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CHAPTER FOUR

She's Motivated

The 3-D View of HER

In Chapter Three, we shared a series of broad-stroke portraits of the Baby Boomer woman with you, considering her life stage challenges and generational influences. But this is not the whole story, for within each life stage, psychological, social, and even spiritual factors will have an impact, both consciously and subconsciously, on the individual woman's receptivity to products and services. What is needed is a 3-D view of her that takes an even deeper dive into the very heat of marketing: what is motivating her purchasing decisions on the archetypal level.

On Appealing to Her Psyche

Michael Bohn,

Director of Brand Marketing (Bosch, Siemens, Thermador, Gaggenau)

BSH HOME APPLIANCES CORPORATION

Demographic segmentation criteria like age need to be augmented by deeper insight into consumer lifestyles. A progressive city dweller, age 50, likely has more in common with the 30-year-old social activist next door than with her 48-year-old fellow Boomer in rural Kentucky, deeply rooted in a conservative belief system. Consequently, at BSH North America we segment our target market psychographically. Then, we utilize our portfolio of four upscale brands—Bosch, Siemens, Gaggenau, and Thermador—to achieve the closest possible fit with each audience, and each type of female Boomer.

As an example, the Thermador brand is designed to appeal to Leading-Edge Boomers with empty nest concerns like connecting, questing, finding new passions, new ways of expressing her individuality, and redefining the role she plays in life. The Bosch brand, on the other hand, is geared more towards Trailing-Edge Boomer women who find themselves sandwiched between eldercare, childcare and their own career, constantly multitasking. What she needs is not a hobby or a means of socializing, but a highly efficient problem-solver in her kitchen. Consequently, Bosch products (and marketing) emphasize convenience, ease of use, and brilliant results with the least amount of effort and the least infraction on the already busy household (thus, for example, Bosch's emphasis on extremely low noise emission).

Another example of differences between Baby Boomers in their social and political belief system. The cultural rift in this generation, originally opened by the Vietnam War, is still manifesting itself in differing views and attitudes today. In this respect, one brand—such as Thermador with its classic American iconography and its emphasis on heritage—will appeal to a different group from the Bosch brand with a subtle VW-like countercultural “force of good” identity and its open embrace of environmental causes, or from the Siemens brand with irreverent “forward thinking” campaign. Finally, Boomers simply differ in the style of home or kitchen they prefer. Consequently, our product design and marketing caters to these very divergent style expectations—from the ultra-modern, Euro-designed Gaggenau to the classic American style of Thermador.

One campaign that has resonated particularly well with Baby Boomer women recently is the Thermador brand campaign. Both the underlying positioning strategy and the creative strategy is deeply rooted in the brand's heritage, essentially reinterpreting successful campaigns of decades past in a fresh, new way suited to a new consumer mindset, but consistent with the Thermador brand identity.

The Thermador campaign does not show kitchens. It depicts glamorous, empowered, iconic women of ageless sophistication—together with a Thermador: bold, heroic, and unique. Naturally, this creates visual differentiation, but more than that, it creates a distinct message. It connects in a different way by speaking to needs and desires that are more relevant than just owning a good-looking kitchen. The campaign gets at the deeper emotional needs of its audience. All her life, the typical female has put somebody else first. Now it's about her. Baby Boomer women feel young and want nothing to do with traditional views of “senior life.” Indulge them. Give them a sense of empowerment and sex appeal. For all her self-confidence, she is at a time in her life in which she struggles with a perceived loss of control—physically (health) and psychologically (emptying nest, reduced media attention to her generation). A campaign that gives her a feeling of control connects emotionally.

This idea of “empowerment” recently even spawned a revolutionary new refrigeration product concepts, the Thermador Freedom Collection, giving the consumer total freedom in making the kitchen of her dreams a reality. But the campaign is about more than kitchen design and performance benefits. It helps shatter traditional assumptions of senior life. In fact, part of its

success is due to the fact that it does not directly address the issue of age at all. It shows empowered, sophisticated women of ageless beauty.

Another, more palpable success factor of the campaign is its calculated use of iconic imagery, reminiscent of an era of unprecedented confidence and affluence in American history. Boomers revered icons of beauty and success, and they believed in big dreams. This is the generation that reached for the stars (and attained them), and Thermador's imagery evokes this era—a simpler and safer time in our nation's history, at least in retrospect. Classic in style, contemporary in tone. Just like its audience. That's the formal employed in these ads.

It has been suggested that the Thermador campaign is really a state-of-the-art reinterpretation of 1950's advertising. And maybe that is at the heart of its success. It evokes positive feelings deeply ingrained in Baby Boomers' psyche, but at the same time addresses the emotional issues they have today.

Michael Bohn is responsible for all marketing activities of the Bosch, Siemens, Gaggenau, and Thermador brands in North America. Prior to his current position, he served as head of International Brand Marketing for Siemens at BSH global headquarters in Munich, Germany. In addition, to bachelor's and master's degrees in business from the University of Bayreuth in Germany, he earned an MBA degree from the University of Georgia.

The Cutting Edge of Marketing

Motivational marketing represents the cutting edge for companies, with psychosocial research playing an increasingly important role in defining the consumer marketplace. Retail analysts are among those who predict that within the coming years, demographics will no longer be the primary determinant in defining the consumer marketplace. Instead, as a result of diversification and segmentation, motivation and shopping behavior will play increasingly more influential roles.¹

On Embracing Both Her Demographic and Psychographic Drivers

Grant J. Schneider,

Chief Marketing Officer, Corporate Sales and Marketing

TIME INC.

The women of the Baby Boomer generation have freedoms that previous generations didn't have. They're living lives of their choosing, not lives that were handed to them. This is a fundamental difference from their mothers and grandmothers. Consequently, Boomer women are joining life in very different ways. In general, they are driven by a sense of worth, esteem, and accomplishment that was heretofore unavailable.

You need to connect with her by helping her solve daily life challenges in a very real way in relevance and context, which means it's imperative to understand what's driving her. These women, especially the younger Trailing-Edge Boomers, live a life of duality in a very time-pressed context. They are choosing to do it all: have a career, raise a family, get divorced, remarry, be a single mom. Because she just gets busier and busier, it eliminates the "me" portion of a woman's quadrant of career, family, community, and friends, to the point she feels there's very little "me" left in her life.

In building a case for leading a life less complex, I helped birth *Real Simple* magazine five years ago. The tremendous success of this magazine is due in part to its relevance in speaking to the psychographic issues these women face. When she buys *Real Simple*, she's saying, "I'm part of this club of needing an easier life." Interestingly, we've found this trend has great appeal across multiple generations. *Real Simple* is one of the few magazines in the country that has equal readership numbers among women 25 to 35, 35 to 45, and 45 to 55 years old. Furthermore, of all our magazines, *Real Simple* has the highest rate of gifting: daughters give it to grandmothers, mothers give it to daughters, girlfriends gift it to one another. By moving beyond just demographic concerns, we've tapped into a growing universal trend in women's lives.

Grant Schneider, as chief marketing officer of Time Inc., is charged with delivering creative solutions that leverage the world's most trusted media brands and resources. With an extensive background in marketing and strategic planning, Schneider holds an industry-wide reputation as a power brand-builder. His recently released book, *She Means Business*, harnesses the unparalleled proprietary market research of Time Inc.'s women's magazines to paint a complete and up-to-date portrait of the American female consumer. Prior to this appointment in December 2005, Schneider was vice president, marketing and brand strategy for *Real Simple*.

Motivational Factors

Later in this chapter, we present a diagnostic tool for marketers that helps identify one of three dominant motivational archetypes for the Boomer woman who is most likely to be a candidate for your products or services. But first, we will share the findings of our proprietary study of motivational factors that have an impact on her decision-making processes, behaviors, and attitudes.

As we said in Chapter One, the notion that women 40+ are in a dynamic period of psychological growth is revolutionary. Until recently in both scholarly and marketing circles, this period in a woman's life was largely considered to be a developmental wasteland. By the time she approached menopause—and certainly thereafter—she had traditionally been thought to have become long established in her ways. Stable, serene, or, at the very least, marginalized, she was stereotyped as an undesirable target market and, in the eyes of most marketers, invisible.

On Aspiring at Midlife

Peggy Northrop,
Editor-in-Chief

Brenda Saget Darling,
Publisher

MORE MAGAZINE

Women over 40 have plenty of aspirations-but the acceptance of that notion has lagged. Our readers want to be seen as women who still care about how they look, who still care about style, who still care about beauty, but who don't want to look 20 anymore. Our readers get very annoyed when they see products like wrinkle cream shown on a 20-year-old's face. "*I'm sorry. You're 20. You don't need wrinkle cream. Don't try to sell me that.*" But if they see a women

who looks like them, but a little bit better, they have a sense of what it means to aspire to be the best that we can be for our age.

More targets women 40 to 60 years old. Over the past six years, we've grown from 300,000 to 1.1 million, more than tripling our circulation. Our sweet spot falls between the ages of 45 to 54, going to the very heart of the Baby Boomer demographic. While there are life stage and situational differences between the woman on the Trailing- and Leading-Edges of our readership, there is an interesting dynamic that has driven the growth of our circulation among the younger group. We have found that these readers, who are just turning 40, are often doing so with a fair amount of trepidation. They look to our magazine as a way to allay their fears, countering all the messages they get everywhere else, that turning 40 is the beginning of the end. As problem-solvers, juggling the multiple demands of work and family, our younger demographic is inspired by the photos and stories of women who are ten or fifteen years older than they are.

When we put attractive, successful women on our covers who look like they are between their late 40s and mid 50s, we sell lots more copies than when we go for the "40, could pass for 32" look. In fact, one of our highest selling issues of the past year had a great looking 53-year-old, gray-haired woman on the cover. You can see the crinkles around her eyes. We have to restrain our photographers from airbrushing these out. Our readers want to be able to see what these faces really look like. And they see something they like: a knowing quality, a sense of confidence. It's reassurance that the coming decades are an open door, not a barrier.

Our readers recognize that you can't get that knowing look in your eyes until you're at least 40. Whether you're a stay-at-home mom, a corporate executive, or a schoolteacher, it takes that long to gain the confidence to be who you really are. We find that the bigger we make "40" in our cover headline, whether it's "Life after 40," "Fearless after 40," or "Style after 40," the better the issue sells. We're being very honest about who we are, and about celebrating this stage in a women's life. And women are drawn to this message.

Aspirations go beyond how we look and style ourselves. We started a new column called "Firsts After Forty," which addresses the strong desire women have to try something new at midlife: to go surfing for the first time, to ride her first motorcycle, to buy her first horse. We featured one woman who went back to college at 40 to become a doctor. People said to her, "You're going to be 50 before you get your M.D." Her response: "I'm going to be 50 anyway, so why not be a physician, too? Our readers tell us that they feel a sense of urgency: if not now, when? A big part of this is a commitment to re-inventing their lives. Our readers are undertaking an intense re-evaluation of every choice they've ever made. There's a reason that the divorce rate is rising among women in their 40s. What's more, it's the women who are initiating the splits. They look at their guys and say, "Another twenty-something years with this guy with these same problems? I don't think so."

One of our contributors, Suzanne Brown Levine, author of *Inventing the Rest of Our Lives: Women in Second Adulthood*, addresses the sense that many women feel they want something more in their lives but they're not sure what it is. It's a developmental stage that large numbers of women are just now exploring, and if we can help our readers be patient, the solutions will reveal themselves, bubbling up from their subconscious minds.

We certainly recognize that our magazine is not for every 40+ woman out there. There are subsegments of Baby Boomer women who are less aspirational, less financially well off, less well educated, much more concerned with security, much less likely to set new goals for themselves. There are other magazines for her.

The *More* reader talks about turning 40 or 50 as a commemoration of where she is in life. For her, it's not "Oh my God! I'm getting old! I have to hide!" Our readers consider the alternative, grab the surfboard, and celebrate how great it is to be alive.

Peggy Northrop was named editor-in-chief of *More* in April 2004. Under her leadership, *More* made Advertising Age's "A List" for 2005, and *Media* magazine named *More* "Best Women's Lifestyle" title of the year. Before joining Meredith Corporation, she was editor of *Organic Style* and held senior positions at *Real Simple*, *Vogue*, *Glamour*, *Redbook* and *Health*.

Northrop is a regular commentator on CBS's *The Early Show* and PBS's *To the Contrary*.

Brenda Saget Darling was named publisher of *More* in August 2005. She had previously served as publisher of *Traditional Home*. Prior to joining Meredith Corporation, she was vice president/publisher of *House & Garden* at Condé Nast Publications. Her broad publishing experience includes positions at several Condé Nast, Fairchild, and Hachette Filipacchi titles. She also served as associate publisher at *The New Yorker* and *Elle Décor* magazines.

She's Dynamic—Not Invisible

As the chief purchasing officer at home, and having achieved unprecedented success in the workplace, the Baby Boomer woman is anything but invisible. Her life is dynamic, reflecting her continuing development as an individual. This movement provides marketers with fertile opportunities to provide solutions and options for her evolving needs, interests and motivations on multiple fronts. An example of a strategic appeal that does a good job acknowledging this evolutionary dimension of the Baby Boomer woman is created by Dodge. Their print advertisement for Dodge Grand Caravan features a youthful Leading-Edge Baby Boomer woman folding down the seats to make room for her grandkids and their bicycles. The headline reads: "Grab Life by the Horns." Dodge gets it. They have discovered that this generation's Grandma, while happy to be tending to the needs of the younger generation, hasn't given up on her own plans, dreams, and aspirations.

Academia has made note of the unprecedented phenomenon of Baby Boomer women returning to higher education to complete degrees or add degrees to their list of accomplishments. Deborah Natansohn, president and chief operating officer of Seabourn Cruise Line notes a new generation of ambitious travelers, including women, who chart their upcoming journeys five years at a time, checking off regions of the world from their "to-do" lists with business-like precision. And speaking of business, as Maria Coyne of KeyBank points out, an unprecedented number of women, many in the Baby Boomer generation, are following their entrepreneurial dream.

On Banking on Women-Owned Businesses

Maria C. Coyne,
Executive Vice President, Key4Women and SBA
KEYBANK NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

According to the Center for Women's Business Research, the number of women-owned businesses in the United States has expanded by 17 percent between 1997 and 2004, to a total of 10.6 million firms generating \$2.5 trillion in sales. At KeyBank, one of the nation's leading financial services companies, we have been committed to women-owned businesses for a very long time. Yet, we realized several years ago that we could better support this growing economic force by dedicating more of our resources to women.

To this end, we launched Key4Women to provide customized service, access to capital, and ongoing education and networking opportunities specifically for women business owners. KeyBank as an organization has made an investment in this segment by pledging to lend \$1 billion in business capital to women-owned firms. This, along with our dedicated Key4Women relationship managers in the field, underscores Key's mission of providing a broad variety of services to women business owners.

We believe it's not a one-size-fits-all kind of world, certainly not with the number of women-owned firms out there. It is of great importance to deliver something real, something more than just marketing. We strive to understand the wide variety of women customers we serve and to provide creative and customized business solutions. And we see a broad array of women running business. In fact, many of our more established women business-owner relationships are with the Boomer generation.

We see many Boomer women who are leaving corporate America, starting businesses based on their great work experience. They may have a nest egg or are in a better position to start or buy an existing business. In some instances we see women, who, due to death or divorce, suddenly find themselves in a different position and strike out on their own in business.

Much more so than men, women business owners are inclined to consult with other, involving experts, employees, and fellow business owners. According to a study by the Center for Women's Business Research, these women are perfectly willing to be risk-takers, but not before they thoroughly understand how a loan or investment strategy works and determining all of their options. Surprisingly, women business owners, particularly those with firms that generate a million dollars or more in revenues, are more likely than men to embrace technology to help their businesses grow. They utilize their websites to perform more transactions, and their offices are run with greater efficiency using computer networks.

Many women running a business have chosen their path in part to maintain a level of autonomy and management control in their work. This can mean running anything from a small company with no employees to a large multi-million dollar business with hundreds of employees. As well, we find that women, especially Boomer women, have tremendously loyal staff because they treat their employees like family. This means that often these women will fund a retirement plan even in difficult business years or continue to pay the employer portion of the health care program even when faced with rising health care costs. Of course, the down side of this "family" outlook is that they aren't as quick to make those tough decisions when they must reduce staff.

Given the universal importance women place on relationships and connections, a key element to the success of our Key4Women program rests in the effectiveness and commitment of our relationship managers in the field. We've invested in educating and building awareness with these local champions, for they are the people who bring the whole thing to life. Frankly, many of our Key4Women relationship managers have found it so personally rewarding that the program has become a very strong recruiting tool. Those candidates who are more mature and experienced, and who are looking for something to give them more meaning in their career, really embrace this women-focused initiative. It has helped us to hire some great people. Moreover, Key4Women heightens our commitment to all women. It is changing the way we attract clients and employees and how we service and maintain relationships with an important part of our market.

Maria C. Coyne is executive vice president and national sales manager of Community Banking for KeyBank National Association. Maria is responsible for the national sales efforts and administration of Key's Small Business Administration (SBA) program and leads both Key4Women (women-owned business) and specialty segment initiatives across Key's 13-state branch network. Maria is also a member of the Advisory Council of the Center for Women's Business Research in Washington, D.C. and is the chairperson of the board of directors for the Beaumont School in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

Outgrowing Old Programming

The revolutionary notion of ongoing adult development is based on the theory that just as there are normal stages of physical development for human beings, so are there normal stages of psychological, emotional, social, and spiritual development. This potential for growth is rooted in the observation that human beings are born with the capacity to experience authentic feelings. However, from the moment the child leaves her mother's womb, she is greeted with frustration and discomfort. Along with physical challenges come messages, influences, and experiences that run counter to her innate sense of herself, programming her with limiting expectations about how things can be. Some women surrender to the limitations, seeking to ground themselves in stability and predictability—even at the expense of their own sense of autonomy and self-expression.

In healthy development, when new information that differs from the original worldview is introduced into the individual's life, she either modifies or replaces the old programming. The old beliefs must be acknowledged as being outdated or dysfunctional in order for the person to advance and grow. This recognition of having outgrown old ways of being is often a painful experience. When it occurs during the teenage years, it's commonly referred to as "adolescent identity crisis." Later in life, this same painful forward movement (that sometimes feels like anything but) has been tagged "midlife crisis." Whenever this crisis occurs, and in many cases, however often, the woman continues her psychological development leading ultimately to the reclamation of her capacity to experience, express, and act on her authentic feelings.

The woman's motivational touch-points can be identified and related to one of three major archetypes, each one associated primarily with one of the three stages of development. Before showing you how to apply developmental factors to shape your marketing strategy for your particular product or service, let's dive right in to the motivational archetypes, adapted from the Orsborn/Smull Research. (*Note to readers: Drs. Orsborn and Smull alternately refer to the Conventional Boomer as the Core Boomer; the Transitional Boomer as the Reactive Boomer and the Aspirational Boomer as the Actualized Boomer.*)

The Three Archetypes

Archetype One: The Conventional Boomer Woman

The woman described by the first archetype is in a stage of adult development we refer to as Conventional. Her motivational orientation is that of maintaining security, seeking to ground herself in stability and predictability—even at the expense of her own sense of autonomy and self-expression. She has either not been exposed to new information that offers a challenge to the status quo, or she has compliantly resisted any divergent thoughts or behaviors that could be construed as "rocking the boat."

Many women outgrow their original programming in regard to some key life issues relatively early in life, often by late adolescence. A move to a new location, a divorce, education, a traumatic life experience, or any serious challenge to the woman's status quo can initiate awareness of discontent with her limitations. On the other hand, she may be satisfied with her lot and think it more than a fair trade to give up her independence in exchange for the expectation that she will be taken care of by others.

Archetype Two: The Transitional Boomer Woman

At some point in their lives, many women begin to experience the consistent inability to make a decision, the nagging sense that they are being perceived by others differently from how they feel inside, awareness of persistent self-neglect of their physical or emotional needs, and free-floating anxiety. These emotional states indicate that, like it or not, the woman is leaving the Conventional stage and entering Archetype Two, becoming what we refer to as the Transitional Boomer woman. This is the stage during which she becomes disillusioned with what she had previously taken for granted and begins to assert her own individuality.

A woman entering this stage often feels herself to be plunged into insecurity, the old beliefs falling apart while a new, more meaningful world view has not yet come into focus. At the same time old conceptions are passing away, signs of new beliefs and behaviors formed in reaction to them begin to emerge.

In many respects, this vulnerable period bears similarities to an initiatory rite of passage. Social scientists, such as William Bridges and Ronald Grimes, suggest that individuals undergoing transitions at any age go through a similar initiatory sequence, often experienced inwardly as an altered emotional state. In the classic ritual, the initiate is separated from the familiarity of the everyday life of the tribe and put through a series of trials. In the end, transformed by the experience, the initiate re-enters the tribe with the new stature of an adult, having gained valuable skills and insights. While disillusionment is not something most women seek in their lives, it typically heralds a new period of growth.

For example, tired of trying to live up to her fashionable mother's expectations about beauty, one research participant, Samantha, decided to cut her long hair into a crew cut, letting what was left of her mane go a natural gray. But it was equally rebellious of another participant, Joanne, who grew up in an austere fundamentalist household, to not only color her hair but opt for a facelift as well. The key to recognizing a woman this stage is not as much by her external choices, but by the thought process that she engages in as she makes her decisions. If her motivation has substantial aspect of reactivity embedded in it, however liberated she may feel or act, she belongs to this second Archetype.

Archetype Three: The Aspirational Boomer Woman

Out of the reactivity of transition emerges the third phase of development, which we refer to as Aspirational. During this culminating stage, the woman moves beyond the passivity of the first stage and the rebellion of the second. The hallmark of the authentic life that arises is integrity: an embrace of opposing tensions, the sum of which constitutes a whole greater than any of the parts. Many women use images of integration to describe their lives in regard to having or gaining meaning: weaving and mending, repairing, and healing.

One typical comment from an Aspirational Baby Boomer woman in the study: "Of course I've made mistakes. But that's not the whole story about me. And what's more, it's not even the most

important part. I laugh, I cry—and I can finally look people straight in the eye and say ‘Here I am, flaws and all’—the whole package. And while I prefer you love me as I am, I am willing to take the consequences.”

Said another: “I think of it as the retrieval of lost and broken pieces, patching them together like a broken pot on an archeological dig, making them into something authentic and new.”

These Aspirational women know that they are pioneering unmapped territory. Recall that she has three to five decades more of life ahead of her than did her great- or great-great-grandmother at the turn of the century. The emotional, attitudinal, and practical landmarks she expected to encounter at various ages have quite simply failed to materialize. It is as if the entire generation is simultaneously waking up to the fact that at 40, 50, or 60, they have few role models or historical precedents and no certainty about what the future may bring to draw upon. They may have mixed feelings about dealing with the unknown—but this is a generation of women who are used to forging their own way through history on their own terms.

Given the Baby Boomer woman’s capacity for lifelong development, the motivational archetypes we have developed are likewise dynamic in nature. Keep in mind that the Baby Boomer woman may be at different developmental stages of her life simultaneously. For example, the same woman may have achieved a high level of attitudinal mastery in regards to her career and finances (Aspirational Archetype) while as a new divorcee she is simultaneously coping with the tumultuous emotions of re-entering the singles scene (Transitional Archetype).

Motivational Marketing Opportunities

Each archetype carries with it attitudes and characteristics that can help you discern the marketing message that will most appeal to her, as well as the marketing opportunities most closely associated with each type.

The Conventional Boomer Woman

Even more than the other archetypes, the Conventional Boomer woman responds to the voice of authority. Third-person credibility, expert opinion, and statistical justification will all fall on receptive ears.

She is not prone to rewarding herself with luxury purchases or experiences, tending to spend her money on family and friends. When it comes to her brands, she is loyal and conservative.

The consummate caretaker, she puts others’ interests first when making a decision. Always keeping family and friends’ needs and desires on the radar, she’s focused on providing the best solution for those near and dear to her.

She will remain within the Conventional Archetype until she realizes that has neglected to put one important family member’s wishes on the list: her own. The woman to whom this thought occurs is on her way from transiting from Archetype One to Two.

Core Motivational Appeal: *Tell her you can give her the help she needs, and that you will keep her safe.*

Oreck® vacuum cleaners is a company that does a good job appealing to the Conventional Boomer Woman. In a print ad for the Oreck XL® Ultra, David Oreck, dressed in black from turtleneck on down, literally stands behind his product—the Oreck XL Ultra. With his bald head and arms crossed over his chest, he conveys a fatherly yet authoritarian image to his target consumer. David Oreck himself is going to take care of all her vacuuming needs, protecting her family. “Hi, I’m David Oreck. It’s common knowledge that household dust carries germs, pollen, dander, mold spores, bacteria—things you don’t want your family breathing in.” Appealing to the Conventional Boomer Woman’s low tolerance for risk, the ad does everything it possibly can to lower the bar of entry for her. The company offers eight free tune-ups and an eight-year warranty, as well as a risk-free, 30-day home trial. “There’s no obligation. I pay all shipping! Even the phone call is free.”

The Transitional Boomer Woman

The woman in this stage is amenable to leaving behind old familiar brands, products and services. She enters a period of open-minded experimentation, rejecting or rethinking purchasing patterns that had become routine to her as she rebels against the status quo. During this transitional period, she begins to pay more attention to her own physical and emotional needs.

An excellent example of a print ad that appeals to the woman transitioning from the Conventional to the Transitional Archetype is for Nature’s Bounty’s® line of vitamins and nutritional supplements. The ad features an appealing, informal, family-style portrait of a multigenerational grouping of women under the headline: “You Do Your Best for Them, But What About You?”

The woman transitioning from the first to second stages of adult development begins to seek out self-nurturing products, services, and experiences and is open to the self-gifting of luxury goods and experiences.

The Transitional Boomer woman is willing to take risks, to stand apart from the crowd, and to look for ways to individualize her self-expression and life. She is a trendsetter and an early adopter of innovative goods and services.

For example, a Boomer woman travel customer at this stage of growth is likely to respond to a pitch for adventure travel: the solo seeker on a quest for self-definition and nurturing. She is likely to take up a sport or hobby that will raise eyebrows. She is the woman kayaking in New Guinea or training to climb the highest mountain in her state. One thing is for sure: She is no longer concerned about living up to others’ expectations. How can you capture this world traveler? You may want to rethink those images of a barely clad couple lolling in the surf. The Boomer woman is just as likely to travel solo, or with her girlfriends, as with a spouse.

Core Motivational Appeal: *Tell her that you believe in her.*

A print ad that captures the spirit of the Transitional Boomer woman is by Vaseline® Intensive Care for Vaseline Total Moisture. The ad features a vivacious woman who appears to be in her 40s, enjoying a good laugh with friends over lunch. Her dark hair brushes her shoulders with lively natural curls and her rose-hued blouse is low-cut to discretely reveal her cleavage. The headline consists of two promises. The first promise: “I promise I’ll never get dry skin again.” But it’s the second promise that provides the tip-off as to her Transitional Stage status. “I promise never to dress like my great-aunt Ethel.” Most people wouldn’t think twice about the modest display of skin in the photograph. But this Baby Boomer woman’s cleavage is apparently an emotionally charged issue for her—as much a sign of her reactivity to the standards by which she

was raised as it is her own declaration of independence. In one final huzzah for her, the copy ends on a note of motivational support: “Leave the covering up to great-aunt Ethel.”

The Aspirational Boomer Woman

This is the “wise woman” stage. She thinks for herself, but may return to an original brand or product, abandoned during Stage Two, having learned to take a “best of” approach to her lifestyle and consumption choices. She is no longer reactive to the status quo, but knows herself and what she wants. This is a ripe stage to target with products she once enjoyed and used, but that lost her somewhere along the way. She will be responsive to a light touch of nostalgia-but she sees herself as firmly rooted in the present. As a result, she is open to trying new things-but is not likely to sacrifice comfort and practicality for style. Give her both, and you will have a loyal customer.

In the spirit of wholeness, the Aspirational Boomer woman is less obsessed with pleasing others or proving her worth. Rather, she is interested in learning and reconnecting with herself and others.

An example of a motivational appeal to the Aspirational Boomer woman is the January 2006 cover of *More* magazine. In large letters, the cover proclaims “Confident, Grown-up.” The subhead reads, “Celebrate Your Life After 40.” The featured articles are “Dressy Dresses for Women Not Girls” and “Dream Trips: Finding Yourself in Machu Picchu.”

Core Motivational Appeal: *Tell her you will embrace life with her.*

Earlier, we described a print ad in which a Baby Boomer woman sported bifocals (a sign of aging) and torn jeans (the youthful rebel’s fashion statement) at the same time. No longer in reactivity to her past, nor in denial about the future, she is finally free to select the “best of” from all her developmental stages and weave them into a way of relating to life that is authentically her own. You might find her deep in yoga meditation one day, going out for pizza with friends on Thanksgiving, and then going whole hog buying Christmas gifts for her extended family a few days later. She’s spontaneous and unpredictable, inventing a style all her own.

Saturn appeals to this Aspirational woman with a print ad for the Saturn Relay, commemorating the fact that, “The family car has grown up.” In the ad, the attractive Trailing-Edge Boomer woman communicates a hard-won sense of empowerment through the self-confident expression in her eyes. “I am a mother of two, but not just a mother of two. I am more than the sum of my errands,” the copy reads. She doesn’t deny her circumstance, but at the same time, she doesn’t allow her circumstances to define her. Make no mistake, she’s her own woman.

Before we conclude our discussion of motivation, we must take a time out to address two final areas that hold archetypal meaning for Baby Boomer women: The first issue is sexuality, the second issue is the search for meaning.

Seasoned Sexuality

When taking on the stereotypes of aging, what topic is more highly-charged (or more to the point, taboo) for most marketers than the older woman’s sexuality? Gail Sheehy, author of the groundbreaking popular work on adult development, *Passages*, faced this stereotype head-on with her publication of *Sex and the Seasoned Woman: Pursuing the Passionate Life*. In this work,

Sheehy reports “a surge in women’s sex and love lives after 50,” tagging the trend “a hidden cultural phenomenon.” Sheehy’s view is that “Boomer-generation women in midlife are open to sex, love, dating, new dreams, exploring spirituality, and revitalizing their marriages as never before. This is a new universe of passionate, liberated women—married and single—who are unwilling to settle for the stereotypical roles of middle age and are now realizing they don’t have to.”

This trend toward an extended and in some cases open-ended period of sexual activity in a woman’s life is seen by many as an organic adjustment to the elongated lifespan of the individual. With better health and medical advancements that address issues of sexual decline, such as the widespread use of hormones, women have more sexual choices than did their mothers once they entered their post menopausal years. With the children growing and/or out of the house, many women view this same period in their lives as an opportunity for renewed vitality and passion. Women 40+ are also prime candidates for attempting to start new relationships, populating dating services, and single bars. (For proof of this, seek no further than ABC on Sunday nights, where four *Desperate Housewives* set the record straight about their peaking sexuality. In fact, despite the stereotypes, in this age group, it is the woman—more of often than the man—who is most likely to initiate a divorce.)²

The sophisticated marketer understands that sexuality is not necessarily a thing of the past for her. The Baby Boomer woman will respond to appeals that will help her bring romance back into her life with her husband: exotic vacations, fine wine, sensual lingerie. Alternately, there is the distinct possibility that she could be dating for the first time in twenty-five years. This is a sizable enough segment of the Boomer woman population to have caught the eye of dating services. But even as she goes on the hunt for the best online dating service, body lotions, mouthwashes, and products that promise to give her “kissable” lips, she will not respond to messaging designed with the twenty-something woman in mind.

The reality is, her body is changing. She is not, despite some marketers’ conception, buying the notion that she can be “forever young.” Nor does she necessarily want to be that way. Depending on her archetype, she may be anywhere on the spectrum from uneasy denial to whole-hearted acceptance about the realities of aging. In fact, we contend that the sexually-charged woman Gail Sheehy describes is not necessarily the norm, but rather only one healthy expression of the Aspirational Archetype: the woman who is embracing newfound freedoms and loving the body she has.

It needs to be pointed out, however, that this newfound freedom includes the possibility of finding alternative expressions of intimacy and passion that are not necessarily sexually based. As a critique of Sheehy’s book in the *New York Times Book Review* reads: “...The real subject she’s discussing—aging—merits far more depth and attention than even the best vibrator can provide. What about the intangible component called dignity? How to have it, how to keep it, how to teach it?”³

The Search for Meaning

Sheehy’s conclusion that there is a surge in women’s sexuality after 50 came out of her qualitative research, interviewing women across the country. While sexuality did come up from time to time in our far-reaching discussions with women in our study, our research produced a different result. When asked about the topics, issues and/or concerns related to their lives that were top-of-mind, it was the search for meaning that surfaced as the core motivator—the true hidden phenomenon—that underlies all the other categories, even her avowed interest in sexuality.

By “meaning” and “spirituality,” we took the participants’ implied and/or stated definitions. For the majority, the search for meaning centers around striving for and discovering a more satisfying experience of their lives. For some, this spiritual experience centered around traditional concepts of God, as transmitted through organized religion. For others, spirituality was a diffuse (or in some cases, distinct) sense of being part of something beyond physical reality that is larger than themselves. This search for meaning can inspire the Baby Boomer woman to seek out experiences, communities, products, and services that hold the promise of feeding her yearning for something more.

On Her Quest for a Free Spirit

Federico Musi,

Vice President of Marketing (Piaggio, Vespa, Moto Guzzi)

PIAGGIO GROUP AMERICAS

The woman on a Vespa scooter is the image of sexy sophistication, form and function coming together on the streets of London, Paris, and New York. She’s a chef, an editor, a new condo owner—and more likely than not, she’s middle-aged!

Vespa, introduced to the marketplace in 1946, turned 60 the very same year that the Leading-Edge women of the Baby Boomer generation celebrated their 60th birthdays. People may be surprised to hear that Boomers represent 40 percent of the Vespa market, with women representing a large share of this segment.

She sees a Vespa as a reward for all that she’s accomplished. After years of delayed gratification, parenting, working hard, and taking care of others, she’s ready to explore new dimensions of life. Now she’s on a quest, fulfilling lifelong desires such as traveling, writing, and spirituality. She is, in fact, expressing her full power.

It should come as no surprise that such a large segment of Vespa owners are Baby Boomer women. After all, this is a woman who has the disposable income, the independence, and the desire to appreciate what Vespa has to offer. In terms of form and function, Vespa has been an iconic brand since day one. It was originally designed to solve the transportation issues in Italy in the wake of World War II. With gas at a premium, the scooter was relied upon to get the man in the business suit, the woman in a skirt and the priest in his gown from place to place, as efficiently as possible. Vespa was not conceived as an upscale product, removed from the masses, but designed for the people. In Italy, Vespa is part of everyday life, with moms and grandmas among the crowd who routinely take the scooter to shop, commute, or take the kids to school.

In America, there is an added emotional appeal that goes beyond the ordinary. Going against the norm of women driving cars, the woman in America who buys and rides a Vespa is celebrating her independence. Moreover, she is communicating the message that she is a sophisticated woman who appreciates beautiful things, elegant simplicity, and a balance between responsibilities and freedom. At the same time, to appeal to her, the product has to offer a practical benefit. For her, saving gas—both for budgeting and environmental reasons—has appeal, as does the premium but not inaccessible entry level of \$3,200.

In terms of marketing to her, Vespa has several challenges. While Vespa is a leading manufacturer of scooters in the world, the U.S. scooter market is still in its infancy. We need to gradually educate the market on the benefits of scootering and attract those early users that will

become our most faithful brand and product ambassadors. Alternative marketing channels, such as PR, product placement, and local events, are at this stage more effective than traditional advertising. Happily, we find Baby Boomer women are very receptive to these channels. Actors riding a scooter on a television program or in a movie, or celebrity chefs jumping around town between restaurants, help us connect to our target and fuel that aspirational drive for the viewer to buy one for herself.

One of the latest and most innovative ways we connect with her are via several of our blog sites, hosted by women who are passionate about Vespa. The female “host” of the Vespa Quest blog site leads the visitor through the process of buying her first Vespa scooter, from researching the product to getting a license, going through the process online. Women identify with her quest, bringing a spiritual dimension to the act of buying a Vespa.

We are also pursuing innovative partner marketing. For example, we’re going after condo marketers with the idea of having them include a Vespa in the condo purchase package. This provides them with an edge in a crowded condo market, such as South Florida. Wouldn’t you prefer that condo pictured with a Vespa in the driveway?

Federico Musi served as a senior consultant at McKinsey & Company in both the Milan and New York offices, prior to his joining Piaggio USA. His client work focused on several industries, including financial services, media, and retail. His expertise includes corporate and business unit strategy, sales and marketing, and organization. Before joining McKinsey, Musi worked as a project manager for the oil giant ENI. He received a master’s degree in engineering from Padova University (Italy) and an MBA from Columbia Business School. He currently lives in New York City with his family.

Increasing with Age

Many of the women in the study reported having expected that as they aged, the most they could hope for was acceptance of their increasing powerlessness and a graceful fading away. However, for many of these women, their reality is turning out to be far different. Rather than the serene acceptance dictated by the stereotypes of aging, the majority of the women reported themselves to be in dynamic states of transition and development. Among Transitional and Aspirational Boomers, we noted their generally optimistic view.

Even when facing the toughest challenges related to aging, their expectations in regard to what they often reported as being most important to them—a sense of meaning—was, in truth, increasing with age. Even the Conventional Boomer woman expressed the desire for meaning in their lives, fueling the rising numbers of church attendance in large part by women in this archetypal segment.

Far from buying into the belief that their power is destined to diminish as they age, the majority of Baby Boomer women are shedding the old stereotypes, coming to view time as the means of actualizing their true potential. More and more of this generation of women are tapping into their ever-growing reservoir of self-knowledge, external resources, and communal wisdom. As one of the Transitional Boomer women in the research study summarized: “Given everything that’s been happening in my life lately, I have the suspicion that spiritual proficiency can no longer be considered a luxury.”

NOTES

¹ Frank About Women. www.frankaboutwomen.com.

¹ AARP. *The Magazine*, July/August 2004.

¹ *New York Times Book Review*, February 5, 2006.