

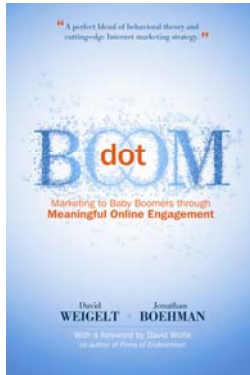


The Take Away

Important Reading For DeathCare Professionals by Alan Creedy

Dot Boom: Marketing to Baby Boomers Through Meaningful Online Engagement

By David Weigelt and Jonathan Boehman (Linx, 2009)



When I think about the complexity and pace of change impacting Deathcare I picture trying to hold mercury in my hands. It is more than a small challenge to try to assimilate all that we are already experiencing AND anticipate and prepare for the impact the Boomer market will bring. Here is a book that will make it easier.

It is widely anticipated that Boomers will create significant change in funeral customs and practices. After all, it is said, they have on everything else. Some 78,000,000 strong (compared to a WWII generation of 35,000,000), one thing is certain: volumes will go up. In fact, I am predicting that like maternity wards of the late 40's and 50's it is probable some of us will be overwhelmed. Good News! Or is it?

In a deliberately readable format Weigelt and Boehman simultaneously address the Boomer generations response to traditional marketing and their interaction with technology, specifically the internet. Consider these factoids:

- Only some 15% of Boomers participated in protests or demonstrations during the 60's
- Visuals from the 60's and 70's do not always stimulate positive emotional responses
- Boomers are "going green" faster than other generations
- They are more educated than their predecessors
- They are NOT brand loyal like their parents generation, and are open to new brands and ideas.
- They represent 30% of the 195.3 million U.S. internet users (its largest single constituency)
- They spend \$7 billion online annually

As owners of the only Marketing Agency devoted exclusively to marketing on-line to the over-50 demographic, Wiegelt and Boehman utilize a unique mix of substantive research, experience and psychology to help the rest of us understand the intricacies of "earning the right" to market to Boomers.

Most surprising to me is the extent to which Boomers are increasingly disenfranchised by traditional

advertising messages. This disenfranchisement occurs for two main reasons:

- It is Transaction-obsessed (think features and benefits)
- It Ignores emotional drivers

This is one reason Boomers look to the internet as a reliable medium for information about buying services and products. The authors teach us how Boomers think at both an intellectual and emotional level. Then they build on the premise that people buy with their emotions and explain their decisions with their intellect. The book explains the function of biology in marketing by connecting the emotions with behavioral drivers. Emotions are what makes information relevant to consumers. By gaining a better understanding of the emotional drivers of this complicated cohort group, their increasing dependency on the internet for valid information makes sense.

We learn, for instance, that as we age our focus in life is redirected from transactional to relational needs for personal identification. Dot Boom introduces 5 core shared values. Among these values are two that appear to be a direct connection with DeathCare: Relationship Values and Purpose Values.

Dot Boom is recommended reading for any DeathCare professional wanting to prepare for this emerging and powerful new market. I recommend it as MUST READING for those who are serious about the future.

The Take Away

"Boomers are more likely to trust a company if they feel the company understands them... Boomers are currently facing more simultaneously occurring life events than other consumer groups. Thus, Boomers have more adaption needs than other groups...Showing Boomers how you can help them meet their adaptation needs is a strong behavioral motivator."

Alan Creedy is a frequent and much sought after lecturer and author. His expertise and 30-year experience spans the full spectrum of DeathCare roles. He is a consultant with Johnson Consulting Group as well as President of Trust 100. He may be reached at:

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