

THE ONLINE WOMAN

WOMEN ONLINE: WHO ARE THEY?

As women, on average, spend more time in the workplace, they also are becoming regular Web surfers. In fact, 64% of online women are working full time, 82% are college educated, and their average household income is \$53,000 to \$63,000. The majority, 56% are moms with children under 18.

Statistics from the Graphics, Visualization, and Usability Center (GVU) shows women Web users are more geographically concentrated than men in urban and well-wired areas. For instance,

- 10.61% of the female Web population is from California (vs. 9.78% of men.),
- 6.27% from New York (vs. 5.77% of men),
- 2.03% from Maryland (vs. 1.53% of men),
- 0.9% from the District of Columbia (vs. 0.69% of men.)

The average age of the wired woman is 41, but this does not reflect the lopsided age spread. About 42% of women online are 30 and under, and 40.3% of men are in that range, suggesting the population surge is coming from younger Web users.

WHAT MAKES WOMEN CLICK?

There are significant socio-economic changes occurring in the US that have a profound impact on how marketers reach women, the fastest-growing segment of the Internet. The latest statistics from the Internet Advertising Bureau show:

- Women will comprise 48% of all online users by 2000 (Jupiter) and 48% of the national workforce by 2005 (US Dept. of Labor)
- One-third of American businesses are now owned by women (National Foundation for Women Business Owners)
- 48% of working wives now provide 50% or more of their family's income (Economic Policy Institute study)

US manufacturers and marketers have a different female consumer on their hands these days. As Bernadette Tracy reveals in her Net Smart research, women have less time on their hands than ever before. Add the vast proliferation of entertainment and information sources, and you've got a woman who needs simplicity and efficiency.

Enter the Internet as tool, friend and advisor. Women use the Web as a tool (1997 Women's Wire Survey), a 24-hour-a-day resource that allows women to streamline their information-gathering as well as to communicate with others in similar situations.

As women flock online, demographics are flattening; however, according to 1997 GVU Study, women on the Web are more educated (82% college graduates), affluent (average HHI \$53k) and techno-savvy.