Ideas made possible.

Boomers Rethinking purpose:

A flat age mindset.

INSIGHT REPORT
12-07-2024

Contents

01

INTRODUCTION



Page 03

02

INTRODUCING BOOMERS



Page 05

03

SUBVERTING STEREOTYPES

01_ Wealth and health
02_ Boomer burden
03_ Ageing in analogue
04_ Resisting change



Page 07

04

FORESIGHT

01_A diverse workforce
02_Co-generation
03_Combined communities



Page 20

05

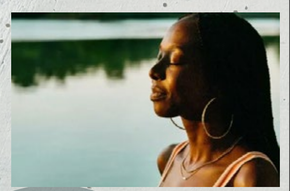
FUTURE DEMOGRAPHICS



Page 29

06

OUR PERSPECTIVE



Page 31

We're living in the most age-diverse society in history - and we're becoming one of the most age-segregated.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

The definition of ‘generations’- The Gen X, or Millennials we often refer to- is used as a means of tracking how society’s values and behaviour change over time but is also a very broad-strokes method of subdividing society.

Inspired by a recent insight report from 'The Future Laboratory' we began examining the evolving nature of generations, as well as our own understanding and expectations of different consumer groups and communities.

We began to explore how best to capture the actual differences that define and drive the differing generations; and discovered that there are many more nuanced similarities between communities, groups, and populations than dividing simply by age suggests.

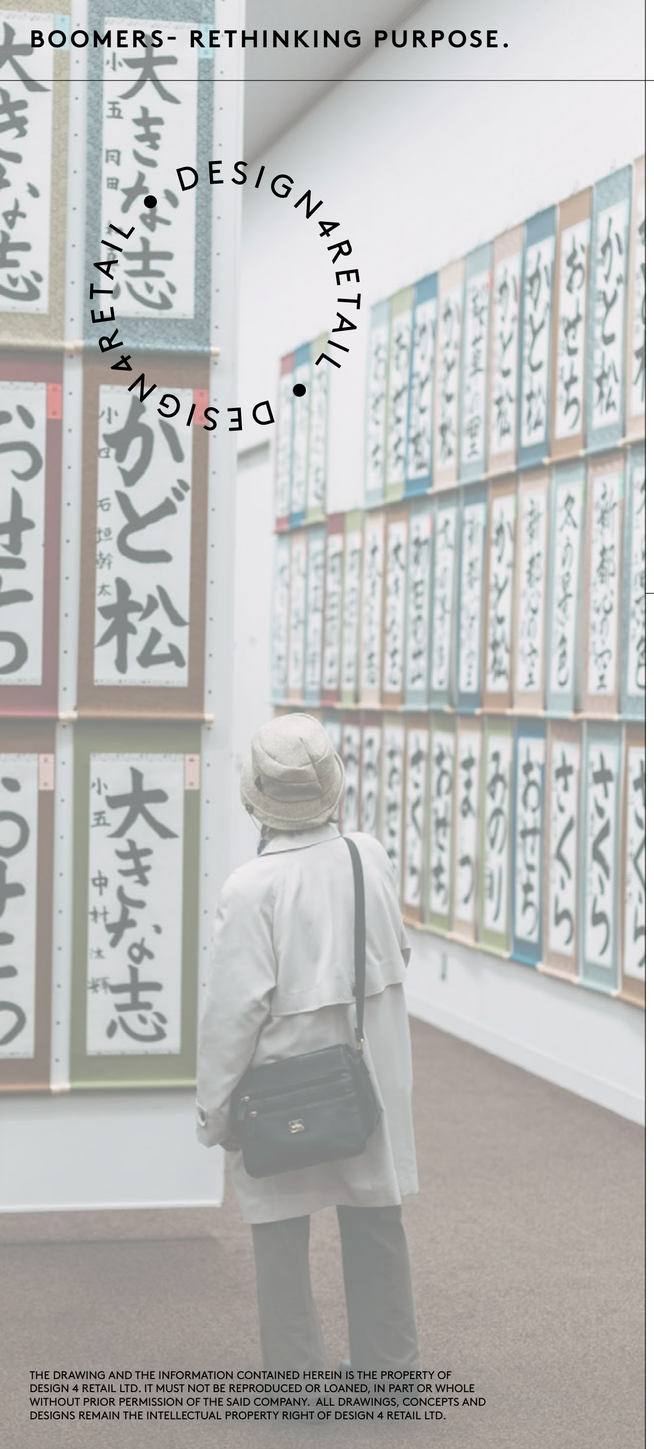
Our investigation has bought some new realisations and ideas to both our insight and creative teams and challenged our thinking regarding key demographic groups.

In this report we will be sharing some of our thoughts about a generation that has been overlooked in recent years as the focus of consumer insight and attention from brands has been on the growing and emerging Gen Z and Gen Alpha groups- Boomers.

We want to explore how retail brands could challenge preconceived perceptions of, and stereotypes about, this tribe and use this knowledge to shape brand activity and bring generations together.

Its important now, more than ever, to find common ground and to move beyond stereotypes towards a more nuanced and effective understanding of consumer behaviours.

Understanding people's behaviour as both consumers and members of societal communities, supports our work as a strategy-led design agency.



THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

So, who are the Boomers?

The term Boomers, used to describe those born between 1946 and 1964, has historically represented a distinct generational cohort with unique characteristics and established and understood societal roles.

By 2030 they will all have reached the average retirement age of 65 and, with long third age lifespans ahead, rethinking the purpose of later life.

There are entrenched negative stereotypes and opinions of the group, such as that they're resistant to change, selfishly hoarding wealth, or still believe the customer is always right. Many of these narratives are derived from anecdotal stories and are proving to be false or at least incomplete as age diversity in society continues to evolve.



"In 2050, this age group is projected to account for one in six people globally"

[Source: UN World Social report 2023].





The Future Laboratory 'Generations' report identified key drivers that are currently shaping the changes we see in the Boomer tribe's behaviour. Greater longevity and the ability to have a higher quality of life for longer than ever before sees boomers gripped by a sense of purpose and potential.

Today's Boomers are maintaining their drive for self-improvement and self-discovery, they want to continue to push beyond their comfort zones.

Approaching later life with this attitude, Boomers are taking on new hobbies and adventures, starting second careers, revisiting the activism of their youth, and approaching life with a more care-free attitude.

"Their ideal of ageing tends to be one of youthfulness and vitality: valuing not only activity but also realisation of the self, not only health, but fitness, and not resignation but agency and handling new challenges"

[Source: LSN Generations report].

In this section we dive deeper into some of the stereotypes typically associated with the Boomer generation and explore how, as the Future Laboratory report informs us, these are being increasingly subverted by brand and consumer activities.





Re-assessing later life purpose.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

Subverting stereotypes

01 __ WEALTH AND HEALTH

02 __ BOOMER BURDEN

03 __ AGEING IN ANALOGUE

04 __ RESISTING CHANGE

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

An important driver of changing Boomer behaviours is the record wealth held by the generation and it's inevitable transfer over coming years. With the over 65's collective wealth increasing, and key life milestones delayed with increasing longevity there are questions emerging regarding how Boomers could influence the eventual transfer of this wealth to younger generations.

Over the next 20 years US Gen-Z and Millennials are due to be passed down an astonishing £42 trillion [Source: Modern Affluence Summit].

Conversely, there are those concerned that economies could suffer when such a large part of the population is over average Western retirement age and too few working-age people are supporting too many who are retired and potentially needing a social safety net.

However, older citizens continue to be as productive as any other cohort of policymakers, business leaders and others harness the opportunities created by increased longevity.

Far from looking forward to retirement, Baby-Boomers are energetically making their mark on small business. They're tapping into their experience in the workplace, their expansive professional networks, and their stable financial positions to become successful business owners and savvy investors- they're twice as likely to be gearing up to launch a business or initiative in the next year than millennials. [Source: Kaufman foundation]

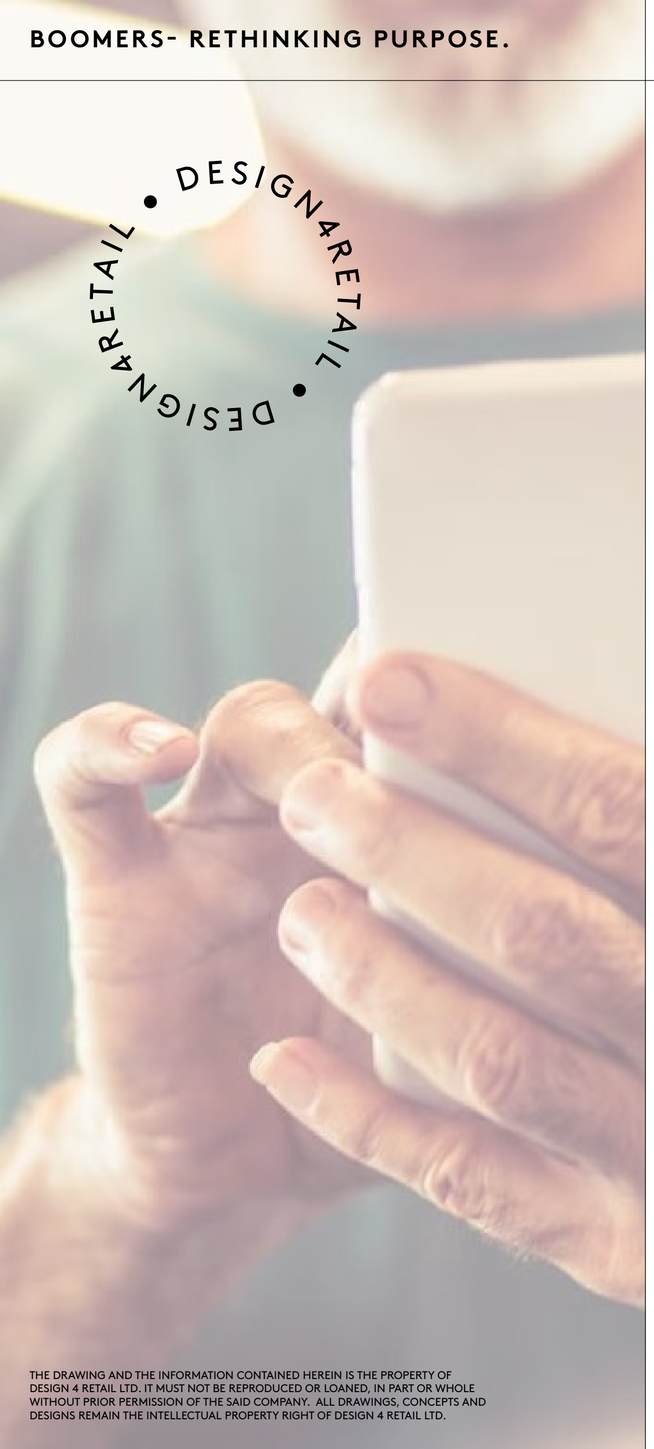
While ageing is often treated as an unavoidable and negative economic problem, growing numbers of financers are starting to see longevity and 'new ageing' as an opportunity for innovation.

The great wealth divide



01

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



The economic impact of the Boomers generational group is beginning to emerge. Investment by Boomers is required for successful strategies in industries and services that will benefit from the changing consumption patterns of this generation as they age.

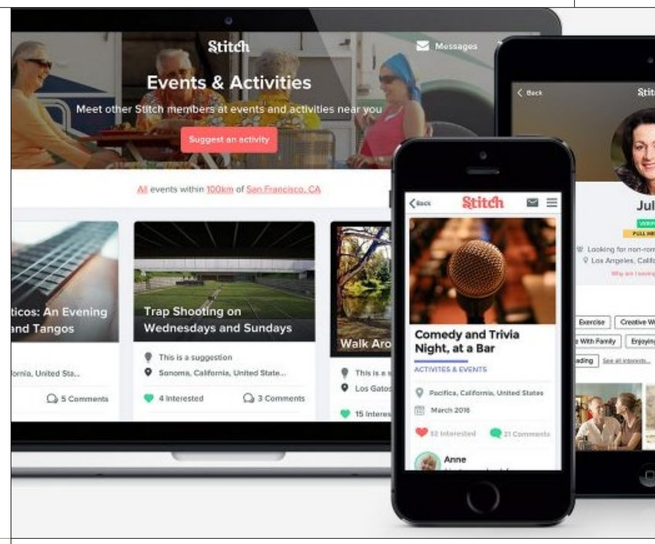
Now, like never before, people are embracing the convenience of immediate access and management of their money through wealthtech apps. With Boomers being the fastest-growing sector of fintech consumers in the last year, it's not just the 'digital native' generations who are keen and competent users of financial technology [source: deVere Group].

"More start-ups are shifting focus from millennials to Boomers, chasing a demographic whose annual economic activity approaches £11trillion" [Source: AARP].

Companies such as Honor, Stitch, and even Amazon are tapping into the over-55 demographic with innovative technologies and service offers. Many entrepreneurs and VCs have underestimated this space for a long time now, not realising that the Boomer generation needs and wants technology, too.

Stitch was started to address social isolation among older adults. The site, which now has over 50,000 members in 50 cities worldwide, connects Boomers and seniors so they can socialize, travel, and make friends.

Much-needed tools for older citizens have for many years badly need a makeover but simply applying high-technology solutions to existing products does not always work.



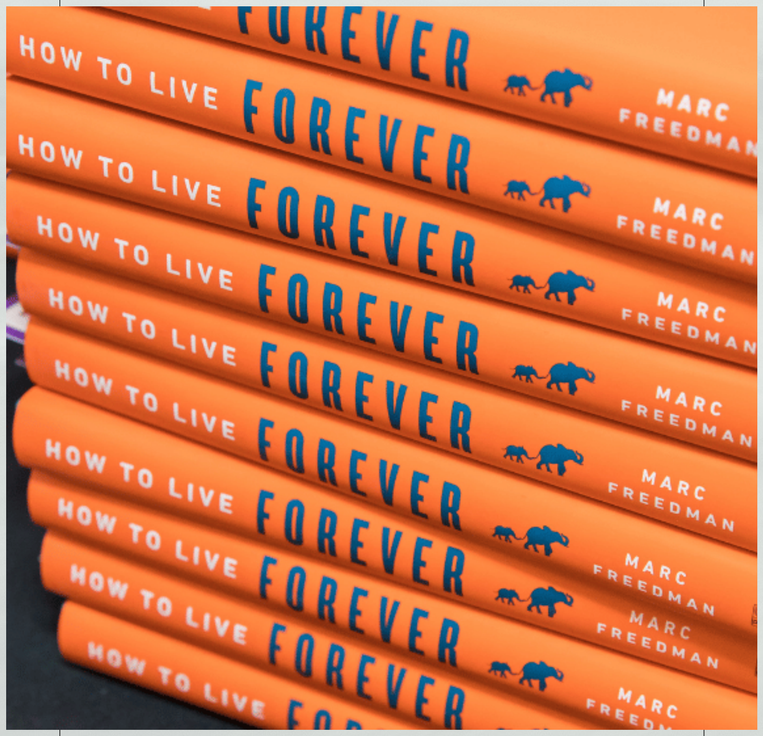


Potential growth in investment could be in voice recognition to take the friction out of issues of technology usage, the connected home, and transport solutions.

Electric bike manufacturer Evelo is one example of a company focussing on the logevity market and producing products and services directly targetted at ageing consumers.

Investing in, and by, Boomers

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



Health is Wealth

While the previous pages and some of the statistics shared suggest that this group are universally an affluent and influential generation, there exists a substantial proportion who do not fit this description.

The wealth divide exists for all consumer groups and these varying experiences can be seen in another key trend: Health as Wealth. Many Boomers believe remaining healthy to achieve a longer life expectancy is the greatest investment they can make for themselves.

Modern Boomers are increasingly, and generally, healthier than people of the same age in preceding generations. They're keen to exploit this generational advantage.

"Overall, people in their 50s and 60s today have healthier habits than people of the same age in 2002"

[Source: 'Boom and Bust' report by the Centre for Ageing Better].

A Nuffield Health survey found that gym visits reach their height at age 66, with gym visitors of that age working out an average of 20 times more per year than teenage gym-goers.

There are several examples of health and wellness brands waking up to this change in demographic behaviours and directing their attention at the Boomer generation.



THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

PureGym

UK accessible fitness brand Pure Gym launched a fitness championship dedicated to the over-50s emphasising performance rather than simple maintenance for this group. The event will test a mix of endurance, power and mobility via strength, cardio, and functional exercises. Prizes include lifetime and year-long gym memberships.

Ludofit

A newly launched direct-to- consumer platform that delivers an immersive fitness-focussed game for balance, strength, stamina and brain health.

After each game, which can involve the player's avatar cycling, rock climbing or skiing in immersive, real-world locations, feedback is gathered about how physically challenging the experience was with answers determining the challenge level of subsequent games for a tailored and progressive programmeme.

Closely linked to this trend for investing in health is the growth of a travel sector targeting the Boomer cohort's increasing wanderlust. A desire for wellbeing is the top driver for travel with many planning extended once in a life-time trips over six months in duration.

Travel is the top priority for discretionary spending for people aged 50+ and travel businesses are benefitting from this spending power with several brands already launching initiatives to focus on their older customer groups.

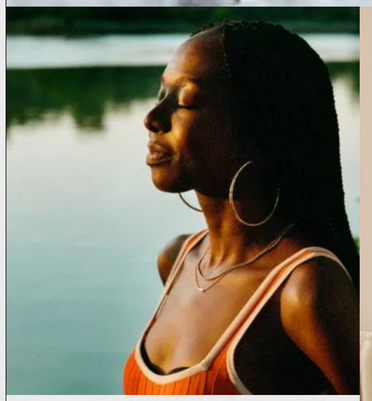
G-Adventures

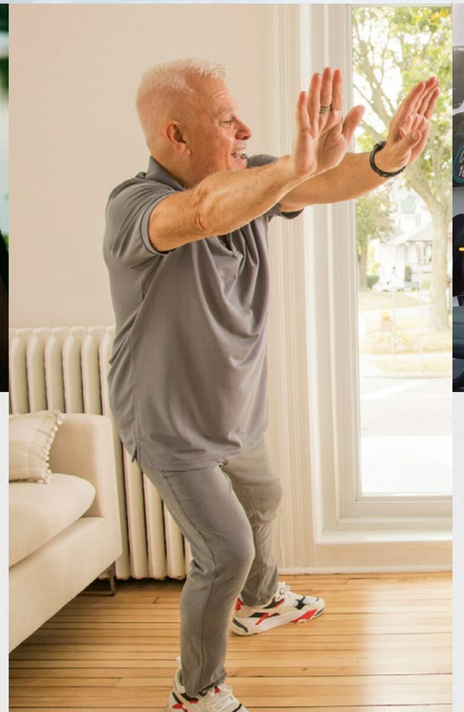
With the launch of Geluxe Collection, UK travel company G-Adventures presents a range of experiences designed to cater for the evolving needs of older customers, who account for 35% of its clientele. Originally known for active and community-focused adventure trips that bring young travellers into contact with diverse cultures, G-Adventures has adapted their offer to be open to all ages in recognition that older travellers are more active and increasingly looking for more than conventional, leisurely luxury tours.

Older travellers are no different from their millennial counterparts in the things that they want- authenticity, truth, and locality.

Case studies









THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

A related, though more negative driver is “Boomer Burden”- older generations feeling the strain of relying on family for support. It’s this term that has contributed to a global perception of the Boomer generation as infirm and of less use than younger people, a stereotype that many over 65 do not wish to be associated with.

A recent article in New Scientist Magazine explored global ageist perceptions and stereotypes about old age such as this. A pertinent read, as whilst other forms of discrimination and bias are not tolerated, ageism can be often pervasive and even normalised.

Outdated stereotypes about ageing directly affect the lives of older people. The article highlights how these beliefs can correlate with shorter life expectancy due to individuals internalising these ingrained negative perceptions.

Positive attitudes towards ageing, can benefit society by removing prejudice in everyday life settings such as in the workplace or social gatherings; the potential of a more meaningful connection between the oldest and youngest ages can offer a much-needed bridge across the generational divide.

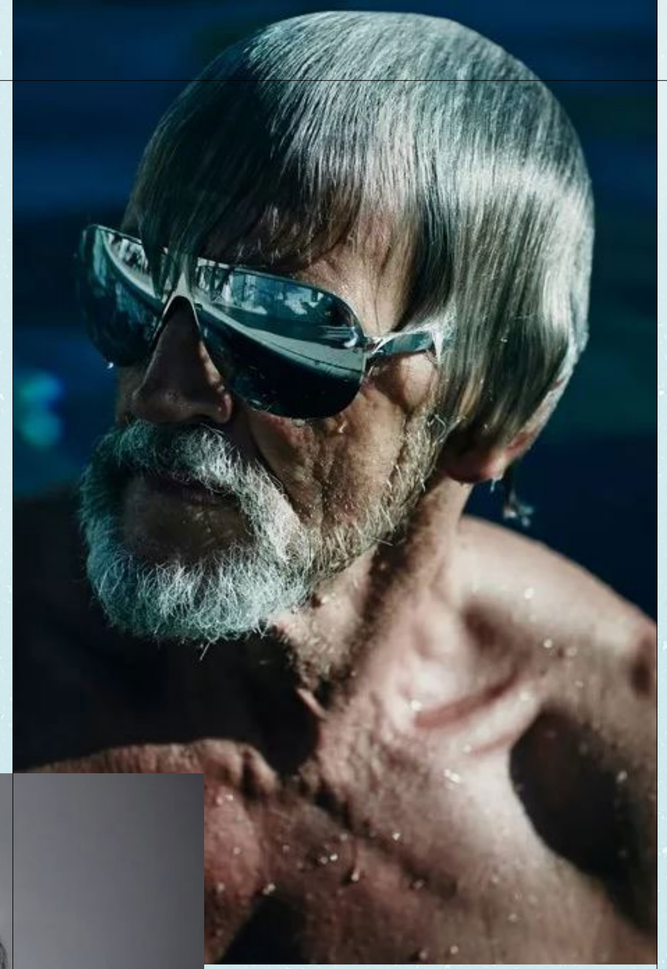
As a starting point, the language and imagery with which we describe our ageing population, can change entrenched negative stereotypes. We would be less inclined to judge a Boomer for their technology use, have less assumptions around declining health, and more often turn to our elders for insight or direction.

Boomer burden



02

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.





Not silverhaired and settling

Boomers are bucking the trends set by previous generations and approaching later life as a process of 'becoming rather than ageing' [LS:N]. Boomers simply don't think of themselves as old. Polls suggest that as many as three out of four Baby-Boomers aged 57–65 regard themselves as middle-aged or younger- nobody wants to define themselves as old and we need to drive businesses to innovate in a new way, because we've got a 100-year life not a three-stage life anymore.

This re-assessment of what later life is and how it is referred to is bringing new perspectives to the mainstream. The emergence of a more Flat Age mindset- replacing the cult of youth with a culture of agelessness- has been pivotal in highlighting those things that unite rather than divide generations. People's interests and activities needn't change just because they were born before a certain date and age is becoming less of a factor in consumer behaviour.

The expected tropes defined by images of silver-haired retirees bicycling in the sunshine are no longer the reality. There are many examples of activity that shows us how the future of ageing could, and perhaps should, look. In recent years, the aesthetics of ageing, particularly for women, have become more visible and desirable. The Wall Street Journal recently reported a 'sky-high' demand for older models.

Society is moving to expand our understanding of beauty standards and representation of older generations is changing to reflect the more diverse make up of society and consumer profiles. A welcome reflection of the actual balance of spending in the UK where 50-plus women account for over 45% of the annual spend on clothing, shoes and accessories [source: Kantar].

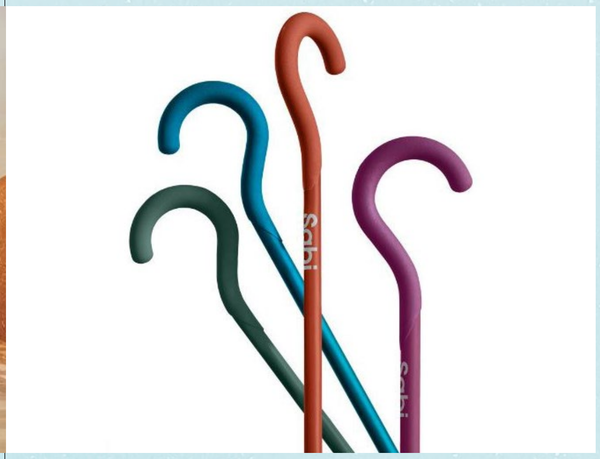
According to colour specialist Josh Wood- 'The mindset's changing: before, going grey was seen as negative, it was thought of as old and hard. Now grey is about a modern colour choice and it can make a woman look softer, more premium, more interesting – younger, even, if done in the right way.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

With terms like ‘reverse ageing’ or ‘ageing well’ used more often, the concept of a predetermined pattern to later life is being upended.







Case ___studies

Launched in 2021 with the mission to help people live longer, healthier lives by giving them the tools to take control of their ageing journey; Health and Wellness clinic Modern Age’s clinic offers wellness assessments such as bone density scans, biomarker analysis, and hormone panels, with advice on lifestyle modifications for improved health span.

As cutting-edge medicine and the understanding of our ageing processes become more sophisticated, there is a wealth of opportunity to provide more holistic services that connect how we look, how we feel, and how optimistic we are about the future.

Wearable devices offering seamless healthcare monitoring are becoming more intelligent and more desirable as products to the more discerning Boomer cohort.

“The global wearable tech market is estimated to reach £227bn in 2027"

[source: eCommerceNews].

The target audience no longer settle for bland beige, instead looking for products that fit into their aspirational and vibrant lifestyles.

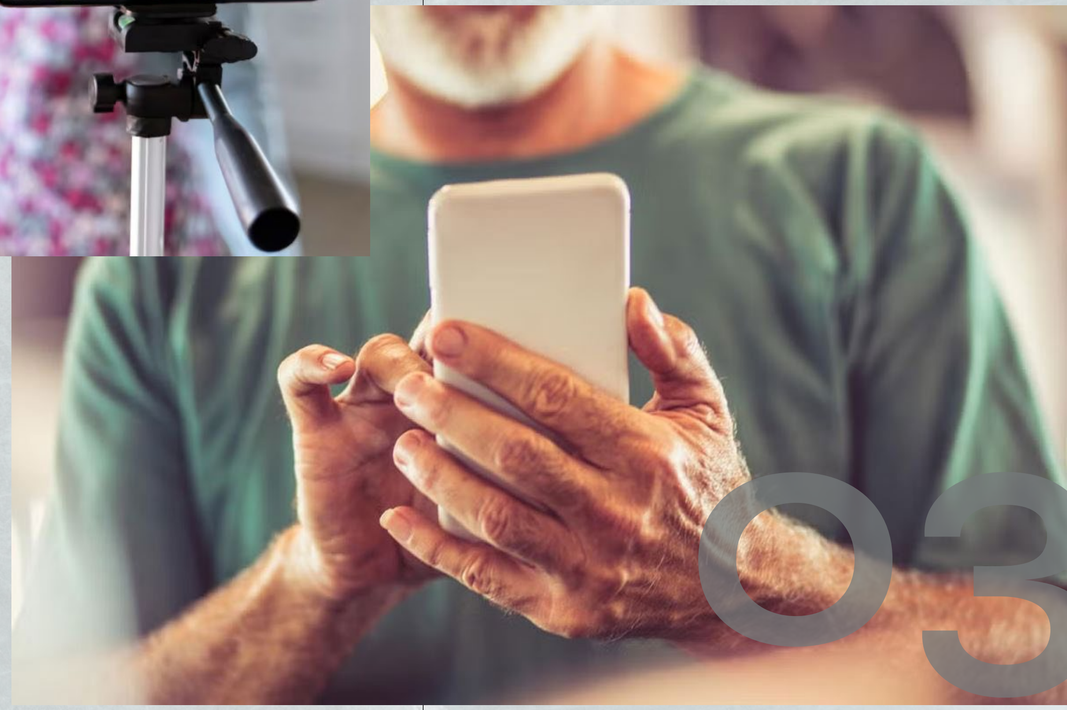
93-year-old fashion icon and accessories devotee Iris Apfel worked with luxury wearable technology company WiseWear on a range of stylish jewellery with unique safety features. The collaboration seeks to inject fun and glamour into an industry dominated by apologetically discreet-looking devices. Apfel launched the product, saying: ‘I think that is fantastic, not only for older people but also a lot of young people. And the idea that you’ll be able to do it in a handsome piece of jewellery is great’.

Medical aid company Sabi rejects the traditional ‘beige, bland, boring’ look of medical support aids and products and creates pillboxes and canes using sleek designs and high-quality materials. In trying to create a more positive visual appearance of age-support products, elevating the sector, the brand elevates the everyday and provides moments of joy in life.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

Ageing in Analogue





03

The Boomer as tech-phobic luddite is another stereotype that is outdated to say the least. Far from being proud rejectors, older adults are following and adopting the latest technology. The rate of digital adoption is surging, and Boomers are also embracing social media platforms. According to research commissioned by TalkTalk, almost one in four grandparents want to learn how to use TikTok as a way of bonding with their grandchildren.

Boomers are moving into the same digital spaces as younger generations, according to Insider Intelligence-

in the US in 2024, over 20 million people over 55 will purchase from social media platforms.

There is an opportunity for brands to encourage sharing of the space and promote engagement with similar content in comparable ways across demographics.

As Baby-Boomers reach retirement, the technology industry is beginning to further accommodate their needs outside of their working life. From medication sensors to brain training apps, new solutions are helping the older generations maintain independent and connected lifestyles.

Older Boomers have felt they've been forced to encounter technology in a very different way to previous generations. Connectivity is an important facet of technology use as nearly 16 million people aged 65 and older in the US live alone as of 2022, three times as many as in the 1960s [source: US census data]. A need to connect during the pandemic was a significant factor in driving many to immerse in a more digitally connected society to maintain vital social inclusion.

Community connecters are crucial to spreading knowledge- people that can use technology or find out how to, and then have the ability or passion to share the experience. Brands are also stepping up to fill this knowledge gap and support continuing connection as technologies and communication methods evolve.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

It doesn't align with Boomer's attitudes to life to 'age in place', instead, they will choose to 'live in place'. And as they do, they will continue to invest in their homes. Digital tools and sensors that support daily living are becoming more commonplace.

London-based Breezie is one company that is positioning themselves as a community connector- simplifying connection and technology use for those starting their digital adoption journey. The brand offer streamlined, personalised tablet interfaces for older people, making it easier to connect to essential communication tools and services such as banking, shopping, and paying bills.

In a recent Google poll, the fastest adopters of smart home tech were found to be Boomers, with 66% saying they immediately started using their smart home devices daily. Surprisingly, the slowest adopters were Gen Z, where 46% said it takes them at least four days to get acclimated to their devices. [source: Google Nest x One Poll. 2022].

There is clearly a marketplace for technology focussed on the needs of an increasingly older population, considering their preferences for control methods, accessibility, and security. Many 65-plus consumers find voice control simpler than navigating a complex app. This helps with mobility, poor vision and simply not having to learn something new [source: Alex Capecelatro, co-founder and CEO of smart home tech brand, Josh.ai]

Many of the sandwich generation- Millennials and GenX- will be able to use smart technology to support parents who need some assistance at home. Family caregivers could in future be looking for ways to be more effective with everyday tasks as their caring obligations encompass both their children and parents.

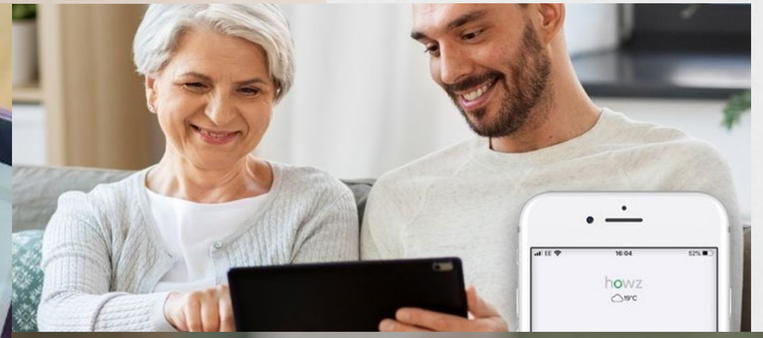
With developments of integrated home technology there will need to be an increased awareness of the security of these tools. Four in five consumers across all ages surveyed by BlackBerry responded that a cybersecurity labelling system would make them feel safer and more informed when using Internet-connected devices and this policy is being introduced in the US from later this year.

Case studies



01









THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

There is a stereotype of the 'detached' Boomer- perceived as reckless and selfish by Millennials and GenZ because of the impact their consumerism has had on the environment and the Boomers lack of action on climate change. But, as new research demonstrates, Boomers are very conscious about the planet's health and the action that needs to be taken to change our lifestyles to preserve them. They are increasingly bridging the generation gap around activism by campaigning alongside younger generations.

In response to Boomers' increased visibility and continued influence in society they will develop a greater awareness amongst the group of their potential legacy and the responsibility that goes with this.

In future we could see more mentorship positions, an increase in voluntary work and a focus on charitable endeavours amongst the cohort, leading to the rise of the philanthropensioner (a term coined by The Future Laboratory).

Ongoing participation in social and possibly political activities amongst the generation who kick started activism in the 1960s will remain strong, reflecting their history of activism and engagement. There is a belief amongst Boomer-age activists and founders that young people, for all their energy and idealism, lack the structural power to make the necessary change. There is not the time to wait for GenZ to take the reins of power to rebuild institutions.

Resisting change







04

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

DESIGN4RETAIL • DESIGN4RETAIL •

// We've never been more determined to save the planet than right now. //

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



The group Third Act, which launched in 2021, has grown to more than 50,000 members, all over the age of 60, who address climate and racial justice issues.

According to founder Bill McKibben "People over the age of 60 may have a deeper sense almost of anyone of how much change has come. We remember the first pictures that came back from the Apollo Mission of the Earth viewed from outer space. And it's a shock to us to realize that the world doesn't look like that anymore...

...we have an almost intuitive sense, a visceral sense, of how much change there's been, and we have a sense of obligation."

The collective fights for climate justice and uses their power and presence in society to increase the efficacy and reach of their political activity. The groups also motivate and support initiatives such as civil disobedience and protest as tools to bring attention to climate inactivity.

As allies to young people, they provide how-to and knowledge for younger activists to work together to protect the climate and safeguard democracy. When writing for and to media outlets, founder McKibben often collaborates and shares credit with a high school or college-aged co-writer, to spotlight the collaborative effort.







Case study
_Third act

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

Foresight & our thoughts

01 _ A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

02 _ CO-GENERATION

03 _ COMBINED COMMUNITIES

04 _ FUTURE DEMOGRAPHICS

05 _ OUR PERSPECTIVE

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

// It is important now to step beyond stereotypes towards a more impactful understanding of consumer behaviours. //

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



Foresight & our thoughts

Research shows that mixed-age relationships can be immensely valuable to groups and people both young and old, but that there are also intense barriers to achieving age diversity. Social forces such as age-based segregation and discrimination make it hard for people to meet, engage with and derive value from an interaction with somebody much younger or older than they are.

“This era of age diversity offers us an unprecedented opportunity to foster relationships between people of very different ages at a scale never seen before."

[Source: Sasha Johfre. Stanford University.]

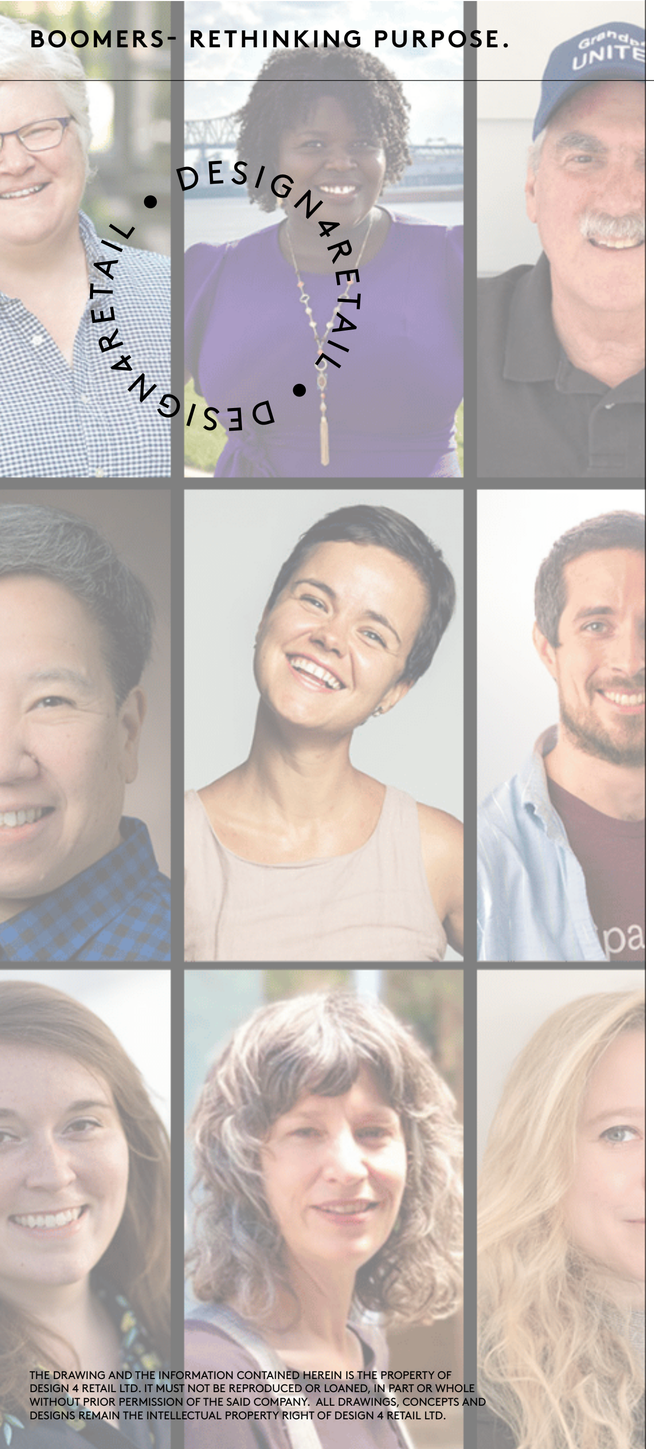
People of different chronological ages tend to see one another as fundamentally different, raising barriers to much needed age integration.

There could be a better way to understand age that fits with both research on the life course and the way we talk about age as “more than a number.” We can imagine and describe age itself through multiple facets.

Rather than focusing on a number, age is best understood as a multi-faceted descriptor of a person that combines their appearance, overall health, workplace status, family roles and hobbies, political views, plus the year they were born. Organisations that understand how to fully leverage the potential of employees - and customers - of all ages will have the competitive edge over those who operate with a more conventional outlook.



THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

We're now seeing more workplaces with an increasingly diverse cross-section within teams and this can include up to five generations collaborating together with varying degrees of success.

The make-up of our work environment has changed significantly in recent years and will continue to do so. We're seeing younger workers become digitally nomadic or taking early-career breaks, those in their mid-careers reskilling, and people of all age demographics juggling increased care responsibilities.

Many more people are deferring or abandoning retirement to pursue longer careers or even late-career changes that deliver on purpose and passion alongside the pay slip. This results in workplaces with a combination of people of all stages needing to partner, support each other, and collaborate.

Supporting this diversification trend is hugely important if older members of society are to continue to be in the work force if they wish to do so. Only a small proportion of workplaces include age as part of any diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy [source: PwC via SHRM Foundation]. Purpose could also be a valuable unifier across generations as people of all generations look to realign their careers with greater personal purpose and meaning.

Opportunities must be taken to evolve how both businesses and brands can support intergenerational mixing and support as well as the Boomer need to upskill, reskill and skill-share both inside and outside the workplace. Examples of this are already being implemented at a national level with Japan softening its hard retirement age and South Korea and Singapore making life-long learning a constitutional requirement.





We can say that it's not just the workforce that's spanning multiple generations. It's likely your customer base, too. The idea of life-long learning and skill-sharing will become the norm, as opposed to undertaking all our learning in early-life. We need to support and empower Boomer generation customers in their drive for knowledge, new skills, and opportunities to grow.

Supporting age diversity

"76% of Gen-Z and 70% of Millennials wish they had more opportunity to work across generations for change."

[Source: Co-generation]

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



The growing age diversity in all areas of our lives will require growth of the Co-generation sector. We're seeing generations who have perhaps not mixed previously- due to separation of learning stages, earlier retirement, and more rigid social milestone structures- being bought together more often. One of the most vital skills to develop as a brand in order to succeed with a more diverse audience is tone of voice - being curious, openminded and never talking down or to stereotypes.

We all live our own different realities, defined by the content we consume and those we talk to. The one thing we have that's undeniably true is our lived experience and this is the best way to connect generations. Intergenerational friendships are occurring more frequently, and these connections can only develop when society puts a focus on Co-generation - Organised activity that brings together people from different generations to problem solve.

Boomers have the experience to know how systems work, and they have the social and financial clout to make things happen, but they won't move in the right, relevant directions without younger people to work with. Whilst Co-generation can have many benefits for our increasingly diverse society and spark intergenerational friendships and collaboration, there are pitfalls. For success the collaborations need intergenerational conversations, not lectures.

Working together





THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.





We have so much to learn from each other

Co-generation

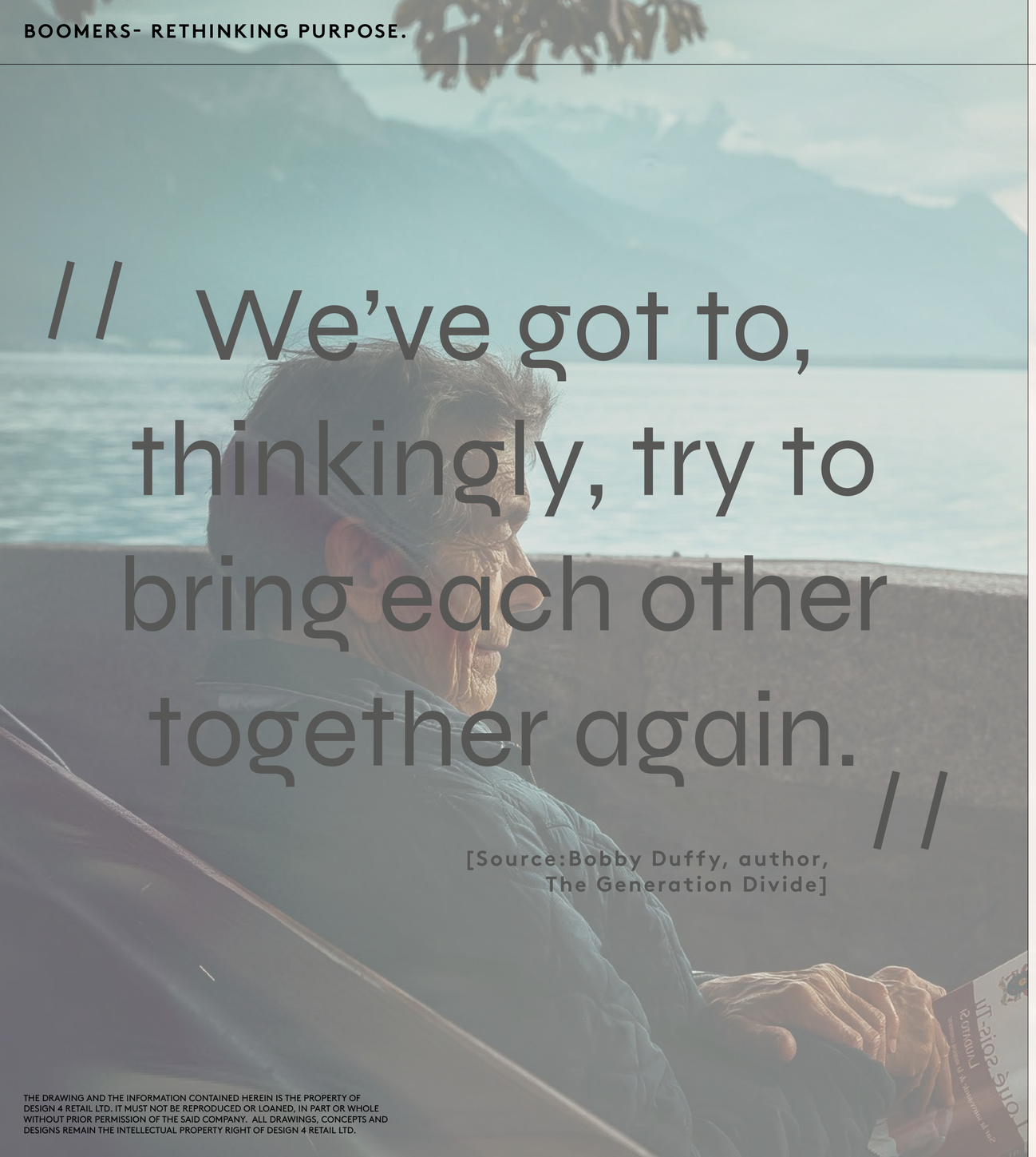
Successful groups building a cogenerative future include Fresno EOC Generations Serving Together, an intergenerational mental wellness programme where older and younger volunteers come together as a team to create lesson plans for elementary school youth on emotional literacy, coping skills and identifying feelings.

Also, in the US are CoGenerate, who develop and organisel experiences to bring diverse generational groups together such as an intergenerational dinner, with at least four generations invited to the table to dine and discuss a topic important to their community.

These relationships can widen our world, providing perspective and community beyond our current experiences and allowing re-evaluation of what it means to grow old. This is important as, mentioned in the New Scientist article, positive opinions of older age can improve quality of life for the holders of those opinions as they age.

Being invited into a space of sharing our stories as co-learners reminds us that we have so much to learn from each other. Friendships with people of different ages offer us a longer view and a reminder of all the varied experiences beyond our day-to-day.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



// We've got to, thinkingly, try to bring each other together again. //

[Source:Bobby Duffy, author, The Generation Divide]

Bridging the gap

Aside from considerations around longer working lifespans, for longer living to be both feasible and appealing, consumers must feel equipped and inspired to maintain a broad outlook on the ever-changing world in all aspects of life.

Alongside increasing connection between generations and the commonality of changing life-milestones we're all experiencing, the required inspiration can be supported by evolving living spaces and situations. In the future, our housing will need to embrace new forms of community and found families based on a shared ethos of life.

In France, for example, a company called Commune has started opening co-living spaces for singleparent families. While each family has their own private living space, they also have access to tutoring, babysitting, school transport, and social spaces, creating a new form of extended family unit that meets their specific needs.

Now is the time to reconsider how our housing structures and community models could be redesigned to better serve a variety of emerging family structures. Unlike in previous years, generational cohorts are not a monolith going through the same life experiences and nominated paths, yet still there is more than unites us than divides our varied experiences.

The Belong intergenerational community in Chester, a purpose-built city centre 'care setting' with a fully integrated children's research nursery, offers daily mixing between tots and residents, who go on 'prambles' together and take craft classes and activity days together.

Combining generations who in the past would not regularly cross paths in multi-dwelling community models provides older adults with increased purpose, community, and health span; younger generations gain resilience and social and emotional skills.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE, WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

Intergenerational _ living

On a smaller more individual scale, multigenerational households are becoming increasingly common. It is often said that Millennials and Gen Z are driven by experiences rather than assets because the assets are so far out of reach.

Average property values have increased by a factor of four since the late 1990s and although wages have gone up, the average salary doesn't equate to the same buying power as it did for the parents of millennials. Previous analysis of generational dependency and 'boomerang kids' predicted the trend would pass when the recession ended, but this is not the case.

The number of people living in multigenerational family households quadrupled to nearly 60 million people between 1971 and 2021 and isn't slowing down.



It is no longer just economic factors driving intergenerational living though; multiple generations living under one roof can share out childcare, elder care, and pooling of resources to maintain the home- cooking, cleaning, etc.

These beneficial considerations are amplified by the low appeal of nursing homes, assisted living centres, and the like which see too many over-stretched sandwich generation Boomers and Gen X watch their ageing parents lonely in these congregate living facilities, thus building a stronger desire to live together.

// As people in different age brackets increasingly collaborate, behaviours and habits will gradually become less specific to certain demographics. //

[Source: Olivia Houghton, deputy creative foresight editor, The Future Laboratory]

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.





Future demographics

The most important consideration and piece of foresight we're taking away from this exploration is that generational demographic categories will no longer be prioritised for future consumers as they increasingly connect through their values, rather than birth date. We've seen that generational mindsets are converging and overlapping, but each has a point of difference that loosely drives and defines them.

It is our role as consumer and brand experts to find those peaks and points of difference. The activities and experiences we craft must be relevant to each generation but also, importantly, identify the overlaps so that each defined group can find their own resonance.

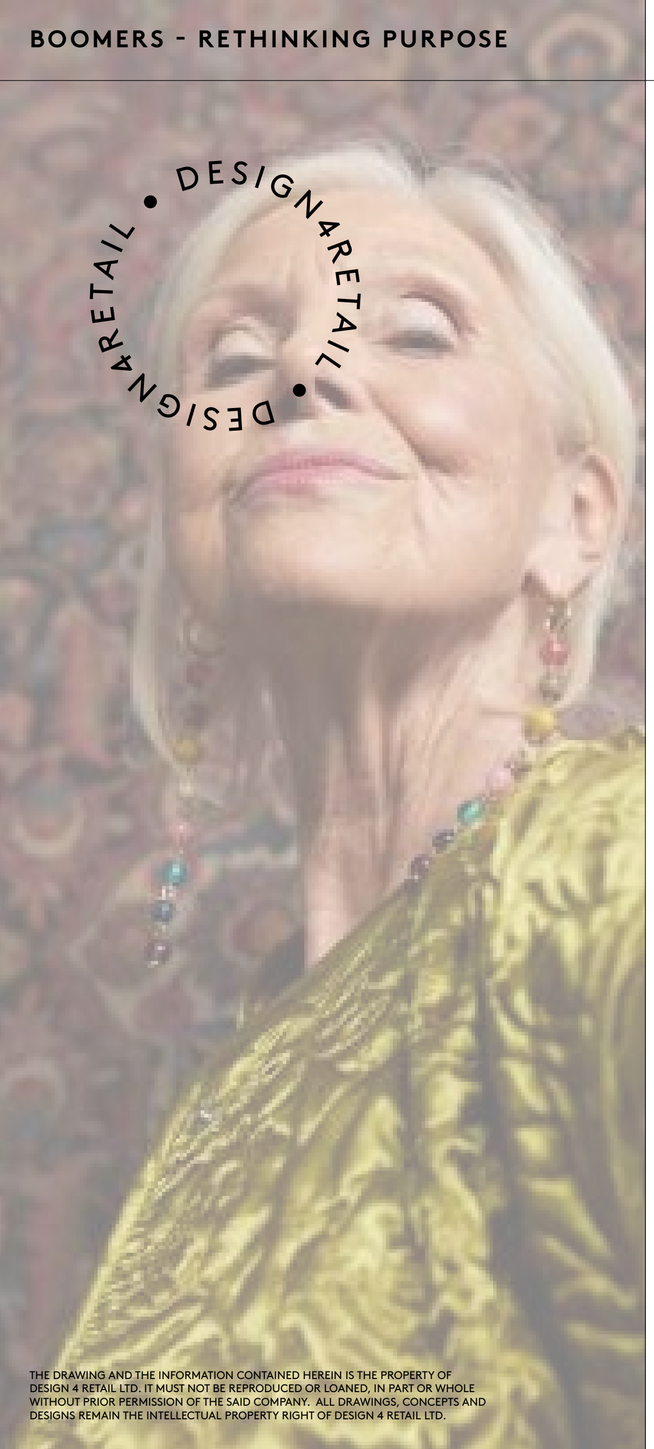
We've encountered a variety of activities that typify and bring to life this foresight. Based in Pennsylvania, Read Rose Books is a used bookstore who have just begun hosting reading retreats welcoming all.

The programmeme gathers book-lovers of all ages for a full day of literary indulgence, arts and crafts, companionship, alcohol-free drinks and a chance to disconnect from their tech devices. The store owners describe their offer to LS:N as ' [not]...a regular bookstore. We are a community bringing different demographics together and supporting authors of all cultures'.

It's clear that brand and consumer activity cannot define customers by age anymore. Behaviours are driven more by mindset and common values, the brands that succeed will be ones that embrace a generation-less approach.

In future we will be thinking more about how to let go of generational stereotypes across age brackets; how to focus on interests, passions, and ambitions and not simply age.

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



Increasing age diversity in all aspects of life is going to have profound impact and could be one of society's greatest strengths. It can lead to a necessary evolution of housing, education, work, and socialising. Reinventing our understanding of what later years of life can and should look like will be a key part of this evolution.

It's been the case that generations have built and maintained stereotypes about each other when they don't know each other or don't have a strong personal connection.

In our age diverse near-future, technology companies are building digital platforms that connect older adults virtually with younger people, activist groups are working to attract multigenerational volunteers and leverage their greater variety of strengths, and entrepreneurs and policy-makers both are launching platforms to match people of different generations for mentoring programmes, housing initiatives, and social activities.

The importance of understanding how technology is shaping our flat age experience will be vital in ensuring we keep up with the multitude opportunities offered by this macrotrend.

What stage you are at in life - new parent, starting a new career, buying your first home - is the important consideration when age matters less. Technology and its impact on our flat age living strategy mean that our chronological age no longer has such a large impact on our behaviours as consumers or members of society.

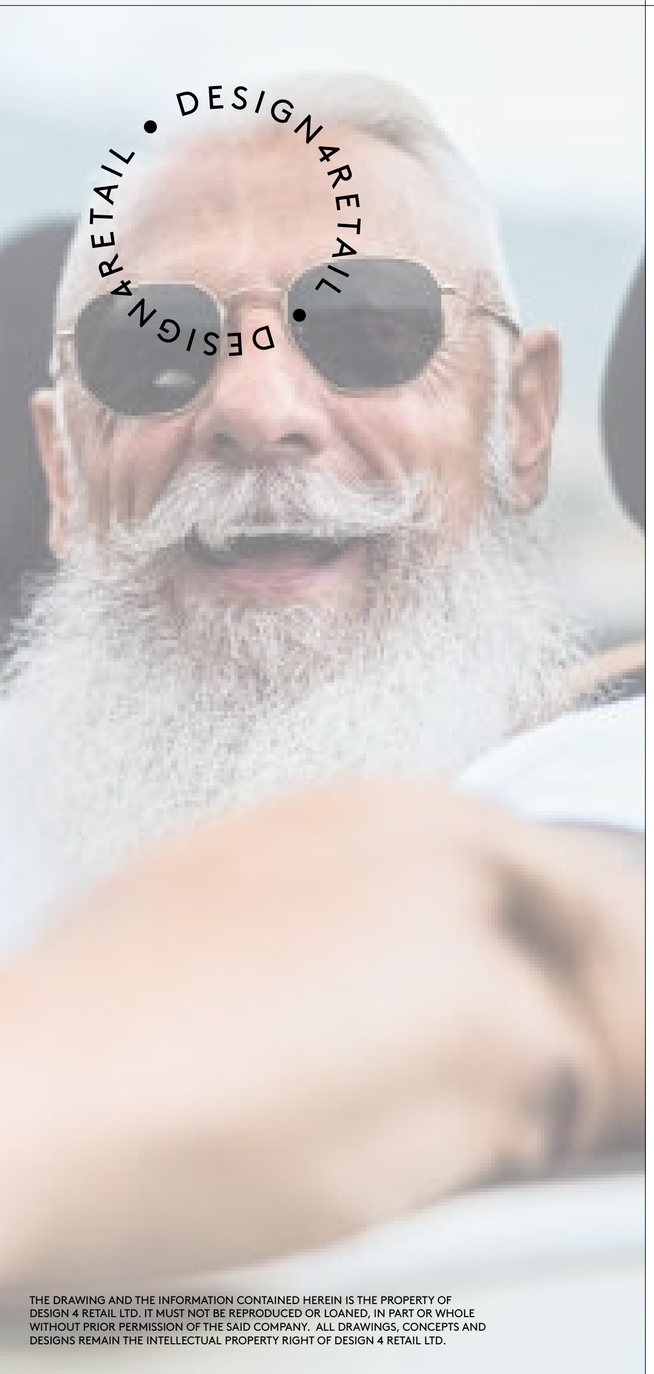




Being a certain age doesn't necessarily have to mean what it used to.

Using this knowledge

THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.



THE DRAWING AND THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS THE PROPERTY OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD. IT MUST NOT BE REPRODUCED OR LOANED, IN PART OR WHOLE WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE SAID COMPANY. ALL DRAWINGS, CONCEPTS AND DESIGNS REMAIN THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHT OF DESIGN 4 RETAIL LTD.

The key themes of this report lead us to predict that reinventing our understanding of what later years of life can and should look like will be an evolution, not a revolution.

We've learned so much through our deep dive into those we would formerly have called Boomers. In future we'll be thinking about...

1. Longevity allows us to discuss the process of growing older more openly. Can it also help us to develop a language around ageing that is more inclusive and celebratory?

2. How can we highlight the diversity of ageing experiences and beauty standards by featuring representation of all ages in marketing campaigns and content?

3. In adapting to changing cultures and technologies, how do we support redistribution of learning throughout our lives?

4. How can longevity-boosting products and services better serve consumers by being accessible to more than the top 1%?

5. How can we provide avenues and opportunities for Co-generation at work, leisure, and in our communities?

Future _thinking



Lastly, the number one thing Boomers want is more fun. [source: Age wave consulting].

In a generation-less in future we can best connect through great ideas that celebrate our life-long desire to enjoy human connection and the joy in the everyday.

We challenge ourselves to put into practice this core truth throughout our activity as designers, creators, and advisors to our clients.

By understanding age diversity in ways beyond just numbers, we can begin to better appreciate what aspects of diversity matter most to us and why. We'd love to talk to you more about how we can support and work with you. Let's define the next new normal for our increasingly age-diverse communities.

HOW CAN YOUR BRAND LEVERAGE
NEW GENERATIONAL THINKING?

Let's talk

hello@design4retail.co.uk