



Women's Retail Rituals: Exploring Women's Changing Attitudes and Behaviors Toward Shopping

Presented by *Frank About Women*

Paramount to understanding how to win the hearts and minds of female consumers with your marketing is understanding how and why they shop. *Frank About Women* recently completed the second wave of a nationally representative study, Retail Rituals II, among nearly 1,400 women—and the results are quite telling. Women's shopping behavior continues to evolve as two out of three women say they shop differently today than they did just a few years ago. They're doing more comparison price shopping. They're more aggressively looking for sales. They're spending more conservatively due to concerns about the economy. And they're more likely to be buying necessity items while spending less on "frivolous" things. In a nutshell, women are even more value-conscious than they were just two years ago. This explains, in part, the tendency to shop periodically with a specific purpose in mind, rather than adhere to the mantra, "all shopping, all the time."

Even so, retail therapy is on the rise. In our first Retail Rituals survey (2003), we were able to identify five key female shopping mindsets: Feel Good Shopper, Butterfly Shopper, Zealot Shopper, Mission Shopper and Anti-Shopper. The only segment among the five shopping mindsets to have grown over the last two years is the Feel Good Shopper. This segment clearly stole share from the Zealot Shoppers, who now represent the third largest segment. The trend implies that more women are shopping to escape rather than engage. Moreover, this recent wave saw an increase in women who say:

- They go shopping to relieve stress
- They feel like they're in their own universe when they shop
- Shopping makes them feel better when they're down
- They prefer to shop alone.

These findings drive home the reality that women shop by assessing both rational and emotional factors relative to products and services. With today's proliferation of choice, best price and best quality often aren't enough. A woman wants to know she's buying a product that will somehow make her life easier, more fun and/or make a statement about who she is.

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