

Plant Pathology at the crossroads: attracting the Millennial Generation

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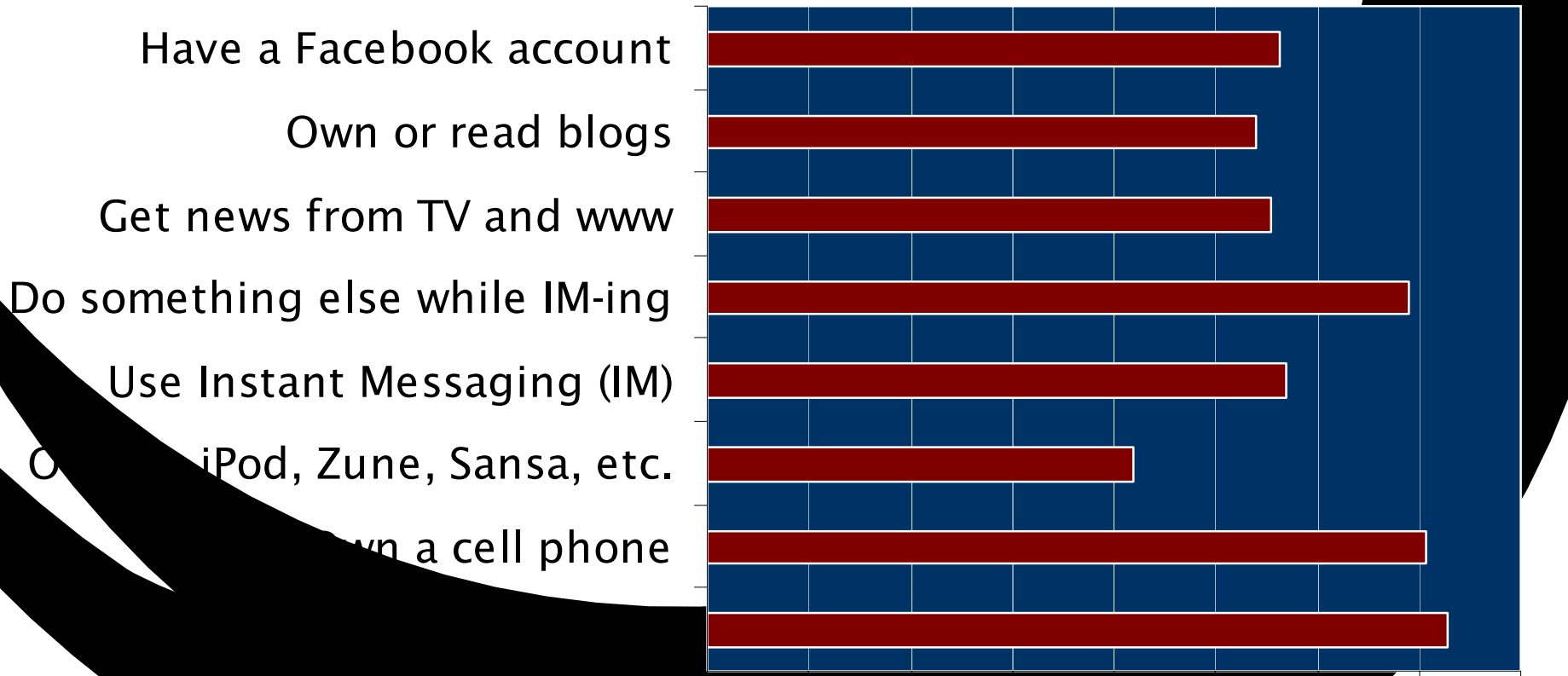
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Millennial Generation: their attributes

- Closely tied to their parents
 - Speak with parents about 1.5 times per week
- Confident in their abilities and drive to succeed
- Driven by compassion
 - Believe it's "cool" to give back
- They are talented and appreciate their education

The 'Net' Generation



Data source: *Net.Generation: A Study of Today's Students*, by Education Professionals at the Pew Research Center. *About Today's Students*, by Junco and Jeanna Mastrodocas.

sample size

Millennials' view of Science

- Vague, Abstract, Difficult, Boring

Many of them do not know:

- What Plant Pathology is and what plant pathologists do

Why the disconnect?

- The American society largely 'detached' from agriculture
- Over 300,000,000 people live in the United States
 - 1% claim farming as an occupation
 - About 2% actually live on farms
- Agriculture is less 'attractive'

Paradigm shift

- Making agriculture/plant science a component of education process
 - Beginning with K-12 curriculum
- Making teachers part of the process
 - A better appreciation for agriculture should be the first step

Paradigm shift

Partnering with Parents

- Millennials rely on, and are in close contact with, their parents
- Involving parents in science/agriculture fairs and academic activities

Need for Greater Involvement: Scientists/Faculty



Courtesy: Robert Hubner

Need for Greater Involvement: Scientists/Faculty

Mike Derie and Lindsey du Toit at their plant pathology display during Mount Vernon High School Sci-Tech Event



Providing Hands-on Experiences



Providing Hands-on Experiences



Providing opportunities for internships



Remember that they are the 'e-Generation'

- Making best use of their 'love' for hi tech



Emphasizing the positives

- Significance of Plant Pathology/Plant Science:
 - We depend on plants
 - Healthy plants for 'healthy' food
 - Food security in developing countries
 - Sustaining the ecosystem
 - Agricultural bio-security
 - Past experiences

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Katie
Re





If we fail to tell our story, who else will?

Thank you