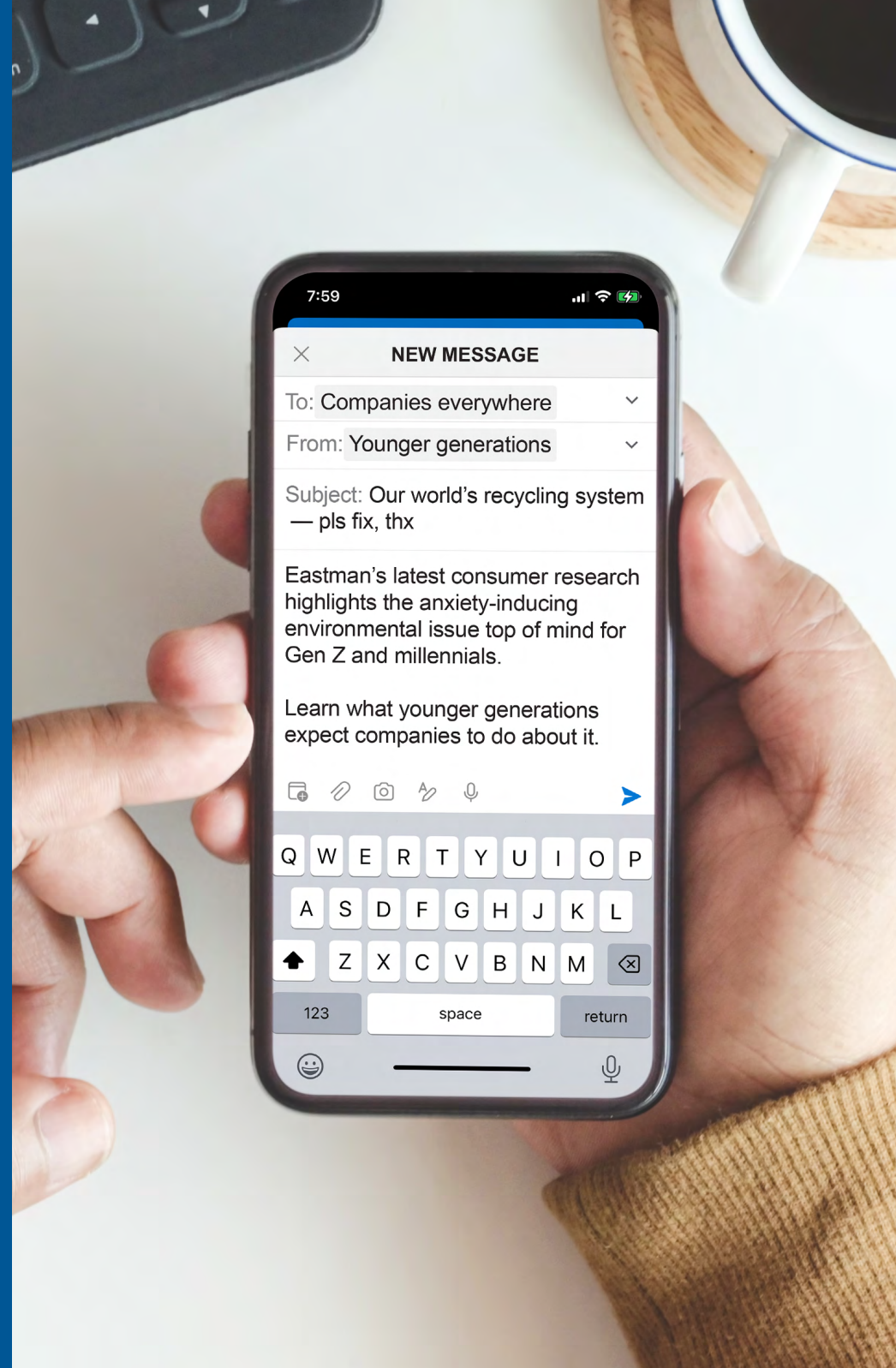


2023 Consumer insights report

EASTMAN



Pls fix

When junior employees see “pls fix” in an email, they know to drop what they’re working on and jump on the latest, probably time-intensive request from the boss. Those requests are never quick, easy or convenient. (“Pls fix” wouldn’t inspire memes if they were!)

When it comes to the plastic waste crisis and our world’s recycling system, the tables are turned. Younger generations know the existing recycling system is broken, and they expect global companies to prioritize fixing it. They know the fix won’t be quick or easy — but there’s one type of technology they agree will make a difference.



THE PROBLEM

Top concerns

Waste takes many shapes — and it's a top-tier environmental concern for younger consumers no matter what it looks like. When asked about the environmental issues they care about, ocean pollution tops the list for Gen Z and millennials; **87%** say they are very concerned about it. In addition, **83%** say they're very concerned about the increasing amount of plastic waste that must go to landfills or be incinerated. Single-use plastics aren't far behind in the list of concerns, coming in at **79%**.

A broken system

Gen Z and millennial consumers are worried about waste, and recycling is an obvious way to act on that concern as a consumer. In fact, **67%** of these younger consumers say they feel guilty if they don't recycle. About **40%** of Gen Z and millennial consumers say they do everything in their power to make sure every product they dispose of is properly recycled.

At the same time, these savvy young consumers recognize that the current recycling system is broken. More than **70%** say they're not sure if everything they try to recycle actually gets recycled. Plus, about **65%** admit they aren't always sure which products are supposed to be recycled.

So they're worried and want to take action, but the system they don't control isn't working. That's enough to give anyone anxiety!



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WHO SHOULD FIX THIS?

Power to the purchasers

(and benefits to the brands)

Recycling isn't the only form of action young consumers can take. They can choose which brands to reward with their loyalty.

These young consumers are looking to brands to help them live more sustainably; more than **70%** think brands need to do more to help them live a sustainable lifestyle. One way brands can do that, say a majority (**80%**) of Gen Z and millennial consumers, is to make it easier to find sustainable products, like those that are recyclable or contain recycled content.

Another, equally important way to empower younger consumers? Show them that you take them seriously when more than **80%** say they wish recycling products was easier.

Gen Z and millennial consumers think brands need to:



HOW?

Enter a multi-benefit solution

You know Gen Z and millennials are waiting for you to do more. (And when we say “waiting,” we don’t mean passively twiddling their thumbs.) What will create the change they expect?

Molecular recycling.

When provided with a brief explanation of molecular recycling and how the process differs from traditional recycling technologies, Gen Z and millennial consumers quickly realized its value.

The majority — nearly **60%** — agree that molecular recycling “helps solve the plastic waste crisis.” Digging a bit deeper, **51%** of Gen Z and **46%** of millennials also agree that with molecular recycling, “plastics become a solution to the waste crisis” rather than part of the problem. Half of millennials understand that this technology “allows plastic to be infinitely reused.”

They also see molecular recycling as an answer to their wish: **53%** of Gen Z and millennial consumers agree that it “makes recycling plastics easier.”

And they understand — especially Gen Z (**52%**) — that this technology is key for creating more products with recycled content without sacrificing quality or performance.



Molecular recycling diverts waste from the landfill, gives waste recovered from the oceans a way to be reinserted into the value chain, and provides brands more options for helping consumers live sustainably. In other words, **molecular recycling meets Gen Z and millennial consumers right where they’re at — and it’s ready for your brand to begin using right now.**

What's next for your brand?

Do you rely solely on traditional recycling to fill consumer expectations and meet your recycled content goals? Then it's time to learn more about molecular recycling and the opportunities it will open for you.

Eastman is here to help. To learn how we can support your brand's sustainability strategy through high-quality, certified recycled content, **[connect with us today.](#)**



METHODOLOGY

Eastman has invested in numerous global consumer studies to better understand how to position sustainability across key industries, including personal care and cosmetics, fashion, electronics, housewares and building/construction.

A database of more than 40,000 consumers across the U.S., Europe and Asia has allowed Eastman to develop cross-industry insights to help our brand partners talk about sustainability in a meaningful way with consumers.

In 2022, Eastman partnered with a global research agency to develop a proprietary panel of nearly 5,000 U.S. and European (from the U.K., Germany and France) consumers who participate in sustainability-related research on an ongoing basis, providing a constant pulse on the consumers' ever-changing attitudes and behaviors. For this report, we used our polling data from a total of 2,422 Gen Z and millennial consumers across the U.S. and Europe.

Connect with us today.



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