

# 8 MUST-HAVES FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF CAMPUS DINING

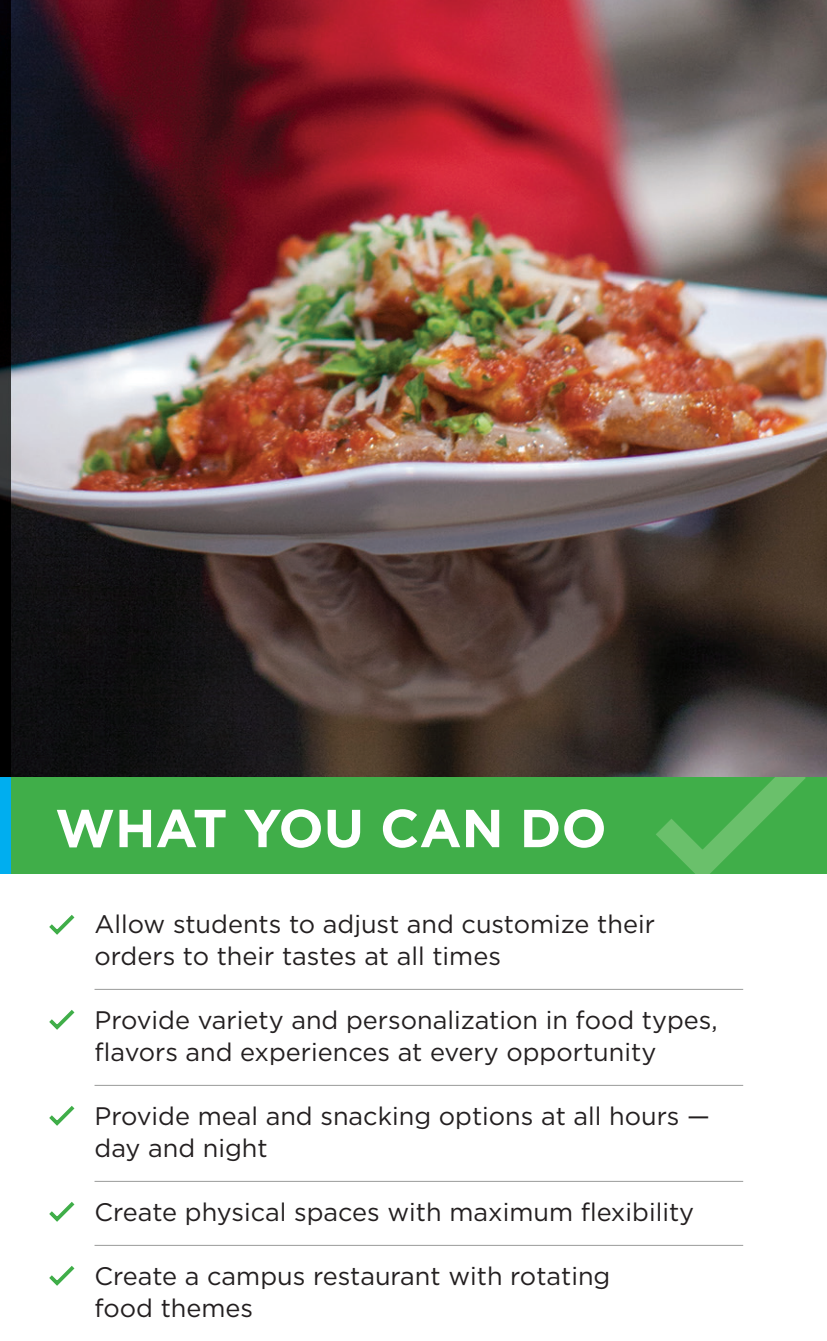
The next generation of students has specific dining demands and expectations. Meeting them requires designing dining programs with 8 essential must-haves. Gain insight into what today's students want and what your campus can do to meet their demands.

## 1 CUSTOMIZATION

Today's students are looking for more than a cafeteria. They want ambiance and an affinity for their campus—to be fully immersed in an environment that is intuitive toward their varying wants and needs, whether seeking a more private nook to study and fuel up before an exam, or a gathering place for catching up with friends.

**Think: Thread an engaging experience throughout the dining program to give students options and enable them to feel in sync with their campus community. Comfortable dining venues serving customizable meals by day. Concert and entertainment experiences at night.**

**57% of students agree that it's important to be able to substitute or omit ingredients in their food**<sup>1</sup>



### STUDENTS WANT

- > Their dining needs and desires to be heard
- > To be in control of when, how and where they get food
- > Food ingredient and source transparency
- > More ways to be involved in their food service
- > Easy access to choices that meet their dietary needs, like allergy-free menu items

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Allow students to adjust and customize their orders to their tastes at all times
- ✓ Provide variety and personalization in food types, flavors and experiences at every opportunity
- ✓ Provide meal and snacking options at all hours — day and night
- ✓ Create physical spaces with maximum flexibility
- ✓ Create a campus restaurant with rotating food themes



## 2 CONVENIENCE

Today's students expect convenience and immediate gratification—they want to be in control of their experiences, including dictating when, how and where they access food.

**Think: Mobile food ordering, store-to-door delivery and multiple pickup locations.**

**53% of students purchase on-campus meal plans for convenient dining options**<sup>2</sup>

### STUDENTS WANT

- > Services close to classes and campus activities
- > Quick service shops offering the right products at the right place
- > Seamless and simple access to food and services
- > Fresh, healthy, and convenience food, like fruit and produce, gourmet coffee, freshly packaged salads and sandwiches, and grilled sandwiches
- > Flexible delivery options that don't interrupt their days
- > An experience — from paying to dining
- > To be rewarded for making good choices

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Add campus convenience stores that feel like real markets
- ✓ Offer a wide variety of convenient options, including canned and dry goods, hot meals, paninis, pizza and soups
- ✓ Allow them to pick up to-go meals from dining rooms
- ✓ Provide 24-hour access to food on the meal plan, like late-night snack carts in student center or library
- ✓ Add multiple food/beverage stands around campus

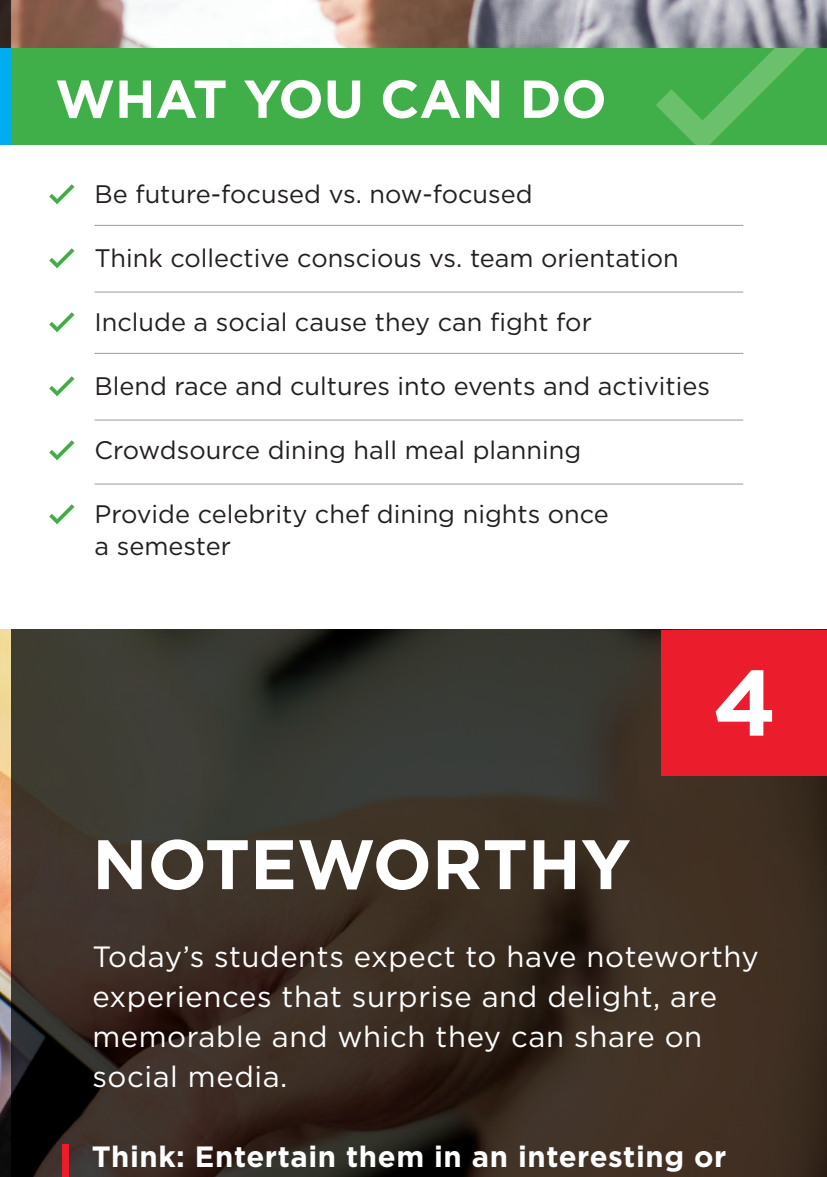


## 3 COMMUNITY

Today's students expect to be connected and have an affinity with the greater community both physically and virtually—from the classroom, to the campus, to the institution, to the city and state and to the world beyond.

**Think: Dining, studying and hangout spaces. Providing food service outside of the dining space and inviting students to participate in community-centered activities allows them to engage with one another and local residents.**

**26% of 16- to 19-year-olds currently volunteer**<sup>3</sup>

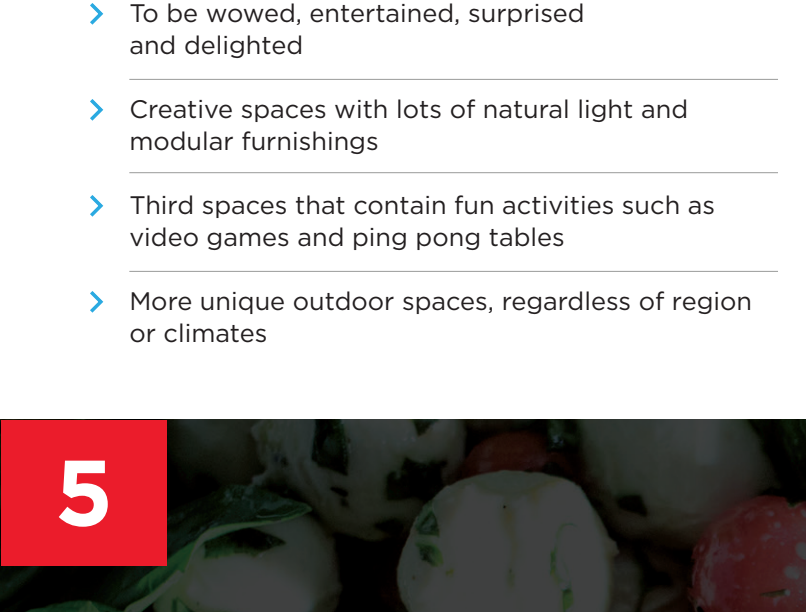


### STUDENTS WANT

- > Holistic community events outside of their group of friends
- > More ways to get involved with people and organizations that provide food services
- > To feel comfortable staying long periods of time in any venue
- > Flexible seating options in the dining areas and campus at large

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Be future-focused vs. now-focused
- ✓ Think collective conscious vs. team orientation
- ✓ Include a social cause they can fight for
- ✓ Blend race and cultures into events and activities
- ✓ Crowdfund dining hall meal planning
- ✓ Provide celebrity chef dining nights once a semester



## 4 NOTEWORTHY

Today's students expect to have noteworthy experiences that surprise and delight, are memorable and which they can share on social media.

**Think: Entertain them in an interesting or unusual "social playground" experience unique to their campus.**

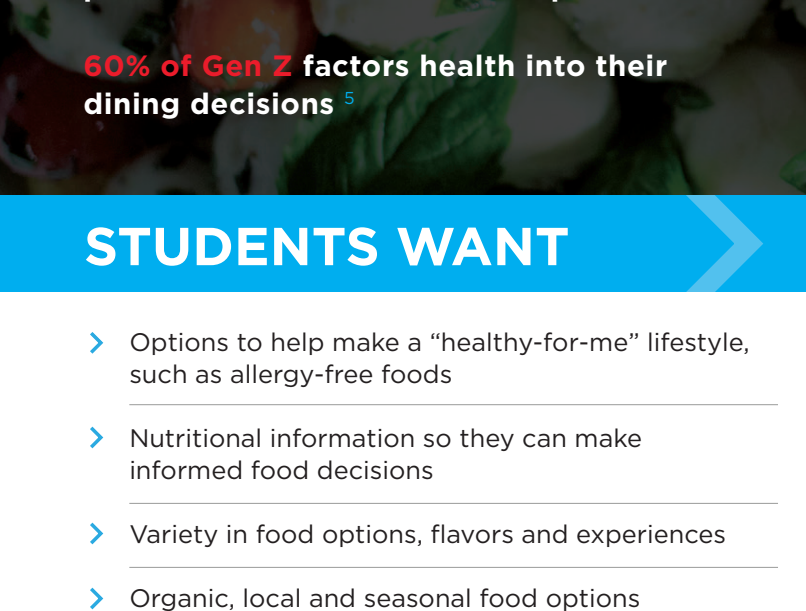
**42% of Gen Z feel that social media has a direct impact on how they feel about themselves and how others see them**<sup>4</sup>

### STUDENTS WANT

- > Everything now, because their time is limited
- > Different experiences that are eccentric, new or innovative and can be shared
- > To be wowed, entertained, surprised and delighted
- > Creative spaces with lots of natural light and modular furnishings
- > Third spaces that contain fun activities such as video games and ping pong tables
- > More unique outdoor spaces, regardless of region or climates

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Supply places for inspiration, experience and escape, instead of merely functional transactions
- ✓ Design spaces that are fun and photogenic with furniture that can move around for easy socialization or alone time
- ✓ Create playful outdoor green spaces with unique landscaping and comfortable all-weather furniture
- ✓ Communicate more frequently in shorter snackable bursts
- ✓ Bring the outdoors in like adding an interior rock garden or large tree planters inside buildings



## 5 HEALTHY

For today's Gen Z students, health and wellness is about holistic balance, which includes their social lives, emotional health, exercise and physical health. For them, good health is defined by both feeling good and looking good—and they want the food they eat to support their holistic views.

**Think: Removing additives, artificial flavors and colors from food and beverages, and provide antibiotic- and hormone-free proteins and clean food concepts.**

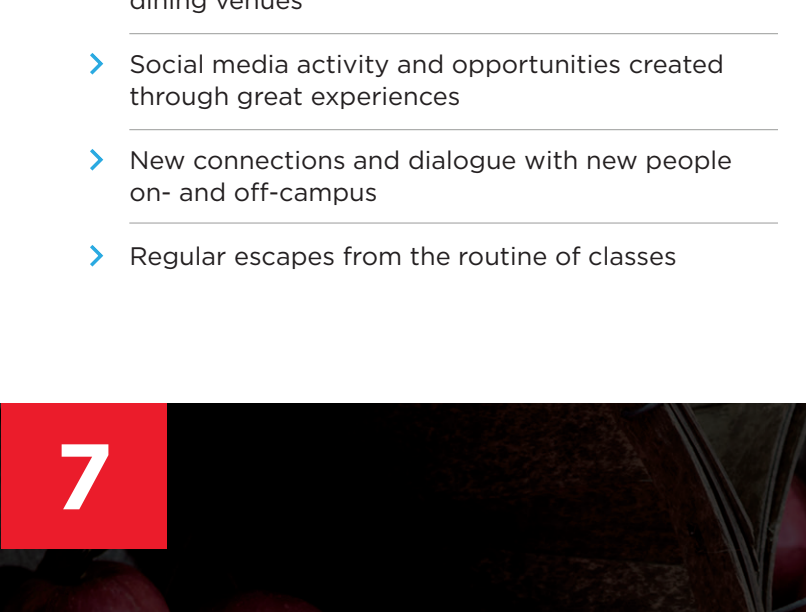
**60% of Gen Z factors health into their dining decisions**<sup>5</sup>

### STUDENTS WANT

- > Options to help make a "healthy-for-me" lifestyle, such as allergy-free foods
- > Nutritional information so they can make informed food decisions
- > Variety in food options, flavors and experiences
- > Organic, local and seasonal food options
- > Transparency on food ingredients and food preparation
- > Access to food prep and cooking
- > Support for healthy choices from everyone in their dining experience

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Help students choose well by providing a balance of healthy options across campus and food education to dining staff
- ✓ Display nutritional details so students can make their own well-informed healthy dining and wellness decisions
- ✓ Offer students organic and fresh food choices
- ✓ Provide healthy "grab-n-go" options
- ✓ Add an on-campus bakery, garden, orchard,<sup>6</sup> dairy or farmers' market
- ✓ Provide real-time food prep and cooking in open kitchens



## 6 ENGAGEMENT

Today's students want more ways to get involved with inspirational people and organizations on- and off-campus.

**Think: Immersive dining experiences. Start a dialogue with students that extends throughout their dining experiences everyday. Evolve the relationship as they move from freshman to senior.**

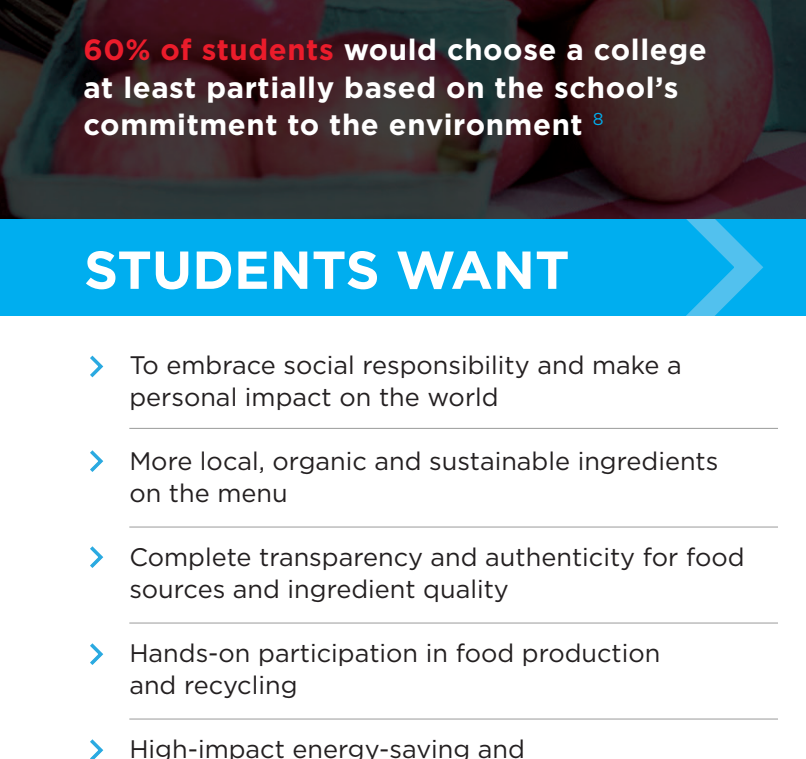
**73% of Gen Z need to spend time in-person with people to feel connected**<sup>7</sup>

### STUDENTS WANT

- > Inspirational activities and events in and out of dining venues
- > Social media activities and opportunities created through great experiences
- > New connections and dialogue with new people on- and off-campus
- > Regular escapes from the routine of classes

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Make high-quality customer service part of their whole dining experience
- ✓ Offer students cooking classes and demos
- ✓ Hold non-nutrition-focused events and activities
- ✓ Provide holiday- and community-themed events such as group meals, parties, and competitions
- ✓ Involve students in food planning, such as menu planning and product selection



## 7 SUSTAINABILITY

For today's students, sustainability and social responsibility is not an expectation, it is a must. They want to support businesses for a cause and help to change the world. They expect authenticity and transparency in sustainability from every organization in their lives.

**Think: Providing students with transparent locally sourced, organic and sustainably produced food, along with on-campus waste- and energy-reduction programs.**

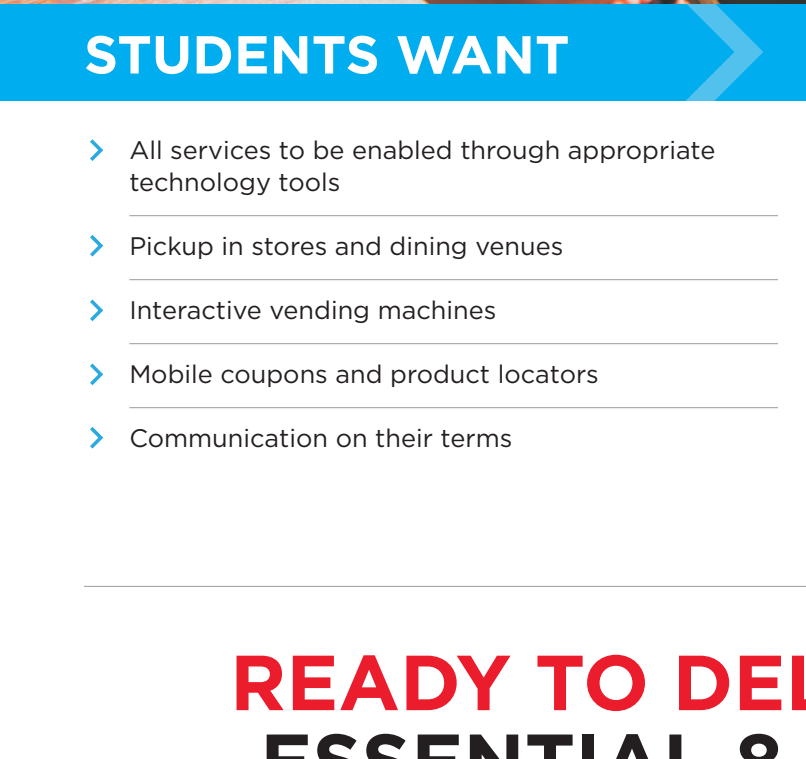
**60% of students would choose a college at least partially based on the school's commitment to the environment**<sup>8</sup>

### STUDENTS WANT

- > To embrace social responsibility and make a personal impact on the world
- > More local, organic and sustainable ingredients on the menu
- > Complete transparency and authenticity for food sources and ingredient quality
- > Hands-on participation in food production and recycling
- > High-impact energy-saving and recycling programs

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Incorporate organic ingredients and food from socially responsible sources
- ✓ Create sustainability programs that involve and excite students
- ✓ Add local food production on the campus, such as a dairy, garden or orchard
- ✓ Offer recycling, composting, and waste reduction programs
- ✓ Improve energy management on campus<sup>9</sup>



## 8 TECHNOLOGY

Today's students expect digital tools throughout their dining experience, including ordering and paying, along with multiple convenience food pickup points.

**Think: Provide digital tools that communicate current and future menus, access to details about menu items and services that aren't currently available, such as food delivery.**

**55% of Gen Z students are likely to use online ordering for to-go orders at restaurants**<sup>10</sup>

### STUDENTS WANT

- > All services to be enabled through appropriate technology tools
- > Pickup in stores and dining venues
- > Interactive vending machines
- > Mobile coupons and product locators
- > Communication on their terms

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Provide digital tools on multiple touch points that help students choose dining experiences
- ✓ Give students ways to order online, and pick up food from dining locations
- ✓ Provide smartphone apps with nutrition information
- ✓ Ask students for feedback, ratings and reviews
- ✓ Add tech-enabled seating in all dining venues

## READY TO DELIVER TODAY'S ESSENTIAL 8 MUST-HAVES?

Aramark has the experience, ideas and capabilities to help you meet the next generation of students' campus dining demands—so you can both attract them to your institution and keep them healthy and happy over their entire higher ed experience.

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> www.campusinsights.aramark.com: Preparing Your Campus for Generation Z  
<sup>2</sup> www.techomic.com: Consumer Trend Reports  
<sup>3</sup> www.mashable.com: Beyond Millennials: How to Reach Generation Z  
<sup>4</sup> www.genta.com: Gen Z Social Media Usage and Trends Infographic  
<sup>5</sup> www.techomic.com: Consumer Trend Reports  
<sup>6</sup> www.campusinsights.aramark.com: Case Study: Responsible Sourcing for University Campuses  
<sup>7</sup> www.store.mintel.com: Marketing to the iGeneration  
<sup>8</sup> The Princeton Review: College Hopes & Worries Survey Report  
<sup>9</sup> www.campusinsights.aramark.com: Improve Energy Management on Campus  
<sup>10</sup> Rise of Gen Z: New Challenge for Retailers

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