

Research Findings

CWC – *In The Wind*

Key Findings:

1. About 19% (apx. 750,000) of Colorado's voting-eligible population could fall into the 'In The Wind' category.

- From the wave 3 tracking research, 52% of respondents responded on a 7-point scale as being completely neutral (4) or on the fence (3 or 5) when it comes to a ballot initiative involving the restriction of hunting. Further, 19% are millennials that are on the fence.
- The survey is weighted for census representation and can be projected out to the Colorado population.

2. Millennial humor is darker and has less meaning than previous generations; an escape from world realities.

- While conventional humor, including puns, irony, wit, and slapstick, are still valid, new types of humor are gaining traction and popularity with this generation. Examples I've noticed are absurdity, universality, and self-deprecation. [INC; [May 2016](#)]
- Millennial humor often doesn't make sense, and it isn't necessarily supposed to make sense.

"To visit millennial comedy, advertising and memes is to spend time in a dream world where ideas twist and suddenly vanish; where loops of self-referential quips warp and distort with each iteration, tweaked by another user embellishing on someone else's joke, until nothing coherent is left; where beloved children's character Winnie the Pooh is depicted in a fan-made comic strip as a 9/11 truther, and grown men in a parody ad dance to shrill synth beats while eating Totino's pizza rolls out of a tiny pink backpack. In this weird world of the surreal and bizarre, horror mingles with humor, and young people have space to play with emotions that seem more and more to proceed from ordinary life – the creeping suspicion that the world just doesn't make sense." [Washington Post; [Aug 2017](#)]

- "Humor is highly effective in producing emotional reactions across generations. This is especially true for younger generations for whom humor is an important and integral part of successful advertising. Gen-Z and millennials were both more likely to describe advertisements as boring, so providing entertainment via laughs is often the price of entry to engage younger audiences. This is especially evident when you look at favorite ads by generation." [CollageGroup, [Mar 2018](#)]

3. This different sense of humor has carried over into advertising that appeals to the millennial base.

- 'Puppy, Monkey, Baby', an absurd 2016 Superbowl commercial for Mountain Dew Kickstart, received mixed reviews being called weird or freaky. However, the shock has left millions talking about and sharing it on social media. The sheer absurdity is what made it successful.

"It's unmistakably geared towards social media, but with a little more finesse than one of those ads just throwing hashtags around or promising cash in exchange for publicity. It understands the sort of bizarre memes that get traction on the internet, and that anything with a corporate sponsorship needs to be that much weirder in order to stake its claim.." [Forbes, [Feb 2016](#)]

"Once I saw the commercial, I couldn't go and explain it to somebody else because I needed to take time to interpret it, soak it in, and come up with how I felt about it. Do I love it or hate it? It was such a weird curveball yet I had to decide, do I love it or hate it? At first, I was weirded out, but I ultimately loved it. Part of the decision came from talking to my friends about it and seeing the buzz online." [Interview with Millennial, Apr 2018]

- Another instance of absurd humor in advertising comes from Old Spice, who have used "The Man Your Man Can Smell Like" and Terry Crews as a spokesperson to reposition to a younger audience.
[The Man Your Man Can Smell Like](#)
[Terry Crews](#)
- Other brands have connected an absurd humor to real situations that millennials experience, like Amazon did when Alexa lost her voice in their 2018 commercials.
[Alexa Loses Her Voice](#)
- Insurance companies, like Geico and Progressive, have recently been attracting younger generations through using unusual humor to sell it's brand.

"This Geico ad "Backyard Pirate" debuted last August, and while it didn't score particularly well overall, millennials still rated the ad 25.8% higher than the general population." [AceMetrix, [May 2014](#)]

[Geico – Backyard Pirate](#)

4. Intel, traditionally and invisible ingredient brand, used Jim Parsons as a humorous spokesperson to attract millennials in the B2C space.

- "With Jim Parsons, our brand among millennials four years ago was just not where it needed to be," the marketer said. "We got a guy that we thought: a.) symbolized the brand, and b.) really connected with millennials – he's been on the No. 1 rated show with a millennial audience." [Marketing Dive; [Feb 2018](#)]
[Intel – Jim Parsons](#)