

Global Consumer Trends: Age Complexity

Understanding and Responding to Consumers' Changing Attitudes Towards Age

Report summary

- A detailed trend analysis outlining what constitutes 'value' for consumers (trends are, after all, a reflection of what's important to consumers)
- Global in focus, but also offers country-by-country and sector-by-sector insights thereby catering to top-line or more specific information needs
- Coverage of all major FMCG sectors with applicability to wider consumer goods audiences
- One of 10 dedicated mega-trend reports outlining the most important issues shaping global consumers' buying behavior both now and in the future

Understand the significance of the different age-aligned trends across territories and FMCG sectors to help support market diversification plans



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About this report

Introduction

The Age Complexity mega-trend reflects that traditional age-related stereotypes are being broken, while at the same time, new ones are being created. The experiences, attitudes and behaviors of differing age groups are coalescing, leading to greater common interest and identification. At the same time, there are tensions between feelings of age pride and the fear of aging

In the two years since our flagship report *New Developments in Global Consumer Trends*, Datamonitor has been tracking consumer attitudes and behavior across the globe using our established 10 mega-trend framework. This report, drawing upon two waves of primary research in 2008 and 2009, outlines consumers' latest attitudes and behavior about a range of pertinent issues shaping consumer behavior today.

Key findings and highlights

- Down-aging is an expression of the idea that many consumers feel younger than their actual ages suggest. Many are maintaining lifestyles, attitudes and behaviors that have more in common with younger age groups. This is fuelled by the greater degree of identification between age groups and similarity in their interests, attitudes and behaviors.
- As well as being proud of one's age, individuals are also showing anxiety about aging in general and the way it is portrayed in the media. Furthermore, the anxiousness about aging is setting in earlier in life, inspiring preemptive, proactive behavior towards limiting the signs of aging.
- Despite the concept of the blurring of age group boundaries that is at the core of age complexity, age remains fundamentally important as a means of self-definition and is not always seen as a negative force that must be thwarted as the years advance. Indeed, the notion of 'age as identity' is a counter-trend to 'down-aging' and 'fear of aging'.

Reasons to buy

- Understand the significance of the different age-aligned trends across territories and FMCG sectors to help support market diversification plans
- Save time and gain maximal insight by using this 'one-stop-shop' resource which offers a clear and up-to-date framework for understanding consumers
- Access data from two waves of global primary research to increase the likelihood of being 'on-trend' with NPD and marketing activities

“Trend-tracking is a way of structuring the broader market research process; providing facilitator content to deliver insights and drive ideation”

Daniel Bone, Datamonitor Analyst and Report Co-Author



Sample pages

INTRODUCTION DATAMONITOR

Figure 5: Trend development is dictated by both 'consumer pull' and 'manufacturer push' and Datamonitor offers the intelligence tools to capitalize on this reality

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CONSUMER PULL: values, attitudes/emotions and behaviors or broader societal issues shaping consumer needs. Datamonitor's New Consumer Insight (NCI) research is produced to help better understand and meet consumers' needs

MEGA-TREND: Long-term shifts in consumer behavior and/or socio-demographics that are substantive and having a fundamental impact on the marketing landscape

INDUSTRY PUSH: responding to evolving consumer needs and taking advantage of new 'trend enablers'. Datamonitor's Product Launch Analytics (PLA) database offers intelligence on how industry players are developing 'on-trend' products

Product analysis has evolved
 Product Launch Analytics
 Allows you to Search > View > Analyse the largest database of global product launches in 3 easy steps

Source: Datamonitor analysis DATAMONITOR

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THE FUTURE DECODED DATAMONITOR

Figure 76: Age pride is strong among consumers across the age spectrum although older consumers feel that their needs are not being met effectively

AGE AS A BADGE OF IDENTITY DRIVERS	
• Age pride has emerged as a counter-trend to the fear of aging, with many consumers seeing old age as a positive lifestyle	• Older consumers are showing adventurousness that breaks with commonly held preconceptions
• Age pride/happiness with age is highest among the young but largely persists into later life	• Older consumers value the perceived wisdom, self-assurance and wealth of experience that they have collected throughout their lives
• Individuality and self-expression remain important to consumers throughout their lives	
AGE AS A BADGE OF IDENTITY INHIBITORS	
• The paradoxical clash between age pride and fear of aging can make it difficult to successfully establish broad appeal among older consumers	• The Senior population grouping consists of several different sub-cohorts, meaning differences in attitudes and behaviors must be recognized
• Many older consumers feel that advertising does not speak to them	• There is a perception that marketers/advertisers are failing to do this effectively, resorting to clichés

Source: Datamonitor analysis DATAMONITOR

SUB-TREND: Age pride is a counter-trend to the fear of aging

Contrasting the fear of aging and associated attempts to delay or hide the aging process is the trend among many consumers for pride in their age. Indeed, research has shown that growing older is seen as offering many positives by those consumers moving into older age groups (contrasting the more negative perceptions of younger age groups looking ahead in life).

- **Old age is increasingly seen as a positive lifestyle by consumers** – the Pew Research Center researched consumer views of old age in 2009 and found that older adults have a largely positive take on their Senior years. Spending more time with family members was the key benefit of growing older cited by respondents aged 65 and over; around 70% said they were enjoying more time with their family and 28% said that this was what they valued most about growing older. An additional 25% said that they valued spending time with their grandchildren most. Pew's study also showed that around two-thirds of respondents cited more time for hobbies, more financial security and not having to work as major benefits, while around 60% felt that older age offered them more respect from others and less stressed lifestyles compared to when they were younger. Notably, greater financial security was cited by only 14% of older adults as the most valuable thing to them about getting older, emphasizing that emotional wellness factors are the key positives coming with advancing years rather than practical/financial benefits. Interestingly, the research also showed that older adults today are not necessarily experiencing these benefits to quite the extent that younger consumers expect to enjoy them once they get older, suggesting that reality is not quite as rosy as expectations formed earlier in life. However, this does not diminish the clearly positive take that Seniors have on the opportunities afforded to them in later life.

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