

Men are From Mars, Women Shop at Neiman's



When it comes to men and women's shopping patterns, gender roles don't just play a part in what they buy, but also how they buy. Call it buying differences or call it the evidences of retail anthropology, but the fact of the matter is that men and women simply shop differently.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women account for more than 80 percent of consumer spending, or more than \$5 trillion dollars annually, but with that percentage comes a lot of research, as women are more likely to spend time weeding through their options to find the best purchase for their needs. In fact, one consumer report mentioned that when women shop, they do so to find the best choice in terms of quality and safety, to socialize and to relax. Men on the other hand can generally be categorized in the "impulse buyer" category as they are looking to satisfy their immediate needs and "get in, get it and get out."

A recent survey by Empathica, a customer experience consul-

tancy, found that overall, men tend to search by product (i.e., based on what will satisfy their current need) while women generally search by brand (i.e., a name they know they can trust).

Although sales and promotions have a tendency to attract a larger number of women, it seems that men are more likely to utilize the web for shopping, as Empathica found that 54 percent of men browse online every few days for shopping research purposes compared to 47 percent of women. - KA

Toying with Tourism

For many gift and destination-driven stores, tourists can be a great market. But how to reach them? The Sixth Floor Museum Store + Café at Dealey Plaza in Dallas, Texas, recently went about tackling that question and ended coming up with a whole new strategy for their infamous location.

"Our museum is a destination for many visitors to the Dallas/Fort Worth area, so a large percentage of our customers are from out-of-town," explains Amy Gilchrist, retail manager for the museum. "Our institution works with the CVBs, chambers and concierges to provide current information about The Sixth Floor Museum and its programs to tourists. In order to better serve our out-of-town guests, the majority of our associates are Certified Tourism Ambassadors, a designation based on coursework and exams from the Dallas Fort Worth Area Tourism Council, so they are well equipped to assist tourists in planning their visit and navigating the area."

Looking to reach out to your out-of-town guests? Take some of Gilchrist's tips for reaching tourists:

- ▶ Make visitors feel welcome. "They've heard we're friendly here, and enjoy seeing that it's true!" she says.
- ▶ Make sure staff is equipped to answer a lot of questions and can give accurate directions.
- ▶ Offer shipping if they can't carry their purchases on the plane.
- ▶ Offer products reflective of their visit online. "Many of our online shoppers are previous tourists who think of something they wish they had purchased while here," she adds.
- ▶ Get in touch with your local CVBs, chambers of commerce and hotel concierges to make sure they're helping you get the word out on your stores latest news.

- KA

