

How To Make Products Resonate With Women

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By now you've probably seen the numbers – the American women affect the spending of over \$5 Trillion dollars, which is more than Japan. With such big numbers, it's no secret that corporations are working day and nights trying to unlock what these women want, and many are missing the mark. They're spending too much time and money making products, services and advertising that "get" attention vs. "give" attention.

Wait—but, isn't that what advertising is all about, cutting through the clutter and grabbing attention away from competing products and services? Yes, and no. Yes, you need to grab their attention, but if the image and final product or service doesn't resonate with her, you lost the sale. By resonate, we mean going beyond the checklist of features and benefits and deep into what makes her react emotionally for or against something.

Why should corporations care? First, follow the money. Anyone in sales knows that if you want to make that sale, you must get to the decision maker or in this case the one with the big "to-do" list. American women are responsible for 80% of all consumer purchases. Second, women are more willing to be candid about what works and doesn't. Corporations willing to listen will gain a wealth of insight they have overlooked in the past. Lastly, the insights given will benefit women and men by designing better products with hassle free, high service delivery.

Many would argue that women and men aren't that different, but if that were true then there wouldn't be a need for psychologists and counselors OR relationship books. Like it or not women perceive things much differently than men, some of it is biological and some of it has been socialized into them. That difference is why the majority of women feel that current advertising doesn't "get" them. The following list is far from inclusive, but is a good starting point to understanding the differences that can be tapped during product development and promotion of your products and services.

- **Biological** - Studies show that women's brains exchange 4 times the information between the right and left lobe. They process more sights, sounds, smells, tastes, etc. "She has a Mother's Ear," became a cliché because women hear more sounds than men and are aware of more peripheral influences. Because she hears more and has greater peripheral vision, she actually perceives more detail. ALL of it, even the smallest detail, is very important and provokes new questions which send her gathering more information to guide her final decision. Knowing this:
 - Prepare your sales reps to give far more information to a female customer than a male, and be willing to stay in the sales cycle longer.
 - Make sure your collateral material addresses her additional questions.
 - Fill your ads with contextual information vs. bullet points.
 - Help her avoid overload. Women tend to multi-task more than men -- they have to since they still perform 67% of all home upkeep as well as put in a full day at the office. Win her over by taking things off her "to-do" list.

Sociological – Women “group” and like to talk. Sociologist will say that this stems from tribal days when staying with the group kept you alive. Today it’s also considered a reaction to stress: beside fight or flight, “grouping” is another accepted option. Groups are simply a safer place to be.

- What groups does she hang out with? If you can tap the group, your product or service will be talked about and self-promoted. Conversely, if she had a bad experience with your product, the group hears that as well. If that “group” is an Internet discussion site, her circle of influence just went worldwide.
- Talking – what some would call worthless chatter, smart marketers see as free research and advertising. While she’s talking are you hearing what’s she’s valuing? Is it her family, the world, her own self-respect – all of the above?
 - What bulletin boards, chat rooms, discussion groups, book clubs, etc., etc. does she use to gather and disseminate information?
 - How does what you offer affect her family?
 - Does it reinforce that you respect her intelligence?
 - Does it tell her that you’re ok with her lifestyle?
 - Are you trying to make the world a better place? (In one study, this was more important than making sure her kids were further ahead.)

If you want your products and services to resonate with women, you need to “give attention” to the way she receives and perceives information – a shiny car with low 0-60 mph ratings and 5 bullet points doesn’t do it, but show that car working in the context of her everyday life and provide the backup information she’ll need to do her research, and you’ll be on the road to resonance.



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