

Advertising and Marketing to Female Consumers

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ABSTRACT

Women are an important segment of marketing because of their discretionary spending power; they spend family money; they influence the parents' spending; they will spend in the future and they will be more of them in the years ahead. As Women are high risk proposition and at the same time they also promise high reward if one can reach and communicate with them effectively, the pay-off will be worth the effort. Hence the researcher is undertaking the following problem statement for the work: To analyze what marketers should do in reaching out to women consumers through advertising and marketing strategies.

Keywords: *advertising, Female consumers, communication, marketing strategies.*

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1. Introduction

With the advent of Television, Commercial Radio's, Cell Phones, Internet, LPG policy and the increase in standard of living, the tremendous changes in the buying behaviors of women are seen. This new environment changed the markets from seller's market to buyer's market and the marketers are made to strive for achieving sustainable competitive advantage for their survival. These changes, challenges and growth have been initiating and accelerating the process of inexorable integration of markets, nation states and technology to a degree never witnessed before in the recorded history of mankind. The impact of them has been so comprehensive that no part of life across countries and continents can afford to be free from their influence. All the business units which wish to survive and prosper in this changed business environment; without exception, have to change their approaches in all the functional areas of management. Those who are hesitant to change are sure to disappear. And the competition in the ultimate analysis is the market centric. Marketers are able to influence the consumers if they are able to predict the consumer behavior. In these days of consumer-centric markets, the knowledge of the behavior of consumers is inevitable. Each consumer segment has unique needs hence an in-depth study of consumers and their behavior is necessary to design suitable products and to market them. Marketers and advertisers need to be masters of fundamentals of human psychology that will be valuable in understanding, predicting and shaping human behavior. Principles that influence human psychology can be useful for marketers for motivating consumer purchase decisions. Women get money from various sources. Literate women more likely are to have a regular/part-time job. Younger women are more dependent on the allowances and as-needed money their parents give them. Women love to shop. It is an experience rather than an errand. The act of buying can be one of the independence or conformity, self expression or socialization. Women spend their funds freely. This fact coupled with their rising incomes, makes women an increasingly attractive consumer segment. Women are more brand conscious today than ever before. Women buy many of the same things that they have always bought, but they also buy products from new and emerging categories, from low-fat to high – tech. the products women buy segment them and reveal their priorities and lifestyles.

2. Profile of Indian Women

Owing to its large population size and growing disposable incomes, India offers a profitable investment opportunity to the marketers across the world. Today's marketing is consumer oriented and therefore the global marketers need to understand Indian women consumers if they want to successfully harness this opportunity. The changes in a country's economic, social, legal, political and technological environments bring around significant changes in the psychographic profile of the women consumers, further influencing their buying behaviors. India has seen rapid development in all these spheres during recent decades which has completely transformed the profile of Indian women consumers. From a women consumer's point of view, the task of understanding their preferences and buying behavior may seem easy but the marketers argue that the things would have been easier only if the women consumers were static in their choices. Let's find out how Indian women consumer has changed over years and how marketers should react to these changes. Today, the Indian women consumer is:

- **Socially Connected:**

Recent researches establish that the Indian women consumer is no more living in isolation. He has mass presence in social media and is increasingly networked. A recent article in The Economic Times claims that Facebook alone has crossed 65 million users in India. From the marketers' viewpoint, this may act as a signal to concentrate more on promoting their offerings on social media. Social media also leads to effective word-of-mouth publicity.

- **Environmentally Aware:**

Indian women's are now better educated and increasingly aware of their environment. They are also well aware of the dangers of environmental degradation. The lesson for marketers here is to invest in environmental researches and offering an environment-friendly marketing mix to the women consumers.

- **Style-Conscious:**

A number of recent researches conducted on population aging establish that a larger population of developed countries is aging as compared to that of the developing countries like India. The larger younger Indian women population exposed to global media and connected through social networking looks for style. From impulse buying products to the high involvement products like cars and smart phones, the purchases are largely influenced by style. The marketers therefore need to blend utility with style.

- **Low Brand Loyalty:**

Today women consumer is exposed to a large array of brands offering similar products. The competition among brands brings greater discounts and better sales promotion offers for the customers. As a result, the consumers today are full of choices and this leads to lower brand loyalty. Since the products are often similar, the women consumers want the best deal no matter which brand offers it. So, the marketers must keep innovating to differentiate from their competitors.

- **Informed Purchases:**

Women consumer no longer depends on whatever information the marketers provide her about the product. Today's consumer explores all possible information sources in order to review, compare and contrast every product alternative available to her before making her purchases. The marketers therefore need to be transparent in their offerings and explicitly provide as much product details as possible on various platforms.

- **Spends on Leisure:**

The reduction in family sizes accompanied by increase in family incomes leaves Indian women consumers with better incomes at their disposal. An article in The Hindu opined that the new generation of Indian women consumers does not mind to borrow from future incomes for holidays.

- **Health-Conscious:**

Health is a priority for Indian women consumers today. The increasing environmental pollution and growing stress levels have resulted into greater incidences of cardiovascular ailments, obesity, and neurological disorders as well. As such, most of the women consumer's purchases are guided by health concerns. The marketers thus need to study the health trends of Indian women's over recent

years; common diseases and the underlying causes. The information so gathered can be utilized for product innovations. Future marketers need to serve Indian consumers with healthier offerings.

3. Literature Review

Saadia Nasir, Prakash Vale and Hafsa 2012 Mateen highlights Word of mouth has greater impact than Social networking sites. The reason behind this is the reliability of word of mouth. The reason found out is that people trust their friends/family's opinion more than other marketing media. Although Social networking sites have high reach but even then it is less effective than word of mouth. Moreover, there is a positive relationship between household income and monthly buying behavior. On the other hand, there is no correlation between household income and preference to designer clothes. This means that household income does not play a role in preferring designer clothes. It has been found out that people belonging to low income groups also prefer buying designer clothes.

Vandana Sabharwal, Savitha Maan and Sanjeev Kumar 2004 in their research paper indicates that Moisturizers are found to be most popular among all age group, income level and marital status. Lakme brand was found to be most popular among unmarried and between the age group of 21-25 and having income more than 10,000. Because Lakme brand were found to be costlier than other brands. Brand and previous usage results were mostly considered by women of age group 21-25 and unmarried women are conscious for selecting a particular brand while selecting cosmetics. Nuclear families were considered quality as the major factor while buying a cosmetic product as compared to joint family. There is a difference in brand possession and favorite brand of women skin care products. Fair & lovely was found to be favorite brand among cosmetic product. But mostly women possessed and use Vaseline followed by Ponds and Fair & Lovely.

Dr. Anu Nagapal Chopra 2009 opines that it is important for a marketer to provide as much information to a woman buyer as he can because communication plays an integral part in buying decisions. Men rely on their personal assessment while women rely more on personal trust when it comes to buying and are open for inputs at various stages. It is important for Marketer to understand that the factors like Promotional strategy, Festival offers, Discounts, Availability, Billing Speed and Ambience play a decisive role in purchase behavior of Women Grocery consumers Hence, it becomes important to position a product in a way that it aims at prioritizing the strategies accordingly. Dr. Sriparna Guha stresses on Women, particularly women workforce are vital part of buying behavior. It has been found that working women are more involved with the purchasing activities. They are more price conscious as compared to the non-working married women.

Marissa Miley and Ann Mack (USA) 2011 researched on the new female consumer: The rise of the real mom, she conveys that sampling new products at one of their 50+ annual events or workshop, watching an original webisode, or redeeming an offer at a local retailer; we motivate /educate women to take action. This is how they engage consumers with custom programs that deliver measurable results. Sari Suzan Hamed Abu Adab worked on assessing the influence of fashion clothing advertising on women's consumer behavior in Finland, He concludes that age, occupation and media have an impact and influence on consumer behavior and trigger women consumers as women are more interested in fashion.

4. Statement of the Problem

To analyze what marketers should do in reaching out to women consumers through advertising and marketing strategies.

5. Research Methodology

The methodology applied is descriptive in nature and a critical analysis on literature done on women consumers has been done through secondary data collection to achieve the objectives of the paper.

6. Advertising and Marketing to Women Consumer

Marketing and especially advertising, it's most glamorous representation is the public arena in which companies insights about women are most vividly on display. Women buy the vast varieties of consumer products. Gender appeal is the type of marketing that resonates with the culture of particular sex, its messages and images tap into a gender's collective consciousness – its rights of passage, milestones, communication styles, body issues and motivations. Marketers needs to understand that emotional connections with audience creates more effective campaigns but marketers must understand that it's different for women and a good story is priceless when marketing to women. Women always responds to messages in the campaign about improvements – women responds to personal stories and examples. Marketers should spread the message about their products and services through women bloggers and engage women in conversations around a topic or issue that you would like to be associated with. Marketers have to understand that women's shopping

experience is transformed when children are around and women will abandon a personal shopping experience if it inconveniences their companions. Women like being involved in clubs and membership programs that let them hear about new products and discounts. Women like websites that recommend matching product when they select an item and they like a “CLEAN WEB ENVIRONMENT” Women not only spend their money but also influence the family spending. Women’s spend more time on media and hence marketers should reach them on social network. Women are more influenced by her friends and children but they are very particular about their purchases. Marketers should remember women are evaluating the sales person as much as the product. Women are more interested in product benefits: Women appreciate having someone edit their options and when she says she will think about it she probably means it.

7. Conclusion

Women constitute a big consumer segment for marketers, as they buy variety of products for themselves and also to the family. Marketers must understand and analyze women buying behavior from women’s point of view and achieve the objectives of the firm.

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