

Moms Rule



PR with LIF™

Women spend more than \$8 trillion a year, the equivalent of the economy of Japan. This covers everything from soup to nuts and bolts – literally. Moms buy for the kids, for dads, aunts, uncles, grandparents and teachers. They drive the decisions for most household purchases including the house and the car. They decide when it's time to decorate, renovate and invigorate.

- By 2010, women are expected to control \$1 trillion, or 60% of the country's wealth, according to research conducted by BusinessWeek and Gallup
- Women purchase or influence the purchase of 80% of all consumer goods, including stocks, computers and automobiles
- Women earn more than half of all accounting degrees, four out of every 10 law degrees and almost that many medical degrees

Most often, moms are the family's moral compass guiding religious preferences as well as house rules. They set the course for education, they motivate, inspire and celebrate life's achievements. ***The hand that rocks the cradle, literally rules the world...***

Teddy bears that make womb sounds? Snuglis with cell phone holders? Pre-wrapped blankets that make swaddling a breeze? Welcome to the world of multi-functional baby products and services, where moms rule and manufacturers are scrambling to meet their every need. The market is more demanding than ever, and only the coolest, most customized and creative products will survive, according to Gallagher. For business, it means a great opportunity to reach a market that is open to anything and everything that can make mom's life easier.

The 21st Century Mom

While no two moms are the same – they celebrate individuality – there are some common denominators seen in the Mom Community.

- **Moms are first of all "women"** – They need to be related to as more than "mom." They often feel a loss of personal identity and will gravitate to brands, companies, people who recognize and address *the woman inside the mom*. For American and European moms this means maintaining a personal identity – without guilt. In Spain and Latin America, moms want to retain their sexuality
- **"Function" is typically more important than "design."** A product must work as expected or better. However, "design" is a much-appreciated bonus generating "envy" appeal

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- **Work needs to work.** Flexible work styles are increasingly demanded and Stay-at-Home Dads are more commonly seen at the playground as moms find their value and the family income in the workplace
- **Middle America Moms are hot.** One in ten have tattoos. They thrive on "new," demand infinite choices and are easily bored. Balance is out – self-actualization is in. One-third of the kids on Main Street are born to single moms. Two-thirds of America's moms live in Middle America

Hi-Tech Moms

Research shows, moms are definitely tech-savy.

- Women spent more on technology than men in 2007, according to the Consumer Electronics Association, accounting for \$55 billion of the \$96 billion spent on electronics gear
- Women are involved in 89% of all consumer electronics purchase decisions
- 84% of women believe that new technologies can help improve their lives
- More than half of all new Web users are women, according to Jupiter Media Metrix

Women, 25-54

Besides underestimating their financial clout, marketers often see women as just one homogenous group. "Stereotyping lives on," says Mary Lou Quinlan, chief executive of Just Ask a Woman, a New York consulting firm. "Marketers see a 25-year-old woman as upbeat, on the way in her career, going out at night. The reality is she's **highly stressed, might not have a job, or be home with three kids**. Such marketing stereotypes hold true for women ages 25 to 40."

Even companies focused on women customers, like cosmetics or baby care, seem to view women as a single target group. Yet one recent study of Gen X and Boomer Moms found the mothers very dissimilar when grouped by age, points out Lisa Finn, editor of *Marketing to Women*, a monthly trade newsletter. The most useful segmentation was by similar parenting styles – and that cut across the generations.

The JSH&A study, "Defining Women," grouped women in **five LIF™ stage categories**.

Rather than chronological age breakouts, LIF™ stage provides a sharper profile to help define the marketing message and media.

- **Explorers** – Women completing their education and beginning to explore new careers, friends, solo-living arrangements, jobs and interests
- **Builders** – Women building their lives with partners, kids, careers, homes, hobbies and finances

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- **Boomers** – The booming stage of a woman's life as career and family settle in and life is full
- **Sliders** – A transitional woman sliding into a new chapter of life from the certainty she has built around family, friends, community and career, to new freedoms and new explorations as the kids leave home and careers are re-examined. ([See "Baby Boomers Take A Walk on The Wild Side"](#))
- **Seniors** – A time for the mature senior facing new limitations and frailties. New approaches become necessary to meet challenges

Overall, women are much better defined by their occupations, interests and identities than by gender. "Focus groups, forums, e-mail customer feedback and other such tools will give you a clear understanding of women's interests, including their passions, life stages, the problems they need solved, consumer sophistication level within your industry and the role they want your brand to play in their lives," says Andrea Learned at ReachWomen, a marketing firm in Bellingham, Wash. (Small Business Resources Marketing.)

JSH&A's Favorite Mom Resources:

- [AlphaMom](#)
- [New Baby](#)
- [Café Mom](#)
- [Dooce](#)
- [5 Minutes for Mom](#)
- [Club Mom](#)
- [Happy Worker](#)
- [Mom Bloggers Community](#)
- [Marketing 2 Moms](#)

