

Sell Us Something. Please!

Baby boomer women are the healthiest, wealthiest and best educated generation of women to ever hit midlife. (Notice I said wealthiest.) We have money to spend and we're upset that hardly a soul is marketing to us. We make 80% of the purchasing decisions in the home. We're at the peak of our earning potential and some of us are inheriting our parent's money. We buy cars, electronics, technology, clothes, cosmetics, food, and household items. We also make lots of travel arrangements.

During the past 18 months, I've traveled with my spouse, son, family, girlfriends, with other families, and for business. I also greatly influenced my husband's purchase of his BMW convertible because I believe he deserved it. We are the powerhouse consumers! When was the last time you saw a boomer woman in an ad for electronics, cars, technology, or even household items? Don't you typically see the younger generations, or men?

I recently spent two hours traipsing through a local mall looking for something to wear to a 50th birthday bash a Boomer Summit conference. I also needed gifts for my kids and a couple friends. I finally left with my gifts for others and nothing for myself. You see, I can't wear those low-cut pants of my daughters' generation, nor do I want to. And I won't wear the high "wasted" pants Mom wore. Nor will I wear those cropped tops that won't tuck, or are cut to my navel.

Boomer women are hard-working women who multi-task to survive. We don't have time to wander frustrated through malls. We're too busy managing our households, caring for our aging parents, baby sitting grandchildren, taking classes, and occasionally getting manicures, pedicures, and other spa treatments we rightfully deserve.

According to a *Top Ten Things What Boomer Women Want Contest* conducted by the National Association of Baby Boomer Women, www.nabbw.com, I am right on target. Numbers nine and ten respectively were:

- A realistic portrayal of our generation in commercials, catalogs and media print. We want a more positive depiction of boomer women in movies, books and on TV.
- The fashion world to recognize we still like to feel and look pretty.

This was not surprising. After all, we feel younger than our chronological age. We work at maintaining a youthful appearance. We ushered in the exercise craze, so we continue to work out and watch what we eat. We are interested in self-improvement, and are young in attitude and outlook.

Mary Brown and Carol Orsborn Ph.D. report in their book, *Boom: Marketing to the Ultimate Power Consumer—The Baby-Boomer Woman*, that according to a study done by the Center for Women's Business Research, almost seven in ten women over 35 years old say that the older we get, the more we enjoy trying new things. We aren't necessarily married to specific name brands.

Brown is a partner of JWTBoom which is a marketing firm whose focus is baby boomers. Orsborn is a senior vice president of Fleishman-Hillard and co-chair of FH Boom, the first initiative by a global PR firm exclusively dedicated to helping companies market to baby boomers. Marketing firms are catching on. My hope is that before long we'll see more boomer-focused advertisements. The boomer demographic spends over \$2.3 trillion annually. Marketers are foolish to ignore us.

So we say, "Come on America, market to us! Put our vibrant selves in your TV commercials, print ads and online marketing ventures. We have money to spend. Sell us something.

Dotsie Bregel is Founder of the National Association of Baby Boomer Women, www.nabbw.com and the wildly popular Web site www.BoomerWomenSpeak.com, the # 1 site for “baby boomer women online. She is passionate about empowering and educating midlife women. Dotsie has been mentioned in *Time* magazine and *AARP Bulletin* among dozens of newspapers across the nation. She frequently does radio interviews and appeared on *The Early Show* (CBS) with Dave Price. You may contact her at dots@boomerwomenspeak.com or 1-877-bboomer.