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50+ POPULATION FULLY ENGAGED, OCCASIONALLY ENRAGED, BY BRANDS AND ADVERTISING

Portrayals of frailty and dependency in ads annoy and exasperate

BOULDER, Colo., July 18, 2017--The Boomer/neXt population, which consists of the entirety of the Baby Boom generation (ages 53-71) and those members of Generation X now in their early 50s, highly values advertising and enjoys layers of involvement with brands, but a significant segment says “do better” to marketers regarding how they come across in many current media depictions.

- * 74 percent of this population agree that advertising is useful in influencing buying decisions
- * 78 percent say they think more positively about a brand if the advertising for it is done well. However, a product that is frequently advertised doesn't mean it's a good product; 63% of Boomer/neXt respondents reject that notion
- * 42 percent are bothered by how people their age are depicted in advertisements. Among female Boomers aged 62 to 71, the percentage rises to 49 percent

“Boomers have been marketed to all their lives and have seen advertising trends come and go, so they are experts at spotting hype and hokum,” says Barry Robertson, Partner at Boomer/neXt.

“For example, whenever members of this population are portrayed as foolish, feeble, befuddled or in desperate need of handfuls of pharmaceuticals, it serves as an immediate turnoff,” he added. “This population relates better to ads in which, depicted appropriate to their ages and life stages, they're active, healthy, enjoying life and engaged with the world.”

When done right, approval pours forth: “I like when we are mostly depicted as vibrant and having a full life,” commented a 58-year-old male survey participant. “They are getting better—now not everyone looks like Ozzie Nelson wandering around in a cardigan” opined a 69-year-old man. A 55-year-old woman comments, “I like when people my age are presented as active and full of energy, because we are.” And a 68-year-old female says “I like when my age is appreciated, even celebrated in advertising. It is time to age with grace.”

Some, however, can't find themselves in advertising. A 50-year-old man says “people my age aren't ever depicted in ads,” while a man 20 years older opines “except for pharmaceuticals, there are few advertisements with people my age.” A woman in her mid-60s states “at my age, you'd think we dropped off the face of the earth—we never show up!”

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And when an ad rankles, the critiques can be blistering. “Guys my age are depicted as either doddering old farts or lecherous men chasing after young women with the help of Viagra” comments a 65-year-old man. A 55-year-old male says “you’d think we all wear Depends and rely on Metamucil.” A 52-year-old woman regrets that “it’s a shame we only show up in insurance or pharmaceutical ads. People over 50 travel, use technology, and spend money.” A male in his late 60s says “we’re all helpless idiots who don’t have a clue.” A 59-year-old woman comments “the assumption is that most of us are rapidly approaching senility.” And a 70-year-old woman complains that “I’m into meditation, not medication, but the ads I see would never show a person my age in that light.” A 63-year-old woman complains, “Help! Help! Help!—we are always, always shown needing ‘help’ in almost every facet of our lives. Enough already!” Lastly, a 54-year-old man observes “we’re usually depicted as having bad attitudes about life in general.”

- * With respect to brand choices, 92 percent of the Boomer/neXt population tries to gather a lot of information about products before any key purchase is made, and 87 percent say they enjoy learning about and trying new products

- * This population are confident consumers: 76 percent agree that they never have problems judging whether a brand is right for them or not

- * 67 percent say they are always on the lookout for new brands to try

- * Beware to the brand that disappoints: nearly all (97 percent) say they would not hesitate in switching to a competitor under such circumstances

- * Nearly half of survey participants (46%) say that they probably do more internet shopping than the average person.

“In the U.S. the 50+ population controls over 70 percent of the nation’s disposable income, but outside the wealth and health sectors, businesses are budgeting less than 10 percent of all marketing dollars on them. This disconnect leads to a feeling that they are invisible and ill-served,” says Robertson. “Each day a tide of Americans joins the 50+ population, and they remain ready to seek, shop and spend. They want advertising to be on their side, and brands to be ripe for exploration going forward.”

About the Survey

The Boomer/neXt Survey of respondents between the ages of 50 and 71 was conducted online from March 29-31 by eSearch.com. Five hundred and ten respondents were interviewed via a representative survey, which corresponds to a margin of error of plus or minus four percent at the 95% level of confidence. Confidence levels among certain subgroups from the sample may have a higher margin of error.

About Boomer/neXt

Boomer/neXt, with offices in Boulder and New York City, is a leading consultancy which focuses on the 111 million Americans who are currently 50 years of age and older. Boomer/neXt provides strategic planning, research-based insights and consultative services to clients in industries that want to understand and unleash the power of this population, which includes the totality of the Baby Boom generation. For more information on Boomer/neXt and its services, please connect via www.Boomer-next.com