The concept of web design has certainly evolved a lot over the past decade – different people have different perceptions of web design and Internet, overall. This notion is still very ambiguous to many, and it must be mentioned that the entire concept of web design revolves around the user: it was created by users and for users.

How Has Web Design Changed Through The Years And What Does It Mean To Different Generations And Demographics?

It often happens that when people from a certain generation or age bracket try to explain themselves something, they tend to correlate that aspect to something that is easier for them to comprehend, this is why people who were born during the first half of the 20th century have a radically different perception of web design than those who were born in the era of technology, simply because their mental models differ and because the societal values have evolved throughout the decades.

One may be tempted to think that people who were born before World War II or during the war are not as “digitally skilled” as those who were born towards the end of the ’80s for instance, but statistically speaking, one in two persons aged 65-74 is computer literate and uses the Internet on a regular basis. The reasons why seniors have started to learn how the Internet works are many: some use it for practical aspects such as booking holidays, reading the latest news or finding information using online dictionaries or compendia, while others consult the Internet for entertainment purposes.

The “Baby Boomers”, on the other hand, are those who were born within 1946 and 1964, and their computer skills and web design-related knowledge tend to overshadow those of their predecessor. This happens for a good reason: starting with the 1970s, when most of the Baby Boomers were in their teenage years or even early adulthood, the technology has started to evolve and to be widely implemented across different industries.
This is why even though the Baby Boomers did not grow up using advanced technologies or computers, they were somewhat forced by the circumstances to adapt and to learn how to operate computers at a relatively young age, as opposed to those born around the time of WWII, who had their first contact with technology at a much older age. Statistics come to support this theory as well: four out of five people who were born between 1946 and 1964 are frequent Internet users, and approximately half of them use advanced smartphones today.

Those who were born between 1966 and 1976, also known as Generation X or Gen X, are even more familiar with computers, smartphones and other gadgets and advanced technologies, while those who were born between 1977 and 1990 (Generation Y) tend to be not only more digitally-oriented, but also the fastest growing segment of the workforce.

The Millennials, however, grew surrounded by technology: it was around the beginning of the 1990s when computers were widely available and it was the dream of every kid to have one. Children and teenagers back then slowly became more digitally aware and social, even if they used to “socialise” in the online environment, and they are the ones who are now in constant connection with one another via different social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter. The last generation are the “natives”, who were born within the last decade and who grew up surrounded by the most recent technology.

What Web Design is Relevant Today?

In addition to the fact that different generations have different perceptions when it comes to technology, computers and Internet, the concept of web design has dramatically changed as well, and this change was mainly determined by the ever-evolving gadgets and portable devices that most of us depend on.

Nowadays, the concept of “Responsive Web Design” dominates the market, and it refers to creating a volatile and versatile type of website design that can easily adjust itself depending on the device that was used for accessing it, be it a laptop, a smart phone or a tablet.