

Fueling the future: An opinion paper on how Gen-Z uses business information to build careers and ventures

Business Information Review

2026, Vol. 0(0) 1–3

© The Author(s) 2026

Article reuse guidelines:

sagepub.com/journals-permissions

DOI: 10.1177/02663821261427232

journals.sagepub.com/home/bir**Christian Mubofu**¹

Abstract

This opinion paper examines the transformative relationship between Generation Z and business information, arguing that this cohort is pioneering a bottom-up, information-driven approach to economic self-reliance. Unlike previous generations, Gen-Z leverages a diverse digital ecosystem from social media platforms to specialized forums to gather, synthesize, and apply business intelligence for career advancement and venture creation. While this represents a significant democratization of entrepreneurial opportunity, it also presents critical challenges, including information overload, credibility assessment, and a potential foundational skills gap. This paper discusses these promises and perils, contending that the current institutional support systems are lagging behind these informal learning models. The conclusion offers a multi-stakeholder call to action, proposing that educators, policymakers, and business leaders must collaboratively build a scaffolded ecosystem to effectively harness Gen-Z's unique information sensibilities for sustainable economic growth.

Keywords

business, business information, Gen-Z, information playbook, information-driven, economic growth

Introduction

Generation Z, the cohort born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, is entering the workforce during an era of profound economic uncertainty, characterized by the gig economy, rising student debt, and shifting corporate loyalties (Zhong et al., 2024). For these digital natives, traditional career pathways are no longer a given. In response, they are not merely adapting to the new economy; they are actively forging it through the strategic acquisition and application of business information. This paper conceptualizes “business information” broadly, encompassing not only formal market intelligence and financial data but also the vast repository of competitor analyses, regulatory insights, and soft-skills tutorials available online. “Careers” for Gen-Z include non-traditional paths and intrapreneurship within organizations, while “Ventures” range from micro-enterprises, often launched on social media platforms, to tech startups built with no-code tools (Narojczyk and Nowak, 2024).

The central focus of this paper is that Gen-Z is pioneering a bottom-up, information-driven approach to economic self-reliance that is essentially different from the top-down, institutionally guided models of the past. This shift demands a critical reevaluation of how educational institutions, policymakers, and corporate entities provide support. This

paper explores the “Gen-Z Information Playbook,” detailing the channels and methods used to gather business intelligence. It will then engage in a discussion of the paradoxes and dangers inherent in this model, including the credibility crisis and institutional lag. Finally, the paper will conclude with a scaffolded set of recommendations designed to empower this generation rather than merely critique its methods.

The Gen-Z information playbook

For Gen-Z, the distinction between consuming content and creating commercial opportunity is remarkably fluid. Their playbook for gathering business information is decentralized, agile, and highly personalized. They do not rely solely on traditional business news outlets or academic journals; instead, they curate information streams from a variety of digital platforms. TikTok and Instagram serve as real-time

¹Library and Publication Department, The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Corresponding author:

Christian Mubofu, Library and Publication Department, The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, P. O. Box 9193, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.
Email: christian.mubofu@mnma.ac.tz

barometers of consumer trends and cultural shifts, providing instant market validation (Barbe and Guisard, 2024). LinkedIn Learning and specialized YouTube channels offer on demand upskilling opportunities, while Reddit communities and Discord servers provide niche advice and peer-to-peer troubleshooting for everything from SEO strategies to sourcing materials (Selimovic et al., 2025).

Their unique strength lies not merely in accessing this information, but in their innate ability to synthesize fragmented data points rapidly to identify and validate opportunities. Consider a hypothetical Gen-Z individual, “Alex.” Observing a recurring discussion of sustainable fashion on TikTok (Barbe and Guisard, 2024), Alex uses Reddit to understand supply chain challenges and follows a YouTube tutorial on digital marketing for small businesses. They then use a no-code platform forum to learn how to build an e-commerce site, effectively synthesizing market intelligence, procedural knowledge, and technical skills from disparate sources into a viable business plan. This process reflects a learning preference deeply rooted in technology and immediate application, as noted by Cain et al. (2022). This synthesis is a form of digital bricolage, turning the raw material of online information into a structured venture.

Navigating the promise and peril

While this self-directed model is empowering, it is anxious with challenges that demand scholarly and practical attention.

The empowerment paradox

The very access to information that fuels entrepreneurship can also foster a persistent “digital hustle culture.” The constant pressure to learn, launch, and scale, glorified across social media, can lead to significant burnout and mental health strains. The democratization of opportunity comes at the potential cost of sustainable work-life boundaries, a trade-off that is often underexplored in the popular narrative of the “side hustle.”

The credibility crisis

Gen-Z operates in an information ecosystem saturated with both expertise and misinformation. The challenge is not a lack of information, but an overwhelming surplus a state of information overload that can paradoxically paralyze decision-making (Love et al., 2025). Distinguishing credible, strategic business advice from viral but flawed content is a critical skill. While research suggests Gen-Z practices a form of “information sensibility,” critically evaluating sources based on platform and presentation (Hassoun et al., 2023), the sheer volume of data makes this a constant and exhausting battle. This is particularly perilous in areas like

business law and finance, where inaccurate advice can have severe consequences.

The skills gap

There is a dangerous assumption that tech-savviness equates to business acumen. While Gen-Z excels at finding procedural “how-to” information, they may lack the introductory, structured knowledge in various areas like corporate finance, business law, and long-term strategic planning (Ebrahimi et al., 2023; Yusuf et al., 2025). Disjointed learning from social media can create practitioners who can execute tasks but may struggle to build resilient organizations capable of navigating complex regulatory and economic landscapes. This gap highlights the continued relevance of formal education, albeit in a reformed capacity.

The institutional lag

Perhaps the most significant barrier is the failure of traditional institutions to keep pace. University curricula often lag years behind digital marketing trends, and business incubators can be steeped in outdated models that fail to resonate with Gen-Z’s informal, self-directed learning preferences (Hidayat, 2024). This creates a chasm between where Gen-Z naturally acquires knowledge and where institutions attempt to deliver it, rendering much formal support ineffective.

Conclusion and call to action

Generally, Gen-Z’s bottom-up, information-driven approach to building careers and ventures represents an important shift in the landscape of economic self-reliance. Their ability to connect a decentralized digital ecosystem for business intelligence is both impressive and unprecedented. However, this path is complicated by a credibility crisis, a potential foundational skills gap, and a concerning lag in institutional support. To truly fuel the future, a concerted, multi-stakeholder effort is required to build a scaffolded ecosystem that supports rather than overpowers this generation’s initiative.

Consequently, this paper suggests the following recommendations for action.

For educators

Move beyond traditional pedagogy. Integrate critical digital literacy and business information evaluation directly into core curricula. Partner with credible online creators and industry practitioners to co-develop modules that are both academically rigorous and immediately relevant, bridging the gap between theory and practice (Utami et al., 2025).

For policymakers

Invest in digital public infrastructure. Fund the creation of open-access, vetted repositories of business information tailored to young entrepreneurs. Support “regulatory sandboxes” that allow new ventures to test ideas in a controlled environment, reducing the perceived barrier of complex legal and compliance frameworks.

For business leaders

To attract and retain Gen-Z talent, organizations must develop clear, engaging social media policies that empower rather than restrict (Zhong et al., 2024). More critically, they should create formal “intrapreneurship” programs that harness Gen-Z’s information-savvy and agility to drive innovation from within the company, offering a structured outlet for their entrepreneurial energy.

For Gen-Z themselves

While championing their autodidactic abilities, this generation must also be encouraged to seek out balanced guidance. Combining open-source learning with mentorship from experienced professionals who can provide context, strategic oversight, and wisdom is crucial for building sustainable, long-term success. Embracing this collaborative framework, we can transform the raw potential of Gen-Z’s information prowess into a influential engine for durable economic growth and innovation.

Acknowledgement

The author extends sincere appreciation to the Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy for providing a supportive and enabling environment, as well as reliable internet access, which greatly facilitated the successful preparation and submission of this manuscript.

ORCID iD

Christian Mubofu  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8860-5033>

Funding

The author received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

References

Barbe V and Guisard E (2024). Impact of Instagram on generation Z consumer buying behavior within the fashion industry.

Retrieved from https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/850902/Guisard_Barbe.pdf?sequence=2

Cain CC, Morgan Bryant A, Buskey CD, et al. (2022) Generation Z, learning preferences, and technology: an academic technology framework based on enterprise architecture. *The Journal of the Southern Association for Information Systems* 9(1): 1–14.

Ebrahimi M, Granitz N, Kohli C, et al. (2023) Gen Z rising: emerging implications for business education. *Journal of the Academy of Business Education* 23: 75–101.

Hassoun A, Beacock I, Consolvo S, et al. (2023) Practicing information sensibility: how Gen Z engages with online information. *Proceedings of the 2023 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* 1–17. Available at: <https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3544548.3581328>.

Hidayat AI (2024) The future of employment: how generation z is reshaping entrepreneurship through education? *Edu Spectrum: Journal of Multidimensional Education* 1(1): 28–37.

Love R, Price A, Martinez de Arredondo Milera S, et al. (2025) The impact of information overload on Gen Z iPhone-user product preferences and visual attention: a biometric approach. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCM-12-2024-7460>

Naroczyk S and Nowak D (2024) Entrepreneurship from the perspective of the Generation Z (Gen Z). *Management* 28(2): 477–503. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.58691/man/200057>

Selimovic A, Kacapor K, Veselinovic T, et al. (2025) Generation Z and entrepreneurship: the synergy of education and the digital environment. In: *EDULEARN25 Proceedings*. IATED, pp. 7128–7135.

Utami B, Ibrahim MM, Violin V, et al. (2025) The role of entrepreneurship education, attitude toward risk and digital literacy on entrepreneurial intention among gen Z. *Journal of Social Science and Business Studies* 3(1): 407–411.

Yusuf HF, Ashary LSW and Rakhmawati R (2025) Financial literacy and its impact on investment decisions among generation Z students in East Java. *Proceeding International Conference on Economics, Business and Information Technology* 6(1): 596–604.

Zhong Y, Zhang L, Wei W, et al. (2024) Attracting Gen Z workforce: the effects of organizational social media policy. *Tourism Review* 79(1): 54–68.

Author biography

Dr. Christian Mubofu is a multidisciplinary researcher with interests spanning information dissemination in health, agriculture, agro-biodiversity, indigenous knowledge, and social media use. His work also explores infopreneurship, adult learners’ library services, and the role of libraries in people’s empowerment. He has published in both local and international journals and currently serves as a Senior Lecturer in Library and Information Management at the Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy in Tanzania