



Baby boomers bend trends: Marketing and aging

By Stephanie Stephens
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He's back here on Mind Your Body: Ken Dychtwald, guru of the marketing group [Age Wave](#), with new baby boomer facts and stats that add substantially to our increasing knowledge about this powerful demographic. Advertising legend [J. Walter Thompson \(JWT\)](#) says one of its own 2012 trend projections is a *more positive view of aging*. Dychtwald's predictions include the following:

1. Age is being relocated. So, you ask, where is it moving? It's not about that, but rather a different way of thinking about getting old. Oh, and we are ALL getting older with every passing second. Dychtwald says that people in their 60s and 70s don't think they're "old." Did ja' know old age begins at 80? Now you do.
2. We live cyclically, not linearly. People used to think of raising families, working, then retiring—each activity on its own "plane." We're reinventing and still learning, and so that eradicates the former notion that once we're at (fill in the blank, a certain age), we're "going down." Heck, let's keep ascending.
3. The marketing epicenter is shifting. Come to think of it, most things are. Dychtwald says. "The marketplace epicenter is migrating towards the 40s, 50s and 60s, where the influentials reside, and everybody wants to copy them." Let's you and I set our sights on being an influential, shall we?
4. We appreciate life stages after the 50th birthday. (I hope so! How about "way after"?) And that, says Dychtwald, presents golden opportunities to capture precious, lucrative marketing segments. Consider that 20 million of us, age 50+, are single. "Have the travel and leisure companies fully embraced retirement as a gold mine? Not really. Have colleges and educational systems realized that today's retirees want to learn? Not really." The profits are there for the pickins' and they're not just slim.
5. Aging is becoming more ageless. We boomers, and others, get together and "bond" because we share like minds and activities—not because we're the same age. "Rather than people 'ghettoing' and clustering into age groups, you see people increasingly comfortable in trans-generational settings," he says.
6. Finally, it's about money, and where it's going to be made. The way we look is where that cash cow grazes. "It's all age-defying products. So, in those neuroses, there's

trillions of dollars of opportunity.” I’m not sure wanting to look younger or better is neurotic. I think it’s natural, but it does sometimes feel like a full-time job.

No matter the trend-sayers, we boomers aren’t clearing space for just anyone. “Previous generations of older people were inclined to move to the sidelines and go quietly,” he says. “Boomers are going to absolutely refuse.”

I think we already have.

(Thanks for suggesting this story, my savvy friend and neighbor, Adrienne Van Scyoc of The OC.)

This article can be found at <http://mindyourbody.tv/2012/01/20/baby-boomers-bend-trends-marketing-and-aging/>.