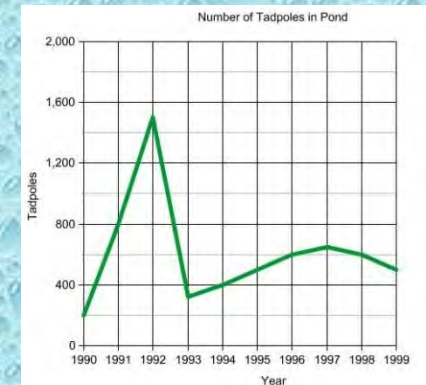
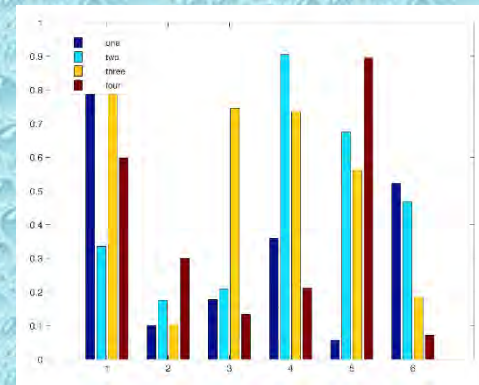
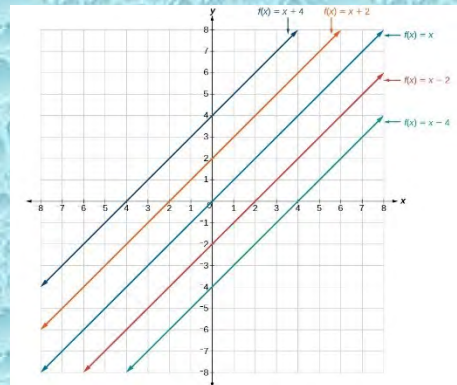
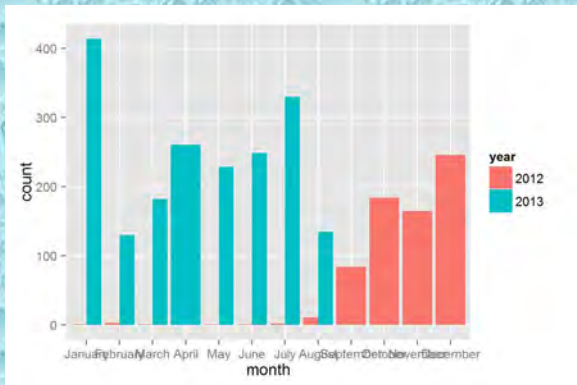




# Letting Our Audiences Lead Us to New Ways of Communicating

# Really long heading that's repeated on every slide/page

- A bunch of text that you're supposed to take the time to read.
- It's basically impossible to read this while you're listening to the presenter at the same time; and if you do, you're going to miss a lot of content.
- And you probably still don't know if you really care that much about it anyway,
- Because you're still not sure how this has anything to do with you
- And OMG this font, and the color, and the spacing is making my eyes want to explode - and then there's the water droplet background...
- And this is when it's on a slide! There's also handouts and posts and web pages where the amount of text can make an audience immediately check out.
- For good measure, let's put some graphs or figures that are way too small to see.



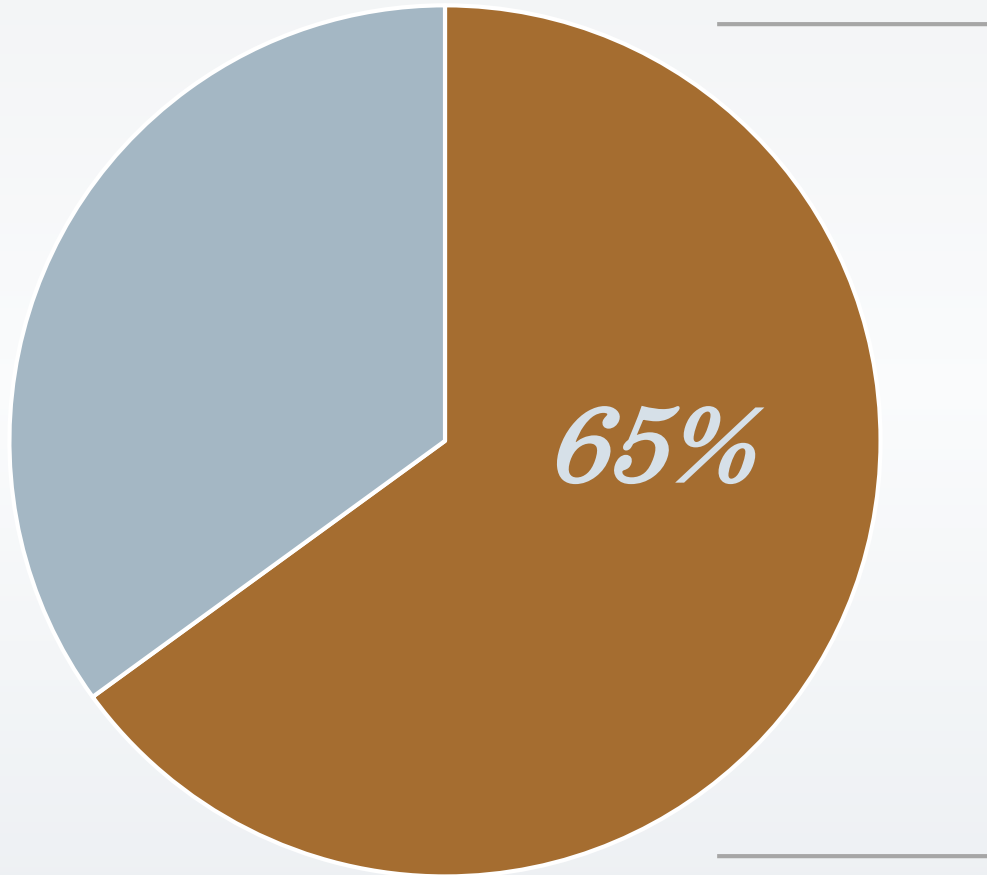
Conservation districts and the voluntary conservation movement were borne from the Dust Bowl of the 1930s.

Dry land farming on the Great Plains led to the systematic destruction of the prairie grasses. In ranching regions, overgrazing also destroyed large areas of grassland. Gradually, significant environmental damage began to occur. Among the natural elements, the strong winds of the region were particularly devastating. With the onset of drought in 1930, the over-farmed and overgrazed land began to blow away. Winds whipped across the plains, raising billowing clouds of dust. The sky could darken for days, and even well-sealed homes could have a thick layer of dust on the furniture. In some places, the dust drifted like snow, covering farm buildings and houses. Nineteen states in the heartland of the United States became a vast dust bowl. With no chance of making a living, farm families... (etc.).



Why do we need to think beyond typical or traditional communication strategies?





Majority of people are



visual learners

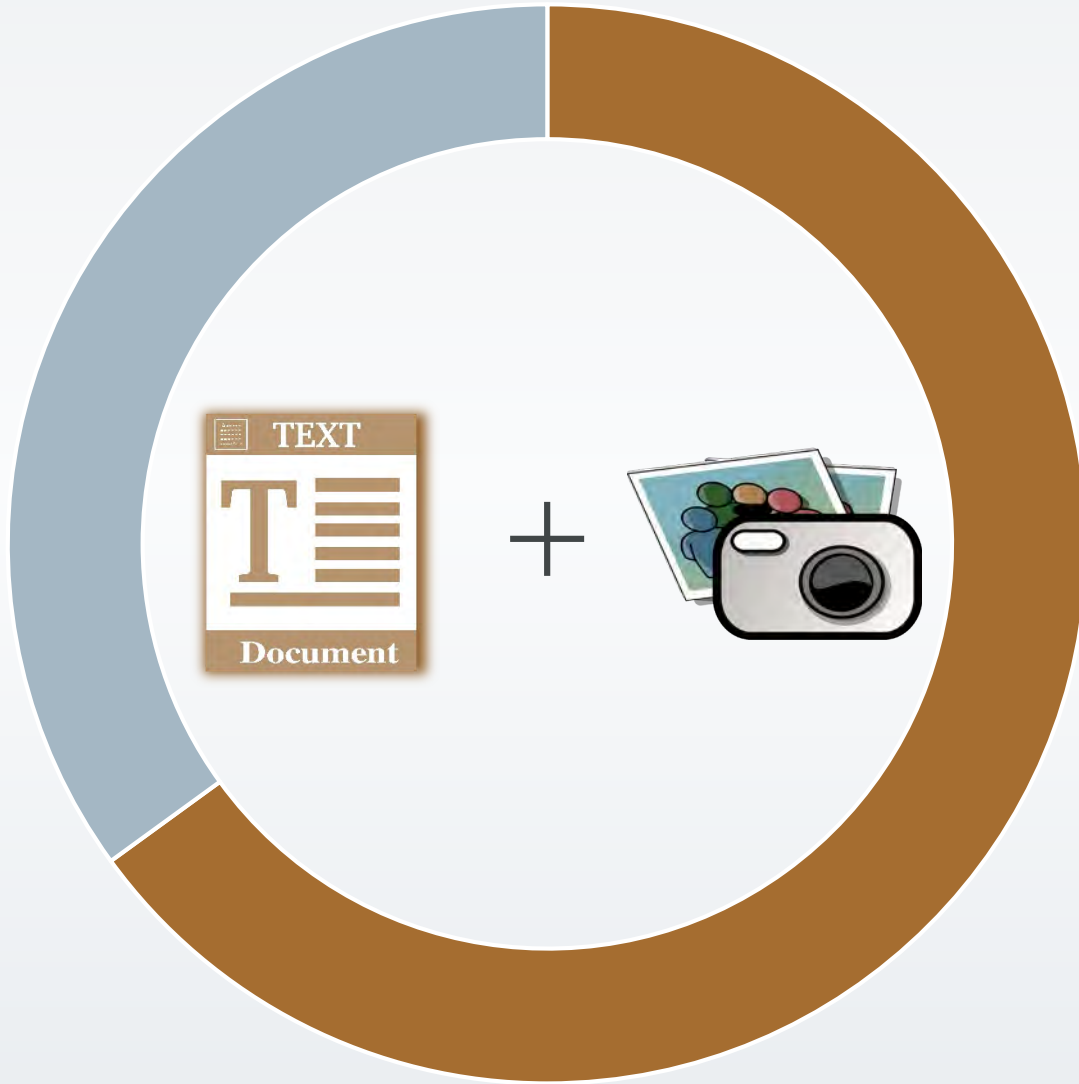
Most people **only read**  
**20–28%** of written text...





Most people **only read 20–28%** of written text...

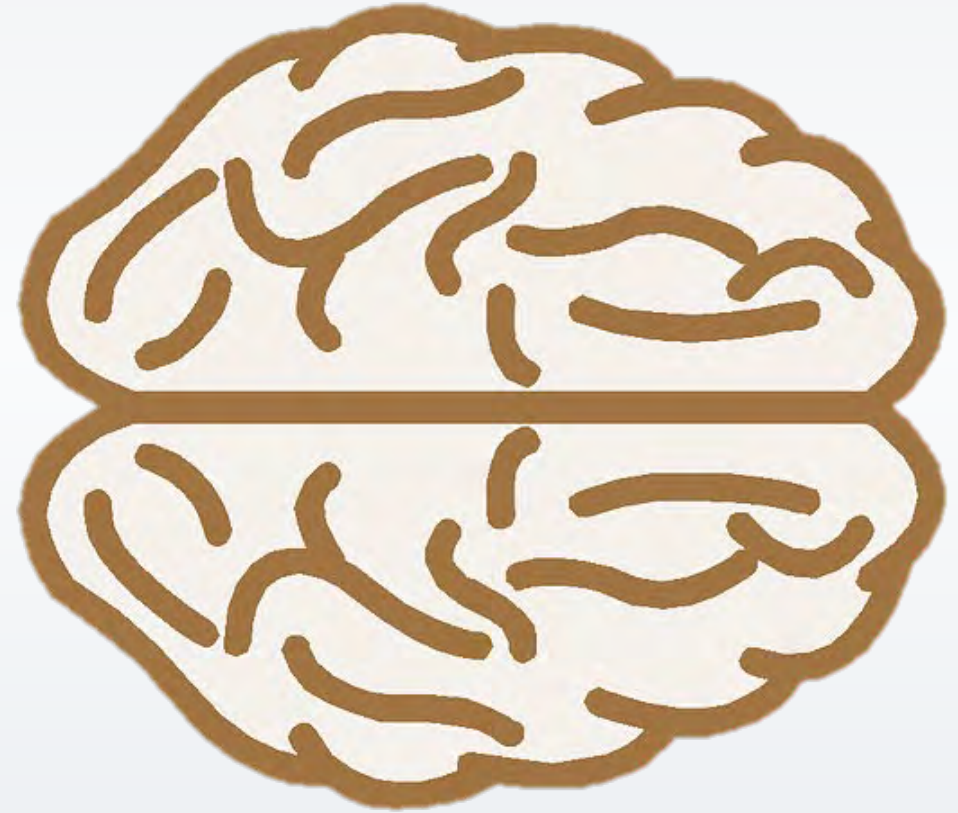
...and, after three days research suggests people **only retain 10%** of what they read.



If concise text is paired with relevant images, after three days people **retain around 65%** of information.



Human brain processes  
images **60,000x faster**  
than text.



## At-a-glance visuals preferred by...



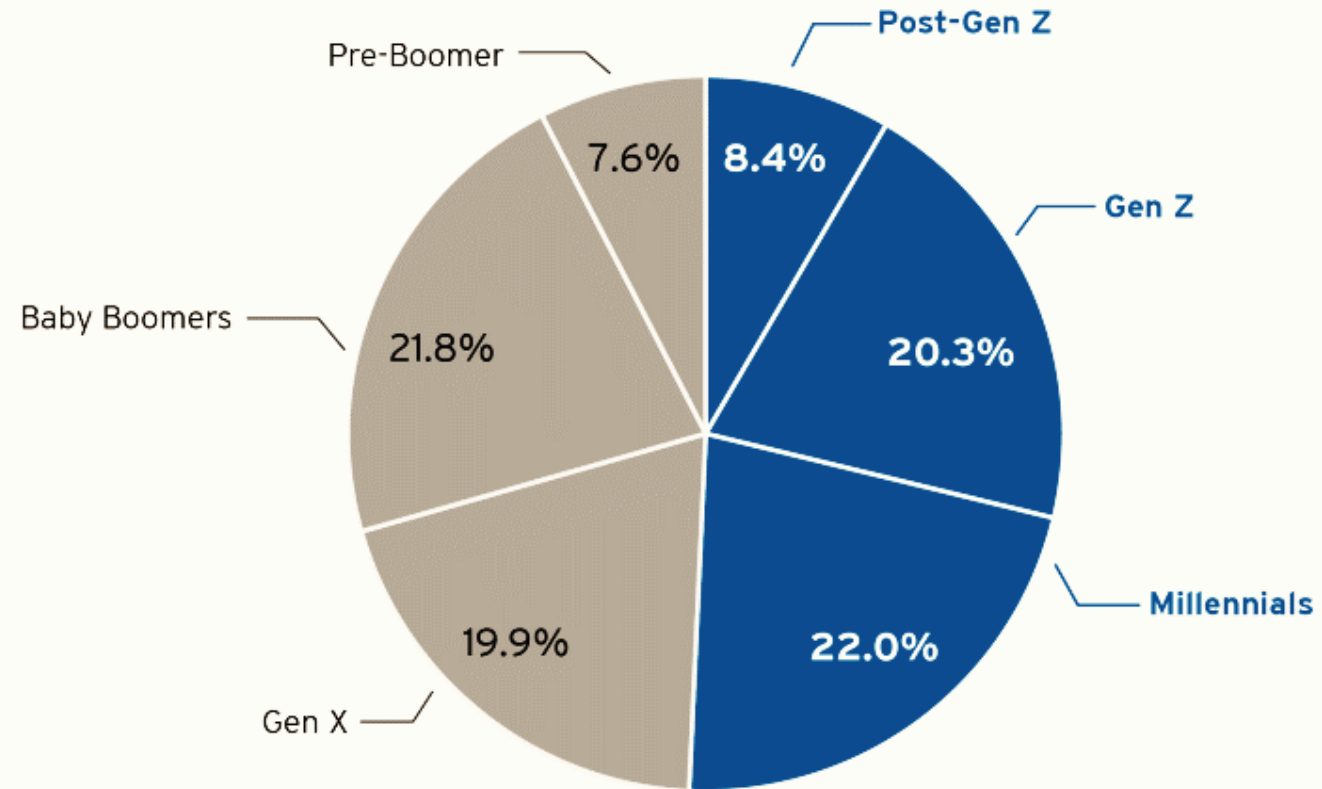
**Elected Officials**



**Millennials**  
(largest adult population in U.S.)

FIGURE 2

### Share of US population by generation



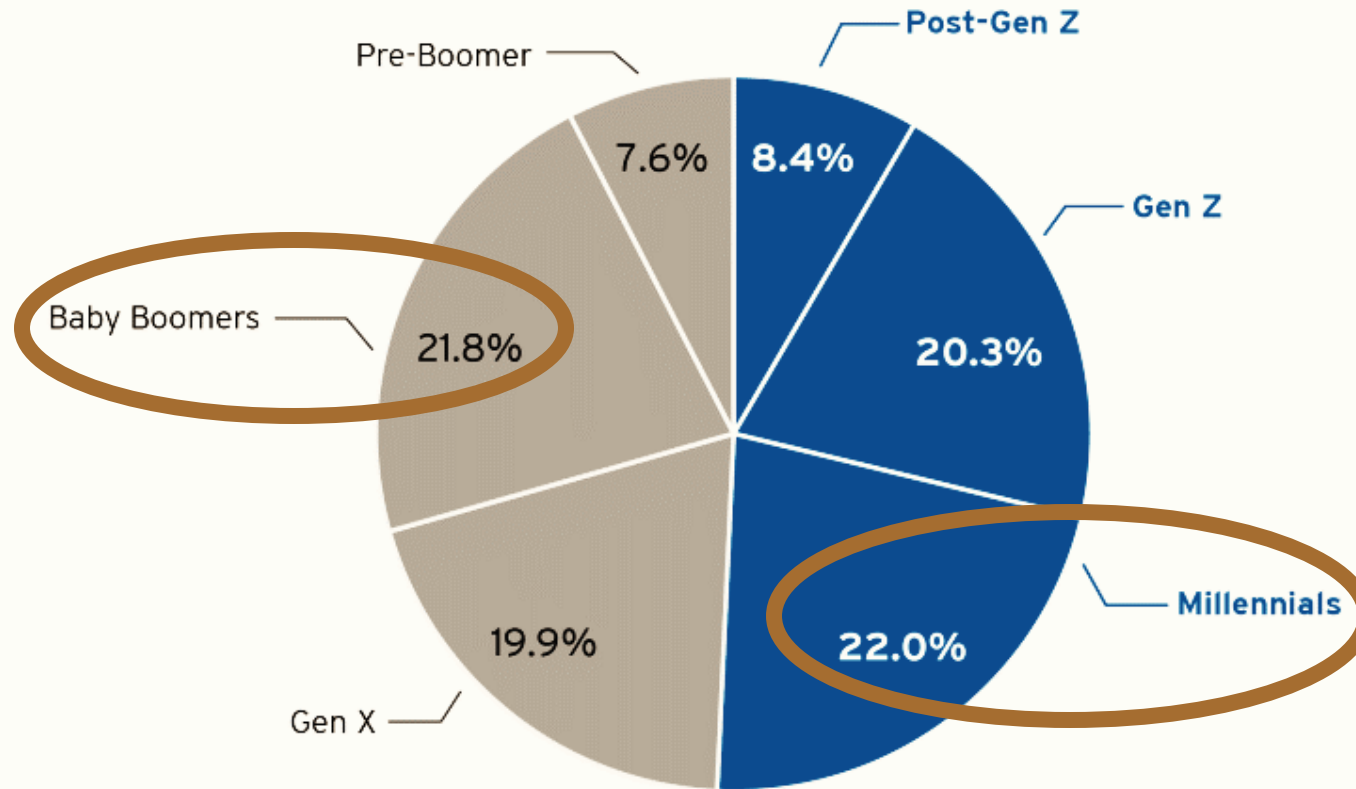
Numbers pertain to July 1, 2019

Note: Birth years are as follows: Post Gen Z (2013+), Gen Z (1997-2012), Millennials (1981-1996), Gen X (1965-1980), Boomers (1946-1964), Pre-Boomer (1945 and earlier).

Source: William H. Frey analysis of Census Bureau population estimates released June 25, 2020.

FIGURE 2

### Share of US population by generation

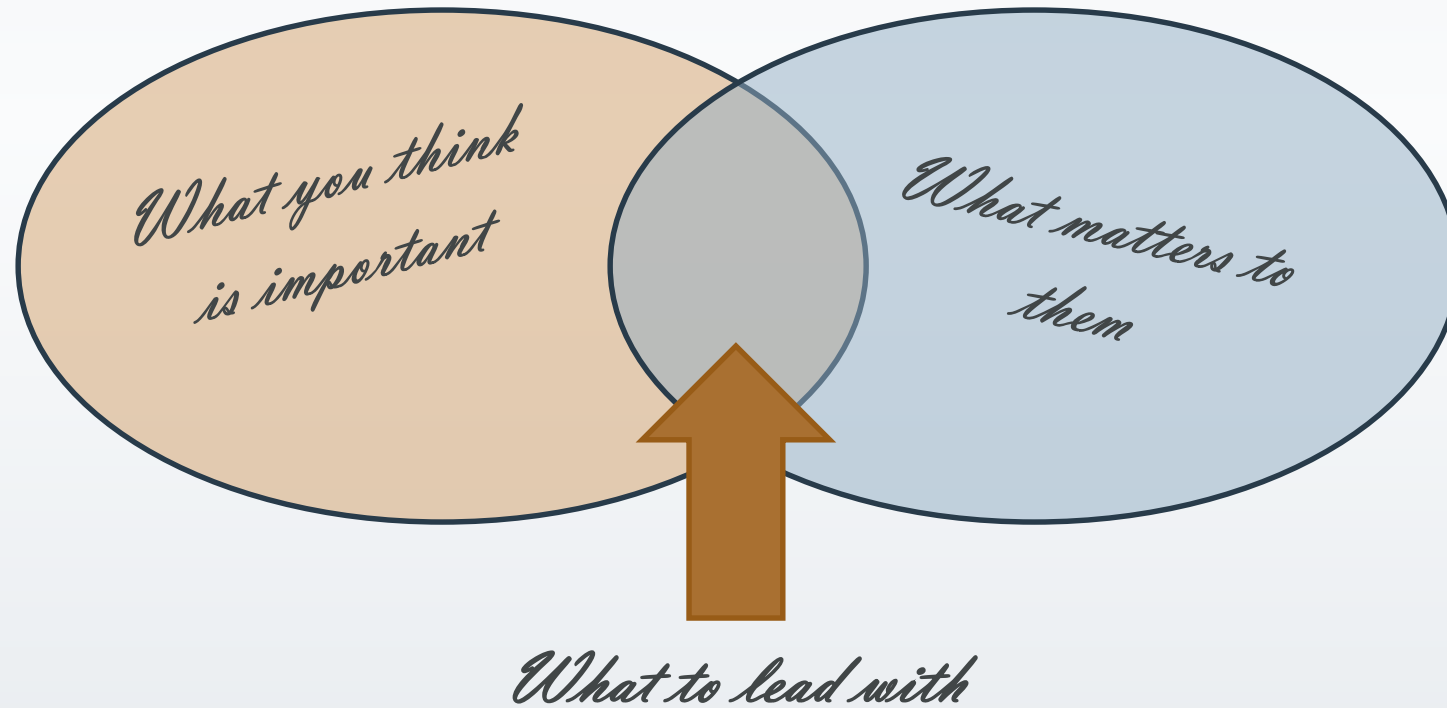


Numbers pertain to July 1, 2019

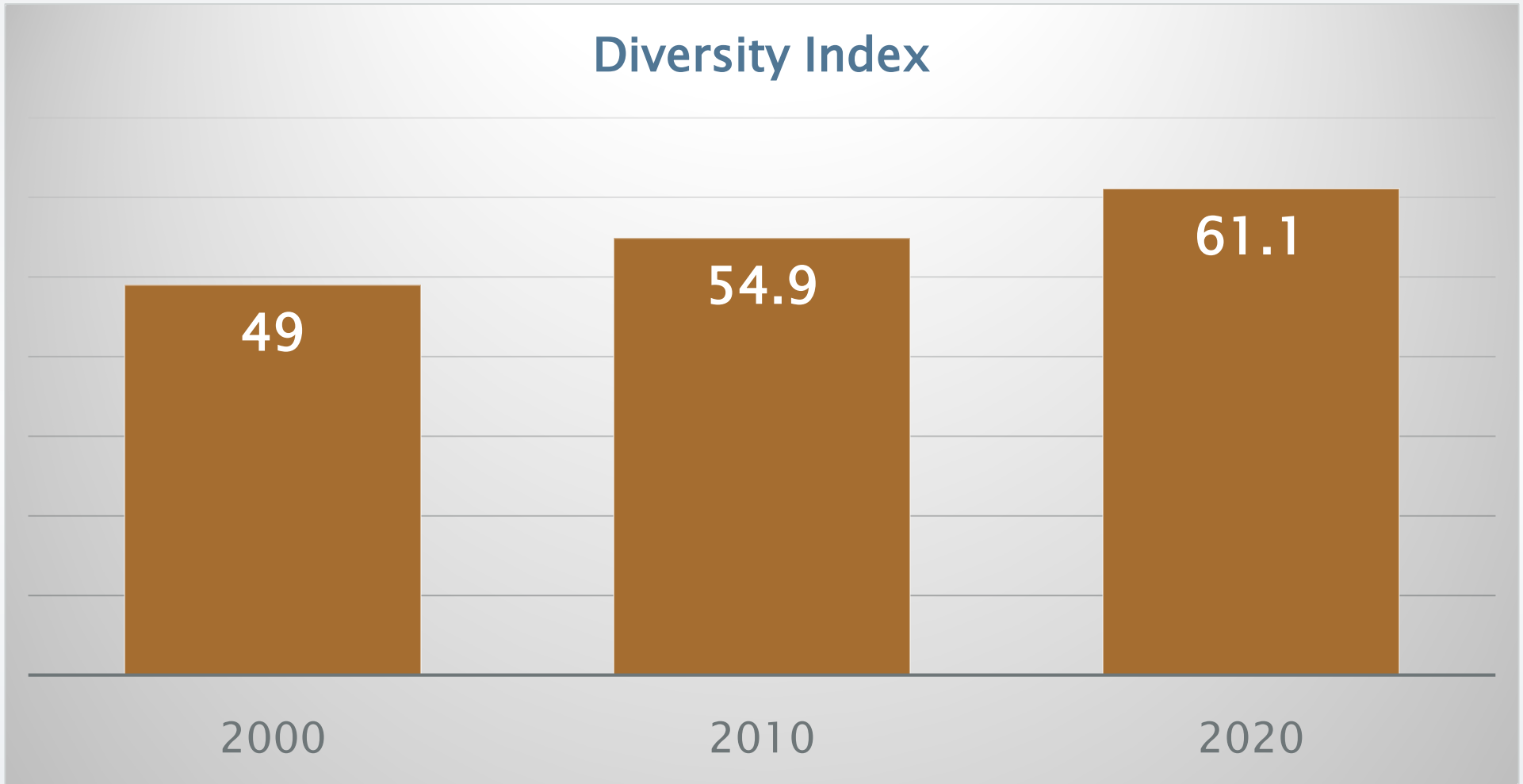
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Source: William H. Frey analysis of Census Bureau population estimates released June 25, 2020.

Millennials (and elected officials) want to know **up front** **and quickly** how what you're communicating is **relevant** to them/the world today.



A few other reasons...



*Source: 2000, 2010, 2020 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary Files*





**Shhh!**

**TOP  
SECRET!**

Ok... so, now what? Where do we go from here?



# Treat communication like a conservation plan



Just like  
conservation,  
there's no one-  
size-fits-all.



- How does your target audience prefer to communicate/receive information?
- What platforms/venues do they use?
- Are there any barriers to keep in mind?



## Use of online platforms, apps varies – sometimes widely – by demographic group

% of U.S. adults in each demographic group who say they ever use ...

0% 20 40 60 80 100

	YouTube	Facebook	Instagram	Pinterest	LinkedIn	Snapchat	Twitter	WhatsApp	TikTok	Reddit	Nextdoor
Total	81	69	40	31	28	25	23	23	21	18	13
Men	82	61	36	16	31	22	25	26	17	23	10
Women	80	77	44	46	26	28	22	21	24	12	16
White	79	67	35	34	29	23	22	16	18	17	15
Black	84	74	49	35	27	26	29	23	30	17	10
Hispanic	85	72	52	18	19	31	23	46	31	14	8
Ages 18-29	95	70	71	32	30	65	42	24	48	36	5
30-49	91	77	48	34	36	24	27	30	22	22	17
50-64	83	73	29	38	33	12	18	23	14	10	16
65+	49	50	13	18	11	2	7	10	4	3	8
<\$30K	75	70	35	21	12	25	12	23	22	10	6
\$30K-\$49,999	83	76	45	33	21	27	29	20	29	17	11
\$50K-\$74,999	79	61	39	29	21	29	22	19	20	20	12
\$75K+	90	70	47	40	50	28	34	29	20	26	20
HS or less	70	64	30	22	10	21	14	20	21	9	4
Some college	86	71	44	36	28	32	26	16	24	20	12
College+	89	73	49	37	51	23	33	33	19	26	24
Urban	84	70	45	30	30	28	27	28	24	18	17
Suburban	81	70	41	32	33	25	23	23	20	21	14
Rural	74	67	25	34	15	18	18	9	16	10	2

*Source: Pew Research Center, Social Media Use in 2021*



# ROCKS TO ROOTS



THE CONSERVATION  
CONVERSATION  
**PODCAST**  
FROM THE BACKYARD TO THE BACK 40

LISTEN FOR FREE ON  
 Spotify  
 Apple Podcasts  
 Google Play





There are some general communication BMPs





Your audience is **influenced by others** — seek endorsements, testimonials, and “reviews”







“Working with the Conservation District was like working with neighbors, which they were... If I had to choose one word to describe my work with the conservation district and getting my ranch back on its feet, it would be ‘community.’”



**Authenticity** is key—don't be afraid to  
show personality/humor





**WHEN YOU'RE AT A PARTY**

**AND NO ONE WANTS TO TALK ABOUT  
SOIL HEALTH**

What goes zzub-zzub when it travels? A bee flying backwards.

😬 Bad jokes aside, we're excited to wish you a Happy #WorldBeeDay! Did you know that bees pollinate an estimated 130 agricultural crops in the US including fruit, fiber, nut, and vegetable crops? One way to celebrate World Bee Day is to plant pollinator-friendly flowers. For advice on what to plant, give your local conservation district a call! (<https://www.scc.wa.gov/conservation->



2,001  
People Reached

140  
Engagements

Boost Post

👍❤️😬 19

16 Shares

Hitch a ride with your **partners**



washington  
grown







...and on RFD-TV (national)



6,168 subscribers | 12.5K views/mo



70K followers | 3K–10K views/video

Over half of online viewers age 25–44

# What about you?

- What new strategies have your agency/CDs tried, and how did it go?
- Have you been able to work with partners on innovative communication strategies?
- Any other tips or recommendations?
- What role could NASCA/fellow state agencies play in helping all of us be more successful with our communication strategies?



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360-701-9455

[scc.wa.gov/marketing-toolkit](https://scc.wa.gov/marketing-toolkit)



**CONSERVATION DISTRICTS**  
OF WASHINGTON STATE

*your window to healthy lands*