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**Buying Bags for Baby Boomers**

**By Maxine Greco**

Lucky baby boomers! They have more leisure time and more money now for travel. And there are so many great places on this Earth to see! Here are some recommendations on the bags they'll need:

First, always buy the best luggage you can afford. It will save you money in the long run. The better brands need repairs less, and on a whole give you better, longer service. Always buy nylon or ballistic nylon. The poly blends are never as durable. Look for in line skate wheels and locking pull up handles. Additionally, there should be a side handle to lift the case into an automobile. And side feet so the case is not resting on its fabric. The old "doggy leash" suitcases are out. They were clumsy and hard to wheel. The new upright cases can be rolled easily by one person. Most of them will attach another bag and your carry on bag can rest on top.

Purchase luggage that has a good warranty and make your purchase in a store that can handle the warranty repairs. That way if there is a problem with the luggage, you don't have to pack it up and mail it away for repair. Shipping can be expensive. Also, ask the luggage salesperson if there has been a problem with the bag you like. They will usually warn you if there have been any issues with the quality.

Remember that there are size and weight restrictions by many airlines. To avoid costly surcharges, be sure to purchase luggage that is within 62" when you add the length, height and weight. It's often advisable to buy 2 smaller cases instead of one large case. Additionally, lift the case before your purchase. Many airlines also have a weight limit. Some cases are called "light weight" but they aren't light. So lift before buying. Many travelers also carry a folding bag, so you can bring home your purchases without overloading your luggage.

You'll need to purchase TSA locks, if the case comes with locks that do not have the TSA acceptable emblem. These locks can be opened with a master key by the security personnel so they are permitted for airline travel. Bright colors make identifying and locating your luggage easier. Sometimes it seems like the whole world is traveling with black luggage. Of course, dark colors do make dirt and wear less noticeable. Monogramming of luggage is often advisable. It keeps someone from picking up your case by accident. There are also bright colored luggage tags that identify your

bag as yours. Besides listing your name and address, these tags are eye catching and make spotting your bag easier.

Maxine Greco has worked in luggage and travel industry for over 35 years. She is now currently at Village Luggage & Gifts

### **Selling To Baby Boomers? Power Charge Your Sales By Segmenting This Huge Group**

**By Joanne Fritz, Ph.D.**

To get a handle on the Baby Boom market, try using the "cohort" principle to segment this huge group. The Baby Boom covers 17 years, from 1946 to 1963. Depending on when baby boomers were born, there are specific external influences and events that helped shape them. Assuming that our peak formative years are 18–24...when what is going on around us will have the greatest effect on who we are, there are a number of cohorts within the baby boom generation. Here are three examples:

Boomers born in `46 would have been in their peak formative years between `64 and `71. They would have been affected by Vietnam, the LBJ years, Berkeley's free speech movement, riots in Watts and Detroit, seeing the first man on the moon, Woodstock, and using the first hand held calculator, among other things.

If born in 1955, boomers would hit peak influence between `73 and `80, being influenced by getting out of Vietnam, Roe vs Wade, Nixon's resignation, Iranian hostages, Love Canal, 3 mile Island, and the first Apple computer.

Boomers born in 1963 would experience peak influence between `81 and `88 when they would live with Ronald Reagan's presidency, see the Bell System break-up, experience the Challenger explosion, and celebrate the fall of the Berlin Wall.

In addition, each of these groups is in a different life phase. The leading edge of the Boomers is approaching 60 today. They are the new "mature market." But, they are very different from people now in their 60s and beyond. That generation lived through World War II. The people ahead of them lived through the depression.

## Buying Bags for Baby Boomers

Baby Boomers born in 1946 were the "flower" children of the 60's. And whether they protested the Vietnam War or not, they were deeply marked by those years. They are likely to be skeptical and idealistic at the same time; to be less moved by patriotic themes; and deeply concerned about

social injustice.

The middle boomers are pushing 50. They are at their peak earning years, sending their children to college, and starting to think about saving for retirement. Less idealistic than the first group, they are interested in security, are more likely to be Republicans, and view institutions with skepticism.

The late boomers are approaching 40. They are raising families, making their mark at work, and buying family size cars. Thoroughly imbued with the computer culture, they may be seeking personal freedom by bailing out of corporate jobs to become free agents or to start a business. They know what an IPO is and how to invest online.

Each of these cohorts is very different from the others. As marketers, we must use different approaches depending on whether our customers are the leading edge of boomers, the middle boomers, or the late boomers. We need to use images and words that resonate with each segment's life experience and with the life passage they are in.

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