

Gazing into the Crystal Ball: The American Housewares Consumer in the Future

Riedel Marketing Group has been managing a panel of U.S. consumers we call the HomeTrend Influentials (HIPsters) since 2004. HIPsters are a segment of home owners who act as the bellwether for mainstream America. HIPsters tend to be two to five years ahead of the rest of the population on many important trends.

HIPsters are among the first to exhibit major changes in attitudes towards their homes. They are among the first to change how they do things around the house and to pick up on new home related trends. They embrace new home goods much sooner than the rest of the U.S. population. By monitoring and tracking changes in the behaviors, habits, practices and attitudes of HIPsters, we predict mainstream population changes over the next few years.

Our research indicates that we will see significant changes in what Americans eat, where they eat and how they prepare food. We will not see a decline in the amount of money, time and energy Americans spend on remodeling and redecorating their homes. Home organization and home storage will be among the hottest housewares product categories through 2010.

Concern about the environment and global warming will become almost universal. The vast majority of Americans will embrace a wider variety of environmental initiatives over the next few years. Within five years, a large minority of Americans will be "extremely green."

Changing Habits

Fully half of HIPsters spend more time on food preparation now than they did a year ago, many because they are trying to eat healthier. Half of HIPsters also report that in the past year or so they have made major changes in the types of foods they eat. HIPsters are eating more organic products, especially produce and meat, and more fruits and vegetables in general. They are eating less fat, carbohydrates, red meat, fast food, processed food and junk food.

No Sign of Reduced Spending

HIPsters focus on: renovating and updating bathrooms; adding to, replacing or repairing decks, back patios and fences; landscaping the back yard; replacing floors improving the energy efficiency of their home to reduce energy usage.

In addition to how their homes look; HIPsters are passionate about how their homes are organized. Fifty-seven percent of the HIPsters have done at least one home organization project in the past six months; 55% have purchased home storage or home organization products; and 63% plan to do at least one home organization project and purchase home storage or home organization products in the next six months.

America Going "Green"

The number of HIPsters who report switching to organic or natural food and environmentally friendly "green" household cleaning products has been gradually increasing over the past few years. Up until now, the environmental movement has remained the purview of a small group of fairly fanatic HIPsters. Now, the environmental movement has reached critical mass with HIPsters. Seventy-seven percent of HIPsters are "extremely concerned" or "somewhat concerned" about the environment; 63% are "extremely concerned" or "somewhat concerned" about global warming; 80% are either an active participant in the environmental movement or sympathetic toward it.

More than three quarters of HIPsters have embraced behaviors that protect environmental quality. Ninety-seven percent of HIPsters voluntarily recycle; 87% are reducing energy use; 77% buy certain products seen as being better for the environment; 41% contribute to environmental, conservation, or wildlife preservation groups. Based on what the HIPsters now do, we expect the broader base of U.S. consumers to look to housewares manufacturers for new products that help them eat healthier and save time in the kitchen; "greener" laundry and cleaning products; and products that help lower their home's energy usage or that use less electricity themselves.

Industry Resources

The Gourmet Retailer

www.gourmetretailer.com

Housewares.org

www.housewares.org

TCD Trade

www.hktdc.com/info/vp/ghsw/en/Gifts-Houseware.htm