

# WHITE PAPER

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## Women's Influence on Packaging

*Women are working, earning and buying more, and consequently have a significant influence on today's product packaging*

### Introduction

It is no secret that the educational growth, earning power, and consequently the purchasing power of women today is on a definite upward trend, and has been trending in that direction for some time. For example, women currently earn more bachelor's (57.2%) and master's (58.9%) degrees than men (Source: National Center for Education Statistics.) And women's median incomes, at least when compared with men's, have been rapidly climbing. In the past three decades men's median income has grown just 0.6% while women's median income has grown an impressive 63% (Source: *Business Week*, Feb. 2005.) With this type of income growth it is no surprise that the influence of women in purchasing decisions is also increasing.

Published statistics vary slightly but in general it is recognized that women account for between 80 and 85% of all consumer purchases. When certain product categories are involved women far exceed those buying percentages, like the Over The Counter pharmaceutical category and the food category where women account for 93% of purchases (Source: *About* website.) With this tremendous influence in purchasing, it follows that women also have a tremendous influence on packaging, including everything from the ergonomics of today's automobiles to the closure on a bottle of vitamins.

### Influencing Packaging

Women have strong ideas about what they want in packaging today. We have found from our own research, developed through Weatherchem focus groups conducted over a number of years, that women know exactly what appeals to them. If packaging does not meet their requirements, their buying decision is clearly influenced. As a manufacturer of dispensing closure systems for the packaging of products where the buying decision is often made by women (like spices and vitamins and minerals) their requirements influence our own designs.

We find four areas that influence the packaging preferences of women:

- **Packaging color** – Packaging design for women goes far beyond simply making your product a shade of pink. At the same time, women are influenced by the colors of packaging. Their preferences from the color palette are clearly different from men’s preferences. At Weatherchem we have the capability to match the color of our closure systems to your package design, providing an attractive product package with significant shelf appeal for the female purchaser.
- **Shape** – Women prefer packaging that has appealing shape, visual characteristics, functionality, and that is easy for them to handle, store, as well as open and close. Our research has shown us that the shape of our Flapper® and NutraFlapper® closures, that allow control of the amount of product dispensed, is an important packaging feature that women appreciate. Of course the ease of use factor is critical. When designing your packaging with women in mind shape can influence a positive buying decision. If the product shape is not ergonomic or if a package is difficult to lift and carry it is much more difficult to sell to women.
- **Product Image** – Image supports and often defines a product’s audience. The image of your product and its package design can target that product for a particular market and certainly for a particular demographic (female, upscale, age-related, etc.) Our focus groups have told us that package design and functionality clearly contributes to product image and quality perception, and to desirability of the product for its target market.
- **Text**- If there is a single important factor regarding text on packaging it is that the copy be easy to read. Various recent consumer studies show that easy to read text on product packaging helps your product get noticed, and consequently purchased.

### **The Age Factor and Women’s Packaging Needs**

As the Baby Boomer aging process moves forward, we see the need for packaging to recognize the requirements of a rapidly aging population while at the same time filling the needs of the general population. For example, we have discovered that young women are particularly attracted to packaging that appears to be of high quality. They also purchase for convenience in terms of package size, as they typically have less storage space available.

Women in the Baby Boomer generation also purchase for convenience but convenience in this instance includes an easy to read, larger print labeling on a package that is also very easy to use. For example, a brand that has the convenience of the NutraFlapper® cap has a distinct appeal to women in the Baby Boomer age group. They do not need to twist open a cap. They can simply flip the NutraFlapper open with a thumb. And controlled access to the product inside is easy with a NutraFlapper cap. Women can dispense the amount they want without pouring excess product, making your product easy to use. Participants in our focus groups have expressed many times their preference for controlled access dispensing and the ability to open a package with the flip of a thumb.

While there are different influences brought about by age, there are common product traits that women of all ages prefer. Products need to be easy to store. They need to be convenient to use.

Women who typically have smaller hands than men need to be able to grip and lift products easily. They need handles to help them lift and carry products. Considering all of these factors when designing your product packaging can help your product become a market success.

### **Making Packaging Woman-Friendly While Enhancing The Brand**

Current consumer research shows that women are the primary purchasers of vitamins, minerals and other healthcare products. In working with Proctor & Gamble and Pharmavite LLC, a California-based vitamin manufacturer, Weatherchem dispensing closures were a factor in the launch of OLAY<sup>®</sup> Vitamins, a dietary supplement line that incorporated our NutraFlapper closures into the package design. This product line targeting the female consumer combines OLAY's skincare expertise with Pharmavite's knowledge of women's healthcare and nutritional needs. While creating the packaging for the OLAY Vitamins, Pharmavite focused on providing convenience and value to their female customer base. This led them to Weatherchem and our NutraFlapper closure. We were able to provide the gold color on our cap that provides an important link to OLAY skin care products. We also provided a custom, easy-to-peel innerseal with the printed OLAY name that not only helped to enhance the brand but was easy to use by the female consumer. And the NutraFlapper closure itself is easy to open, easy to use, and provides controlled access dispensing.

One other important factor for packaging designers to note was the ease with which the Weatherchem closure was incorporated into the Pharmavite manufacturing process as the company switched from its previous non-dispensing closure to the NutraFlapper closure.

### **Our Role In Designing Packaging For Women**

As in the OLAY Vitamin example, our controlled dispensing closures easily match the packaging requirements that women today demand. Color, shape, image and high visibility are all part of what we present to packaging designers. Our newest product offerings, like our FlapMate<sup>™</sup>, NutraGen II<sup>™</sup> and LiquiFlapper<sup>®</sup> closures can provide your packaging with brand enhancing qualities that will appeal to the female consumer. Our closure design is contemporary and extremely functional, with the type of convenience and features that can satisfy the most demanding packaging requirements. Our products provide packaging security and freshness, recognized by the audible snap heard when closing Weatherchem closures.

Women are knowledgeable and demanding consumers. They research purchases before they buy, and whether they are a part of Generation X or the Baby Boomer generation, packaging design plays an important part in their buying decisions. Weatherchem can help you meet those requirements in your packaging design while helping to enhance the desirability of your brand.



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