

# Women, Power, & Money

The Shift to the  
Female-Driven Economy

Insights Into Who She Is and How to Reach Her

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Fleishman-Hillard, headquartered in St. Louis, Missouri, is a leader in international marketing and communications, and one of the premier public relations agencies in the world. Harrison Group, headquartered in Waterbury, Connecticut, is a strategic marketing consulting and research services firm.

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## Executive Summary

*We stand at a societal tipping point – a tipping point in American economic power, and the power of families to control their destiny in a firestorm of economic risk. Amid these difficult times, one key factor is gaining authority over the country’s future; a growing authority is now exercised at the kitchen table, in the workplaces of America, and in retail environments – electronic and physical – by the American woman.*

*We are fast becoming a matriarchy in that women not only take the lead on issues of parenting, but are the principle decision makers in every family, including purchasing and investing. In truth, our data shows that America is becoming a “Momocracy” with women playing key roles in setting the agenda in millions of households – an effect that aggregates across the country into a society dominated by the new woman’s sense of success, self-determination, leadership, competence, and generosity.*

*Our society, our economy, our lifestyles – all is being fundamentally reshaped by the leadership of women. This report summarizes two large-scale, nationally-represented surveys that underscore the growing power of women. We also interviewed senior marketing executives who, as we shall see, fundamentally misread the lives and aspirations of women today.*

*First and foremost, we find that the vast majority of women – nearly 90% – feel successful; 60% feel very successful. And with good reason. Within the typical family, the female head of household is now effectively the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Purchasing Officer, and Chief Operating Officer. Outside of the family, women in high positions of leadership and power – be it politics or the corporate world – have become commonplace. They have come by these positions of power quietly and comfortably, without dramatic social upheavals. As we look back, it is clear that a profound power shift has occurred. The glass ceiling was not so much shattered as it was dissolved into irrelevance.*

*It’s not just that today’s woman feels successful – she’s fundamentally redefining success itself. She is in control. She sets the agenda. She leads by persuasion and consensus-building. She is passionate about her family, but is not defined by it. She is decidedly “not the new man” – for her, empowerment and control do not necessarily equate to masculinity. She is happy, and she is also a lifelong learner who strives for further self-satisfaction and goodness. She characterizes her identity, and draws her self-esteem, from a self-defined mix of career, family, friendships, and their own moral fiber. In today’s economy, she views saving as a moral imperative, and it is her value-orientation that is reshaping brands and marketplaces today.*

*The fundamental characteristics of women today are remarkably consistent across geography, income groups, and ethnicities as well. This calls for a new world of communication. Women expect open, honest, and engaging communications. They expect suppliers to offer clear guidelines for quality, relative advantage, and price. They expect to talk with one another about the things they want – not to learn new ideas, but to gain additional opinions and reinforce the opinions they have developed. Most of all, the new woman wants to be respected for the successful life she leads, and the authority she possesses in managing the economy at home and across the nation.*

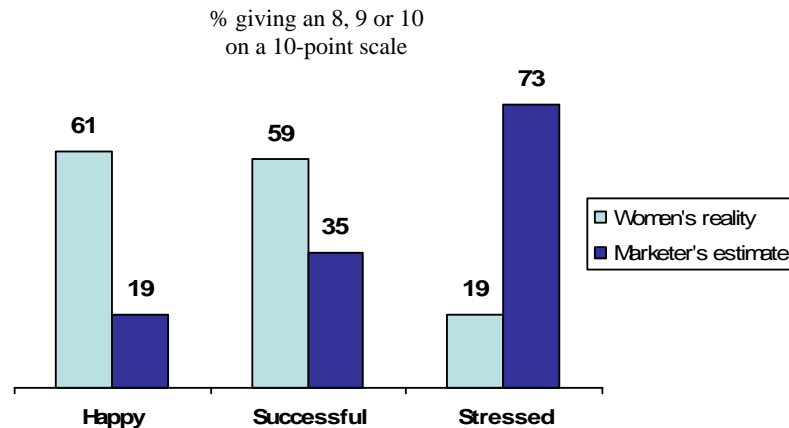
## Women, Power & Money: Research Methodology

Our research partner for this effort was Harrison Group, a leading market research and strategy firm known for sophisticated analysis and actionable business insights. The first wave of research was conducted in mid-2008, with a second wave conducted in November 2008 to replicate and extend the initial findings. Our methodology (outlined at the right) ensured that the demographics of our samples corresponded closely to Census information about the population at large. Together, the two studies paint a coherent and compelling picture of the powerful and changing role of women in American society today.

### She is... Misunderstood by Marketers

As our research with women progressed, we also undertook a separate effort to understand how women are perceived by a group who should have a deep understanding of them: consumer marketing executives. During September 2008, we interviewed 48 senior executives at top consumer marketing companies in the United States. These marketing professionals – with titles such as Chief Marketing Officer, Vice-President of Marketing, or Director of Marketing – were asked to estimate how women of North America would answer the questions in our survey.

The results revealed a fundamental disconnect between women and marketers. **Marketers predicted that women would describe their lives as stressful, and that less than a third would describe themselves as successful or happy. In fact, feelings of happiness and success are widespread, and only one-in-five describe themselves as highly stressed.** Marketers underestimate the passion today’s woman has for culture (books, music and travel), while overestimating her passion for career, fashion and celebrities.



### Women, Power & Money: Research

Study 1:

- Conducted August-September, 2008
- Nationally representative of women (U.S. and Canada)
- Ensured adequate representation of women across ethnicities and income groups using sampling methodology
- Conducted 1600 35-minute interviews via online research panels
- Ages 21-70; annual household income of \$25K+
- Considered themselves “successful” (6 or more on 10 point scale)

Study 2:

- Recontacted 602 U.S. respondents from Study 1
- Conducted post-election (November 5-7, 2008)

Study 3

- Interviewed 48 senior marketing executives at top consumer marketing companies

% passionate about...	Women's Reality	Marketer's Estimate	Gap
Travel	60	38	+22
Books	59	21	+38
Music	46	13	+33
Health	57	73	-16
Money	37	58	-21
Career	35	69	-34
Beauty	27	46	-19
Fashion	27	60	-33
Celebrities	10	35	-25

Marketers also misread how best to use brands to connect with women. On average, marketers believed that 79% of women would agree that “it is important to wear the right brands” when in fact, only 24% agreed with statement. Marketers estimated that 65% of women would agree that “In the past year, I noticed a product being worn or endorsed by a celebrity or athlete” while in fact, only 15% agreed. This report dispelled these and other misunderstandings through a deeper look at women’s lives and aspirations.

## She Is... Successful on Her Own Terms (and is not “the new man”)

Our research goal was to study women who feel successful, and to understand how those success dynamics reverberate throughout their lives and their shopping habits. Therefore, we asked women to rate how successful they felt on a 10 point scale, with 1 meaning “not at all successful,” and 10 meaning “extremely successful.” We kept the definition of success intentionally broad. We asked them to answer based on their own perspective, and that this could be based on a number of factors – financial, personal, career, relationships, happiness, and so on.

**Fully 89% gave a 6 or higher, our minimum threshold for “success.”  
In other words, only 11% declared themselves to be not successful.  
Moreover, 59% gave themselves an 8, 9 or 10.**

We had set out to understand today’s successful woman, and our first conclusion was that virtually all women today consider themselves successful. Moreover, they are defining success for themselves, and are redefining it for society as a whole.

**Today’s woman is clearly not “the new man.” In defining character and success, she is disavowing typically male aspirations, traits, and combinations of traits to rewrite the rules.** Stereotypically masculine aspirations – such as career and financial success – are defined and experienced in relative terms, and are as much about power, domination and superiority as they are about enjoying experiences themselves. Women, in contrast, are displaying many fewer male-driven hierarchical notions about success and character.

When asked how others view them, for example, we saw above that the top five characteristics were not necessarily the terms one would use to describe a stereotypical alpha male: Intelligent, kind, thoughtful, independent, generous. Conversely, far less than half describe themselves as decisive, ambitious, charismatic, or athletic. Interestingly, only 38% say others would describe themselves as feminine – perhaps reflecting that males have largely co-opted the term and defined it for their own purposes. Similarly, when asked about their passions, we see how inherently “non-competitive” pursuits top the list: family, love, children, travel, books, and marriage. Money, politics and sports appear well down the list.

**Consider that today’s “alpha females” are highly accomplished, but not defined by those accomplishments, and haven’t needed to take on the affectations of masculinity to achieve.** Michelle Obama, for example, is a Harvard Law School graduate and married to the president, but her identity is less “the First Lady” and more “Michelle Obama” and “mom-in-Chief.”

Words that People Who Know Use to Describe You:		Passionate About...	
	%		%
Intelligent	82	Family	81
Kind	80	Love	66
Thoughtful	79	Children	64
Independent	75	Travel	62
Generous	70	Books	59
Funny	67	Health	58
Sensible	66	Marriage	57
Fun-loving	63	Education	55
Sensitive	62	Cooking	47
Motherly	58	Music	45
Creative	56	Pets	45
Empathetic	56	My body	43
Attractive	55	Exercise	42
Patient	52	Clothes	41
		Shopping	41
		People in need	39
Balanced	49	Money	38
Talkative	46	Environment	37
Serious	39	Movies	37
Decisive	38	Career	36
Feminine	38	Church/Temple	29
Ambitious	37	Volunteering	29
Eager to please	34	Fashion	28
Romantic	32	Beauty	27
Cautious	31	Interior decorating	25
Sexy	30	Art	22
Charismatic	28	Cosmetics	22
Sophisticated	27	Jewelry	22
Mischievous	24	Politics	17
Athletic	20	Spectator Sports	15
		Celebrities	10

## She Is... In Control and Sets the Agenda

The widespread sense of success is accompanied by an even more profound and pervasive sense of control. She sets her agenda, defines her goals, chooses how to pursue them, and remains confident in her ability to achieve them. Beyond her personal goals, it is her ideas and aspirations that shape her household, her destiny, and the national economy as a whole.

*Every single woman in our survey – a 100% figure unheard of in the world of survey research – described themselves as having significant input into household decisions, with 59% describing themselves as the sole decision maker on most issues.*

Welcome to the modern American matriarchy. In the modern American household, women are effectively ...

- *Chief Executive Officer:* 79% say “In the end, my opinion determines family financial decisions”
- *Chief Purchasing Officer:* 74% are primarily responsible for buying groceries and basic supplies
- *Chief Financial Officer:* 55% are primarily responsible for paying the bills
- *Chief Operating Officer:* 91% feel they are “the manager for the quality of my family’s life”

From the point of view of our respondents, husbands play a vitally important role in the social fabric of the modern household as well. But when it comes to specific tasks, men lead in responsibility for making money and mowing the lawn. That’s it. Nearly half of the women surveyed say their spouse is the primary source of income; 38% say this responsibility is shared, and 13% describe themselves as the primary breadwinner. In terms of our lengthy list of day-to-day responsibilities, however, only in terms of lawn maintenance do men typically have the primary responsibility (the glass ceiling for women has been replaced by the grass ceiling for men).

Forget the glass ceiling, and the notion that men impose limits on a woman’s career, and by extension, her life. We gave women ample opportunity to talk about the glass ceiling and any lingering resentment associated with gender-based constraints on their careers, and it was clearly not a top-of-mind issue. Women are aware that it is no longer extraordinary for women to be on top in corporate, academic or even political life. **The glass ceiling – as we have come to think of it – wasn’t so much shattered as it dissolved, and gave way to a new sense of entitlement and power.**

		This responsibility is...		
		Mostly mine	Shared	Mostly my spouse's
Primarily women's responsibility	Purchasing gifts for friends and family*	81	19	-
	Buying groceries, toiletries and basic supplies*	75	23	1
	Scheduling household appointments and activities	73	25	1
	Cooking/providing food for meals	68	24	7
	Paying bills*	56	28	15
Tied: Women's & joint	Entertaining in our home	48	48	2
	Budgeting for my family	47	49	5
	Managing savings account	44	46	10
Joint responsibility	Major household purchases (appliances, furniture)*	22	77	1
	Planning what we do for fun	34	64	2
	Planning vacations*	40	58	2
	Conducting financial planning	29	51	19
	Having important "talks" with the children	21	48	2
"The Grass Ceiling"	Gardening/lawn maintenance	16	26	46

## She Is... In Control and Sets the Agenda (cont)

She leads in more than just household tasks, and she leads in her own unique style – not by command, but rather by persuasion and building consensus. More than seven-in-ten women say they like brands that are valued by their spouse/significant other, and spouses are generally the primary resource when making major purchase decisions. Similarly, kids have a potent impact as well.

She makes decisions with the input of her family, but ultimately, she decides what is in the best interest of her family. In today's economy she spends prudently (as we shall see) but she also spends in accordance with her role as manager of her family's quality of life. Whether it is family vacations, back-to-school shopping or private school tuition, she is the ultimate arbiter of what is a "family want" versus a "family need." She is more inclined, for example, to cut back on holiday gifts (figuring the spirit of the season could be fostered in non-material ways) than on birthday gifts for her kids (a rite important to her family's cohesiveness and well-being).

**In the end, successful marketers will be those who recognize the evolving leadership role of women. Arm women with tools for persuading family members, and help her make effective decisions on behalf of the family unit.**

### *Leadership in action*

- 91% agree: People often seek me out for answers when they have questions
- 84% agree: I am good at thinking of multiple ways to explain my issue or point of view
- 83% disagree: I look to what my friends are doing to find out what I should be doing

## She Is Happy, but Striving for Self-Satisfaction and Goodness

Today's woman is feeling happy and in control, as we have seen. But what is perhaps most remarkable is that this sense of control – indeed, leadership and success – extends to each of the four main areas of her life: family, friends, her relationship with her significant other, and her career. Moreover, she manages all of these elements, not in ways or priorities dictated by men, but in a manner that ensures that she gets what she wants for herself. Her self-esteem and identity are drawn from each of these areas, in self-determined proportions. In a sense, today's woman creates her own “identity equation.” This is empowering, and provides a buffer against threats to her identity and self-esteem – when one area of her life becomes challenged (e.g., career difficulties), she is able to draw strength and self-esteem from her family, confide in her friends, and feel good about her other interests in life.

Some women focus largely on family, and family tops the overall list of passions (see chart on page 4). **But while she is passionate about her family, she is typically not defined by it, and her list of passions is long and well-rounded.** For some, work is an important element of the identity equation as well, in a more compartmentalized way. Two-thirds feel their job is a critical element of their self-esteem. Yet only one-third feel their life revolves around their career, and a similarly small number describe it as a passion. Regardless of the path one woman chooses, she tends to be non-judgmental and accepting of women who choose a different path.

**Her passions speak to a fundamental underlying desire: to improve her life.** Today's woman is happy, and engaged in a life-long pursuit of self-satisfaction and goodness. This is the hot button that Oprah has hit so effectively for years – self-improvement books typically attract more women readers than men. The result is a sometimes confusing paradox of contentment, while also striving for improvement. For example, she is relatively content with her health and appearance, while she strives to lose weight and be even healthier. Consider that...

- 91% feel they are “aging gracefully”
- 87% try to “eat what I know is right for me”
- 84% believe they are “doing what it takes to be healthy”
- 69% are happy with how they look

Relative contentment with health and appearance does not mean a lack of aspirations to improve in these areas. Three-fourths are actively trying to lose weight. Fully half are increasingly looking for organic products. Over 80% wish there were healthier choices when eating out. When asked about stress-reduction strategies given today's economy, she cites a range of tactics relying on her many sources of support.

*Activities done to help manage stress*

Staying within my budget	54
Exercising	53
Spending more time with my family	53
Eating healthier	49
Cooking at home	48
Taking more time for myself	45
Spending more time with my friends	38

## She Is... a New and Savvy Shopper

Today's woman has not only taken charge of the management of the household, she is the treasurer and chief purchasing officer. We suspect that the current economic crisis will enhance her powers in these roles. **But greater purchasing authority does not imply more impulse purchasing; instead it augers a world in which women carefully research choices within their constraints of time to shop, income, and family situation.** For example, asked about her last purchase across a variety of price points, women indicated a strong preference for Internet-based research, due diligence (for both item features and price), comparison shopping in stores, and a preference for brands that can help mitigate the down-side risks of making a poor purchase.

Her due diligence owes itself to her natural search for the best deal, but in the present environment it must also be understood that she isn't trying to "save" money...she's "making" money by extending the purchase power of the family income. And it's an attitude that is intensifying, as women increasingly seem prepared to wait the market out. Consider that...

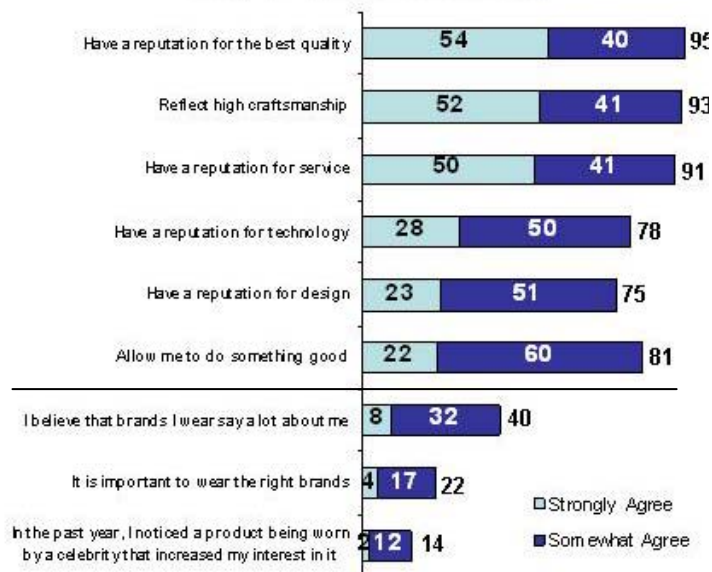
Prior to Purchase:	Last \$100+ Purchase %	Last \$500+ Purchase %	Last \$1000+ Purchase %
Researched the item online	61	65	65
Looked for pricing online so I am not taken advantage of	49	52	50
Shopped around multiple stores to ensure best pricing	49	51	50
Decided which brand to purchase	42	48	51
Waited for the product to go on sale	38	33	29
None of these	11	8	10

- 87% are more thoughtful than ever of every purchase they make
- 86% usually wait for something to go on sale before buying
- 83% are more carefully budgeting expenditures in the current economy

**Savvy decision making in the marketplace translates to a practical and quality-oriented approach to evaluating and choosing brands. Status takes a back seat to quality, craftsmanship, and service.** Value has always been important to her – a focus intensified by today's economy. The value equation is obviously important, but so is the values equation, as 81% appreciate brands that allow them to do something good. Technology and design are widely valued as well.

While the practical and utilitarian aspects of brands are widely considered very important, the social and emotional benefits of brands consistently appeal to a much smaller niche. Only about one-in-five believe "it is important to wear the right brands," and one-in-ten look for brands that are preferred by their friends. **Today's woman does not rely on brand names to fit in or arrive at a sense of who she is – rather, she chooses brands that are consistent with who she already knows she is.**

Study 1: "I like brands that..."



## She Is... Empowered by Technology and Media, but Disengaged from Advertising

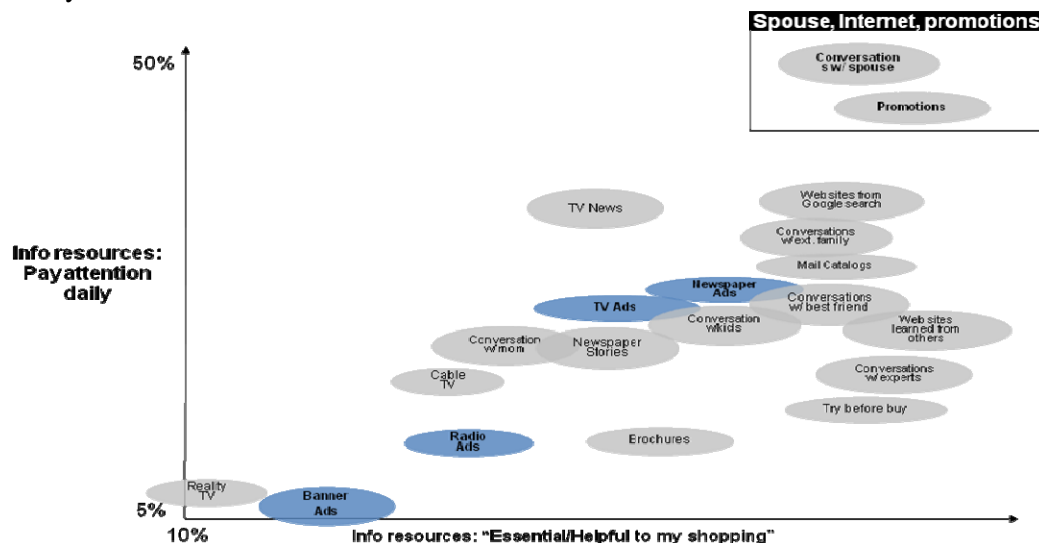
Increasingly advertisers wonder what is going on out there: the old solutions do not work. The problem is not that today's women are too busy to consume media. Indeed, quite the opposite. Women are heavy consumers of mass media, highly connected with one another through mobile media, and increasingly active as producers and distributors of content. Consider that today's women are...

- **Media hungry:** They consume over 40 hours of media per week – essentially a full-time job – with Internet use leading the way with 17 hours.
- **Cell phone savvy:** Cell phone ownership has overtaken landline penetration. Moreover, nearly three-fourths send/receive text messages on their cell phone, and just as many use a cell phone camera; one-third use their phone for Internet access.
- **Women 2.0:** Over two-thirds of women under 35 keep a profile on a social networking site, and over half have uploaded photos to a photo sharing site. Nearly one-third blog or post comments online in a typical week.

	Total	Age 21-34
Have a cell phone	96	97
Have a landline phone	79	61
Use their cell phone to...		
▪ Text messaging	71	84
▪ Take pictures	67	74
▪ Access the Internet	31	36
Have a profile on a social networking site (e.g., MySpace, Facebook)	42	70
Upload photos to a photo sharing site	39	53
Post comments online about products/services	30	32

With so much media consumption, and so much of it seemingly highly targetable, the challenge for marketers is not getting their messages in front of today's women. Instead, the bigger challenge is making it compelling enough for her to truly pay attention, and then take action. Across a variety of impact measures, advertising in various media is often far down the list. The most potent influences are generally the opinions of her spouse, Web sites she knows well, and promotions (particularly given today's value orientation). For less frequent and bigger ticket purchases, additional influences include expert recommendations, online reviews, and trial experiences with the product. Clearly, **breaking through is a challenge for advertising messages. It's not the medium, but rather the message.**

Indeed, it's not even the content of the message, but the fact that there's any advertising message at all that causes women to start tuning out. The challenge is now maximizing relevance, and crafting messages that speak to her needs while resonating emotionally.



## Ten Key Take-Aways: The Art and Science of Communicating With Today's Women

The process of effective communication begins with respect. Neither advertising nor public relations persuades...rather they advise. The future goes to businesses that learn to influence women through advocacy and helpful advice.

Both advocacy and advice have distinct rhetorical platforms. In the new world of women, detail matters. Appeals to logic and then the emotion align with the search for empirical validation and emotional reward. A goal of public relations must be achieving independent confirmation in the world of free-circulating ideas. Build information that can be learned and restated into campaigns: the new world is not about slogans – it is about intelligent choice and the strength of argument. Celebrate your most successful consumers in word and story. Tell women how much you love what you do. Circulate your story and your history. Give them a means to talk with you. Use the combination of media – public communication, Web-site, and advertising as elements in a chain of communication with each medium playing its own role – PR for story-telling, the Web for detail management, and advertising to add color.

In the end, women have the experience to determine what they need, how they need it, and how much they value it. They understand how to trade price against volume. They understand how to wait for price to come to them. They understand how to navigate risk. They are the arbiters of the next generation American economy. We offer ten thoughts about the communication process and the attitude we think successful companies will take in serving women...

**1) Recognize the new American matriarchy.** We stand now at a tipping point, where our historically male-dominated society is shifting toward a matriarchy. The shift in the balance of power resulting from this tipping point is accelerated by today's economic crisis, one which, in retrospect, will be viewed as largely driven by male behavioral patterns such as heavy leveraging and aggressive risk-taking. Women's more prudent and reasoned approach to spending will afford them a sense of financial control which they will not relinquish (to paraphrase one media pundit: *We all know what happened to Lehman Brothers. If they had been Lehman Sisters, they would still be here*). They are up to the task, exhibiting a profound sense of leadership – of the family unit, of financial decisions, and of their destinies.

**2) Position with substance.** Effectively connecting with women requires aligning products, brands, and messages with the core characteristics of today's women. In general, they will resonate to brands that authentically represent quality, not status. They will relate to messages that are substantive, straightforward, and geared toward leaders. Flowery adjectives and superfluous descriptors will not resonate. Most importantly, they will respond to messages of respect – for their power, their authority, their social connectedness, and their self-confidence.

**3) Re-think your assumptions.** This study was conducted to uncover the realities of women today. The results highlight the need for making business decisions based on data – quantitative, qualitative, ethnographic, CRM-based, and more. Gender-based stereotypes are more misleading today than ever before.

**4) Market to the team as well as the team leader:** Women lead through consensus-building and persuasion rather than by command. Across all price points, spouses are cited as the top influence on purchase decisions. Similarly, kids have a potent impact on everything from day-to-day decisions, such as leisure activities and television programs, to bigger ticket purchases, such as vacation destinations. Effective marketing, therefore, must target the whole family, recognize the woman's role of power, and give her tools of persuasion to make her leadership role easier.

**5) Help women strive for more.** Today's woman is characterized by a sense of satisfaction and contentment, but at the same time, she continues to strive for self-satisfaction and goodness. Whether it is connecting with her wide-ranging passions, or her broadly-defined interest in self-improvement, marketers need to understand and cater to her interest in personal growth. Keep in mind that this desire for growth takes place from a foundation of contentment with herself, not from a sense of self-dislike or dissatisfaction. Connecting with her requires walking the fine line of this paradox.

**6) Be good.** Just as important as the value equation is the values equation. Simply put, women are looking for more than a good product at a good price – they’re looking to do business with companies that are *good*. For example, 63% are more likely to purchase brands that support charitable causes, and on average they donate 2% of their income to charities. *Good*, in this sense, is broad and multi-faceted. It means having a set of values that drive every aspect of the business, from product development and marketing to customer service and employee relations. It means having integrity, and keeping one’s word to every constituency – customers, employees, clients, channel partners, shareholders. It means supporting cause-related activities in an authentic, enthusiastic way... even when no one is looking. It means being green, not just in word, but in deed.

**7) Recognize that family is a center, but not necessarily the center of life.** Family may be her strongest and most pervasive passion, but it is not her only passion. Career is a potent element of the self-esteem of many, although they typically go to great lengths to ensure that work is not their only passion. Social networks and peer relationships are equally important. It is tempting to label today’s family a *momocracy*, but it is important to recognize that today’s women view themselves as much more than just moms.

**8) Rethink your communication channels.** Today’s women have a weakening tie to advertising, particularly later in the purchase funnel and for big ticket items. The causes are many, including lack of trust, greater use of filtering technologies, and the complexity of her media use across circumstances. She looks to magazines and programmed content – both Internet and television – to shape her ideas. She turns to friends and family to validate her solutions. She uses channel choice to maximize value. Public relations provides a critical lever to offset the difficulties associated with message transmission. Although some control of the message is lost, by transmitting through the impartial lens of the media, marketing content garners an aura of objectivity.

**9) Target roles, not lifestyles.** Lifestyle labels such as “stay-at-home mom” and “career woman” are becoming increasingly dated and over-simplified. Her life and self-concept are multi-faceted and composed of many roles – mother, businesswoman, friend, confidant, and as we have seen, household CEO, CFO, CPO and COO. She is at ease with these many roles, even though they sometimes battle for her precious time and attention. Talk to women in the roles they play from the context of your product, and avoid pigeon-holing them with a single lifestyle label.

**10) Appreciate the magnified power of me.** The creation and distribution of media content is no longer the province of multi-national corporations. Instead, it is increasingly the province of today’s woman. Although Web site and blog creation are still activities of a minority with a particular passion for advocacy, posting comments online and spreading messages virally are becoming mainstream activities. Internet power may be more about screening ideas through the published reports of others, rather than a message dissemination device.

## **A Final Thought**

Women across America, no matter their economic station, their ethnicity, or their location, define their self-esteem by their decisiveness, their ability to mobilize their friends, their generosity, and their health. They work and take care of their homes. They manage their home purchasing using just-in-time inventory procedures. They respect the will of the whole family in making purchasing decisions, but the ultimate decisions rest with them. The economy has forced them to become more careful and prudent in making purchase decisions, and so we find they will spend more time in discount stores, and less time shopping traditional mercurial retail. In fact, women are looking to reduce their spending in virtually all of the categories they purchase in routinely, with declines becoming particularly pronounced as the economy has slowed.

As women become even more efficient in their purchasing, they bring a “purchasing officer mentality” to home management – buying on need as opposed to on want, stocking their shelves on a best-price available basis, and concentrating on managing against a budget that they set and execute, rather than set with the permission of others. These women bringing these attitudes are changing the landscape of the American economy, and we suspect they won’t be going back to the old days. They are finding that by being careful, they are actually bringing their families closer to them, as they become more effective as homemakers and as workers. The future goes to people who speak to women with authenticity, clarity, and intelligence in creating a price-values relationship that underscores both the quality of the products they offer, and the quality of appreciation they have for the women who respond.

In the final analysis, women are reshaping our economy and our society. Their similarities far outweigh their differences. And it is marketers who truly understand the lives and aspirations of women who will be successful in this new landscape.