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THE REALITY OF THE WORKING WOMAN

Her Impact on the Female Target Beyond Consumption



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Introduction

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IT WAS THE watershed moment that wasn't. Countless newspaper headlines predicted that a seminal moment was just around the corner: For the first time ever, women would outnumber men in the American work force. It was going to happen any moment now, we were told. "We did it!" proclaimed the cover of a January 2010 edition of *The Economist*, featuring Rosie the Riveter flexing a buff bicep.

Well, actually, Rosie did not do it—yet, anyway.

The latest numbers from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, for the month of April, put women's share of the 130.2 million jobs in the U.S. at 49.8%. While not the majority, that is not to say something seismic has not happened in recent decades. The trend is undeniable, in fact: Women do account for a growing share of jobs, and the tipping point, most experts and economists agree, is inevitable. One need go back only a decade to see a shift of major societal and statistical significance. At the turn of the century, men held six million more jobs than women; today, the gap has closed to just half a million.

The trend reflects women's centuries-long struggle to achieve an equal playing field. For sure, the field is still far from equal—from the persistent pay gap to the disproportionate burden on women to manage household chores and childcare. But what is clear is that the soundbite-driven, often-superficial portrayal of the working woman does not apply. She is complex and has nuanced views about work, especially across generations. She celebrates societal advances and her growing role as breadwinner. She wants affirmation of her hard work and her newfound status as an economic force to be reckoned with—yet, she still wants acknowledgement of her traditional values and her role as a mother and homemaker.

Despite all this, and the opportunity it creates for brands, many marketers struggle to define the working woman. Still, marketers that do reimagine women—and shed old stereotypes in their ad campaigns—will benefit, by examining the impact of women in the work force on the broader female target.

"We haven't really changed the image of women since the '50s," said Sandy Sabean, chief creative officer at New York-based boutique Womenkind, which promotes its work as "Decidedly not from Adam's rib." Said Sabean: "There are huge gaps. Women are either portrayed as moms or sex kittens, and when you do see a professional woman, it's the cliché mom with a briefcase and baby. It's a lot more complex than that."

Pushed to explain the paucity of fresh imagery, Sabean added: "I don't think marketers and advertisers are really scratching beneath the surface and are taking a superficial view of women without finding out what really makes them tick. I just don't think enough women are taking the creative reins."

Beyond more contemporary imagery reflecting this massive societal shift, Bridget Brennan, author of "Why She Buys: The New Strategy for Reaching the World's Most Powerful Consumers," argues the big opportunity for brands wanting to reach working women is investing more in services. "The biggest thing brands are missing is that customer service and marketing are the same thing, especially toward working women," Brennan said. "She needs services, not just products, because she is so busy."

Working women don't have the time to deal with products and services when they go wrong. Most marketing campaigns are engineered as a full-front assault on the senses, but what happens after the customer is acquired? It's a huge opportunity for brand differentiation, especially with the working-women target."

This Advertising Age and JWT white paper explores the changing attitudes among multiple generations of working women and their increasingly dominant role as breadwinner in American families. It examines marketers' opportunities and strategies for reaching this powerful group of consumers, exploring how women's attitudes and their outlook on their careers, jobs and domestic roles have changed as the work force at large has changed so dramatically in recent decades. It questions whether the advertising industry has kept pace with societal changes through the imagery and the archetypes they employ, and outlines opportunities for marketers that effectively reflect the new role women play, not just as consumers, but as powerful players in the once-male-dominated working world. It looks at the number of women in the work force, and explores what working women are most worried about and what they wish marketers understood better about their day-to-day lives. An important note: For the purposes of this survey, only responses from women who were working full-time jobs, part-time jobs, and contract or freelance work were included, but that in no way means to diminish the work of stay-at-home moms.

This white paper is based on a quantitative study of 1,136 men and 795 women, conducted April 7-14, 2010, using SONAR, JWT's proprietary online research tool. All data have been weighted to U.S. Census estimates across age and gender. Of those respondents, including both men and women, 53% reported having no children. Among female respondents, 47% reported having no children. The average number of children per household was 1.9. We have also included insights gleaned from interviews with more than a dozen brand marketers, experts and media professionals who have studied this demographic in-depth, as well as profiles of working women across generations, focusing on Baby Boomers (women ages 46-65), Generation Xers (33-45) and Millennials (18-32).

So, who is the working woman today? Perhaps it is best to start with what her average day is like. Based on our survey data, she works 4.9 days per week on average, starting at around 9 a.m. each day and wrapping up by 3:50 p.m. She prepares dinner 3.5 nights a week—as opposed to her significant other or spouse, who does so only 1.5 times a week. She goes out to dinner 1.2 times and brings a prepared meal home 1.3 times each week. If she gets vacation time from work, she takes 2.5 weeks off each year, and if she's taken a vacation in the last two years, she's most likely (by a wide margin) to have visited family and friends, and is more likely to have gone camping than to have visited a resort. She watches TV an average of 2 hours and 12 minutes per day, and spends 24 minutes reading a newspaper. She spends 2 hours a day on the internet, 84 minutes on the phone (both mobile and land line), 48 minutes reading a book, 48 minutes exercising and 42 minutes shopping. Yes, the working woman is one busy person.

→ This is one in a series of white papers published by Advertising Age. To see other Ad Age white papers and to obtain additional copies of this one, go to AdAge.com/whitepapers.

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JWT

JWT is the world's most famous communications agency, with nearly 150 years' experience pioneering new frontiers in brand-building marketing communications. JWT's global network capability spans 90 countries and 200 offices. Clients including HSBC, Shell, Nokia and Microsoft benefit from JWT's deep knowledge of local cultures and vast experience of building brands.

The Breadwinner Breakdown

THE ASCENDANCY OF women as consumers and shoppers is not breaking news. It is, rather, the oft-touted conventional wisdom: the ubiquitous PowerPoint slide and warnings that brands neglecting to understand the female demographic do so at their own peril. The mantra “The consumer is king” should long ago have been rewritten as “The consumer is queen.” Women influence the vast majority of purchases—as much as 73% of household spending, or \$4.3 trillion of the \$5.9 trillion in U.S. consumer spending, according to Boston Consulting Group. Yet, as more and more women contribute a greater share of the household financial pie, women are increasingly defined not by their roles as consumers, but as breadwinners.

Women aren’t just spending money; they are earning it. And in more and more households, the woman is the primary breadwinner. Granted, men remain the primary breadwinner in the majority of households surveyed—64%, compared to 31% in which women have that role. Women reported contributing an average of \$39,420 to household income, compared to an average contribution by men of \$54,225 (see chart 1, page 5).

There’s also the rise of the single-parent household. A record

four in 10 births in 2008 were among unmarried women, compared to 28% in 1990, according to a recent report from the Pew Center examining the changing demographics of mothers.

And among working mothers, two-thirds are breadwinners or co-breadwinners, according to “The Shriver Report: A Woman’s Nation Changes Everything,” released in 2009 by The Center for American Progress. The report also outlined the historic shift the growth of women as breadwinners represents: The traditional family economic archetype is gone. Men are no longer the sole source of household income they largely were in 1975, when nearly half of families with children consisted of a male breadwinner and a housewife. Today, the stay-at-home mom is found in only one in five households. Then, there is the rise of the single-parent household—defining just one in 10 families in 1975 but one in five today, according to the report.

The so-called “traditional” family structure is no longer the norm, and single mothers are more likely to work. In 2008, 76% of unmarried mothers were part of the labor force, compared to 69% of married mothers, according to the Department of Labor.

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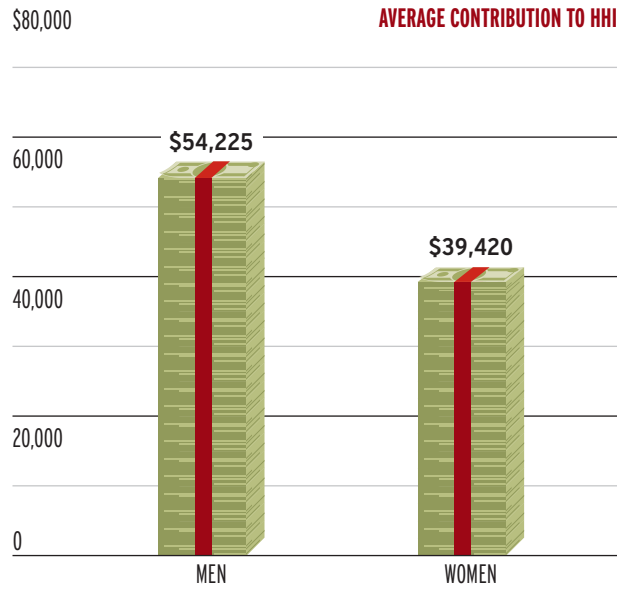
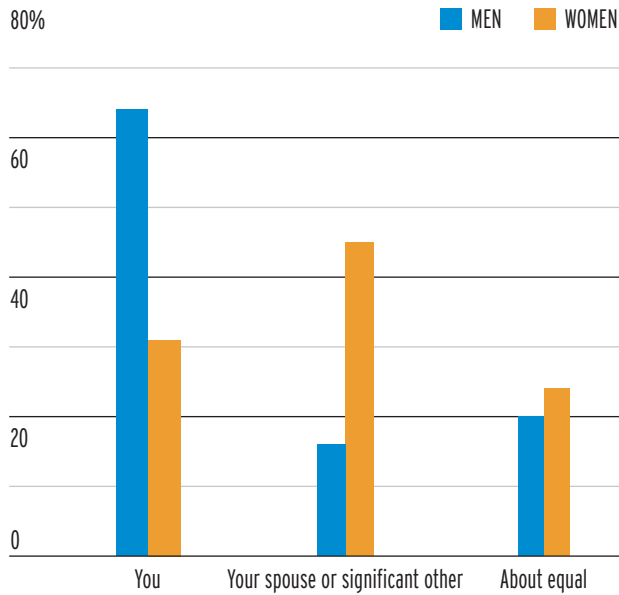
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CHART 1: BREADWINNER PERCEPTIONS

Who is the household breadwinner and what is your contribution to income?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey



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The Source of Nostalgia

THE MAN STANDS at a kitchen island where the makings of the typical lunch are spread out—a loaf of bread, lunch meat, vanilla wafers—carefully constructing sandwiches for the two young girls drinking milk at the breakfast table.

That image graces the cover page of the report “Our Working Nation: How Working Women Are Reshaping America’s Families And Economy and What It Means for Policymakers,” released this year by the Center of American Progress. Just as advertising campaigns feature a dearth of images of men doing household chores or raising children, the work environment also has not kept pace with demographic changes. The image of the dad preparing sandwiches for his girls may be a comforting one—but just because mom is working doesn’t mean dad is a stay-at-home dad.

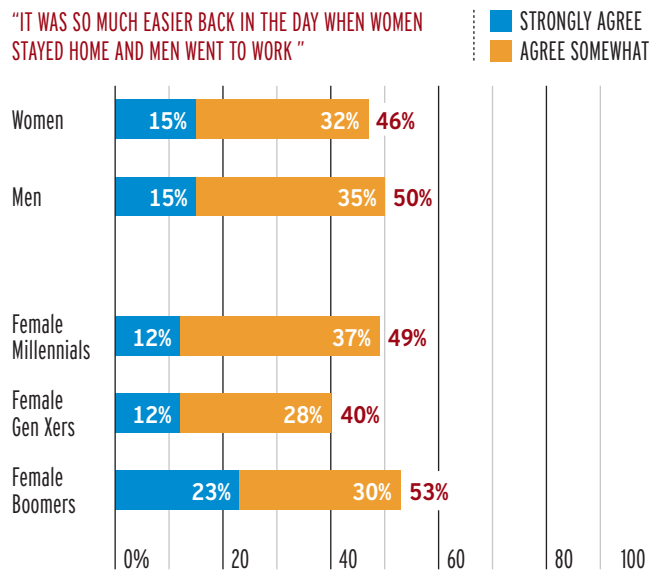
“Inside the home, the majority of families no longer have someone to deal with life’s everyday, humdrum details or emergencies—from helping the kids with homework to doing the grocery shopping, or from being home for a sudden home-repair emergency to picking up a sick child from school or taking an ailing parent to the doctor...the vast majority of workplaces are still structured as though all workers have a stay-at-home spouse to deal with family needs,” write the authors of the study, Heather Boushey and Ann O’Leary.

When asked in our survey whether it was easier “back in the day,” when women stayed home and men went to work, responses were fairly split—with almost half of men across all generations agreeing that the traditional model was easier (see chart 2). Responses were similar among women, with one notable exception: 60% of Gen X women disagreed with the notion it was easier “back in the day,” compared to about half of Boomers and Millennials. Also, that attitude does not hold true across all levels. Only 45% of white-collar working women say they have such nostalgic notions, compared to 62% of blue-collar workers. This vast disparity in how white-collar workers and blue-collar ones feel about the pace of cultural change is likely not immutable. White-collar professionals are more likely to have flexibility in the workplace and to have paid leave.

“In 1960, men with steady jobs could deliver the basics of a middle-class life—the house, the car, the washing machine—with only intermittent part-time work by their wives. That’s over,” said the report, “The Three Faces of Work-Family Conflict: The Poor, the Professionals, and the Missing Middle,” released in January of this year by the Center for American Progress. “After the first oil embargo in 1973, the income of high-school-educated men plummeted, leaving many fewer Americans able to sustain stable access to the American dream. Yet better-educated workers experienced explosive earnings growth in the 1990s. Today, the gap between middle-income earners and high earners is much wider than it was in 1979.”

For example, higher-income workers have seen their pay grow by 7% since 1979. Meanwhile, middle-class family income has fallen by 14%, as earnings by lower-income families plummeted 29%. (Is it any wonder blue-collar workers wish for the good old days?)

CHART 2: THE GOOD OLD DAYS...OR NOT? Was it easier back in the day?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

The unprecedented societal changes accompanying the rise of the working woman presents both a challenge and an opportunity for many brands. While Stouffer’s is focused against a working-woman target, according to Brett White, director of marketing, “She’s traditional at heart.” White explained: “She has traditional values as far as family and home and expectations for dinner. It’s a big frustration on her not to be able to do that as often as she likes. That said, she has no desire to go back to the June Cleaver days, spending all this time making homemade meals every night. Even though she is a traditionalist, she feels it’s much better that the kids have the full lives. She loves her job and being able to work outside the home.”

At Stouffer’s (where the working woman is referred to internally as “Rachel”), research has shown that the era of the harried, never-satisfied working mom is over. “The working mom is pretty comfortable with herself,” White said. “Today, she is happy in the workplace and happy at home, and she gave up trying to be June Cleaver. She makes compromises. She is willing and happy with the tradeoff if it’s better for the family to be involved in activities and for her to be working rather than spending all the time in the kitchen.”

For Stouffer’s, which offers a full line of ready-to-cook frozen meals including family-size servings of lasagna and macaroni and cheese, reaching this busy working women requires something more than the same old TV spots and print ads. So the brand has launched several integrated multimedia campaigns—among them, the “Let’s Fix Dinner Challenge,” a series of reality TV-inspired webisodes featuring working mothers trying to integrate family dinners back into their busy routines. “It’s an effective message for working women; she has even less time than a stay-at-home mom to get dinner on table,” White pointed out.

MILLENNIAL**CARRIE MYERS, COLUMBUS, OHIO****Age:** 27**Occupation:** Architect**Marital status:** Single**Media usage:** Internet first. Facebook and LinkedIn power user. Not a big TV watcher. Reads Real Simple magazine.

At a lunch in Carrie Myers' honor on the last day of her internship at an architecture firm, her boss stood up and said: "Thanks for coming here this summer. You've been the prettiest intern we've ever had."

Shocked, Myers could not even muster a response. Silence filled the room. Her colleagues apologized later for the bizarre, obviously sexist and inappropriate remark. Now 27, Myers recalls the incident as a seminal one, one that made her realize getting taken seriously as a working women wasn't going to be as easy as she had always assumed.

"There's definitely more equality in the workplace today," she said. "I can't imagine someone being dumb enough to say something like that now."

Myers grew up in the small farm town of Wauseon, Ohio. Her father raised cattle, then corn and soybeans. Her mother held a part-time job until Myers was born, and then never worked outside the home again. Despite not having had parents who had professional careers, Myers never considered following in her mother's footsteps—in fact, her mother always urged her to go to college and pave a career in the professional world. "She always really pushed me to go to school," Myers recalled.

Inspired by a single aunt who worked as a schoolteacher and used her earnings to travel the world each summer, Myers decided early on she wanted a career. "I always thought

'If you've become a partner and you've got three other male partners, you are going to have to put in the same amount of work and time as the guy'

she was super cool and that I wanted to be independent and do my own thing and work," she said.

Today, Myers works at small architecture firm (not the one where she interned), where she is one of only three women. Three men in the office recently became fathers, and she has watched with a bit of dismay as all three came back within a few days of the birth of their children. It has given her pause when considering the challenge of balancing marriage, work and eventually motherhood, although she would not have a problem if her future husband stayed home with the kids



instead of herself—something that never would have happened during her childhood back in Wauseon.

"It would depend on who was more career-focused or who it made more sense for financially," she said.

Even so, she admits it might have been a bit easier a few decades ago, when women were not as active in the work force.

"Maybe back then, it was expected that they would not be as hardcore and as committed to their jobs, whereas there's a lot of competition now," she said. "If you've become a partner and you've got three other male partners, you are going to have to put in the same amount of work and time as the guy. It sometimes feels like there's more pressure to go above and beyond."

Even so, Myers, who recently got a new smartphone and has started using mobile calendars and to-do lists, said she's wonders whether such technological advances might help her to balance work and family.

"If I do ever have a family, I think this could be really helpful," she said. "I could have my kid's schedules, my husband's schedule and mine all in one spot. It's hard to imagine. I need all this help now. I can't imagine how it will be if I have kids. I'm sure I will have to shift my priorities."

Despite her professional ambitions, Myers is not bothered by the preponderance of mothers and women in domestic settings in advertising messages. In fact, she said, it causes her to think better of the brand. "I think: If it's good enough for them, it's good enough for me," she said. "I think their standards are probably higher than mine because I don't have kids yet."

Earning Power, Not Just Shopping Power

AS THE ECONOMIC power of women grows, how working women feel about consumption is inextricably linked with how working women feel about work. After all, women no longer simply drive purchases: They bring home the bacon (to use a well-worn cliché), enabling them to not only pay the grocery bill but also the mortgage, the car payment and the college tuition.

Despite this shift, men and women share virtually interchangeable attitudes about the economic necessity of work. According to our survey, around two-thirds of respondents work only because they must: 67% of men, 64% of women. Even if the sexes share similar lamentations about the necessity of work, more men view their work as a career (70%, versus 61% of women); this, as 74% of men said their work is linked to their sense of who they are, compared to 66% of women (see chart 3).

The generational differences in attitudes about work are worth noting, with the Millennials, more than any other group, linking their work with their sense of themselves (71%, versus 66% of Gen Xers and 58% of Boomers). Among Millennials, 72% said they work for personal and professional fulfillment, compared to 67% of Xer working women and 63% of Boomers. Variations in attitudes about work also exist across income levels, with 79% of higher-income working women (defined as those earning \$70,000 or more) linking work to a sense of self, compared to 53% of those making \$39,000 or less.

Does this disparity along socioeconomic lines explain the vast differences in images of women found in advertising? Would it benefit brands targeting higher-income women to show more images of women in professional attire or office settings rather than the home?

“How do we represent women today when we continue to straddle two different worlds: home and work?” said Fara Warner, a lecturer in communications studies at the University of Michigan and author of “The Power of the Purse,” which explores the growing economic power of women.

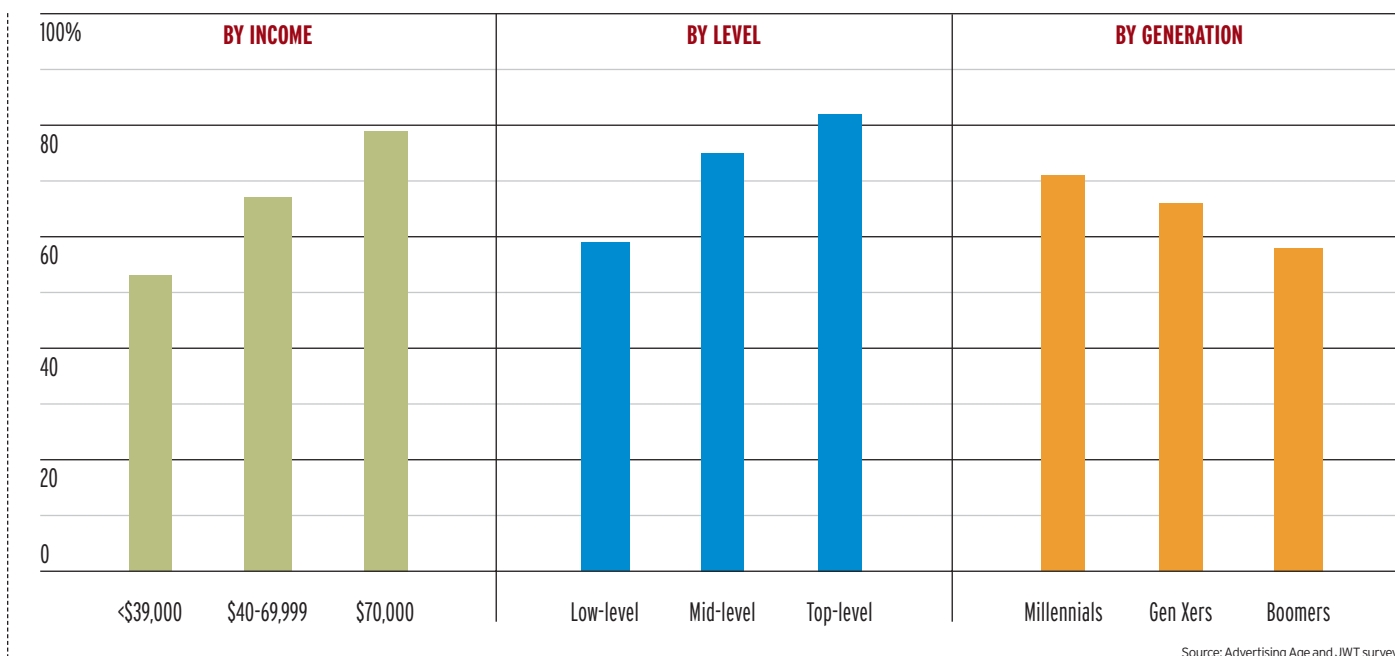
Comparing the ad campaigns of Walmart and Target is instructive. The average household income of the Target shopper is \$59,582, compared to \$48,390 for the Walmart shopper, according to BIGresearch’s Consumer Intentions & Actions database.

In Target’s ads, the woman is always fabulously adorned, often with little ones running afoot as she heads out to work. Walmart’s ads are another story: celebrating the image of the stay-at-home mom, decked out in more casual wear, and often pictured in the kitchen, preparing dinner or unpacking groceries.

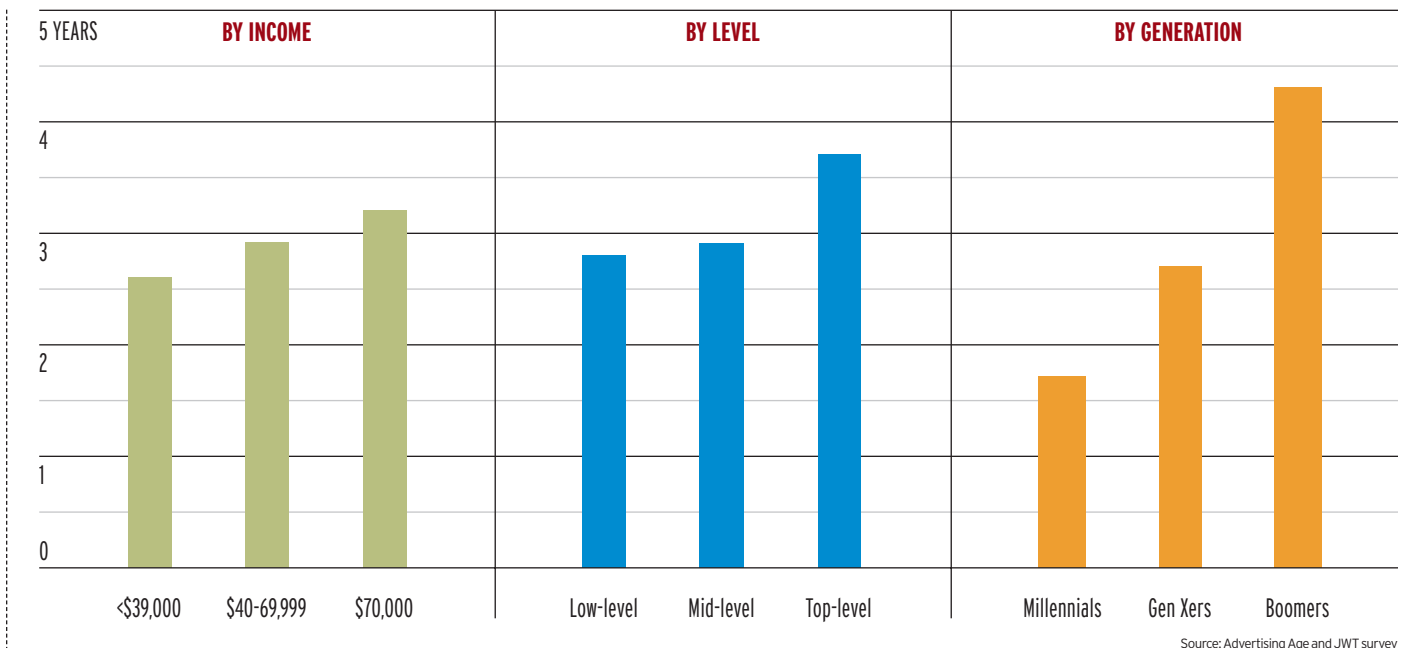
It is a tough line for brands to walk. Despite the value working women put on their work, many women admit a certain level of ambivalence, especially when it comes to the necessity of work. For example, almost 65% of working women, across all three generations, said they would rather stay home with their families full-time if it were financially possible. Nearly 60% of working women reject the notion that the duty falls to them should one parent need to stay home with the children.

The data suggests, however, that this is an attitude subject to the classic pendulum swing: 56% of Boomer working women rejected the idea that it must be the mother who stays home with the kids, compared to 63% of Xers and 56% of Millennials—suggesting Millennial working women are more traditional and closer to Boomers than Xers on this issue. Granted, 54% of working men think that duty falls to the mother.

CHART 3: IDENTIFICATION BY WORK FOR WOMEN Is work linked to a sense of who you are?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

CHART 4: AVERAGE TENURE PER JOB FOR WOMEN Tenure calculated by dividing average number of years worked by average number of employers.

The Image Makeover

THE COVER OF the book “Porn for Women” features a photo of a dreamy, cover-of-a-romance-novel-worthy bloke, barefoot and wearing jeans, studiously vacuuming a hardwood floor. And the cover of the “Porn for Women” calendar? A shirtless hunk in jeans (again, barefoot), vacuuming a shag rug. The series also includes “Porn for New Moms,” whose cover sports a brawny dad in a tight-fitting tank top, playing with a cherubic baby on a diaper-changing table.

Little wonder these books have found a market.

Despite the fact that women are contributing more financially to households and have joined the full-time work force in massive numbers, the work of running a home still largely falls to women.

In our survey, working men reported doing 54 minutes of household chores a day, while working women reported tackling 72 minutes of chores daily. Yet when looked at through a generational lens, change is clearly afoot. Millennial men reported doing just as many household chores as the average working woman: 72 minutes, compared to an average of 54 minutes among both Boomer and Xer men. While the gap would appear to have been closed, it is important to note that more than half of Millennial men are single and, thus, handling chores on their own.

So does this cleaning deficit on the part of older men explain the persistence of images of women dressed in sensible shoes and khakis, sweeping the floors, dusting armoires and pushing shopping carts? Certainly, there is a missed opportunity here if men are, in fact, doing just as much housework as women in the case of the Millennials.

Yes, women have ascended to the highest ranks in business, and almost half the work force is now female. But there is a paradox: When it comes to brands hawking cleaning supplies, laundry detergent and other household-care items, it is rarely the image of a man we see—except in jest.

Case in point: A 2008 TV spot introducing the Chevrolet Traverse, in which a bare-chested, chiseled hunk irons a dress while making dinner reservations to celebrate his six-month (yes, six-month!) anniversary with his girlfriend. It ends with him on his knees, scrubbing a toilet. The voiceover: “It’s everything you ever wished for, and then some.”

While there may be a chuckle and goodwill to be gained from a brand showing men doing chores, household-cleaning brands face a seemingly intractable conundrum: If women drive more than 70% of purchases, why target men? “How do we present women in a fresh way that doesn’t offend the women who are wearing the chinos and the denim shirt?” said Warner, author of “The Power of the Purse.”

Consider Swiffer, Procter & Gamble’s brand of floor-cleaning products. In the most recent Swiffer campaign, we never see a man sweeping the dust from the kitchen floor. Ads perpetually showing women doing the chores irked at least one blogger—who happened to be a 9-year-old girl. She wrote: “Dear Swiffer, I think your commercials are totally sexist. There is no good reason why in all your commercials there is a girl cleaning the house with Swiffer. Why are there only women doing the cleaning? It makes just as much sense that a man would be doing the cleaning of the house.”

GENERATION X**SELINA MEERE, HOBOKEN, N.J.****Age:** 33**Occupation:** Publicist**Marital status:** Married**Media usage:** NPR. Reluctant TV watcher, but favorite show is "The Office." Newspaper junkie (The New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal). Magazine reader (Elle, Shape, BabyTalk).

When Selina Meere and her husband, Michael, were debating whether to buy a condo in Hoboken, N.J., or stretch themselves financially to buy a house in more upscale Riverdale, N.Y., her father-in-law's take struck her as old-fashioned: "What if Selina gets pregnant, or you want to have a baby? She's not going to want to go back to work," he said, advising against buying the house.

Apparently, at that time, he didn't know his daughter-in-law so well.

The couple did end up buying the condo, and there is a baby on the way. Still, Meere has no plans to give up her job.

"I really enjoy my job and love going to work and think I would go crazy if I stayed home with the baby," said Meere, who is director of publicity at Workman Publishing, publisher of the best-selling book "What to Expect When You're Expecting." Added Meere: "I really like to work, and I have no plans to stop."

Even if the desire to stay home did strike her after the baby's arrival, Meere said, she fears the pace of technology and major changes in the publishing industry make the option of an extended maternity leave a moot point.

"You can't really just check out for two years," she explained. "I guess it could eventually change, but I just got a promotion at work and I want a career, and I see now where my career trajectory is going, and a job is really important to me."

Despite Meere's commitment to work (she puts in anywhere from 55 to 60 hours a week), she knows not all women of her generation share her point of view.

"What's most important is for women to decide what is right for them," she said. "There's a lot of societal pressure to stay home. Women should do what they want to do and what's comfortable for them and what makes them happy."

Still, the daycare question comes up frequently among colleagues and friends, especially the guilt-laden suggestion that if a parent puts her child in daycare, then someone else is raising that child.

"I can't stand that; it's just not true," she said. "You are still raising your child."



For Meere and her husband, who is 37 and completing his MBA while he continues to work as an accountant, the juggling act has surely just begun. The couple is starting out on an even playing field. "We actually make exactly the same amount of money," said Meere.

The soon-to-be parents talk a lot about how the drop-off and pick-up schedules will work once Meere finishes up her eight-week leave and returns to the office.

"I figure picking up the baby will just be a part of what I'm doing," said Meere. "Making dinner and walking the dog and not neglecting the baby, I just figure you do it. You figure it out."

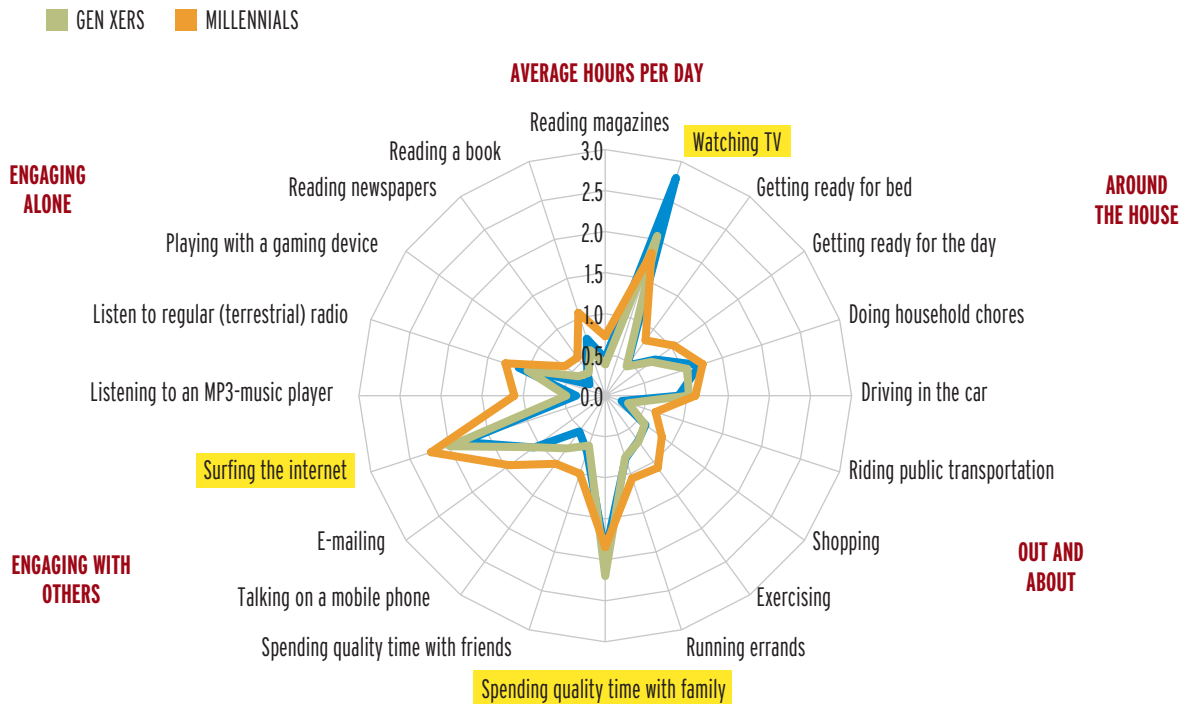
Meere's career ambitions were informed from early childhood. When she was a toddler, her parents divorced and her mother moved the family to her hometown of Madison, N.J. Her mother immediately began working, starting as a computer programmer and working her way up to a higher-level consulting position.

"I watched her come a long way with the company, and I saw her do everything herself at home," she said. "She was extremely independent, and it's made me the same way. I really, really think that you can do both."

So what does this career-driven woman think of advertising showing women cleaning house or doing the laundry?

"So many brands are clearly geared to women and show them cleaning," she said. "They have a very typical look to them in the clothes that they are wearing. It's always got the soccer mom kind of persona. I always think I never want to be like that."

Even so, Meere admitted, "It doesn't make me not want to buy sometime. If I see a Swiffer commercial, I think: That looks like it will work—even if the woman in the ad is not someone I want to emulate."

CHART 5: DAILY ACTIVITIES How many hours per day do working women spend doing the following?

Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

Granted, women in those ads do appear to don somewhat professional attire: separates paired with sweater sets, flats, subdued jewelry. There are no kids visible—or for that matter, any sign of kids (swing sets, bottles, cribs). And yet, the scene is, by necessity, domestic.

P&G argues it has evolved the Swiffer brand by infusing a touch of humor into messaging, and though it shows only women in the ads, it aims to portray cleaning as a “family enterprise.”

“It’s not a chore,” said Marie-Laure Salvado, who works in external relations for homecare at P&G. Indeed, that’s the narrative hook of a recent spot for another P&G brand, Cascade, in which a father oversees his young son loading a dishwasher. But instead of a menial, banal task, it’s portrayed as a game, with the dad trying to distract the son with loud interjections.

The wife comes in and asks “What are you doing?” in a somewhat smug tone—suggesting the guys never load the dishes.

“He’s trying to beat my record: 61 dishes and a garlic press,” says the dad.

“Well, that’s too full. Those will never get clean,” the mom responds.

Cascade, naturally, is depicted as the hero of the spot: the dishwashing soap that can make every dish—even in a dishwasher stuffed to the max—spotless.

So why not show more men doing housework? “We do see that men are doing more cleaning in the household, but it’s still a matter of how quickly does that show up from a target standpoint,” said Dewayne Guy, who works in external relations for the

Swiffer and Febreze brands. “It’s something we think about, but it’s our job to place the ad that best resonates with our target consumer. Oftentimes our target consumer is primarily, disproportionately women. As that changes, we will take a look at whether our target audience is changing and what resonates from an advertising standpoint.”

In the case of Swiffer, change may be afoot. To wit: The brand recently launched a public-relations campaign featuring Cesar Millan, star of the National Geographic Channel’s “The Dog Whisperer.” In an interview about the campaign with *The New York Times* this past February, Millan said: “I came into my marriage with a pack of dogs, and my wife said she didn’t want the smell in the house, so I’m the one who cleans the house.” Said Guy: “This is a new way to talk about cleaning.”

P&G’s Bounty brand also plays with the idea of soliciting men into cleaning roles, with its online “Honey-Do List,” which women can fill out, print and give to their “honies.”

Still, images of working women in advertising remain scarce. A rare example of a campaign that turns the female-as-domestic-goddess role on its ear and portrays women as more than just “homemakers” is an ad for P&G’s Febreze, featuring a real estate agent preparing a house for a showing by spraying Febreze in the home. “She’s there as a professional, as a working person and highly credible in what enhances the home,” Salvado said.

So how to explain this dearth of images?

Perhaps it is not only the client who is to blame. The old-boys’ network of the agency world may have been upended by an inva-

CHART 6: MILLENNIALS: TIME SPENT VS. GEN XERS AND BOOMERS BOOMERS

How much more time than their older counterparts do Millennials spend doing everything, except sleeping, TV?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

sion of women in media buying, account management and strategy jobs, but where images and campaigns are really born—the creative department—it is still largely a man’s world, especially when it comes to senior creative-director positions. A recent academic study by Karen Mallia, a former copywriter and creative director who teaches creative strategy, copywriting and advertising campaigns at the University of South Carolina, put the ratio of men to women in creative departments at 2.3 men to every 1 woman. And of course, on what is advertising’s single biggest day of the year—Super Bowl Sunday—it is a undeniably an estrogen-challenged world.

The number of female creative directors is dismally low, for sure, and in no way reflective of the demographics of American society. Of 58 spots from the 2010 Super Bowl in which the creative team could be identified, 92% of creative directors were white men and only 7% were white women, according to the Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport at the University of Central Florida. (There were no black creative directors, and the only Latino was the winner of a crowd-sourcing contest for Doritos.)

One marketer that has worked to evolve with women’s changing image is Avon. The brand was launched 34 years before women had the right to vote. Today, the company has 6.2 million representatives worldwide, 95% of them women. In fact, Avon positions itself as “the company for women,” and the growth of the brand mirrors the societal shifts ushered in by women’s entry

into the work force over the last half-century. In the ‘50s, women were still homemakers, and Avon afforded them the opportunity to socialize with other women while earning extra spending money. In the ‘70s, as the wave of women entering the work force grew, so did Avon’s sales.

“Avon went with them, and order sizes grew,” said Jeri B. Finard, senior VP-global brand president at Avon and a former marketing executive at Kraft Foods. “Women needed to wear makeup at work, and were able to expand business into a new network of women they worked with.”

Another challenge is adapting to the new media-usage habits of the Millennial generation. Investing in digital strategies is critical, and Avon reps can now sell products via smartphones and even Facebook. In advertising and collateral materials, Avon often shows women in front of computers tracking orders, but in other cases in family settings or around children. In its recruitment efforts, Avon never uses models, but actual Avon representatives.

Today, the challenge for Avon is the time factor: Working women simply have less of it. “If you ask women what they want most, the most precious commodity for them is time,” Finard said.

Still, the superwoman archetype continues to be used by some brands. Instead of challenging the status quo and suggesting women cannot do it all, there are those brands that continue to affirm the frenzy and feed the do-it-all lifestyle. “You’re amazing. You’re on the go 25 hours a day, crossing off to-do lists at home, at work and everywhere in between.” So says the website of appli-

ance maker Electrolux. For the Swedish company, the second-largest appliance marketer in the world, the celebration of the superwoman is over-the-top and unabashed, a melding of traditional and modern images. In an accompanying spot, TV personality Kelly Ripa is seen as working superwoman—decked out in a fashionable dress with a flattering black belt, racing out of a TV studio to an awaiting car that swoops her off to where she really wants to be: home. And there, she's not simply whipping up a casserole: she's manning the stove, flipping appetizers to kids lined up at a kitchen island before racing off with a glass of red wine to socialize with the adults and play the role of charming hostess. And, of course, Ripa looks amazing at every turn: perfectly coiffed, tanned, smiling ear-to-ear. Yet there's no husband visible; Ripa does it all on her own. Of course, it is difficult to imagine that in real life, Ripa does not have at least a little help. At the end of the ad Ripa implores the viewer to "be more amazing."

"Just because half of women are in the work force doesn't mean communications always have to show them in professional attire; similarly, you don't have to present them in the home

just because they are the operational and emotional cores of the home," said Ann Mack, director-trendspotting at JWT. "Brands must consider the context and recognize that it's not just about reflecting their reality; it's about making it better. If your brand can help simplify or improve the working woman's very complex life, this message is likely to resonate, even if the specific imagery or archetype doesn't mirror her reality, as long as it's not offensive."

Has the rise of working women as breadwinners influenced Electrolux's marketing? "Appliance makers have typically marketed to women as the decision makers," said MaryKay Kopf, CMO of Electrolux Major Appliances, North America. "This shift will only underscore this approach and focus. Kelly Ripa truly personifies our target: She's a natural when it comes to multitasking. Whether it's juggling family and career or doing laundry while making cupcakes for the bake sale, she's up for the challenge. The insight we uncovered about our target is that she sees herself at the center of it all, and the Electrolux campaign is designed to celebrate her and her amazing ability to do it all and make it look like a piece of cake."

Financial Anxiety: The Opportunity

DURING THE RECENT Great Recession, sometimes referred to as the "Mancession," men bore the brunt of job losses, with an estimated 82% of pink slips going to men. This disproportionate impact was blamed on men's dominance in sectors like construction and manufacturing hit especially hard by the downturn.

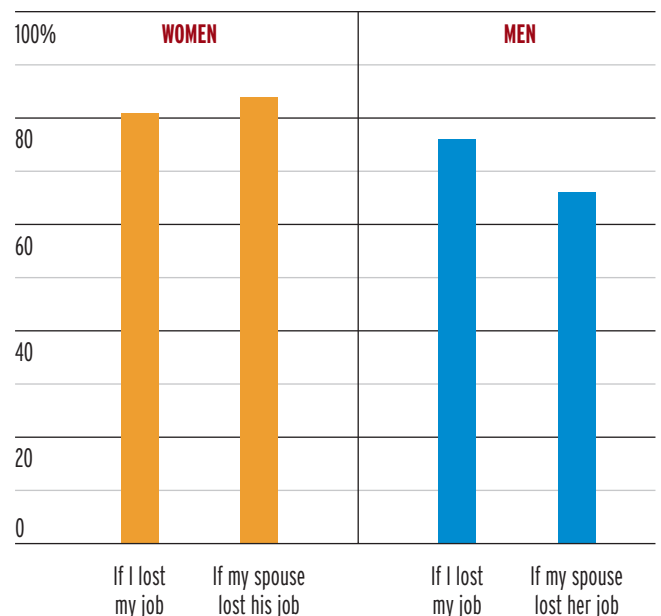
That hardship failed to dampen men's attitudes about their long-term financial prospects, whereas women reported more anxiety about finances. Certainly it is not unexpected that both women and men chose finances as generating the most anxiety. But in our survey, women did so in far greater numbers, with 55% of women rating it as the source of the most anxiety, beating out work (18%), family (11%), relationships (8%) and health (8%). Only 41% of men rated finances as most anxiety-inducing, followed by work (24%), family (12%), relationships (12%) and health (10%). Moreover, 53% of women chose finances as the area in life they would most like to improve, compared to 47% of men (see chart 10, page 15).

And when it comes to retirement, men reported by a double-digit margin that they had more confidence in their retirement plans and investments, with 75% saying they understood their options for saving extra money between now and their retirement, compared to 61% of women. Also, 48% of men said they had enough money to see them through retirement, compared to 37% of women (see chart 9, page 15).

This desire for financial stability presents an opportunity for the financial-services sector, including banks, wealth-management brands and credit cards. Yet, few brands market directly to

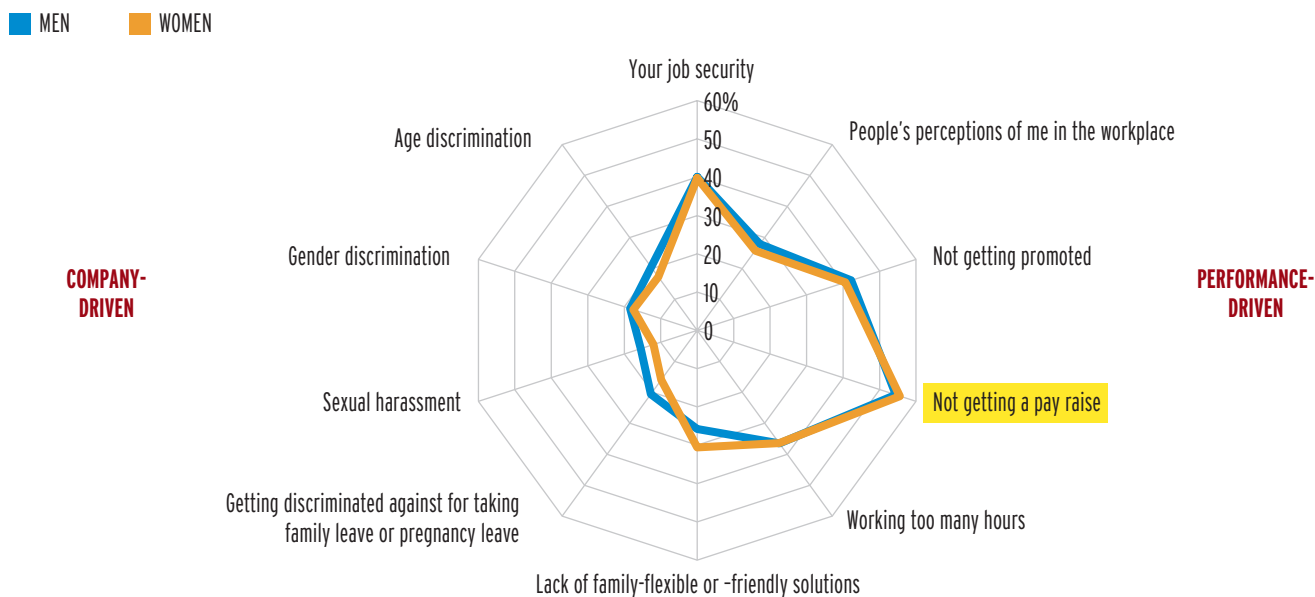
CHART 7: JOB-LOSS ANXIETY

How nervous or anxious would you be if you or your significant other lost a job?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

CHART 8: WORKPLACE ISSUES How significant are the following employee-treatment issues where you work?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

women. “One of the big, untapped areas is financial firms and how they approach working women,” said Warner, author of “The Power of the Purse.”

For the financial services industry, the opportunity is immense. Women & Co., a membership-based online community launched at Citigroup in 2000 by Lisa Caputo, a former aide to Hillary Clinton who now serves as executive VP-global marketing at Citigroup, targets affluent women in the highly competitive money-management and financial-services category. More than a decade of targeting financial services to women has evolved over time. Today, the imagery and content affirms a working women’s economic prowess.

In January of this year, Women & Co. launched a new campaign, an element of which is a print ad showing a sprawling, corner office with wall-to-wall windows overlooking a city skyline. In the office are eight women: a proportionate mix of Boomers, Xers and Millennials, all dressed elegantly, quite a few steps above business casual. There’s not a pair of sensible shoes in the room, or a harried mother in sight. There is no guesswork here. These are working women: strong, fashionable and affluent. The copy at the bottom of the ad reads: “As women, they share unique situations that impact their financial goals—like being the one in charge of her family’s finances and planning for college, career changes, and retirement.”

The campaign, which runs through the end of this year, has appeared in publications including The New York Times (in the Sunday Styles section); O, The Oprah Magazine; Self; Bon Appétit and Martha Stewart Living.

“Women think about money not just when they are reading a money magazine,” said Linda Descano, president of Women & Co. “Money is part and parcel of every aspect of our lives. We

want to be there when they aren’t just thinking about money. This is all about lifestyle, it’s about life: the infusion and holistic approach to living and finances.”

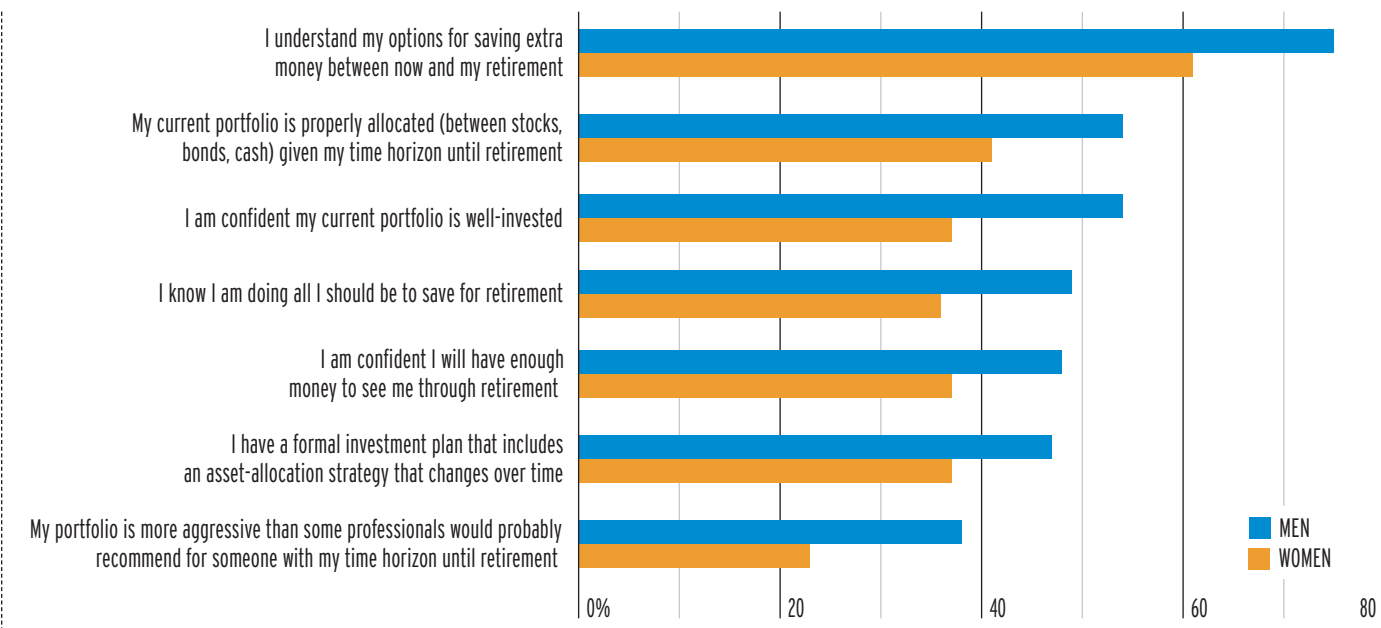
The women featured in the ads are actual members of Women & Co., which charges \$125 per year. (Descano would not release membership figures.) Past campaigns (handled by the brand’s former agency, Publicis) featured models. The shift to so-called “real” women in its marketing happened when Women & Co. switched its account to New York-based Womenkind several years ago.

Descano, who spends a good part of her job talking to women about how they feel about finances—via focus groups, ethnographic studies and countless surveys—takes issue with the tendency among surveys about women and finances to conclude men are more confident and women are more anxious about money. “It’s about how women approach many things in life. We always think there’s always more to do. If it’s about going for a job—eight out of the 10 requirements—I don’t think I should go for it, whereas some men would say, ‘If I can spell the job title, I go for it,’” she said. “When you really dig down, we’ve seen from the women in the community from our surveys that women are confident decision makers, but absolutely believe there’s always more they can do. Women are saying, ‘I don’t have it nailed—I can do more.’”

In financial services, brands must evolve communications to reflect this way of thinking, yet so much industry lingo concerns benchmarks, or how something stacks up against the S&P 500 or other performance measures. “Women want to know whether I will be able to retire at 55 and move to Tuscany,” said Descano.

Moreover, Descano feels that surveys can sometimes discredit women. “They are humble in that they don’t get overconfident and let that blind them,” she said. “They recognize the capital markets and their lives don’t stand still.”

CHART 9: CONFIDENCE IN RETIREMENT PLANS AND INVESTMENTS How confident are you when it comes to your retirement plans and investments?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

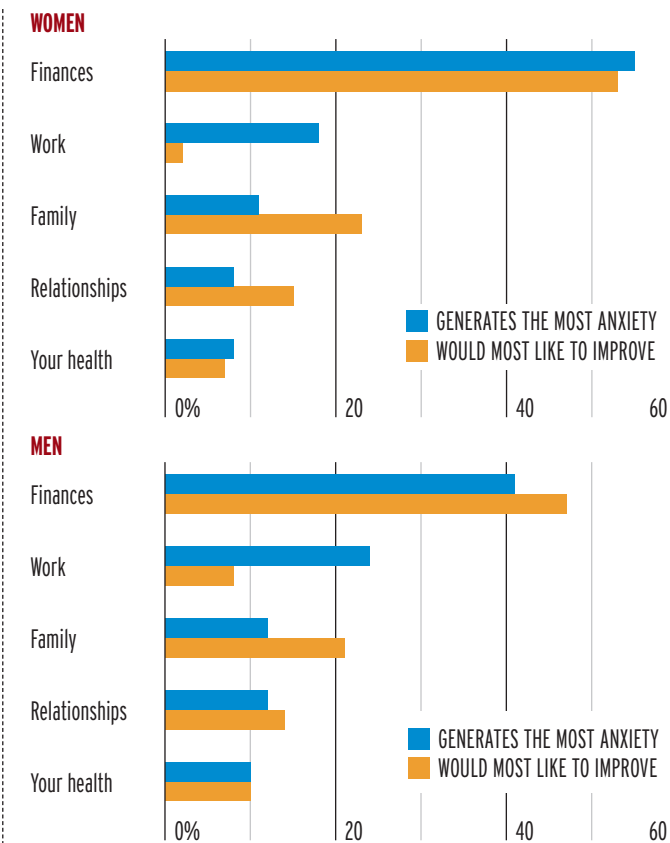
Online personal-finance brand Mint.com is taking advantage of the fact that others in the category neglect working women. “Investment companies really target the males,” said Stew Langille, head of acquisition marketing and data at the site, which launched in 2007. “The E-Trades and the Fidelitys of the world target males,” said Langille, who is now transitioning to the role of marketing director-personal finance for Intuit and will oversee both the Mint.com and Quicken brands. “We are going to capture women on Mint.com investment companies don’t reach now,” he said.

At Mint.com, they call their target “Karen.” She is between the ages of 28 and 40, tapped into the mommy-blogger world, digitally savvy, and most likely has downloaded the Facebook app on her iPhone—and Mint.com estimates that within a year to 19 months, she could represent the biggest demo on the site, with its 3 million users. The shift of the site’s user base toward women is viewed as a major opportunity, even though for now, men make up 70% of users. The male target, “Jason,” represents a tech-savvy crowd of mostly single men in their late twenties and thirties who tend to care more about “geekier features.” As the site shifts to catering to more women, safety messaging will grow in importance. “Karens are more concerned with safety than the Jasons,” Langille explained. “Making sure that safety is front and foremost and ease of use in mobile is important as well. Everything is automatic, not having to spend a lot of time because they tend to be busy.”

The site recently did a major content partnership with Redbook magazine, and is looking to make other content deals with not only traditional women’s magazines but also blogs focused on women. “We want to target women in their 30s, professional women and those that are relatively web-savvy,” Langille said.

CHART 10: SOURCES OF ANXIETY

Which makes you more anxious, and what would you like to improve in your life?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

What a (Working) Woman Wants

THE ARCHETYPE OF the working woman certainly is nothing new in entertainment. The trail was blazed by such iconic sitcom characters as Mary Richards, Murphy Brown, Julia Sugarbaker and Claire Huxtable (who, in supermom fashion, made partner in her law firm while raising five children). More contemporary characters include high-powered hospital executive Dr. Lisa Cuddy on Fox's "House," while the network's "24" last season gave us Allison Taylor as the first female U.S. president. Then, of course, there is NBC's show-within-a-show "30 Rock," whose head writer, Liz Lemon, is played to crowd-pleasing, award-winning effect by the show's real-life creator, Tina Fey.

But despite these empowered and empowering portrayals, when it comes time for the commercial break, it can seem as though the feminist revolution never happened. Certainly, how women feel about work is an important factor for brands seeking to reach this target. It is instructive, then, to examine just how women do feel about their work.

For starters, many see the workplace as still largely a man's world. In our survey, 65% of women called the idea of a gender-balanced work force a myth. And almost as many men (60%) agreed.

For all their advancement, the working woman has hardly become a staple of advertising. Office-supply chain OfficeMax recognized this as an opportunity to break through the clutter. In a recent OfficeMax spot, a 30-ish, professional woman prepares for the big meeting—rehearsing in front of the mirror, making copies of her presentation, and ultimately delivering a knockout performance. She exudes confidence, charm and charisma.

The spot was part of a broader effort, initiated in 2009, to target women, following two years of research that found women buy \$44.5 billion in office supplies each year. That revelation led to a major shift in marketing strategy at the chain, one that took into account exactly who its target audience really was and that led to the creation of "Eve." The fictional Eve is very much a presence in

meetings where such issues as products or store design are mulled, explained Bob Thacker, senior VP-marketing, who noted that 70% of all new businesses are started by women.

As part of its changing marketing philosophy, the chain also established OfficeTalk, a panel of 5,000 working women who provide feedback on product design, services and messaging. "It's dynamic and constantly changing, and a great way to constantly be in touch with what women are really thinking," Thacker said.

OfficeMax is not the only brand in the category strategically courting working women. Office Depot has launched a web-based seminar series aimed at small-business owners and female professionals, created a women's advisory board, and has hosted a conference for women in business for seven years running. In March, the National Association of Female Executives named Office Depot one of the top 50 companies for executive women. "More companies need to understand what Office Depot understands, that having women in the executive ranks means you have the perspective of those making over 80% of buying decisions in America: women," NAFE president Betty Spence said in announcing the award.

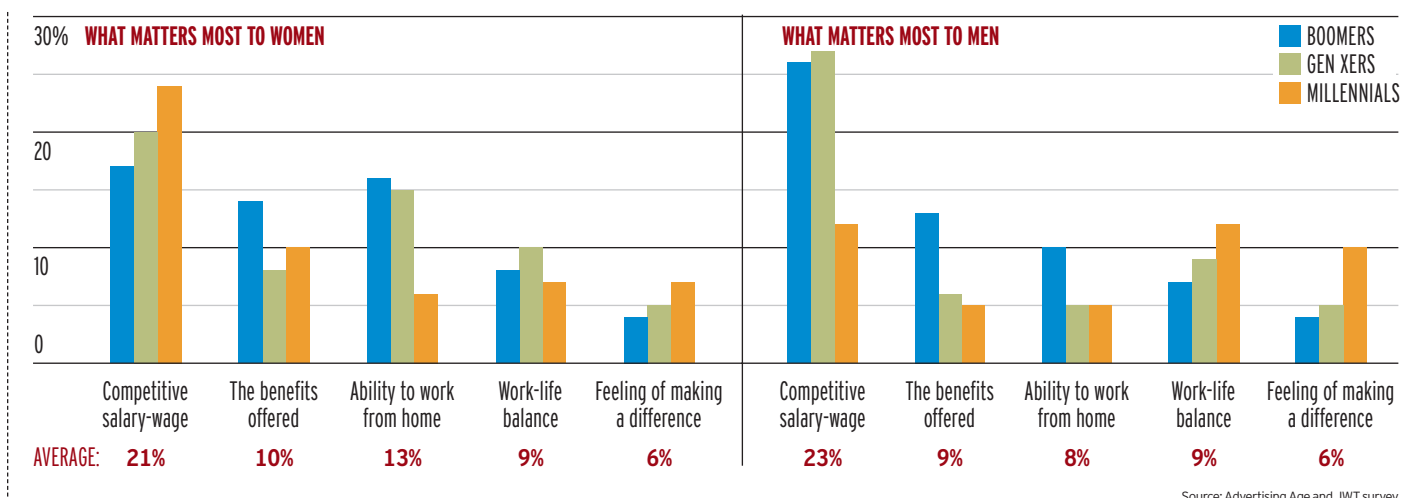
Traditionally, companies serving business owners had a pretty simple target: men. No more. Since 1987, the number of women-owned businesses in the U.S. has doubled, while revenues have grown five-fold, according to SCORE. Today, they account for 40% of all privately held companies, according to the Center for Women's Business Research. Further, one in five companies with revenue of \$1 million or more is owned by women.



BREAKING THROUGH

OfficeMax features a woman prepping for a presentation.

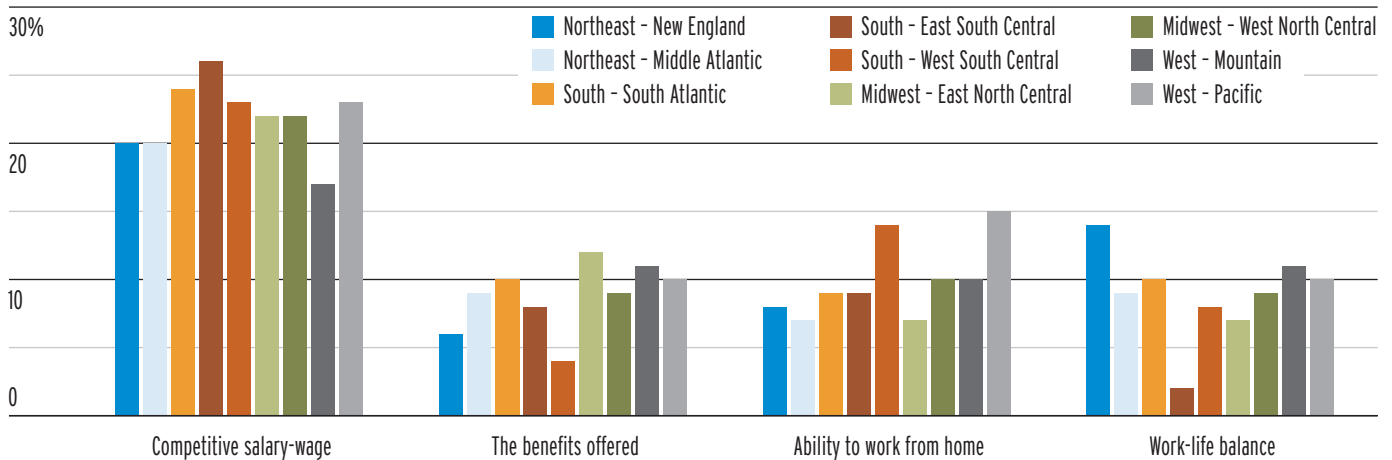
CHART 11: JOB HUNTING : WHAT MATTERS What's most important to you when looking for a new job?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

CHART 12: JOB HUNTING: WHAT MATTERS BY REGION

What's most important to you when looking for a new job?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

Company as Brand and Employer

THERE'S THE CORPORATE brand and the consumer brand—but do working women conflate the two? Do companies earning poor marks for wage equality or having a paucity of top female executives risk alienating female consumers?

Those questions could be answered over the next year, as Walmart faces what could be a very public trial involving a sex-discrimination lawsuit, described by The New York Times as “the biggest employment-discrimination case in the nation’s history.” If a trial ensues and the details get a thorough airing in the press, will Walmart’s reputation among shoppers who are working women take a hit?

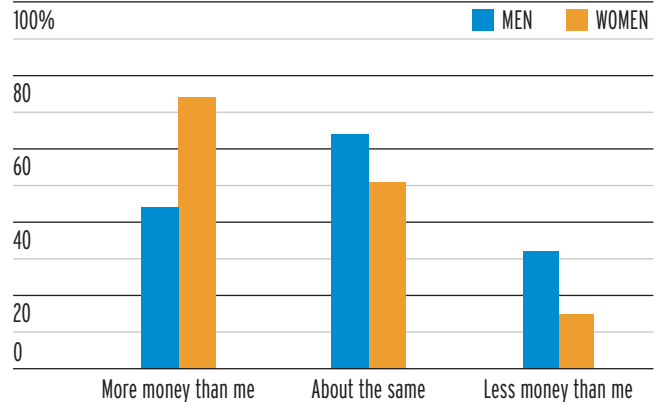
The claims are not exactly brand-affirming, with Walmart reportedly paying women less than men, giving them smaller raises than men, and promoting them less frequently than men. The Ninth Circuit upheld a lower-court decision to certify the case as a class-action suit. Walmart is appealing this decision to the U.S. Supreme Court.

“The success of our company is deeply rooted in our focus on our customer—90% of whom are women—which results in every product we place on shelves, every service we add, every change made in stores and online having her needs and interests in mind,” Walmart spokesman Greg Rossiter responded via e-mail, when asked to comment on the case and on working women as a marketing target.

Despite substantial gains, a male-female wage gap persists in the U.S. In 1979, women working full-time earned 62% what men did, according to the Department of Labor; by 2008, it was 80%. Working women with full-time jobs had a median weekly income of \$638 in 2008, versus \$798 for men. Does the persistence of a wage gap correspond with women’s own attitudes about their work? After all, 74% of women in our survey said they would prefer their spouses or significant others make more money than them, compared to 44% of men. And just 15% of women said they

CHART 13: EARNINGS-BREAKDOWN PREFERENCES

Would you prefer a spouse/significant other to make more, less or the same as you?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

would prefer a man make less money than them, compared to 32% of men (see chart 13).

Still, attitudes among working women—Millennials in particular—suggest a possible sea change. When asked what mattered most to them, all women said competitive salary and wages higher than benefits, telecommuting options, work-life balance, and the feeling of making a difference. Nearly a quarter of Millennial working women said competitive salary and wages was their top priority, compare to just 12% of their male counterparts. (see chart 11, page 16).

In explications on the wage gap, career choices and the preference for so-called “nurturing” professions—nursing, education, social work—are often blamed. If the younger generation makes parity in pay a priority, it could suggest the gap is poised to close further.

The Single Working Woman: The Opportunity

THE SINGLE WORKING woman is often portrayed in entertainment and advertising as young, urban and childless. But, of course, the single working woman is far from monolithic. “Women are spending more of their life single,” said Carol Orsborn, author of “Boom: Marketing to the Ultimate Power Consumer—The Baby Boomer Woman.”

Indeed, convergent trends have created a whole new demographic for marketers to consider. How did this happen? For starters, women are waiting longer to get married on the front-end of their lives. In the middle of life, they more often find themselves divorced (resulting in the rise of the “cougar” in popular culture), and when it comes to their golden years, women often outlive their male spouses, according to Orsborn. Single women now make up 27% of all households in the U.S.—and that’s an opportunity for brands willing to pay attention to her, and offering an alternative to the recycled, ubiquitous imagery of the perfect, nuclear family.

“It is aspirational to show young women at home with their babies, and that’s an image women of many generations can appreciate, but it doesn’t reflect reality,” Orsborn said.

Fay Ferguson, co-CEO of multicultural agency Burrell Communications, said brands and marketers could learn a great deal

about working women by first understanding the African-American working woman. “Black women have always had to go out and work, either as a supplement to the household income or as the sole breadwinner,” she explained. “So in a way, it’s a great benchmark.”

In a recent spot the Chicago-based agency did for McDonald’s, the narrative is centered around the working woman—namely, the struggle of a single mom to find time for herself. In the commercial, an African-American woman arrives home from work, dressed in a suit; her kids rush to greet her at the door. She brings in a Happy Meal for each of her kids, before stopping to take a moment for herself. “The kids are happy, she’s happy, and then that magic moment happens,” said Ferguson. “I think that’s very real in many of the lives of working women. How do you manage work, making meals for the kids, getting them to where they need to be and all that stuff that generally falls to mom—in particular, the working single mom? There’s no secret the vast majority of African-American households are single-headed households run by women, so they have that extra layer of stress they go through. So you get that additional head nod from African-American females that you really capture me in my life.”

In general, for those brands targeting working women, the key is to get at portrayals of women that hit the “sweet spot,” Ferguson

social media + mobile + database + hispanic + healthcare marketing
custom publishing + web design and development

Meredith is a leading provider of integrated marketing programs delivering compelling content across traditional and new media channels. We leverage our award-winning expertise in word-of-mouth, online and direct marketing to build deep, meaningful connections with consumers. **Let Meredith help you strengthen and nourish your relationships with women in ways you’ve never imagined.**



said—that get her to say, “Oh yeah, you really get me; you understand me.”

In a Burrell spot for P&G’s Tide brand called “Nostalgia Dad,” a father is seen holding his sleeping infant son while he himself naps in a spotless white shirt. “Yes, females drive the purchases, and you see single-women head of households within the African-American population,” Ferguson said. “But it’s also important to show a balance—and for many families, the father is present and that is the ideal. So it is about showing that other side, if you will, and something that’s aspirational.”

Aspirational sometimes ventures into the realm of pure fantasy—especially among brands targeting single women. Take those Kelly Ripa spots for Electrolux: essentially appliance marketing meets “Sex and the City.” Here, Ripa is “SATC” heroine Carrie Bradshaw, typing away on her Mac to the voiceover: “Just because a woman is single doesn’t mean she doesn’t understand the right appliances can help you find your McHotty—like my friend, the Cupcake Queen.” What follows is pure, unabashed fantasy. Ripa, wine glass in hand, sits with the aforementioned friend in a well-heeled, urban flat. The doorbell rings repeatedly, after which a quick succession of soap-opera-handsome, brawny guys—one of them shirtless, sporting washboard abs and bulging pectorals—appear in the doorway, each holding an empty plate. What are they here for? Why, a cupcake, naturally, freshly baked in the Electrolux double-wall oven.



MAGIC MOMENTS

Tide’s ad shows an at-home dad, McDonald’s, a working woman.

How to convey the product benefit of a kitchen appliance to a woman who doesn’t happen to have a houseful of kids and a hungry husband to feed? How to convince the single working woman to shell out upwards of \$3,000 for an oven? Like the ending of every episode of “SATC” comes Ripa’s closing journal entry: “So you see, if you have the right appliances, they’ll be after your cupcakes all night.” Quite the reach, not to mention double entendre: Buy an expensive oven, whip up some cupcakes, and bed a hot guy. But considering the countless ads targeted to men and featuring sexy women—from those infamous Carl’s Jr. spots starring Paris Hilton to the innumerable spots for cars, beer and every other product imaginable—surely a little payback is in order.

direct ways to connect with diane

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**ABOUT FACE**

One Depend ad features a professional woman, a conductor, while another features a domestic scene of a grandfather with his son and grandchildren.

The Boomer Moment

THIS YEAR, the first Boomer turned 65—which happens to be the traditional retirement age. So why do ads for Kimberly-Clark's incontinence-products brand Depend feature working women—namely, an symphony conductor named Kim? The spot opens with a violin player, noting a litany of things people know about Kim. It concludes with Kim revealing: "People know a lot of things about me, but no one needs to know about my condition."

A look into the consumer research behind the spot is worthwhile here. With a plan to run two separate spots targeted to men and women, the first instinct was to make the female spot related to family and home, said Blake Boulden, brand manager of Depend. After all, research had shown that women dealing with

**BOULDEN**

'Our goal when we started this was more about how to connect best with our Depend customer'

the issue of incontinence tended to withdraw from friends and family, and sometimes were motivated to withdraw from professional interests and hobbies as well.

"Our goal when we started this was more about how to connect best with our Depend consumer," Boulden said. "It wasn't about needing to portray a professional woman, but the way the insight unfolded, it made sense to do that."

Ironically, the family-oriented ad—an emotion-driven piece featuring a father with his son and grandchildren—ended up being the spot targeted to men.

From the outset, the presumption was that women would respond best to a "family moment." Boulden wanted to challenge that notion. "We had a hunch there's enough women who would be drawn to the professional side," he said. Testing with focus groups confirmed the conductor ad worked, producing "really strong" reactions among working women, Boulden added, with the bonus being that women responded to the male-focused TV spot, too.

Due to the nature of the product, the brand is sticking with traditional media such as TV and print, rather than social media. "It's a discrete category that doesn't lend itself to Facebook," Boulden explained. "It's tough to get out there and announce you are part of the brand. We are trying to reframe the condition, to get consumers to think of it as more normal and that it doesn't have to be so taboo. That's a big issue we are trying to overcome."

Orsborn, author of "Boom: Marketing to the Ultimate Power Consumer—The Baby Boomer Woman," praised the Depend campaign, predicting other brands will find more creative ways of showing women in the workplace—especially as Boomers approach retirement age but, in many cases, simply don't retire, preferring to launch a second career, start a new business, or embark on a philanthropic path.

"When an ad like the Depend one comes through, it does break through the clutter," said Orsborn. "The Boomer generation wants to see themselves as contributing, and that their work is meaningful. It's a very positive connotation for Boomers."

BOOMER**RHONDA FORD, CINCINNATI****Age:** 54**Occupation:** Internet ad sales**Marital status:** Married**Media usage:** Facebook. Fox. CNN. Home page: Yahoo. Heavy BlackBerry user.

In 1970, when Rhonda Ford was a high-school freshman, she watched her stay-at-home mom go to work for the first time ever. The clerical job, in the advertising department of J.C. Penney, caused some friction at home. "My dad finally agreed to let her work outside the home but told her if it interfered with anything at home, it was not going to work out," Ford recalled.

Today, her mom is 78-years-old—and has never stopped working. "She loves work," said Ford. "She found her identity there."

And so has Ford. Save for a short 18 months during the recession of the early '80s, when both of her sons were under the age of five, Ford has always worked. And she has almost always earned more than her husband, who is a truck driver.

"It would be foreign to me to not work," said Ford, who has spent 25 years in various newspaper, publishing, and now internet ad-sales jobs. "I have been blessed with absolutely enjoying what I do as my career. I don't look at it as work, but as an extension of who I am."

Not that juggling the demands of family life and work were always easy, but Ford recalled that when her kids were younger, her husband worked nights and she worked days—so there were no issues with childcare.

"He had a domestic role and I had a domestic role," she said. "I had a career role and he had a career role, and as a couple, I didn't look at myself as a career woman or as a domestic woman—I just looked at myself as a human being in a marriage with two kids, and we had to do whatever worked and was best for the family."

Such an equal, gender-neutral sharing of domestic duties and childcare is certainly not the traditional norm. While it worked in Ford's case, she admitted, there were pangs of nostalgia along the way.



'It would be foreign for me to not work. I have been blessed with absolutely enjoying what I do as my career. I don't look at it as work, but as an extension of who I am'

"It would definitely have been easy—and there is a part of me, because of how I was raised, [my mother being] at home for most of my life—if I could have had the lifestyle I had and been able to stay home, I may have done that," Ford said. "But I don't know if that's what is best for women. If I had done that, I would not have been able to support myself. I just had a friend whose husband left her. She's 48-years-old and she's scratching her head, saying, 'Oh my gosh, I have no skill—how do I support myself?'"

Continued Ford: "I'm glad that I have the tools to support myself and not be dependent. If you could be dependent, which it seems like you can't these days—one, everything is expensive; two, what would happen if you got walkaway Joe?—you just have to be comfortable in your own decisions."

Social Media and Working Women

THE TRADITIONAL MEDIA plan has come a long way—and we can thank the working woman for much of that change. The traditional media buy ceased to be effective with the demise of the daytime soap opera. Women, especially working women, simply are not in the home as much during the day as in years past. So which media are best serving the working women of today?

“Working women, when you think about them as the target audience, it’s how much those women working in an office are online and on mobile and the amount of time in and out of their working day they are exposed to online media and social networking,” said Mary Lou Quinlan, author of “What She’s Not Telling You” and founder of consultancy Just Ask a Woman. “It’s huge, and I don’t know how much we give her something to talk about on these networks.”

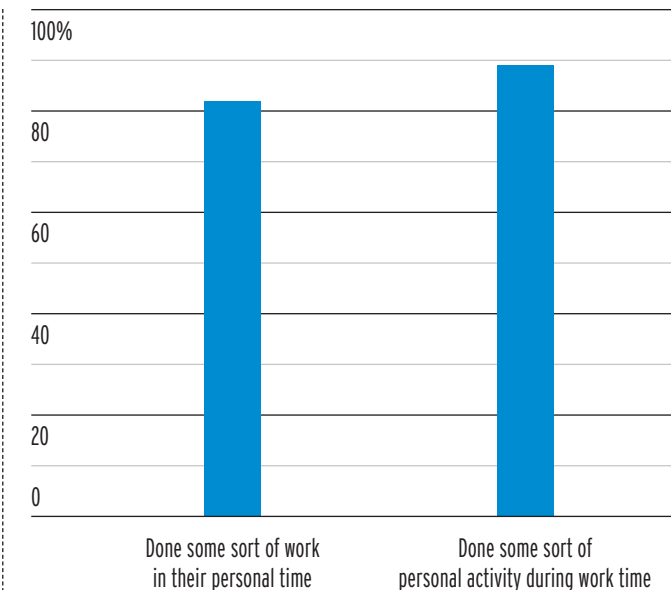
Despite this deep immersion into social media, Quinlan said she is hard-pressed to think of a great site for working women—and wonders whether that’s even the smartest strategy for buying against this audience. “With what little bit of spare time she has, does she want to go to career site or something about health or money or technology or gossip?” she asks.

So, where to reach women? We can start by understanding the almost inseparable linkage between women and work. When respondents to our survey were asked if they had a difficult time “separating my work life from my personal life, and vice versa,” what was revealed was a radical disparity between generations. Among Millennials, 47% said they did have difficulty, compared to 30% of Xers and 24% of Boomers (see chart 15).

And increasingly, women are performing personal activities at work, with nearly 28% of Millennials surfing the net at work, compared to 23% of Xers and 17% of Boomers; 22% of Millennials using e-mail at work to communicate with friends and family, compared to 16% of Xers and 10% of Boomers; and 18% of Millennials visiting social-networking sites, compared to 12% of Xers and 6% of Boomers (see charts 16 and 17, pages 23 and 24). The trend undoubtedly will continue to grow considering the explosion in digital media—and even more so among Millennials. “Millennials are digital natives and multitasking machines, so they can weave seamlessly in and out of their professional and personal lives without much disruption,” JWT’s Mack said. “The multitasking tendencies and work-life blur of today’s working women extend to their media consumption, especially for Millennials. This means there’s significant opportunity to start a conversation with them while they’re at work—while they’re surfing the internet, visiting social networks, checking their mobile, etc.—and continue it throughout the day and into the evening after work. While their attention may never be undivided, engaging them throughout the day at

CHART 14: WORK-LIFE OVERLAP FOR WOMEN

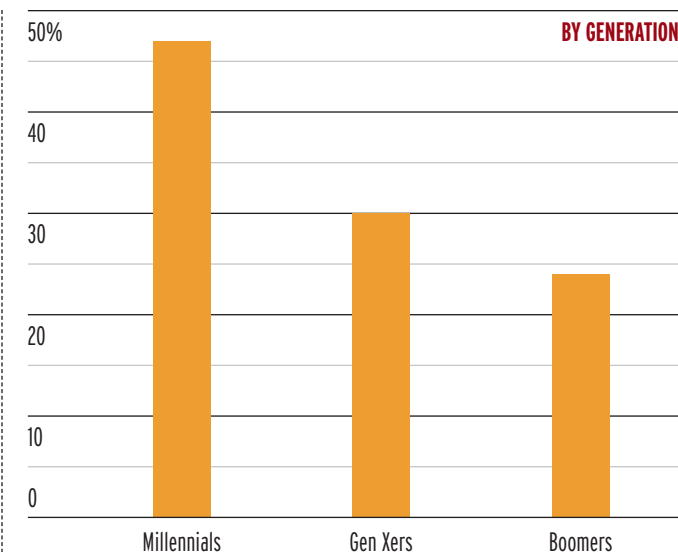
How much have you done the following in the past month?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

CHART 15: WORK-LIFE SEPARATION FOR WOMEN

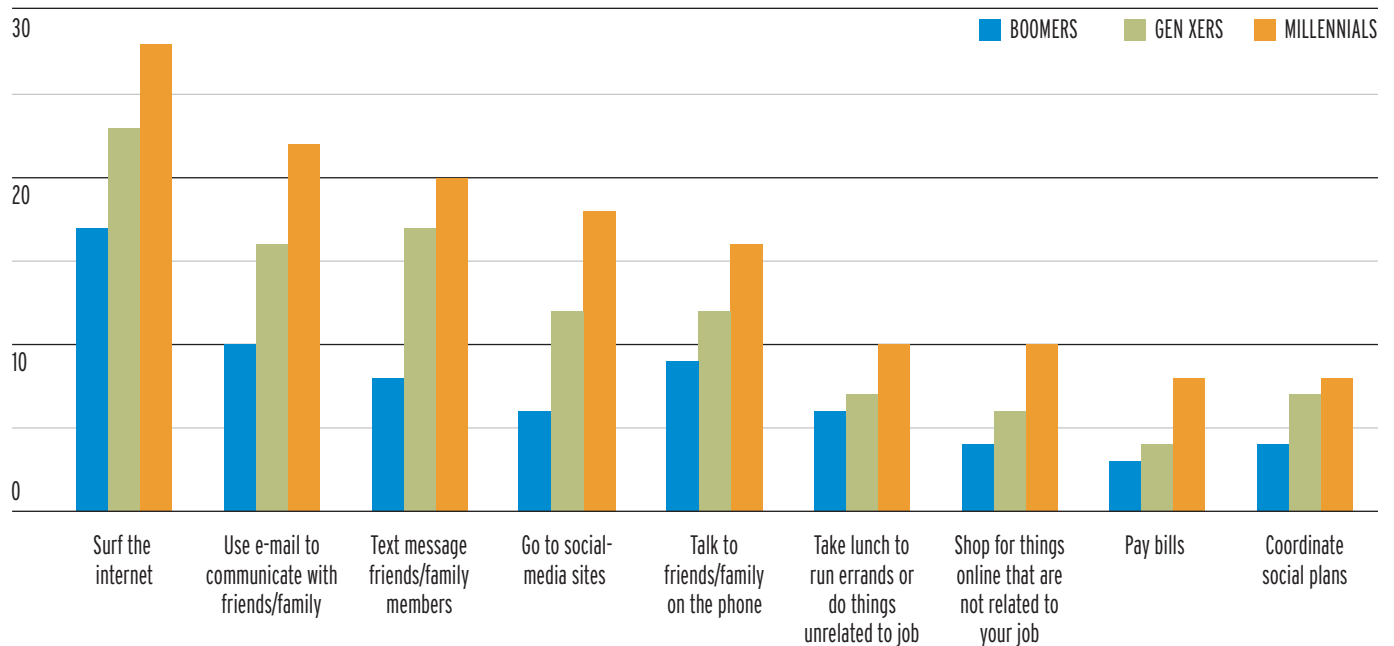
Do you have a tough time separating work from personal life and vice versa?



Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

CHART 16: WOMEN'S PERSONAL ACTIVITIES DURING WORK

How frequently have you done the following in the past month?



Note: Average times per month. Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

multiple touchpoints will add up to a whole."

For the social-networking site LinkedIn, tapping into working women has radically altered its demographic makeup.

When Patrick Crane joined LinkedIn three years ago as VP-marketing, he dove head-first into a research project concerning consumer perceptions of the brand. The takeaway that stayed with him: Women users viewed the site as a place to help others. "It was a distinctly female attitude," he said. The research, meanwhile, showed that men took a different view. "They were here to get something done," Crane said. "It was about what they could get out of it." Those insights have influenced the site's evolution and development ever since.

When LinkedIn launched in 2003, it skewed heavily male—79% male, in fact. "In the early days, it was seen as a bit of an old-boys' network," said Crane, adding it is the only social-based network more historically male-centric.

Even three years ago, the ratio of men versus women using the site was 65/35; it's now 58/42. By default, since the site targets professionals, the vast majority of its female users happen to be working women, with a median household income of \$106,000. In fact, LinkedIn sees itself as a means for working women who take time out from family life to continue to participate in their professional lives. "They don't have to be out of the game; they can still be present," said Crane, noting that there are more than 8,260 professional women's groups on LinkedIn. "We see a lot more of what I call authentic relationship building taking place by women. They are more natural relationship builders."

For traditional print media brands, the rise of social media is

both a challenge and an opportunity, especially when it comes to reaching the time-crunched working woman. It is simply not enough anymore to have a website: The marketplace, and busy working women, demand products like mobile apps. "You have very limited hours when you are a working woman and a working mom, and we know we have to create products and services that can fit into her life and make her life run more smoothly," said Betty Wong, editor in chief of Fitness magazine, whose readership is 65% female and has a median age of 38.

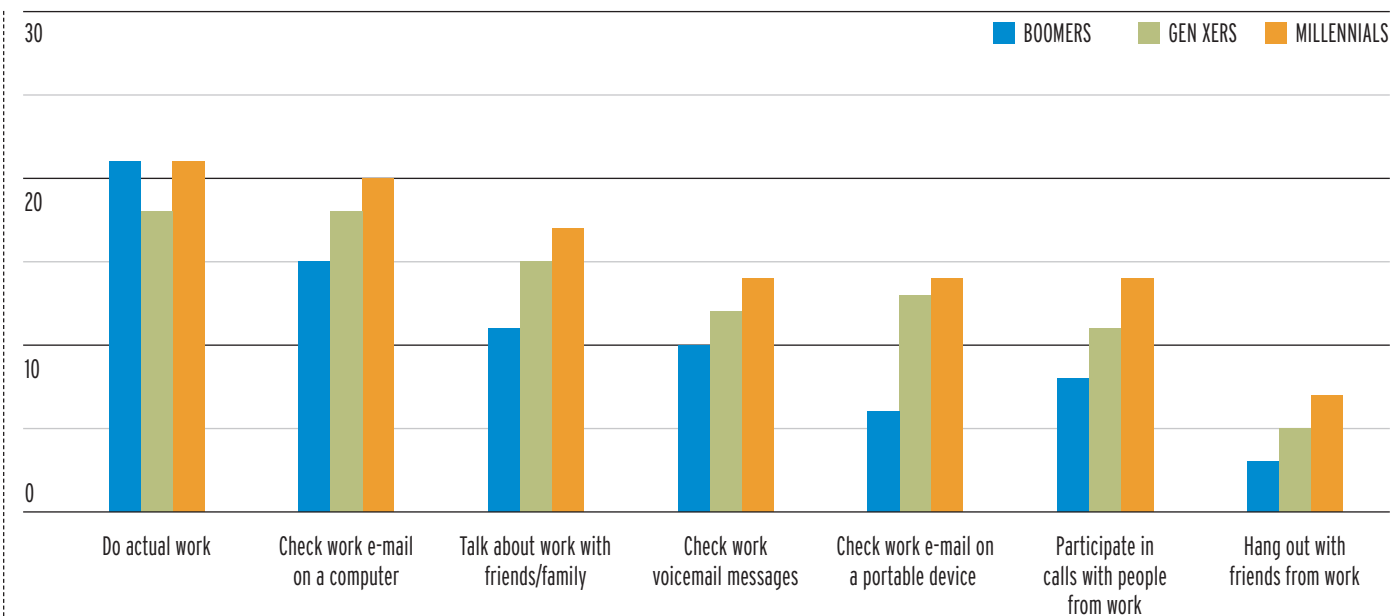
Toward those aims, Fitness is launching iPhone apps that will give subscribers access to workout routines via their mobile

'You have very limited hours when you are a working woman and a working mom, and we know we have to create products and services that can fit into her life and make her life run more smoothly'

devices. "It's tough to capitalize on the brand authority we have with the magazine and translate that into a whole new medium," said Wong. "Will they see it as Fitness the brand, or just a generic fitness app because there are already hundreds out there? We have to create something that is very brand-consistent with our look, voice and feel."

Pushing more digital content is also helping the magazine find younger readers. "Our readers need to access content anywhere," said Wong, who noted that the magazine's strong following on Facebook and Twitter tends to skew younger. "We are trying to reach out via social networks and blogs to keep the Fitness name and brand out there. Being able to evolve our content to these dif-

CHART 17: WOMEN'S WORK ACTIVITIES DURING PERSONAL TIME How frequently have you done the following in the past month?



Note: Average times per month. Source: Advertising Age and JWT survey

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ferent, more mobile and more portable technologies is vital.”

Meanwhile, when Meredith Corp. launched women’s magazine More 11 years ago, it was targeted to a Boomer audience that was “pretty much homogenous,” said editor in chief Lesley Jane Seymour. “Targeting women over 40 was a big deal—no one put them in ads, they were the forgotten. It was a very different world and mindset.”

Yet More’s audience has evolved, now comprised about two-thirds by Boomers, one-third by Xers. That shift has resulted in changes to content, as well as removing any reference to age on the cover. “Demographics are no longer the key way to sell things anymore,” said Seymour. “My daughter, who is 14, wears the same clothes and makeup [as I do]. When I grew up, you wouldn’t touch your mother’s closet. Things were flat demographically. It’s harder in some ways, but more interesting.”

Seymour credits such shifts with women’s increasingly powerful role in the workplace.

“Women don’t just influence the buys—they control it,” she said. “The real revolution is what is happening to men. Women have taken over so much and gotten so far, they don’t know who they are anymore. It is going to be really interesting to watch what has happened to the Millennial guys. What has the focus on girls and working women done to this generation of men?”



EVOLVING WITH THE TIMES

Fitness and More magazines have adjusted content as well as access points to keep the brands relevant to their changing audiences.



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ACTION STEPS FOR MARKETERS**■ THINK OF YOUR PRODUCT AS A SERVICE**

Invest in more services, no matter what you sell. In providing value-added services pre- and post-purchase, you will not only differentiate your brand but also strengthen your relationship with the consumer so that it becomes more substantial and inevitably more long-term. Consider what services you can offer independent of purchase to extend goodwill toward the brand and heighten consideration. For example, create or align with social-media platforms that help women engage with the consultants they trust the most: their peers.

■ ASIDE FROM THE IMMEDIATE PRODUCT BENEFIT, OFFER MORE

Today's working women understand that life is a series of tradeoffs, both big and small. Highlight the residual benefits they gain from your brand. For example, Frigidaire has offered a "More Me-Time" guarantee, claiming the time-saving features of its new appliances will save moms at least eight hours a month. What is your higher purpose? For example, the Stouffer's "Let's Fix Dinner" campaign extols the benefits of families eating together.

■ GIVE THEM PERMISSION TO DELEGATE

Data indicates that Millennial men are more helpful around the house than their older counterparts, but don't leap prematurely to messaging aimed at men. Working women still spend more time doing chores than men—provide them with tools to let go of the inclination to do it all and to simply delegate some responsibilities, whether to a spouse/significant other, a child or a brand. For example, Bounty's "Honey-Do List" enables delegating to the spouse/significant other and the brand.

■ CHANNEL THEIR HUMILITY INTO FEARLESS FINANCIAL DECISIONS

When it comes to managing their finances and preparing for retirement, working women believe there's always more to do. Help women channel that humility—which often translates into thoughtfulness and diligence—into confident financial decisions by providing them with more information, tools and counsel. Be wary of addressing women as insecure or earnest or of sounding too grave; the tone can be fun and fresh—for instance, encouraging friends to get financially savvy together. Be explicit about how their financial decisions can lead to real-life rewards—for example, ability to afford a child's college tuition, an early retirement, a vacation home.

■ THE WORKPLACE MIGHT BE THE BEST PLACE TO START A CONVERSATION

The multitasking tendencies and work-life blur of today's working women extend to their media consumption, especially for Millennials. This means there's significant opportunity to start a conversation with them while they're at work and continue it into the evening after work. Offer them a break between answering e-mails and attending meetings—something they not only want but are also accustomed to doing. Create content or incentives that are interesting or exciting enough to become a habitual part of the workday. For example, Gilt Groupe sends its members e-mail alerts for 36-hour flash sales.

■ DON'T BE AFRAID TO BE FUNNY ABOUT A WORKING WOMAN'S REALITY

As brands already often do with the male demographic, engage women by using comedy to cleverly articulate what they feel. There's a certain humor in the chaotic reality of the working woman's day. Acknowledge with humor the sheer impossibility of doing everything and her demanding responsibilities and hectic lifestyle.

■ DON'T JUST REFLECT THEIR REALITY; MAKE IT BETTER

Demonstrating how your brand can help simplify or improve her complex life is likely to resonate, even if the imagery or archetype doesn't mirror her specific reality (as long as it's not offensive). There's an opportunity to tell working women they can make small choices that will have big effects on their day-to-day lives.

■ CREATE MODERN ARCHETYPES

Just because half of women are in the work force doesn't mean communications must always depict them in professional attire; similarly, you don't have to present them in the home just because they are the operational and emotional cores of the home. Today's women are more layered than ever, and the current archetypes do not necessarily apply to her—it's not as black and white as the 1950s homemaker versus the suit-clad power woman. Consider a new approach in your representation of women.

■ DON'T DISTINGUISH WOMEN AS 'WORKING'

Today, women control \$4.3 trillion of the \$5.9 trillion in U.S. consumer spending, or 73% of household spending; they also make up nearly half of the American work force. Men are not deemed "working men," so why the need to make the distinction with women?

- ANN MACK, DIRECTOR-TRENDSPOTTING, JWT

JWT

Conclusion

ARGUABLY, IRREVERSIBLE, SOCIETAL changes have been wrought by women now making up nearly half the work force. Work increasingly defines women in our society, and more and more women are fashioning an identity outside the home—not only because of the rise of the female head of household, but due to the necessity of women working in an economic environment that demands dual incomes.

“As more women are earning more than their husbands, the same questions face today’s marketers and advertisers about gender—how much to emphasize or tone it down,” writes Juliann Sivulka in “Ad Women: How They Impact What We Need, Want, And Buy.” A professor of advertising at Waseda University in Japan, her book explores the transformation of advertising as women entered that once-male-dominated profession.

Despite Sivulka’s contention that women have transformed the industry, still others cite the dearth of female creative directors for the persistent image in ad campaigns of women in traditional, mostly domestic, rather than professional, roles.

Nonetheless, working women have become a more central target for marketers, and innovative brands must pay attention to the changes they bring to both the workplace and the marketplace. Her ever-shifting, evolving relationship with work and home will continue to shape her consumption habits.

The working woman wants marketing images to reflect her new economic power and acknowledge her as more than just a check-cashing, credit-card-swiping money machine for brands. She does not just make purchases—she earns the money to make them. She is more than just a consumer—she is an economic force.

“Rather than leap prematurely to lots of messages aimed at

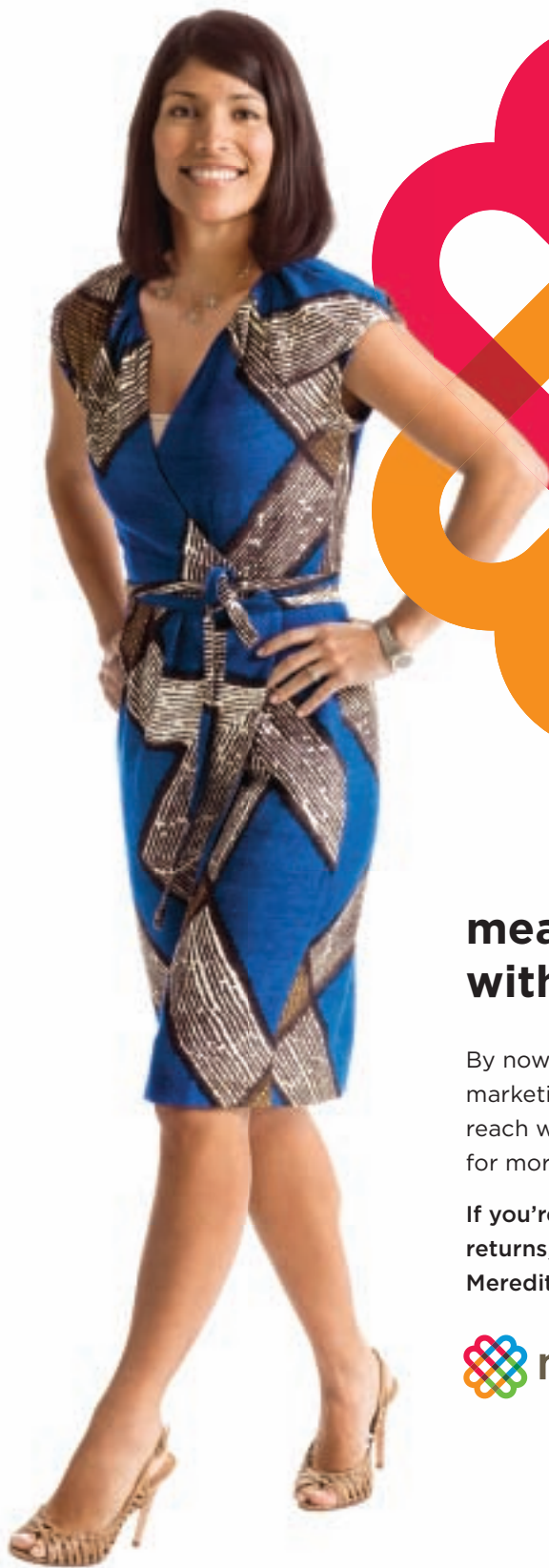
men, marketers of household goods can start by providing working women the tools to let go of the inclination to do it all and simply delegate some responsibilities—whether to a spouse or significant other, a child or a brand,” JWT’s Mack said. “This will get both genders accustomed to the idea of a more egalitarian split of household and childcare responsibilities and perhaps even help drive this trend.”

Still, there remains a dearth of creative executions that speak to her.

“We’ve done a good job focusing on her life as a mom and her life as a Gen Xer, but the one variable that cuts across every generation is, we all have to work, and why can’t we play in that world more?” asked Quinlan of Just Ask a Woman. “I would imagine that the female creative directors who are working their butts off and know what it means to be the breadwinner have a real opportunity to tell the real story of working women. All the other imagery of women we see is boring or dated or limiting. It just doesn’t seem to be getting to the drawing table, even though with working women, there is so much material there.”

Continued Quinlan: “I don’t know why we are afraid of it. Maybe it’s because we are so in love with moms right now, and working women haven’t really been dealt with as a serious customer. The miss is that there is such a gap between women’s working lives and how they are portrayed in advertising.”

MYA FRAZIER is a freelance journalist based in the Midwest and has reported on the advertising and marketing industries for more than a decade. She is a former staff writer for Advertising Age and advertising columnist for The Cleveland Plain Dealer.



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