

# EXTENDED 20S AND NEW LIFE BUILDERS

## RETHINKING LIFESTAGES AND THE TECH TO MAKE THEIR LIVES WHAT THEY WANT



\*AI Generated Imagery

### Extended 20s and new life builders are the only lifestages that should matter to marketers and here is how AI and tech will help you win them

Marketers love to make easy tag names for the people they are trying to entice to consume their brands.

- Easy demographics like “women 25-49” ( which was polite shorthand for “housewives” ) was the lifeblood of advertising and media briefs for decades
- Or “discovering life styles” like “teen” or later “youth” which was sort of discovered in the 1930s and confirmed in the 50s as a new life stage that did not exist previously in human history but by the 1990s evolved in to “the mindset” all marketers believed they had to chase ( the “get them young and they will stay loyal” myth )
- The total misunderstanding of a great novel, “Generation X”, in the early 90s and the resultant need to believe every ten to fifteen years we now have a new generation that is totally different to previous one.
- All that despite of research showing that people at different life stages have more in common than not.

Behind all that though is a need. A need to identify how large parts of the marketplace think and act and how to talk to them.

**So let’s suggest a simple way to think for the next few decades.**

### First consider the two dominant demographic shifts happening around the world:

For most of human history, in all cultures, there were three life stages : childhood, which lasted to puberty, adulthood, which lasted until you could not physically procreate and / or work and then old age, which was really those last few years waiting to die.

Typically a lifespan of 12 years of youth, 20 to 30 years of adulthood and then a couple of old age.

In the 20th century we added a new , interim life stage : teenage. Yes there had always been people 13-19 years old, but they had been treated as adults. From early in the 1900s though more and more people were asked to spend their teen years in a sort of neutral state between childhood and self responsible, working, child bearing adulthood. They were asked to spend increasing amounts of time in school, staying at their parents home, being provided for and developing a culture around that lifestyle. And the business and marketing worlds adapted to, and were attracted to it because it was an easy sell. Lifestyle goods and services that were mostly there to promote a cultural fit, and years of then living with a self image developed as a teen. So by the 1970s the 4th life stage of being a teen was well established.

BUT in the two new the last quarter century we have seen two new life stages develop due to a confluence of health, wellness, and social expectations:

**1.The world is ageing.** In most developed countries and many other parts of Asia, Europe even the rest of the world longer lives are very much the norm. Even in countries like India and Indonesia the fastest growing demographic is the over 60s. Thailand is typical in that people are living longer, with more and more people reaching life expectancies of 80s, 90s. Where to die at 60 used be considered having “lived a good life” in the 1980s, now it is usually remarked on as “having gone so early”. And what we have noted in the last 30 years is that people reaching their 60s now expect to live good lives for another two or more decades. To be active, to try new things, to explore hobbies and new places to eat, and travel and to Build New Lives now the immediate “adult” stage of life concerns like raising families are not so much their focus.

**2.Staying Young is so much easier.** At the same time people are having fewer children, having them later, or deciding not to have them at all. Staying or moving back in with parents, treating pets as luxury friends, focusing on maintaining a life of fashion and style. Yes some of that is economic and tied to the costs involved. But again and again we see that younger adults, whether parents or not, seem to be putting off old images of middle age and adult. No problem with that. No judgment. It is a life style referred to as “delayed adulthood” or “extended youth”. For businesses it raises the opportunity to help build these lifestyle of extending a more sophisticated life than the teen age.

**These two "new" life stages can be described as:**

**New Life Builders:**

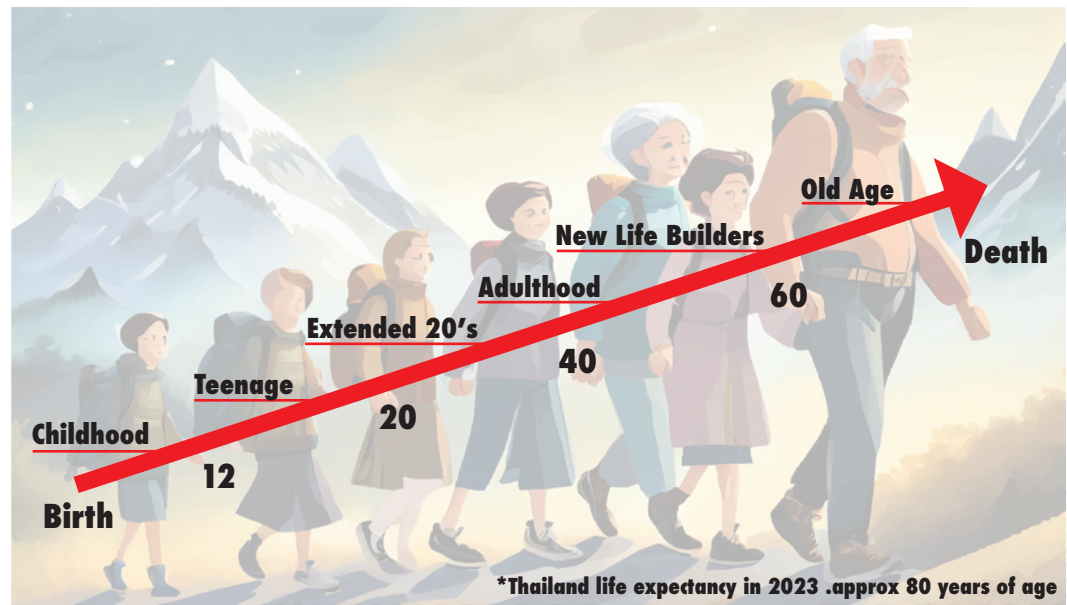
Over the last 25 years constant research has shown that people entering their 60s and through till at least their late 70s are no longer the old stereotype of "getting older" and are instead what we call "New Life Builders". People are now seeing 60 plus as a time to rethink and focus on "what is next" in life. To find new things to do. What we call retyrment. For some that will mean big travel adventures, for some going back to university, for some taking dancing lessons, for some the chance to try new kinds of employment, for some just taking more time to explore their home city or rediscover old friends and hobbies. Did you know that when the Japanese "boomers" first turned 60 and started retiring the single fastest growing category of products on sale was electric guitars ... New Life Builders retrying life.

**The challenge for marketers and for tech support:** how do you help them "re-try" life, experiment, adapt, trial and live with an opportunity to do more. Understand that this is the demographic with the most money, that despite marketing mythology are willing to learn, to try and explore.

**Extended 20s:**

Or is it forever 20s ? We will see in time. But there is certainly a big change that marketers need to accept. Yes we have seen the "boomers" age to retirement still wearing their AC/DC t-shirts and buying the Stones new music. But among those 15 to 50 there is also change. Not letting the lifestyle we used to associate with youth go. More people "staying at home" or "returning home" in their 20s, 30s and beyond. In Italy there are the "bamboccioni", 40 something men whose mothers have to get court orders against to get them to leave home. Again there are economic reasons. But we see many other signs of an extended young adulthood. Having a first child is now a thing for 30somethings, maybe. And we see constant evidence that when you have your child, and often it is only one, they are treated as a playmate and friend. Pets becoming surrogate families. The "entertainment of kids" of the past like the Marvel world, gaming, clubbing, the fashion trends, the need to be "socially connected" are all no longer the college student profile, they are the signs of everyone for decades. The world we used to think of the 20something young adulthood has become extended to decades.

**The challenge for marketers and tech support:** How do you merge all those hobbies and habits to help that 20something life of explore and social life and seeking relevance and escaping at will to all become just so easy ?



**QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK**

- How do you bring to life the ambitions of the 60, 70 years olds to live lives of retyrment ?
- What are the AI and tech opportunities to bring life ambitions for both EXTENDED 20s and NEW LIFE BUILDERS alive and easy to access ?
- How to enhance lives where the cross over between "real" and "digital" seems so last decade ?
- So how do you bring alive life stages that are full of people "looking to enhance life and enjoy more" in a manner they find comfortable ?
- Come talk to us to understand these two new life stages and how you can help people live those lives.



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