

reaching the boomers

A new report offers insights into this relevant generation.

Millennials get a lot of attention these days, but baby boomers have far more disposable income and remain an important demographic for retailers. A new report from **COLLOQUY**, a publishing, research and education practice based in Cincinnati, Ohio, offers data on how baby boomers, those born between 1946 and 1964, differ in their shopping habits from Generation X (born between 1965 and 1980) and millennials (born between 1981 and 1997). All the data on this page comes from the report, "Shopping by Generation," which can be downloaded for free at www.colloquy.com.

“Retailers who fail to recognize issues uniquely important to baby boomers could watch those shoppers walk out the door empty-handed.”

Jeff Berry
COLLOQUY editor-in-chief

disposable income

Boomers control a whopping 70 percent of all U.S. disposable income, making them richer than the other generations of consumers. This is most likely because:

- They are more likely to have their homes paid off.
- Many are empty-nesters and therefore have smaller households to support.
- Most don't have the student loan debt that the younger generations have.

serious business

Only 27 percent of boomers strongly agreed with the statement, "I think shopping is a great way to relax." However, 45 percent of millennials strongly agreed, as did 33 percent of Gen Xers.

self-reliant

Only 12 percent of baby boomers agreed that they rely on family and friends for help deciding what to purchase. That compares to 32 percent of millennials who do.

make it convenient



These are the elements that are important to boomers when they shop:

- Product quality and assortment (77 percent)
- Easy-to-access location (75 percent)
- A helpful and knowledgeable staff (65 percent)
- Easy-to-understand and unrestricted return policy (65 percent)

high expectations

Boomers can be demanding shoppers:

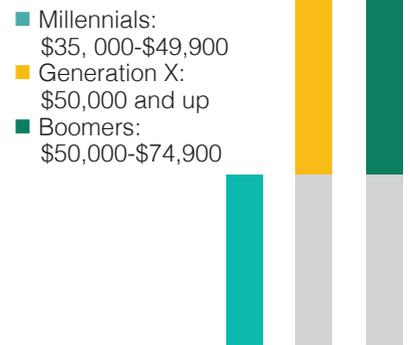
- If they feel a sales associate doesn't appreciate their business, 54 percent are "very or somewhat unlikely" to return. That compares to 33 percent of millennials.
- If the store is messy or disorganized, 50 percent of boomers said they are unlikely to shop there again, compared to 36 percent of millennials.
- If making a return is a "hassle," 54 percent of boomers would be unlikely to return. Only 32 percent of millennials felt that way.

75.4 million

That's the number of baby boomers, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

what they earn

Mean household income for each demographic:



84%

That's the percentage of boomers who say they shop in-store, compared with 71 percent of older millennials (those 25 to 34). The survey found that just 25 percent of baby boomers prefer to shop online in order to avoid going to a store, but 43 percent of millennials said they prefer online shopping.

price check

More than the other generations, boomers know the price of most of the food and packaged goods they buy.



- Baby boomers: 64 percent
- Generation X: 59 percent
- Millennials: 57 percent