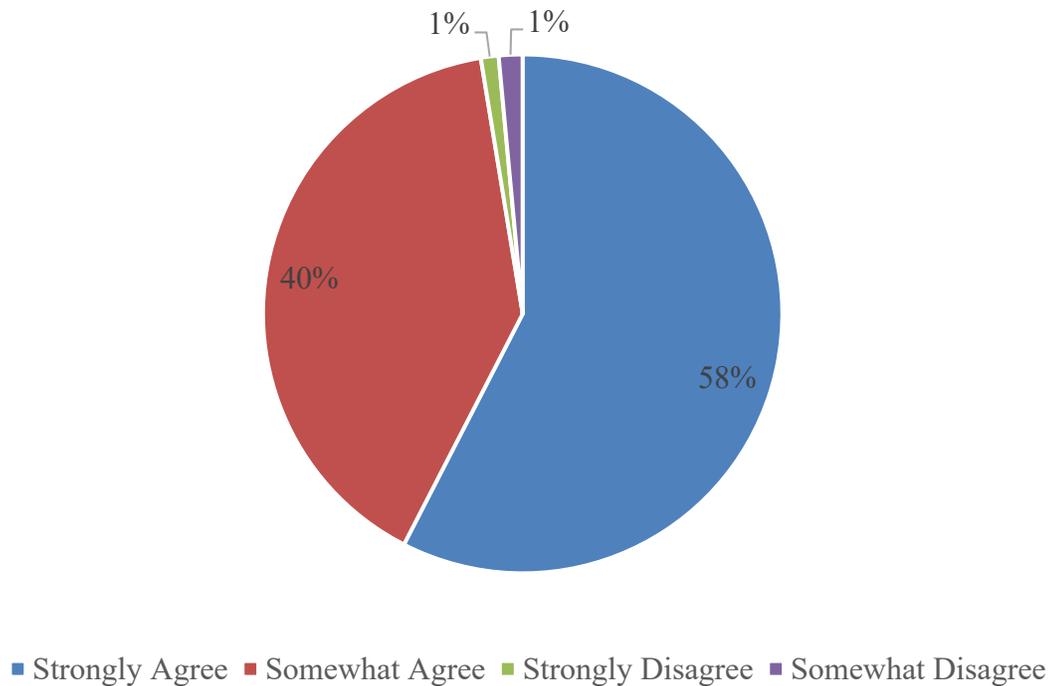
Another attribute that animal owning farm supply consumers responded on was if they rely on farm supply store employees on advice on products when they do not have an understanding of a product. Figure 4.4 shows that 83% of Millennials still rely on store employees for advice. This statistic shows that animal feed companies still need to continue and increase store employee training to assist customers. In figure 4.5, all generations are shown that somewhat or strongly agree that they rely on store employees for help. From the results, 89% of the consumers questioned answered somewhat or strongly agree with relying on store employees for help. Of that 89%, Millennials made up 21%, Generation X 24% and 38% were Baby Boomers. This figure also stresses the importance of store employee training and how valuable good employees are to a business.

Figure 4.4 What Percent of Millennial Farm Supply Consumers that Rely on Employee Advice
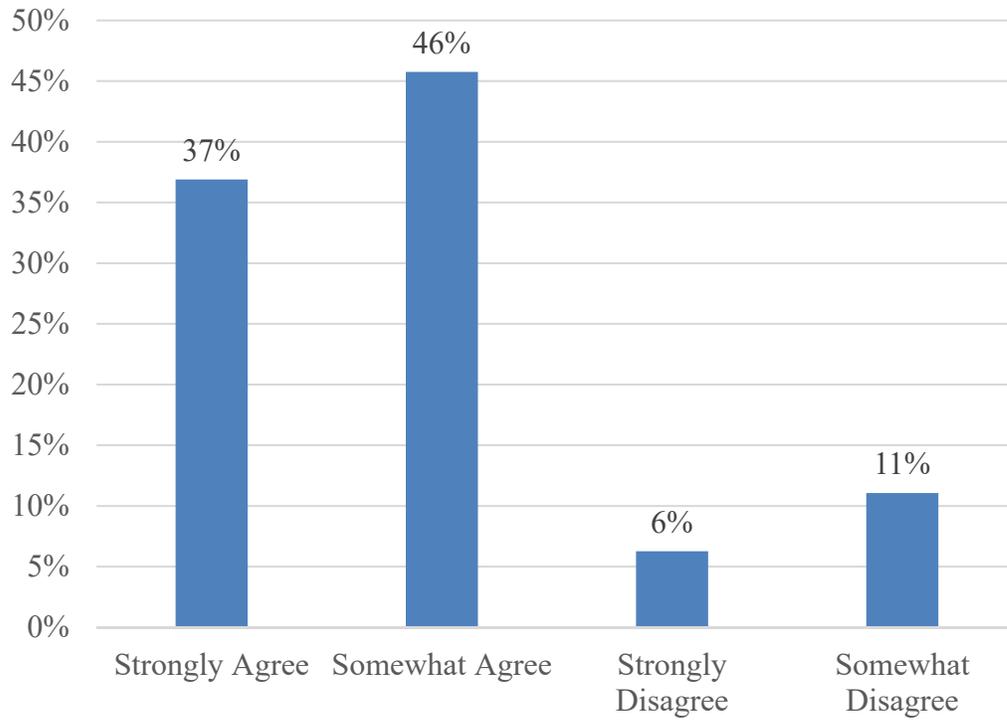
**Figure 4.5 What Percent of Farm Supply Consumers that Rely on Employee Advice –
Responded Somewhat or Strongly Agree**
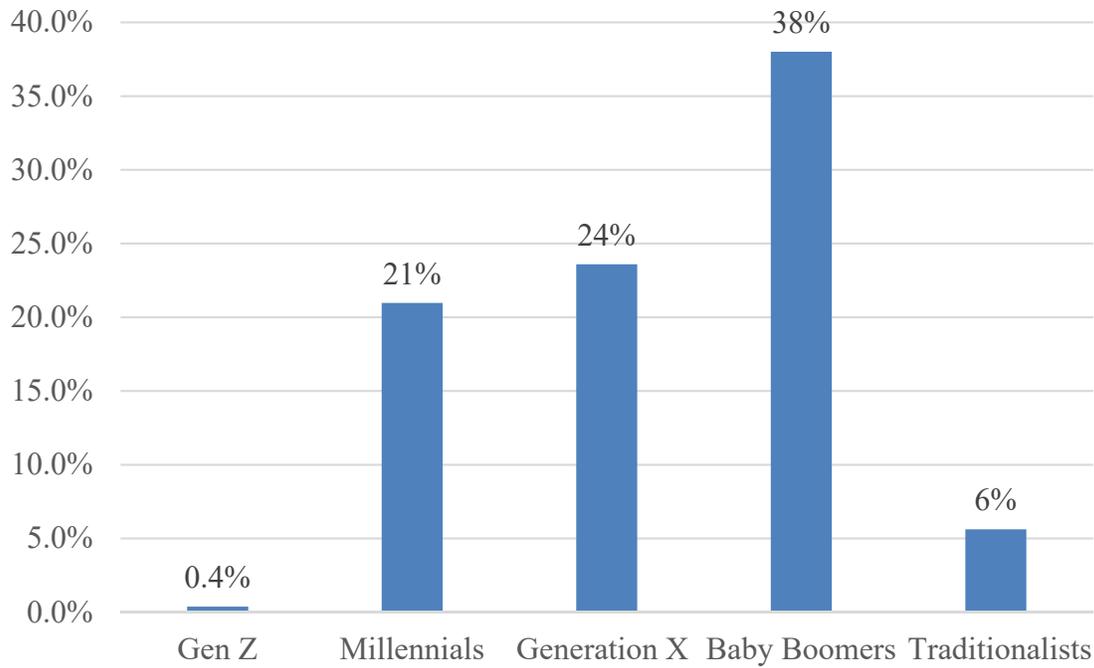
4.3 Analysis

This thesis utilizes exploratory data analysis to identify trends and patterns in the data that can provide insights into differences in the customer behavior and shopping habits of Millennials and customers of other generations. Specifically, the combination of graphical analysis and statistical testing is used.

5.1 Defining Generations

A total of 1,068 customers of Company W responded to the survey. Question Q1.2 asked customers to identify their age. Figure 5.1 illustrates the respondents by generations. By knowing what generations have been surveyed the company and researcher can learn more about each generation. Figure 5.1 demonstrates the breakdown of customers by generation in a pie chart.

Figure 5.1 Generation of Customers
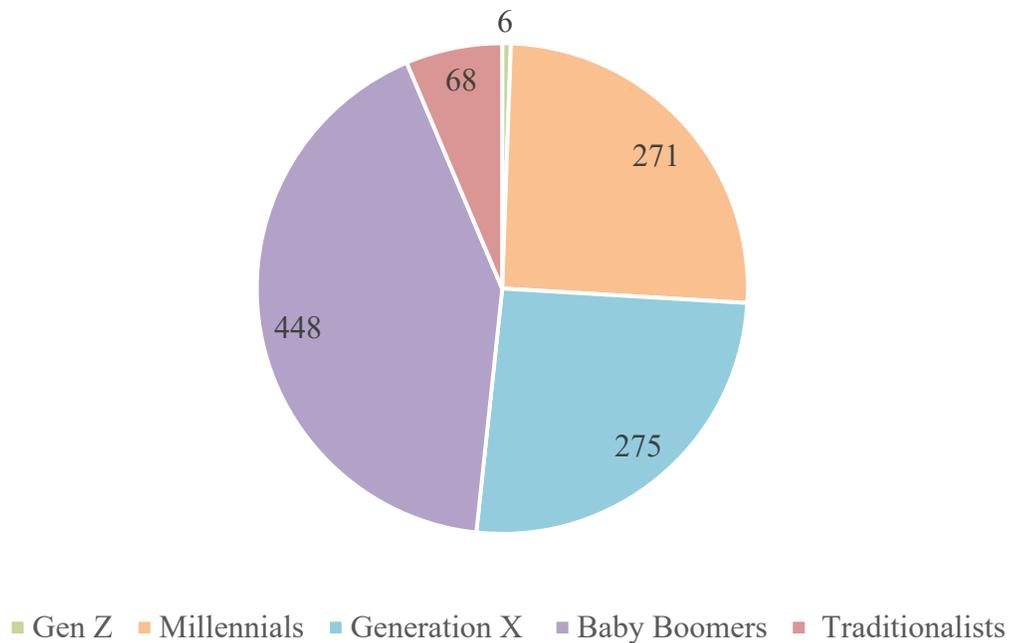
The pie chart is useful to show the portions of the generations that make up the 1068 participants. Out of the 1068 participants, 6 were Gen Z, 271 were Millennials, 275 were Generation X, 448 were Baby Boomers and 68 were Traditionalists. This data can

help the company and researcher know what generations have completed the survey and shop with Company W.

5.2 Demographics

Figure 5.2 Percent of Female and Male Customers by Generation
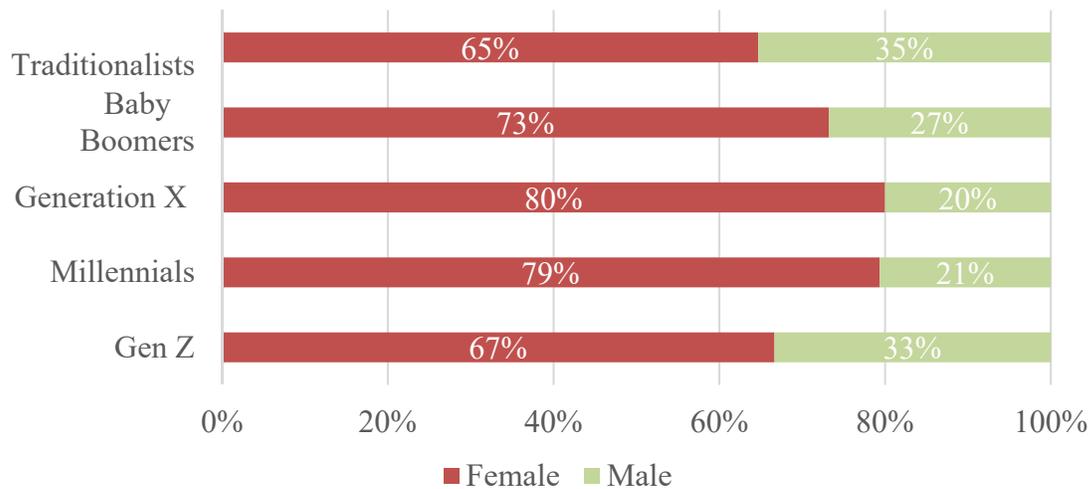
Figure 5.2 shows the data in a bar chart. This bar chart shows the generational breakdown of customers but also if they were male or female from Questions Q1.3 in Appendix A. The results show that more female customers overall completed the survey compared to males. Gen Z was the smallest generation, with four females and two males. Millennials and Generation X were close in respondents. Both generations had more females than males. About 80 % of Millennials and Generation X respondents were female. Baby Boomers had the largest number of respondents with 328 females and 120 males. Out of 68 Traditionalists', 44 were female and 24 males.

This information can be helpful in designing marketing efforts to attract more females than males in the farm supply channel. Marketing campaigns can be tailored to

reach female customers by generation if desired. It is important to also keep in mind that all

generations still continue to shop in farm supply stores. Limiting marketing efforts to only

one generation may lose sales from new customers.

Figure 5.3 Customers Income Levels by Generations

Legend:
- Less than $50,000
- $50,000 to $74,999
- $75,000 to $99,999
- $100,000 to $149,999
- $149,000 +
- Prefer not to respond

Income Level	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Prefer not to respond	17%	11%	19%	31%	43%
$149,000 +	17%	6%	17%	8%	6%
$100,000 to $149,999	17%	18%	21%	13%	10%
$75,000 to $99,999	17%	15%	16%	11%	9%
$50,000 to $74,999	17%	26%	15%	17%	12%
Less than $50,000	33%	24%	12%	19%	21%
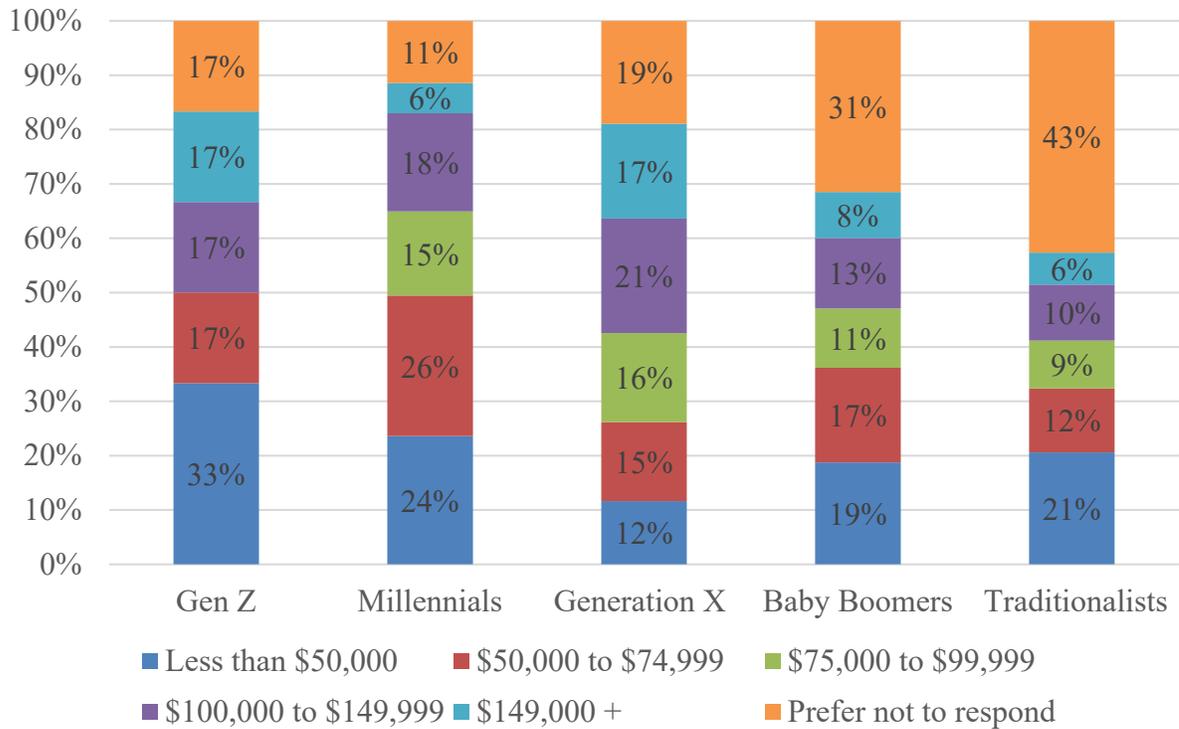
Table 5.1 Customers Income Levels by Generations

Generations	Less than $50,000	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 to $99,999	$100,000 to $149,999	$150,000 +	Prefer not to respond
Gen Z	33%	17%	0%	17%	17%	17%
Millennials	24%	26%	15%	18%	6%	11%
Generation X	12%	15%	16%	21%	17%	19%
Baby Boomers	19%	17%	11%	13%	8%	31%
Traditionalists	21%	12%	9%	10%	6%	43%

Question Q8.3 asked the current customers what their annual household income was. This question allows Company W to see what income levels their customers were making annually. Figure 5.3 allows the annual income of customers per household displayed by generations. This stacked bar chart easily shows the amount of customers by generations at their income bracket. Table 5.1 also demonstrates the income brackets by generations.

The most frequent income level bracket was less than $50,000 with the $50,000 to $74,999 bracket close behind. In both of these two income brackets, the Millennials and Baby Boomers were the largest generations of respondents. 142 respondents were in the income level of $75,000-$99,999 and 173 respondents were in the bracket of $100,000-$149,000.

This data helps companies know what products to carry to attract customers. Companies would want to keep the consumer's income levels in mind when purchasing merchandise to sell in their stores. A customer would not want products that were over

their price point. Companies can bring in products instead that fit in their target audiences price range. Also offering a limited amount of products that are outside of their customer price point may intrigue new customers or customers to spend more.

Figure 5.4 Customers Current Living Situation
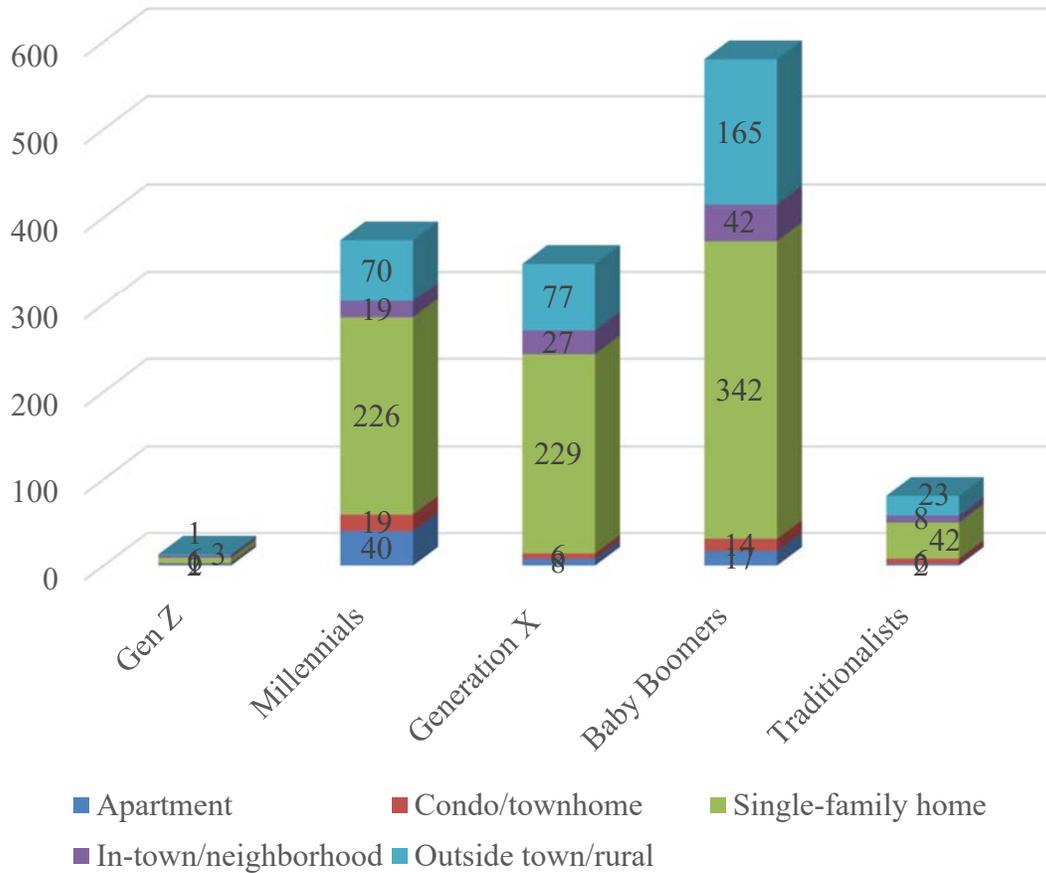
Question Q8.7 in Appendix A inquired customers about their current living situation. Customer had the option to choose which living situation best described them. Figure 5.4 describes what respondents live in-town/in a neighborhood, apartment, single-family, condo/townhouse or outside of town/rural. This figure also breaks down the customers by generations. The stacked bar charts allows the generation and living status to be displayed at the same time.

Single–family homes had a large population of customers across all generations. The largest generations for single–family homes were Baby Boomers with 342 respondents, Generation X with 229 and Millennials with 226 respondents. Millennials, Generation Z and Baby Boomers preferred to live rural or outside of town compared to in-town. Company W can use this information to tailor their product offerings depending on where their customers live. For example, a customer that lives outside of town may need fencing supplies for their goats were a customer that lives in-town may not due to city ordinances about having livestock in–town. They can adjust their product offerings to engage all living situations or just a couple depending on their market strategy.

Figure 5.5 What Animals Customers Own
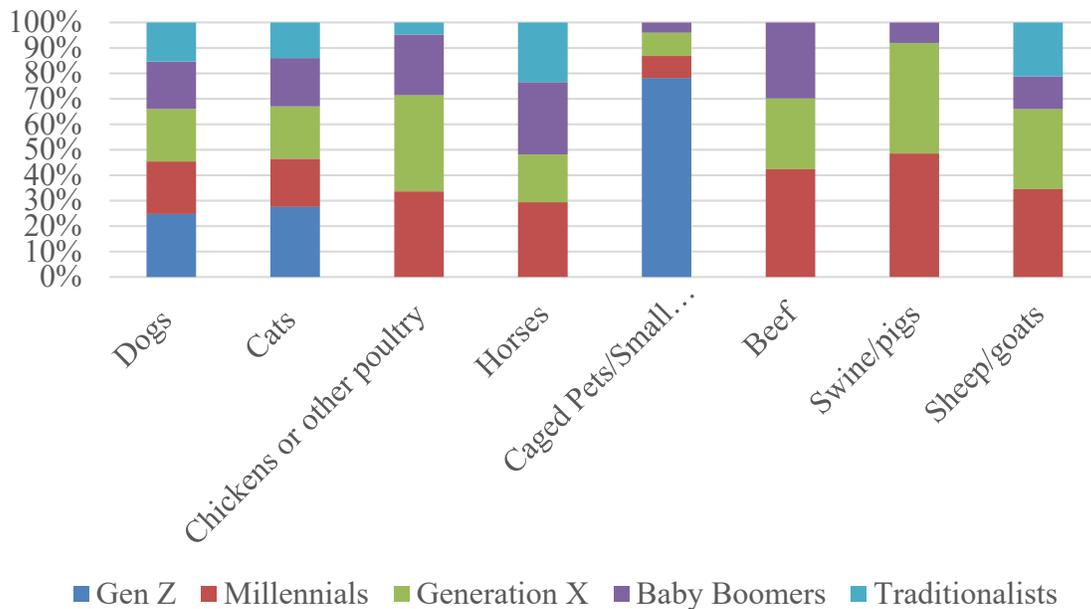
Table 5.2 Percent of Animals Customer Own by Generation

Species	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Dogs	100%	83%	83%	75%	62%
Cats	67%	46%	50%	46%	34%
Chickens or other poultry	0%	21%	24%	15%	3%
Horses	0%	7%	5%	7%	6%
Caged Pets/Small Animals (rodents, reptiles, birds, etc.)	100%	11%	12%	5%	0%
Beef	0%	2%	1%	2%	0%
Swine/pigs	0%	4%	4%	1%	0%
Sheep/goats	0%	5%	4%	2%	3%

Question Q1.5 in Appendix A inquired if customers owned animals and what animals they owned. Figure 5.5 and table 5.2 break down what animals Company W's customers own and by generation. The figure shows the amount of people that own dogs, cats, caged pets/smalls animals (rodents, reptiles, birds, etc.), beef, swine/pigs, and sheep/goats. The results are shown by generations per species.

The results from questions Q1.5 were 839 customers own a dog, 494 own a cat, 191 own chickens, 69 own a horse, 86 own a caged pet or small animal, 17 own a cow, 24 own pigs, and 35 customers own a sheep or goat. The largest species are customers that own dogs. Customers that owned a dog were 6 customers from Gen Z, 225 Millennials, 229 Generation X, 337 Baby Boomers and 42 Traditionalist. Over 79% of customers owned a dog. Based on the information in figure 5.5 Company W can tailor the animal feed they offer by what species of animals the customers own. They can also use this data to bring in other products retailed to that species. For example, since the majority of customers own a

dog they can provide all the other supplies a customer needs to care for their dog besides

feed such as toys, beds, bowls, treats, collars, etc. The researcher and Company W can take

this data and use it for advertising. They can promote advertising in dog based magazines,

social media sites and in printed advertising. Knowing the types of animals the customers

have can also benefit the company by knowing what type of products to put in their flier

and on their website.

5.3 Product Attribute Preferences

Question Q5.6 queried customers about how satisfied they were with many

attributes from Company W. Customers ranked these attributes by somewhat satisfied,

completely satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, and

completely dissatisfied. They ranked the following attributes product price, store locations,

store hours, knowledge of staff, selection of brands offered, and friendlessness of staff.

Table 5.3 through table 5.8 rank their responses by generation.

Table 5.3 How Satisfied Customers were with Produce Prices by Generation

Satisfaction Level	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Completely Dissatisfied	0%	2%	1%	3%	3%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	17%	18%	17%	18%	7%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	50%	16%	17%	22%	21%
Somewhat Satisfied	33%	46%	44%	36%	40%
Completely Satisfied	0%	18%	21%	22%	29%
Likert Scale Average	3.167	3.598	3.662	3.560	3.853

Table 5.3 ranks how satisfied customers were with product prices at Company W. Over half of the customers for each generation said that they were either somewhat satisfied or completely satisfied with Company W's current prices for products. Price ranked 2nd overall when customers ranked the importance of attributes.

From the results Company W can monitor what price point they need to have their products priced at. It is unlikely to ever make everyone happy about prices for products. They can at least know how their customers feel about the prices while still making a profit. They could also compare their prices to competitors to be more comparable for prices. If they add the option to purchase products online, then they could start looking at online competitors. Another survey about online prices may need to be conducted to request input from customers about online prices.

Table 5.4 How Satisfied Customers were with Store Location by Generation

Satisfaction Level	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Completely Dissatisfied	0%	0%	0%	5%	3%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0%	2%	5%	5%	3%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	17%	17%	16%	18%	13%
Somewhat Satisfied	0%	25%	25%	18%	12%
Completely Satisfied	83%	56%	53%	54%	69%
Likert Scale Average	4.667	4.343	4.262	4.123	4.412

Table 5.4 illustrates how satisfied customers are with the store location. A majority of customers over all generations are either somewhat satisfied or completely satisfied. Store

location was ranked 5th for importance to customers. Some shoppers indicated that the store

was too far away from their house to make frequent stops. By looking at this data Company

W can use this information to help target new customers by generation around their store.

They can also look at this data if they plan to expand in the future. For customers that were

further from the store, Company W could promote to those customers the option to purchase

online if they add that compatibility to their website.

Table 5.5 How Satisfied Customers were with Store Hours by Generation

Satisfaction Level	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Completely Dissatisfied	0%	0%	2%	5%	1%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	33%	8%	5%	3%	1%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	0%	17%	9%	8%	4%
Somewhat Satisfied	0%	28%	24%	16%	7%
Completely Satisfied	67%	47%	60%	68%	85%
Likert Scale Average	4.000	4.137	4.360	4.384	4.735

Store hours ranked 6th in importance. The majority of customers being satisfied

with the current store hours was high. For Millennials, 75% were somewhat or completely

satisfied with the stores business hours. Only 10% of customers indicated that the current

operating hours do not fit into their schedule. From this data, Company W could extend

weekday hours until later in the evening, as well as extend the Sunday hours. By extending

their hours, new customers may start shopping at the store. Current customers may make an

additional stop due to being able to visit the store at a new time of day. They could always

experiment with extending the stores' hours before permanently changing the hours. By

testing if the extended store hours improve profits with a few test dates then the company

wouldn't lose profit due to extra overhead costs.

Table 5.6 How Satisfied Customers were with Knowledge of Staff by Generation

Satisfaction Level	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Completely Dissatisfied	0%	0%	1%	4%	1%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	33%	11%	10%	9%	4%
Somewhat Satisfied	0%	24%	19%	18%	10%
Completely Satisfied	67%	63%	68%	68%	84%
Likert Scale Average	4.333	4.472	4.524	4.444	4.750

In table 5.6 customers ranked the importance of knowledge of staff and how

satisfied they were with Company W's staff. Knowledge of staff ranked 3rd for importance.

From the survey,87% of customers were somewhat or completely satisfied with the

knowledge of Company W's staff. The table illustrates the rankings by generations. This

data indicates that Company W cares about their employees and their customers

experience. Knowledgeable staff delivers a good customer expertise. Customers are likely

to feel like they can trust and depend on the staff to help make the best purchasing

decisions for their animal. Company W can leverage their knowledgeable staff to be an

educational resource for their customers and their community. This can support current

customers but also bring new customers. Continuing training their employees would be key

in continue store success.

Table 5.7 How Satisfied Customers were with Selection of Products by Generation

Satisfaction Level	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Completely Dissatisfied	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0%	3%	4%	5%	0%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	33%	11%	8%	9%	15%
Somewhat Satisfied	33%	31%	35%	28%	19%
Completely Satisfied	33%	54%	53%	55%	65%
Likert Scale Average	4.000	4.354	4.371	4.257	4.456

Selection of brands offered ranked the highest for importance with customers.

Customers want to have a variety of options. From the results, 85% of customers were

somewhat or completely satisfied with the variety of brands offered from Company W. For

the variety of brands offered, 10% of customers where neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

By offering a variety of brands for products, Company W can attract all generations

of customers. A wide variety of products helps satisfy customers shopping at a variety of

price points, quality levels and if they stay loyal to a brand. Offering a variety of brands

allows customers to choose which product they prefer. Employees can help educate

customers on the product lines that they carry to help guide the customers shopping

experience. It is unlikely to carry every brand that everyone customer will ask for but

having a variety will please most customers.

**Table 5.8 How Satisfied Customers were with Friendliness of Staff by Generation**

Satisfaction Level	Gen Z	Millennials	Generation X	Baby Boomers	Traditionalists
Completely Dissatisfied	0%	1%	1%	4%	1%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	0%	3%	3%	1%	3%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	0%	4%	4%	5%	1%
Somewhat Satisfied	33%	15%	15%	12%	7%
Completely Satisfied	67%	77%	78%	78%	87%
Likert Scale Average	4.667	4.653	4.669	4.580	4.750

By looking at table 5.8, 92% of Company W's customers are somewhat or completely satisfied with the friendless of staff. Friendless of staff ranked 4th for overall importance. From the results, 92% of Millennials were somewhat or complete satisfied with the friendliness of Company W's staff. This chart shows the satisfaction level by generations. When asked about how friendly (table 5.8) and knowledgeable (table 5.6) Company W's staff was both response rates for somewhat or completely satisfied are very high.

Company W should continue to use their strategy when hiring and training employees. These high satisfaction rates help maintain and bring in new customers. Happy customers provide great word of mouth advertising for the business to bring in new customers. Customers are more likely to continue to shop at Company W if their staff provides a positive shopping experience.

5.4 Actual Communication Channels Used

Figure 5.6 How Customers Heard about Company W for the First Time
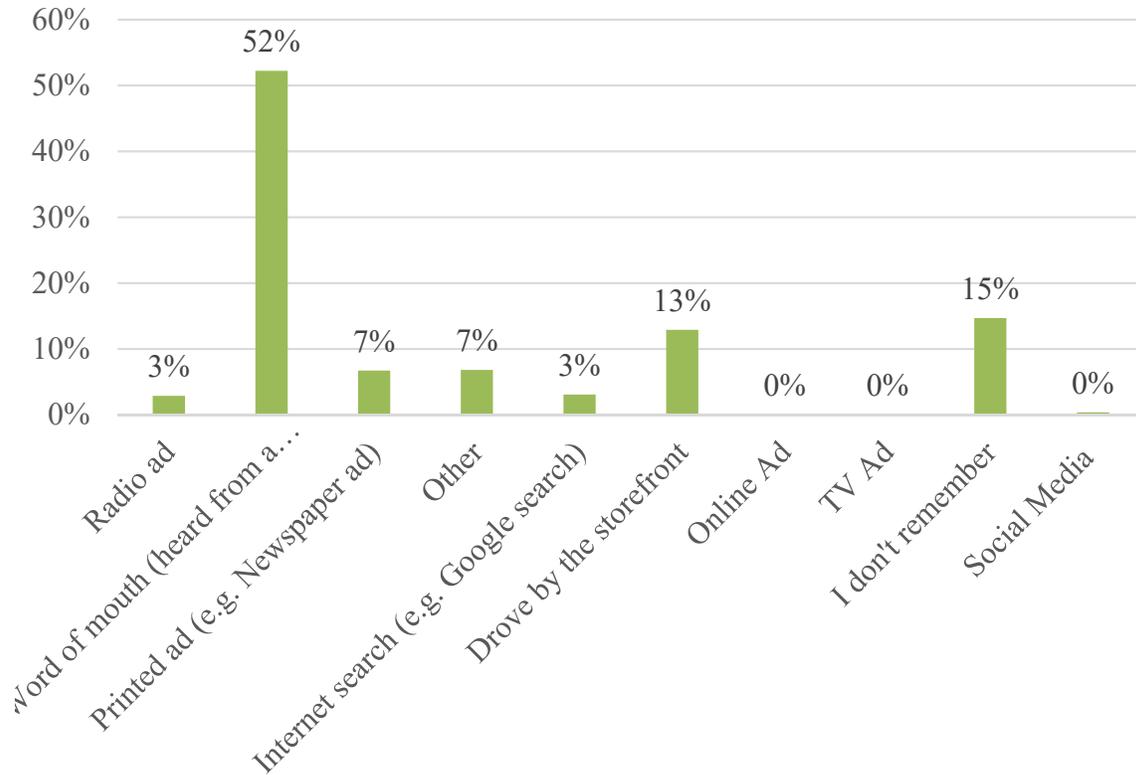
Question Q2.4 in Appendix A asked customer about their first time hearing about Company W. The customers had ten options to pick from to describe their first experience hearing about Company W. The options where if they had heard about Company from a radio ad, word of mouth, printed ad, other, internet search, drove by the storefront, an online ad, TV ad, they don't remember or on social media.

The data in Figure 5.7 illustrates that the top three ways a customer heard about Company W displayed in order of ranking where word of mouth, they didn't remember and that they drove by the storefront. All three of the top categories Company W did not pay additionally for.

A customer first impression makes a large impact on the rest of their shopping behavior. Word of mouth was the largest communication channel that let customers hear about Company W. This tells the researcher that by providing customers an excellent experience they will tell their friends and family about their experience. This is also true with a bad experience. Sometimes, bad experiences can be shared more than good. In the New England area around Company W, few customers saw the TV or internet ad and didn't hear the radio ad. From this data and around this region in New England, the researcher could adjust the amount of funds into TV, radio and internet ads and focus on a presentable store front, print ads and a good customer experience in the store.

**Figure 5.7 How Customers Heard About Company W by Generation**
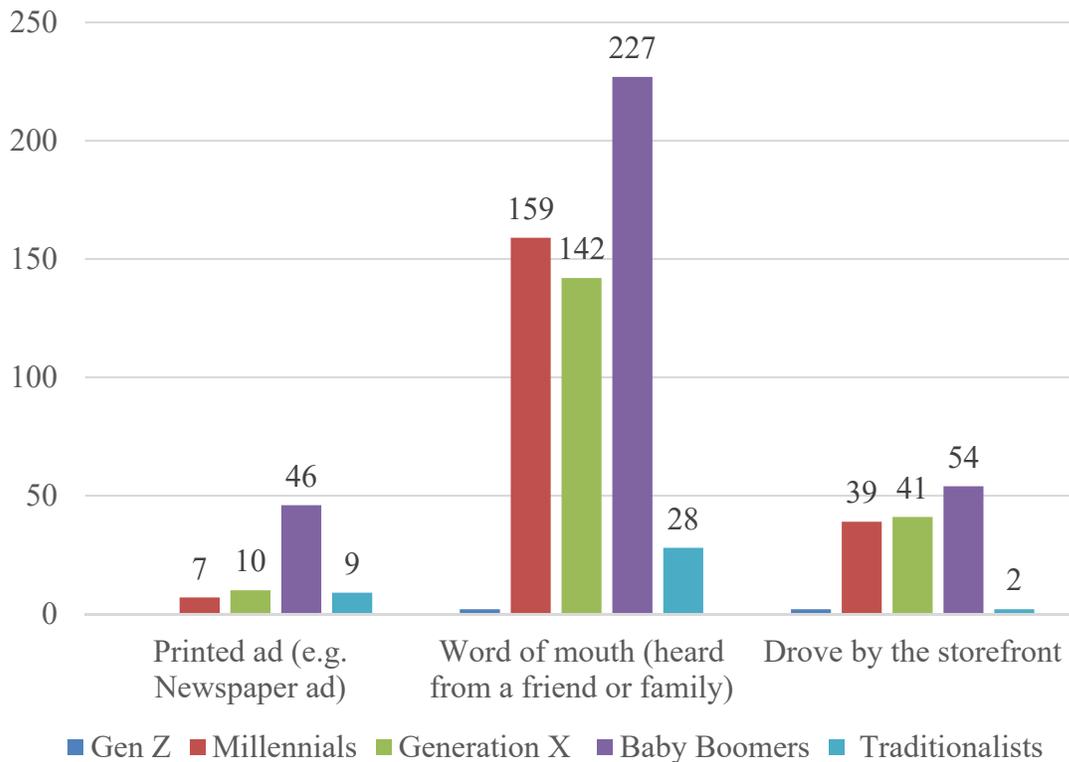
Table 5.9 How Customers Heard About Company W by Generation

| Generations	Printed ad (e.g. Newspaper ad)	Word of mouth (heard from a friend or family)	Drove by the storefront
Gen Z	0%	33%	33%
Millennials	3%	59%	14%
Generation X	4%	52%	15%
Baby Boomers	10%	51%	12%
Traditionalists	13%	41%	3%

Figure 5.7 looks deeper into the data analyzed in questions Q2.4. Printed ads, word of mouth and drove by the storefront options where divided up by generation in a bar chart. In the bar chart, the researcher can easily see how the different generations heard about Company W.

As mentioned in figure 5.6, a majority of customers surveyed heard about Company W by word of mouth. This means that they heard about the company from a family member or friend. What they heard was most likely positive as they are shopping at and completing the survey for Company W. Only 7% of customers saw the printed ad that was most likely published in a newspaper. Out of the 7%, Baby Boomers were the majority that saw the printed ad. This trend is common due to Baby Boomers utilizing print (newspapers) advertising as a source of entertainment/information source.

Based on the data from figure 5.7, the researcher would recommend that Company W spent less money and resources on TV, radio, and online advertising. More efforts could be increased on print advertising around the communities that Company W is located. Since so many customers and customer prospects drive by the store, they can continue to

maintain an appealing store front to provide customers a positive first impression of the store. By continuing to provide an excellent customer experience in the store, they can increase their word of mouth recommendations to reach new customers.

Figure 5.8 Communication Channels that Customers Have Seen Company W Advertised in by Generation
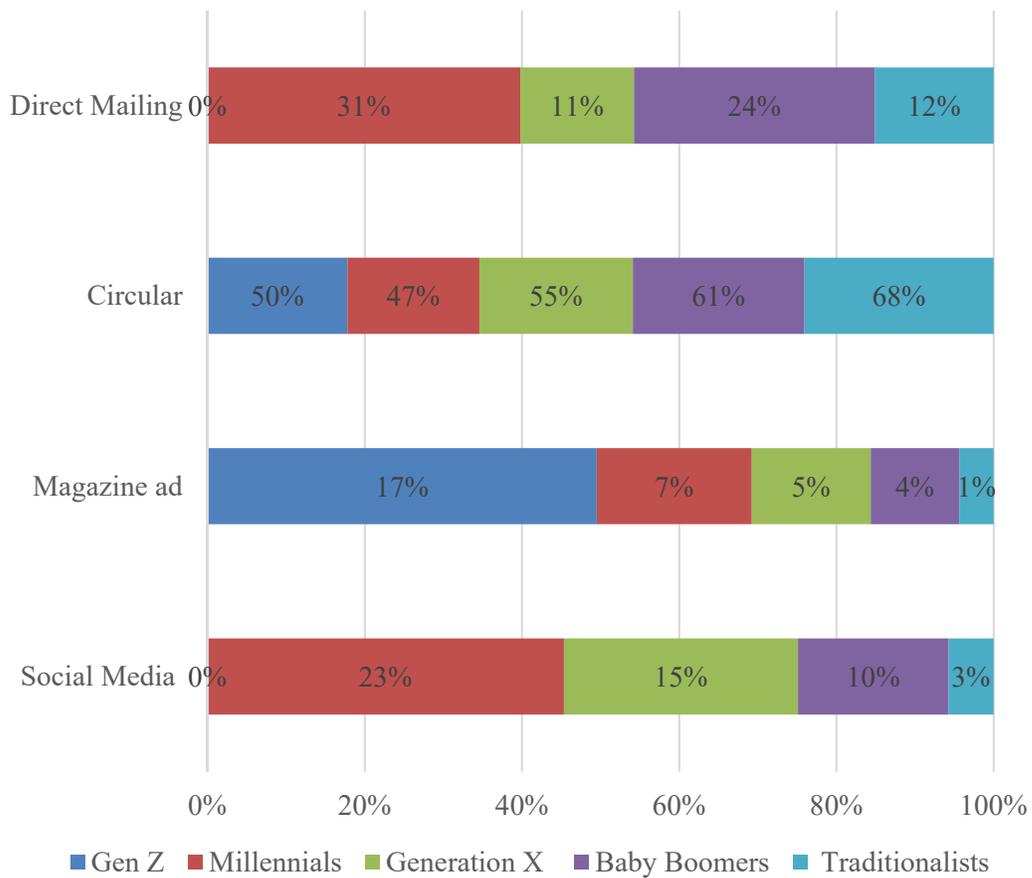
Question Q2.5 in Appendix A asked customers to identify what form of marketing channels they have seen Company W advertise in. The researcher studied this data and ranked the top four communication channels of overall customers. She then applied the generational breakdown of respondents by communication channel into a stacked bar chart.

Figure 5.8 allows the researcher to see what communication channels that Company W are currently advertising in and how effective there are to customers.

The top four communication channels that Company W already advertised in were direct mailing, store circulars, magazine ads, and social media. Store circulars or sale flyers had the most respondents and had all five generations engaged. Direct mailings had the second largest amount of customers respond. The majority of the respondents for direct mailings were Millennials and Baby Boomers. Advertising on social media was the third largest communication channels that customer saw an advertisement on. Only two Traditionalist and zero respondents from Gen Z saw the advertising on social media. Overall, there were lower respondents from Gen Z, so this low engagement could be from lack of Gen Z respondents. 51 respondents say that they saw on advertisement for Company W in a magazine ad. Out of the 51 respondents, Millennials and Baby Boomers make up the majority of respondents.

Based on the data from figure 5.8, the research would recommend that Company W continues to promote their store circulars. By continuing their circular, they will main current customer and possibly gain new ones. From the data, Generation X was not engaged in direct mailings. Company W could purchase a consumer list of new customers in their target communities that are in Generation X to try to promote more sales from Generation X. Continuing with social media advertising could also reach all generations of customers.

5.5 Preferred Communication Channels

Figure 5.9 Forms of Communication that Customers Prefer to Receive from Company W
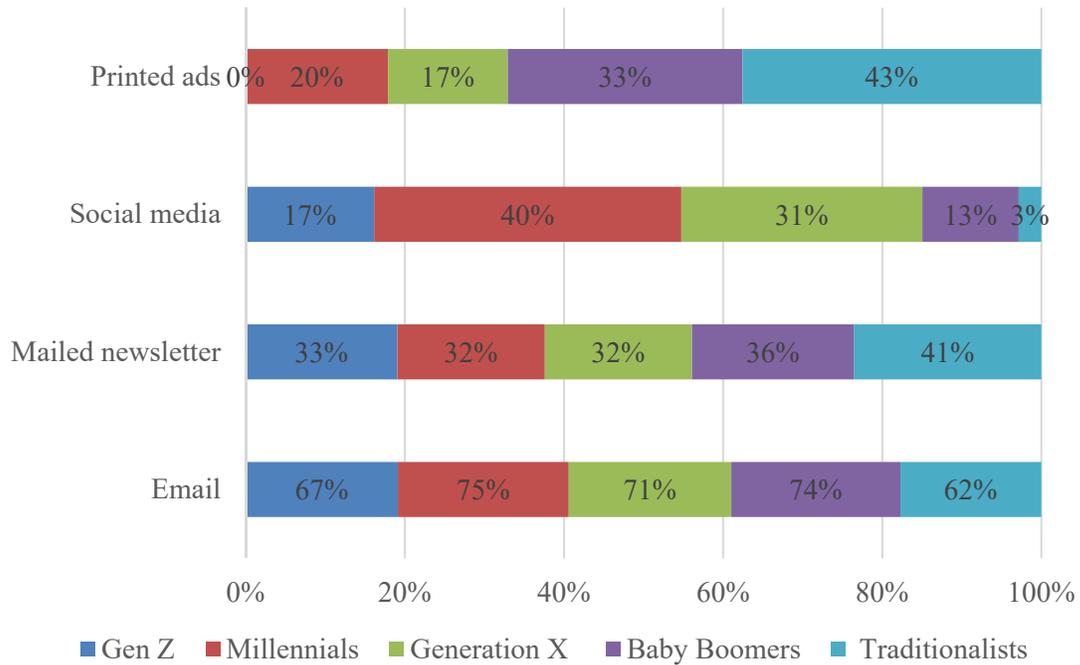
In Figure 4.1, question Q6.3 in Appendix A is demonstrated by listing all communication channels customers could choose as their preferred communication style. Figure 4.1 also illustrates the results from question Q6.3. This figure examines the top four forms of communication channels that customers prefer ranked largest to smallest, email, mailed newsletter, printed ads, and social media. Figure 5.9 shows a bar chart of the top four channels broken down by generation.

The results show that across generations, email communication is the most preferred communication channel. Four respondents from Gen Z, 203 Millennials customers, 196 Generation X customers, 332 Baby Boomers and 42 Traditionalist

preferred email communication. Mailed newsletters ranked at 34% of customers preferred to receive information from Company W in a printed and mailed newsletter. Printed ad communication had 26% of customers indicated they wanted to learn information about Company W by viewing the information in a printed ad. 253 respondents wanted to learn about company information through social media. The majority of customers that preferred social media where Millennials.

The researcher and companies can learn from figure 5.9 what communication channels their customers actually prefer. By knowing what communication channels customer prefer, they can increase efforts in the indicated channels. Overall, all generations participate in the four indicated channels. By continuing to practice these communication methods they will keep current customers and attract new.

Comparing figure 4.1 which demonstrates what forms of communication customers observed to figure 5.9 which shows what forms customer want information from can help the researcher and the companies understand their customers. Customers highly saw and preferred direct mail communication from Company W. Social media and printed advertisements also are highly encouraged by customers. They saw the communications from Company W and they would prefer to use those channels to be communicated with. The researcher would recommend that Company W increase their presence with email, direct newsletters, social media and printed advertising as communication tools to reach their customers.

5.6 Online Shopping Habits

Table 5.10 If Current Customer Shop Online by Generation

| Generations	Purchase Products Online
Gen Z	100%
Millennials	99%
Generation X	100%
Baby Boomers	97%
Traditionalists	96%

Question Q7.3 in Appendix A asked customers if they shop online and what percent of their shopping is done online. Table 5.10 indications if customers of Company W shop online. The bar chart demonstrates by generation what respondents shop online. It was important to ask question Q7.3 to see what percentage of customers purchase products online.

Only 20 respondents out of 1,068 total said they do not shop online. A majority of customer's shop online for other products that they purchase outside of Company W. Baby Boomers were the largest category of customers that shop online. Millennials and Generation X had similar responses. Company W does have a website but customers cannot purchase products online.

Company W should take into consideration that 98% of their customers shop online. They do not have a company website that allows customers the ability to purchase or research products they carry online. Again, the lack of respondents from Gen Z may have shown the results lower for that generation. The Traditionalist respondents were lower than other generations but Traditionalist are the oldest generation and could not have access

to a computer or the internet as much as other generations. From this data Company W

could look at adding the feature to purchase products online.

Figure 5.10 Average Amount of Purchase Made Online by Generation
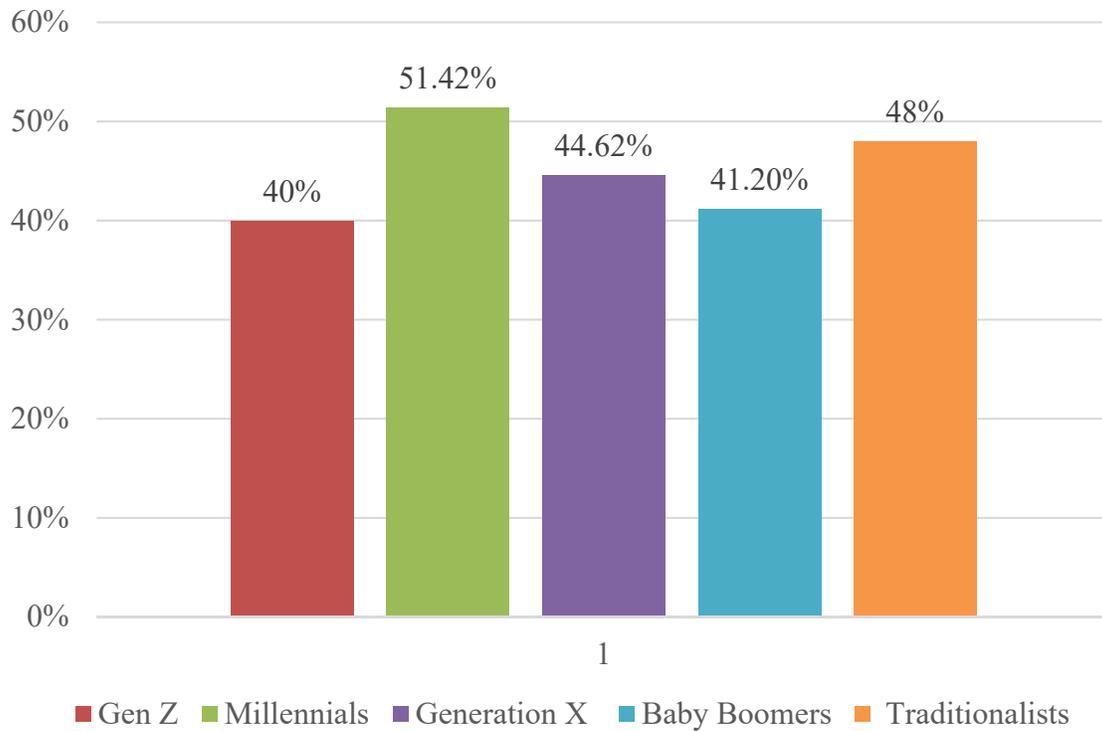
By asking question Q7.3 the researcher could see the percent of purchases made

online by customers. The researcher than analyzed the percent's of purchases by

generations and calculated the average by generation. Figure 5.10 illustrates the average

amount of purchases a customer made online by generation.

In table 5.10 Millennials were not the largest generation of online shoppers.

Interestingly, Millennials have the highest average of purchases made online. They

purchased 51.42% of their purchases online. Similarly, the Traditionalists have a higher

average percent of purchases made online than Baby Boomers, Generation X and Gen Z.

Gen Z averaged 40%, Generation X averaged 44.62%, Baby Boomers averaged 41.20% and Traditionalists averaged 48%.

Based on this data, the marketing efforts could be focused around online shopping. A marketing plan could be executed around making the customers shopping experience easy and memorable. The average number of purchases made by customers could also fluctuate around the time of year. If there are bad weather conditions such as rain, snow and ice then customers would be more willing to make more purchases online to not have to battle the weather conditions. During nicer weather, online sales may decrease depending on if customers want to travel to the store. The time of year could also affect the average purchases of online sales. In the animal feed industry, there are seasons for each species. For example, chick starter sales can be larger in the spring and fall around the timing when chicks are born. This seasonality could affect online sales depending on the products and season. Another factor that could influence the average number of online purchases would be if the store is located near a customer and what other stores are located nearby. Depending on a customer's driving preference they may not be willing to drive over 15 miles to a stores. Other customers could be more willing to drive an hour if there are other stores around that they can shop at also.

5.7 How Likely Customers Are to Shop Online

Figure 5.11 How Likely Customers Were to Shop Online If Company W Had a Website
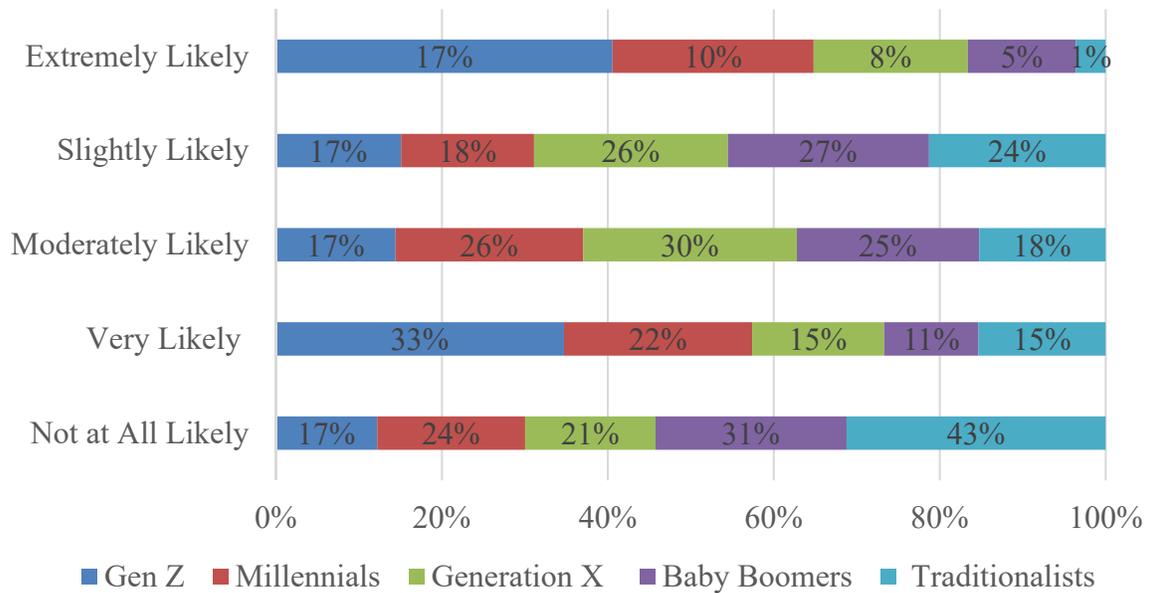
Like question Q7.3, Company W also wanted to know if they sold products on their own website would customers be willing to purchase them. Question Q3.4 in Appendix A asked customers how likely they would be to purchase products online from Company W. Figure 5.11 displays how likely customers are to shop online if Company W has their own website. This figure also shows the respondents by generation in a bar chart.

From the results, 28% of respondents said that they would not be likely to shop online from Company W. The Baby Boomer generation was the largest representation of respondents that would not shop online. The participants indicated that 24% of respondents would be slightly likely, 26% where moderately likely, 15% very likely and 7% extremely

likely to purchase products online from Company W. Millennials responded the highest out of respondents for extremely likely to shop online.

Figure 5.11 illustrates a different story compared to table 5.10. Customers in table 5.10 stated that they purchased products online but then when asked if they would purchase products online from Company W over 50% said that would be slightly or not at all likely to purchase products online from Company W. Some reasons customers would not shop online are that they don't want to pay shipping costs, live very close to the store, are buying products that are heavy and don't want expensive freight, and they like visiting the store. The researcher would recommend that Company W does more research on if their customers would utilize an ecommerce website if they developed on and what products they could sell on it.

5.8 Testing the differences between generations

In this section t-tests are utilized to tests the differences in means across the generational groups. The validity of null hypothesis that the average of responses on select questions are not different across generations. Millennials are compared to other generations by the percent of shopping done online with Baby Boomers and Gen X from question Q7.3 in Appendix A.

Millennials Compared to Generation X

The variables used for this set of test include the percentage of shopping done online. The difference between Millennials and Generation X is significant at a 99%

statistically significant level. Millennials tend to shop more online compared to Generation

X. Table 5.11 demonstrates the t-test between Millennials and Generation X.

Table 5.11 What Percent Customers Shop for Products Online for Millennials and Gen X

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	Millennials	Gen X
Mean	43.287	36.272
Variance	604.961	560.046
Observations	271	275
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	542	
t Stat	3.395	
P(T<=t) one-tail	0.000	
t Critical one-tail	1.647	
P(T<=t) two-tail	0.000	
t Critical two-tail	1.964	

Millennials Compared to Baby Boomers

The variables used for this set of test include the percentage of shopping done online.

Table 5.12 compares the differences in Millennials and Baby Boomers that shop online.

There is statistical significance between the two generations. Millennials shop more online

than Baby Boomers. If Company W creates a website that has the option to purchase

products online then they could attract more Millennials to purchase products online. They

would also improve the shopping experience for Generation X and Baby Boomers that

shop online. An online shopping experience would meet the need of Millennials but also

attract new customers.

Table 5.12 What Percent Customers Shop for Products Online for Millennials and Baby Boomers

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

	Millennials	Baby Boomers
Mean	43.287	30.216
Variance	604.961	536.675
Observations	271	448
Hypothesized Mean Difference	0	
df	543	
t Stat	7.057	
P(T<=t) one-tail	2.597E-12	
t Critical one-tail	1.647	
P(T<=t) two-tail	5.20E-12	
t Critical two-tail	1.964	

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Overview of Objectives and Methods

The focus of this thesis was to understand how Millennial retail shopping habits for animal feed differ from that of other generations. Agricultural companies everywhere continue to work towards gaining the maximum return on investment for their marketing efforts in the agricultural industry. They need to see that their efforts do not go wasted and the target audience has been reached. The companies involved in this project wanted to gain insight on shopping habits and preferences of Millennials to maximize their marketing efforts to reach their target audience.

Results from the survey answered by Company W's customers uncovered how Millennials shopping habits can be different compared to other generations and how they use online shopping retailers to purchase products online. The data was reviewed and placed into categories for assessment. Finally, the data was analyzed to study and understand the proper communication channels to use to reach farm supply customers and specifically Millennials.

6.2 Key Findings

The three main findings of this study are related to online customer preferences, new communication channels and the type of channels customers prefer to be communicated with for store information.

The results of the survey provided insight for Company W to make their decision about adding the option to purchase products online available. By adding products to a website, customers have the option to review products before purchasing, purchase products from anywhere online and provide education about the product. The results indicate that having an online presence are essential not only for effectively reaching out to

Millennials, but also for promotions and sales focused on other generations. Website banner ads, store circulars, social media ads, eblast, magazine ads, and direct mail pieces can all direct customers back to a company's website and product offering to promote sales. Adding an e-commerce option to a company's website also calls for improved sales analytics for advertising and tracking sales volume. By adding more analytics for a company to review, the marketing strategies can become more geotargeted and reach a more ideal group of customers from the insight gained from the analytics. This finding is consistent with previous literature with also highlighted the importance of new communication channels. For example, the customers increasingly using more forms of digital applications for entertainment and to gain knowledge. By offering an app for customers a company could gain new customers, educate and increase the user experience for current customers and increase sales. An app can promote product knowledge, services offered by the company, customer service information, the option to purchase products, and many other helpful tools for the customer.

The other new communication channel that can be used to target Millennials and new customers could involve text message marketing. More and more companies have the option to sign up for text message alerts for sales, events, and special offers. The results indicate that customers rely on their phones to stay connected to others so communicating with customers through text messages can be beneficial for improving engagement.

The results also indicate that customers have specific preferences on how they want to receive information from a company. Specifically, email, printed newsletters, circulars, and social media platforms were identified as preferred options by respondents of various generations. The use of these channels should be continuously optimized to align the

content with the preferences of specific target customer group. By knowing what channels are optimal for each customer group the marketing managers can direct time and money in enhancing communication efforts to customers to increase awareness. Other channels can be experimented with to see if additional customers can be added.

6.3 Limitations

One source of limitation in this research stems from the lack of data on farm supply accounts and customers. Due to the farm supply channel being newer, there was a lack of data to be reviewed. This caused the researcher to look at other areas from the agricultural industry within the target demographic to find comparable sources. Another limitation was that Company W does not have the ability to sell products on their website. They did have a website but, customers could not purchase or review a large product offering from the website.

The lack of sales data was another challenge for this research. Sales data was not provided in the survey of current customers. This limited the ability to analyze the data by conducting regression analysis. If some sales data was provided the researcher would have had more options to run regressions and conduct more detailed statistical analysis.

6.4 Areas of Further Research

To improve the study further larger surveys can be conducted with a large farm supply account that has an e-commerce website. The researcher and larger farm supply account could partner together to look at sales, specific feed products, advertising tactics and trends. By looking at different advertising tactics and seeing customers' responses both

parties could learn new ways to improve customers' experiences and gain maximum return on investment from advertising expenses.

Expanding the survey to include sales data for customers from each generation would allow the researcher and companies to view which generations generate more revenue from various product and service categories. Sales from online retailers versus a brick and mortar retail location could be analyzed and interpreted.

6.5 Conclusion

This thesis provided insight for the researcher, Company W, and partners with the company for the future. The research conducted can help the company moving forward with business plans and marketing strategies. Key findings can be incorporated in decision making to increase customer awareness, shopping experiences, and sales. By understanding customers, a company and employees can improve their business and gain new customers.

The results of the survey provided significant information to help the companies and the researcher understand their customers shopping habits and preferences by generation. The analysis provides insight for planning a strategic marketing plan for farm supply retail accounts. What customers currently do business with farm supply stores, how they want to be contacted, and proper communication channels to be contacted were identified through this study.

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INTRODUCTION

Q1.1 In the following study, you will be asked to answer questions regarding your familiarity with and shopping habits at the Company W Store. The survey should take about 10 - 15 minutes to complete. Participants that complete the full survey will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of five $100 store gift cards, as well as the grand prize, a year's supply of dog food available for pickup from Company W! *

*(Some restrictions apply; see store for details)

All your answers will remain confidential, and your responses will not be associated with you individually. Please answer all questions as candidly as possible. Please click the arrow below to begin the survey.

Q1.2 What is your age? Please enter your age in years.

Q1.3 Are you a...?
○ Male
○ Female

Q1.4 Which of the following types of animals do you currently own? Please select all that apply.
❑ Dogs
❑ Cats
❑ Chickens or other poultry
❑ Horses
❑ Caged Pets/Small Animals (rodents, reptiles, birds, etc.)
❑ Beef
❑ Swine/pigs
❑ Sheep/goats
❑ Other (please specify) _____
❑ None

Q1.5 How many of the following animals do you own?
Pipe in animals owned from Q1.4
_____ Dogs
_____ Cats
_____ Chickens or other poultry
_____ Horses
_____ Caged Pets/Small Animals (rodents, reptiles, birds, etc.)
_____ Beef

_____ Swine/pigs
_____ Sheep/goats
_____ Text from "Other" option

COMPANY W AWARENESS

Q2.1 When did you first hear about the Company W Store?
- ❍ Within the last year
- ❍ 1 to 2 years ago
- ❍ 3 to 5 years ago
- ❍ 6 to 10 years ago
- ❍ Over 10 years ago
- ❍ I've never heard of the Company W

Q2.2 When did you first visit, or step into the Company W Store for the first time? Your best estimate is fine.
- ❍ Within the last year
- ❍ 1 to 2 years ago
- ❍ 3 to 5 years ago
- ❍ 6 to 10 years ago
- ❍ Over 10 years ago
- ❍ I have never visited the Company W Store

Q2.3 Can you please explain why have you never visited the Company W Store?

Q2.4 How did you first learn about the Company W Store?
- ❍ Word of mouth (heard from a friend or family)
- ❍ Internet search (e.g. Google search)
- ❍ Drove by the storefront
- ❍ Printed ad (e.g. Newspaper ad)
- ❍ Online ad
- ❍ Radio ad
- ❍ Television ad
- ❍ Social Media Platform (e.g. Facebook)
- ❍ Other (please specify) _____
- ❍ I don't remember

Q2.5 In which of the following forms have you seen Company W advertise? Please select all that apply.
- ❑ Newspaper ad
- ❑ Magazine ad
- ❑ Sales circular/flyer/bulletin

- ❑ Direct mailing
- ❑ Radio ad
- ❑ Television ad
- ❑ Online ad
- ❑ Social Media post (e.g. Facebook post)
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____
- ❑ None

SHOPPING FUNNEL

Q4.1 How often do you typically visit or shop at the Company W Store?
- ❍ More than once a week
- ❍ Every 1 to 2 weeks
- ❍ Every 3 to 4 weeks
- ❍ Every 2 to 3 months
- ❍ Every 4 to 6 months
- ❍ Less than once every 6 months

Q3.5 When did you most recently visit or shop at the Company W Store?
- ❍ Less than a month ago
- ❍ 1 to 3 months ago
- ❍ 4 to 6 months ago
- ❍ 7 to 12 months ago
- ❍ Over a year ago

Q3.6 When was the last time you purchased a product or service from the Company W Store?
- ❍ Less than a month ago
- ❍ 1 to 3 months ago
- ❍ 4 to 6 months ago
- ❍ 7 to 12 months ago
- ❍ Over a year ago
- ❍ I have never purchased anything at Company W

Q3.7 Can you explain why you have not purchased anything from the Company W Store in the past year?

Q3.8 Can you explain why have you never purchased anything at Company W Store?

SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

Q4.2 When shopping for supplies for your animals and/or pets, how frequently do you purchase from Company W Store?

	I PURCHASE ALL MY SUPPLIES AT COMPANY W	I PURCHASE MOST SUPPLIES AT COMPANY W BUT SOMETIMES SHOP ELSEWHERE	I PURCHASE SOME SUPPLIES AT COMPANY W BUT MOSTLY SHOP ELSEWHERE	I NEVER SHOP AT COMPANY W FOR THESE SUPPLIES
Pipe in animals selected in Q1.4	O	O	O	O

Q4.3 Which of the following best describes why you do not purchase more of your animal supplies at Company W? Please select all that apply.
❑ The products are too expensive
❑ It is not convenient for me to travel to Company W
❑ Company W doesn't carry the brands I like
❑ I am not satisfied with Company W's customer service
❑ I shop for animal supplies online
❑ I feel loyalty towards another store
❑ Other (please specify) _____
❑ I am not sure

Q4.4 Which of the following best describes your familiarity with the Grooming service?
O I currently use Grooming for my pet grooming needs
O I used to use Grooming for my pet grooming needs, but don't currently
O I'm aware of the Grooming service, but have never used it
O I have never heard of the Grooming service

Q4.5 Can you explain why you no longer use the Grooming service?

Q4.6 Which of the following pet services would you be interested in using if Company W provided them? Please select all that apply.
❑ Self-service pet washing and grooming
❑ Dog walking service
❑ Dog and Puppy training classes
❑ Pet birthday parties
❑ Other (please specify) _____
❑ None

Q4.7 Have you ever purchased any of the following lawn and garden supplies at Company W in the past? Please select all that apply.
❑ Soils/mulches

- ❑ Fertilizers
- ❑ Grass seed
- ❑ Insect control
- ❑ Weed prevention
- ❑ Garden tools & equipment
- ❑ Gloves, boots, & apparel
- ❑ Winter supplies (ice melt, shovels, etc.)
- ❑ Other (please specify) _____
- ❑ None of the above

Q4.8 How interested would you be in learning more about and/or purchasing hydroponic gardening products at Company W?
Note that hydroponic gardening involves growing plants in sand, gravel, or liquid, with added nutrients, but without soil.
- ❍ Not at All Interested
- ❍ Slightly Interested
- ❍ Moderately Interested
- ❍ Very Interested
- ❍ Extremely Interested

Q4.8a You mentioned that you would be interested in in learning more about and/or purchasing hydroponic gardening products at Company W. Can you explain why?

Q3.1 How likely are you to visit or shop at the Company W Store in the next 12 months?
- ❍ Not at All Likely
- ❍ Slightly Likely
- ❍ Moderately Likely
- ❍ Very Likely
- ❍ Extremely Likely

Q3.2 What other stores do you expect to shop at in the next 12 months for your pet and animal feed & supply needs? If you do not plan on shopping anywhere else, please enter "none."
   1) _____
   2) _____
   3) _____
   4) _____
   5) _____

Q3.3 You indicated you are unlikely to shop at Company W in the next 12 months. Can you explain why?

Q3.4 How likely would you be to shop online at the Company W website, were this option available?
○ Not at All Likely
○ Slightly Likely
○ Moderately Likely
○ Very Likely
○ Extremely Likely

Q3.4a You indicated that you would be unlikely to shop online at the Company W website, if this option were to be available. Why is this?

Q3.4b You indicated that you would be likely to shop online at the Company W website, if this option were to be available. Why is this?

Q3.5a Company W is open Monday through Saturday from 8am until 6pm, and Sunday from 10am until 3pm. Do you find these operating hours to fit well with your schedule?
○ Yes
○ No

Q3.5b You mentioned that Company W's' operating hours do not fit well with your schedule. What would you change about the hours to make them work better for your schedule? Please explain below.

STORE VALUES AND COMPANY W PERFORMANCE

Q5.1 How important are the following attributes when determining where to shop for your pet & animal, as well as home & farm supplies? Please drag and drop each attribute in order of importance with 1 being the most important attribute.
_____ Product price
_____ Store location/convenience
_____ Store hours
_____ Knowledge of staff
_____ Selection of brands offered
_____ Friendliness of staff
_____ Customer Reward Program

Q5.2 Which of the following best describes your level of familiarity with the Company W Store Loyalty Rewards program?
○ I am a current member of their Loyalty Rewards program
○ I used to be a member of their Loyalty Rewards program, but am not currently
○ I have heard of their Loyalty Rewards program but have never been a member
○ I have never heard of their Loyalty Rewards program

Q5.4 The Company W Loyalty Rewards program allows customers to earn points on their store purchases. As these rewards points accrue, enrolled customers become eligible for discounts on future purchases. Additional program benefits include historical purchase tracking, earlier access to store sales, a subscription to the quarterly newsletter and the recall notification feature which alerts customers of recalls on various products such as pet food.

Based on this description, how likely are you to enroll in the Company W Loyalty Rewards program in the next 12 months?
○ Not at All Likely
○ Slightly Likely
○ Moderately Likely
○ Very Likely
○ Extremely Likely

Q5.5 Why are you not at all likely to enroll in this Loyalty Rewards program?

Q5.5a You mentioned you would be likely to enroll in the Company W Loyalty Rewards program in the next 12 months. Would you be open to receiving more information on the program?
○ Yes
○ No

How satisfied are you with Company W on the following attributes?

	COMPLETELY DISSATISFIED	SOMEWHAT DISSATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	COMPLETELY SATISFIED
Product price	○	○	○	○	○
Store location	○	○	○	○	○
Store hours	○	○	○	○	○
Knowledge of staff	○	○	○	○	○
Selection of brands offered	○	○	○	○	○
Friendliness of staff	○	○	○	○	○
Display if Currently Enrolled in Rewards Program Loyalty Rewards program	○	○	○	○	○

Q5.7 What changes could Company W implement to enhance your shopping experience? If you cannot think of any changes, please enter "none."

COMMUNICATION PREFERENCES

Q6.1 How interested are you in being notified of the following topics from Company W?
Columns
❍ Not at All Interested
❍ Slightly Interested
❍ Moderately Interested
❍ Very Interested
❍ Extremely Interested
Rows (Randomized)
❍ Upcoming sales
❍ New products
❍ Info & helpful tips for pets & animals
❍ Info & helpful tips for farming & agriculture

Q6.2 You indicated that you are not interested in receiving notifications from Company W Store. Can you please explain why?

Q6.3 In which of the following forms would you like to learn about upcoming sales, new products, helpful tips, etc. from Company W Store? Please select all that apply.
❑ Text message
❑ Email
❑ Mailed newsletter
❑ Social media
❑ Radio ads
❑ Television ads
❑ Printed ads
❑ Other (please specify) _____

Q6.4 At what frequency would notifications from Company W on this type of news and information be most helpful?
❍ Every week
❍ Every few weeks
❍ Every month
❍ Every couple months
❍ Once a year or less

HABITS AND PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Q7.1 Which of the following local radio stations or streaming services do you listen to at least once a week? Please select all that apply.
Randomized
❑ Radio 1
❑ Radio 2
❑ Radio 3
❑ Radio 4
❑ Pandora
❑ Spotify
❑ Apple Radio
❑ Other, please specify:
❑ I do not listen to any of these options

Q7.2 Which of the following local newspapers do you read at least once a week? Please select all that apply.
Randomized
❑ Newspaper 1
❑ Newspaper 2
❑ Newspaper 3
❑ Newspaper 4
❑ Newspaper 5
❑ Other, please specify:
❑ None of the above

Q7.2b Which of the following local TV stations do you watch at least once a week? Please select all that apply.
Randomized
❑ Station 1
❑ Station 2
❑ Station 3
❑ Station 4
❑ Other, please specify:
❑ None of the above

Q7.3 Generally speaking, what percentage of your current shopping is done online? If you're unsure, please enter your best guess.
_____ % of Total Shopping

Q7.4 Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:
Broken up into 2 different batteries across two pages in program

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
I prefer to shop locally, and understand the importance of supporting local businesses	○	○	○	○
It's important to me to shop at businesses which are involved in my community	○	○	○	○
I buy based on quality, not price	○	○	○	○
Price is more important to me than brand names	○	○	○	○
I like to shop around before making a purchase	○	○	○	○
I rely on employee advice when buying an item I'm unfamiliar with	○	○	○	○
I usually read product reviews on an item before purchasing it	○	○	○	○
I am willing to pay more for items which are certified organic	○	○	○	○
When I find a brand I like, I stick to it	○	○	○	○
I like to compare prices across different stores before purchasing something	○	○	○	○
I prefer to shop at stores that specialize in a specific type or style of product	○	○	○	○
I likely to purchase an item if it's on sale, even if I do not need it	○	○	○	○

DEMOGRAPHICS

Q8.1 In which of the following state do you live?
○ Vermont
○ New Hampshire
○ I live outside of these two states

Q8.2 For classification purposes only, please enter your zip code below.

Q8.3 What is your annual household income?
○ Less than $50,000
○ $50,000 to $74,999
○ $75,000 to $99,999
○ $100,000 to $149,999
○ $150,000 to $199,999
○ $200,000 or more
○ Prefer not to respond

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Q8.4 Which of the following best describes your race?
- ○ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ○ Asian
- ○ Black or African American
- ○ Hispanic
- ○ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ○ White
- ○ Two or more races
- ○ Prefer not to respond

Q8.5 Which of the following best describes your marital status?
- ○ Single, never married
- ○ Married
- ○ Living with an adult partner
- ○ Divorced/separated
- ○ Widowed
- ○ Prefer not to respond

Q8.6 How many children under the age of 18 do you have living in your household?
- ○ None
- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5
- ○ 6 or more

Q8.7 Which best describes the setting in which you currently live? Please select all that apply.
- ❑ Apartment
- ❑ Condo/townhome
- ❑ Single-family home
- ❑ In-town/neighborhood
- ❑ Outside town/rural
- ❑ Other (please specify)

Q9 Thank you for completing this survey! As mentioned earlier, by completing this survey you are eligible to win one of five $100 store gift cards, as well as the grand prize, a year's supply of dog food from Company W!*

To enter this drawing, please fill out your contact information below. If you do not wish to enter the drawing, please leave the boxes blank. Note that winning participants will be contacted via email approximately 4 to 8 weeks after the completion of this study.

First Name_____

Last Name_____

Phone Number OR E-mail Address_____

*(Some restrictions apply; see store for details