



Why She Buys: The New Strategy for Reaching the World's Most Powerful Consumers

Bridget Brennan

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If the consumer economy had a sex, it would be female.

If the business world had a sex, it would be male.

And therein lies the pickle.

Women are the engine of the global economy, driving 80 percent of consumer spending in the United States alone. They hold the purse strings, and when they've got a tight grip on them as they do now, companies must be shrewder than ever to win them over. Just when executives have mastered becoming technology literate, they find there's another skill they need: becoming female literate.

This isn't always easy. Gender is the most powerful determinant of how a person views the world and everything in it. It's stronger than age, income, or race. While there are mountains of research done every year segmenting consumers and analyzing why they buy, more often than not it doesn't factor in the one piece of information that trumps them all: the sex of the buyer. It's stunning how many companies overlook the psychology of gender when we all know that men and women look at the world so differently.

Bridget Brennan's *Why She Buys* shows decision makers how to bridge this divide and capture the business of the world's most powerful consumers just when they need it most.

- **No Matter Where You Live, Women Are a Foreign Country:** You'll discover the value in studying women with the same intensity that you would a foreign market. Women grow up within a culture of their own gender, which is often invisible to men. Brennan dissects this female culture and explains the important brain differences between men and women that may cause your female customers to notice things about your products, marketing campaigns, or sales environment that you might have overlooked.
- **The High Fives:** There are five major trends driving the global female population that are key to determining their wants and needs. These global shifts are just beginning to be tapped by businesses, and learning about them can provide you with an invaluable blueprint for long-range planning.
- **The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly:** Find out how the best and brightest companies have cracked the female code, and hear horror stories about those that haven't. Through instructive case studies and interviews, *Why She Buys* provides practical, field-proven techniques that you can apply to your business immediately, from giants like Procter & Gamble and Toyota to upstarts like Method home-care products and lululemon athletic apparel.

At a time when every company is looking for a competitive advantage, Bridget Brennan offers a new and effective lens for capturing market share.

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Details

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Mardel Fehrenbach says

I enjoyed reading this book; it was interesting, fast and enjoyable. But there was nothing groundbreaking here, although I suspect there is still quite a need for a book like this. Most of the points seemed obvious to me; but then, I am a woman. I worked in a company's marketing department 20 years ago and most of this information would have been news to the greater majority of our staff; it seems sad if it hasn't changed that much, and frankly I would not be surprised if it hasn't.

Entertaining and of the moment.

Jean says

I might be a little prejudiced, as I know the author! But I have to say, Bridget has a great style of writing. Her book is packed full of information and she lays out details of good marketing strategy. I know there is a difference in male and female psychological makeup, but Bridget does an incredible job of explaining how this impacts marketing decisions.

Carole Martell says

For brands overlooking the shemale marketplace, this is a must; for others, it comes off obvious and outdated.

Cornelia says

This book clues marketers into everything from gender differences to a typical day in the life of a woman to the top ten rules about female consumers. I love the chapter —Pink Is Not A Strategy. I love the way she did her Notes (bibliography page in the back) much simpler and less distracting than the usual way but all the pertinent info is there. If you market to women, I'm sure you'll find something helpful in this book.

Gabriela says

It is a must read for marketers targeting women,

In this book, Bridget Brennan brilliantly reveals how many businesses may have overlooked the role of the female buyer in the customer economy, how she makes her purchasing decisions and why she influences other consumers' decisions. In her book Why She Buys, she shows how consumer decisions are influenced by gender; she makes the point that up to 80% of consumers are female and businesses should structure their marketing campaigns to focus on the needs of this influential consumer.

This book exceeds the mundane arguments of gender culture and perceptions. It delves deeper into how the female buyer purchases and why she makes these decisions. Women and men have different ways of looking at the world and they shop differently too. I like the point introduced here that businesses should be keen to understand the needs of the female consumer before marketing anything to her. The book is virtually what the female consumer wants to tell businesses but has not had the opportunity to.

If you are looking to stand out from the crowd of thousands of products targeting women, this book can help you to greatly differentiate your product at the shelves. It is a must read for marketers, brand managers, advertisers, men and women.

Samantha Schafer says

This a great book for everyone to read. Men and women both!

Budd Margolis says

Outdated but still useful.

Nollie says

2.5 Stars. I think I was the wrong audience for this book. The first chapter was really redundant and a lot of it is just common sense stuff that women already know about themselves. I think it would maybe be more enlightening for men because of gender differences and understanding how women think and what makes them purchase things.

Sam Choi says

Typical of practically every business book I've read -- interesting title, about 5 pages of insight scattered among 200 pages of random assertions, truisms, anecdotes, and general "duh!?!?" stories.

I bought this so I might help my wife with her women's boutique. But most of the content consists of the author trying to convince the reader that women shop differently from men, with stories of "duh!?!?" moments of male-dominated advertising agencies coming up with dumb campaigns.

I managed to extract out at least a few ideas ... but ... geez, the crap that qualifies as "publishable" in the business book world ... (sigh).

Dennis Cuffel says

This was extremely helpful in understanding how 80% + of all purchases are executed or influenced by women. The purchasing framework for women and men are completely different. This book clearly describes the thought processes for men and women using both humor and real life examples.

Lindsay says

This book is fascinating, not just from a business perspective but also a cultural one. I highly recommend it.

Jill Miller says

Anyone in sales, marketing or retail needs to read this book. This is perhaps one of the most important books written in this field in years -- amazing and definitive.

John Yelverton says

This was just a sexist pile of drivel with no practical insights for the common salesman. This book is directed solely toward marketers, campaigners, and CEO's, and basically tells them to ignore men and focus solely on women. It is not worth your time at all.

Ash says

Like many business books, this could have been about half the length and still made its point. Still not a bad read overall, and the discussion of women's behaviors and needs was generally tasteful. Which is why I was stunned to find the ABHORRENT "Mencyclopedia" waiting at the end. What the fuck was that, Bridget?

Liz says

As a female I found the book to be very illuminating – the whys of some of the innovations in customer service: the proliferation of customer feed-back surveys I receive, the ones I respond to and the ones I ignore, all cycle back into design of, or integration of changes to service levels. As an agent of customer service and a representative of a brand, it is an informative message of where the customer is actually directing their attention during down-times in service (line-ups, “on hold times”) or in instances of service interruptions when we don’t have the product and make counter-proposals, or offers to meet their needs, how satisfied are they with the outcome? How can we improve that?

Ms. Brennan addressed this in her book which was published in 2009, and re-issued in 2011. I wonder what

she would change: of the suggested organizational changes to corporate structure to include more females in key stakeholder positions and in the design and planning processes to integrate more female-friendly or sensitive processes would she suggest we go further? Within home-building companies many changes have been made in the larger companies to include plans and footprints that take into account the needs of a working woman/mother trying to multi-task while cooking and supervising children. I can't speak to how responsive the automotive industry is as I have only been car-shopping in the presence of my husband and we have been respectfully addressed as a couple shopping but it may be different were I on my own. I think the industry is slowly evolving.

Within my own industry and store - a retail book unit -- males and females shop equally, with woman tipping the balance a bit in favour for their own or family-oriented shopping more often than males but the service model is very responsive to them because they ask for direction or assistance more often and welcome or ask for reading suggestions more readily.

I had conversations with my husband and son over dinner about the frequency they are sent customer feedback surveys electronically. While I receive at least two per week, they report receiving less than 1 per month typically. This would support the author's conclusions about women being more astute shoppers, more observant and more likely to report customer satisfaction results, and thus their views are sought more frequently than men's. These surveys proliferate and have doubtless increased in the last ten years as businesses seek a competitive edge and don't want to lose any customers to anything so easily preventable or remediable as customer service lapses.

While these are just a few of the eye-openers in the book, I would recommend it to anyone who is involved in customer service or interested in the field.
