When it comes to 'easy' inspiration for dreaming up new products and services, some big trends keep on giving. Case in point: the continuing rise in purchasing power enjoyed by baby boomers, the gay community and women. In this briefing, expect plenty of examples from brands having fun with these forever trendy demographics.

"FOREVER TRENDS"

We've finally succumbed to the pressure. Many of you have repeatedly asked us about big, demographic trends (kids! boomers! gays! women!), to which our answer has always been that there are so many trend firms doing interesting stuff in this arena, that we don't have anything to add. Except for one insight: that these FOREVER TRENDS have been so thoroughly researched, the only thing left to do with them is to turn them into new products, new services and new experiences for your customers. Which may not be what some of you want to hear from us (what about the numbers, the stats, the predictions?), but again we'll gladly refer you to other firms' excellent in-depth reports.

To make a long story short: for this edition of our monthly trend briefing, we asked our spotters to keep an eye out for interesting new business concepts and products that are specifically aimed at women, the gay community and boomers. We collected and analysed their findings and created a hands-on snapshot of what brands around the world are ALREADY doing to serve these demographics in innovative ways, making good money in the process. We've also added a few business ideas we'd spotted in the past, tracking their progress and in some cases, their demise.

So, without further ado, let's get started with:

DIY | Barbara Kavovit (a.k.a. Barbara K) is a former head of a major New York City construction firm. Her business in her own words: "do-it-yourself home repair and home improvement tool kits take away the 'fear factor' and empower women with clear and simple day to day household solutions." Having made quite a splash over the last few years, Barbara is expanding: there's now a roadside safety kit for women, plus 24/7 road assistance.

Women. The Mega Niche. The under-served market of all markets. And so on. Just consider the fact that women, who comprise just over 50% of the US population, make over 80% of the consumer purchasing decisions (and in case you're wondering, consumer spending accounts for two-thirds of US GNP). Consulting firm A.T. Kearney estimates that women determine 80 percent of consumption, purchase 60 percent of all cars and own 40 percent of all stocks. No wonder some companies have FEMALE FEVER these days. Oh, and there are more numbers and insights galore on Trendsight, Rethink Pink, Marketing To Women Online and BlogHer. But hey, we were going to focus on examples, so here goes:
The competition is alive and kicking too: **Tomboy Tools** sells "fashionable matching construction apparel." Tomboy Tools are for sale individually, in tool combos and in specialty kits for projects such as tiling, drywalling, plumbing and woodworking. At home tool parties, guests see products and basic home improvement repairs in action and learn simple and cost-efficient techniques. Selling online and Tupperware-style, tool parties in the US are held by over 900 consultants, while Tomboy Tools parties also take place in Canada and the UK. The company is planning to expand to Australia and NZ.

For women on the go, there's **Miss A Kit**, also known as the Miss Army Knife. The knife—available in a wide variety of colours—sells for USD 19.95 and comes with a flashlight, keychain, needle and thread, tweezers, perfume bottle, mirror and pill box. Not only is this market still growing fast in the US, it is also wide-open in the rest of the world. Even better, this IS the kind of company that will get snapped up by an established DIY giant. Time to get hands-on.

**Cars, motorcycles & scooters**! Cars designed to appeal to women are nothing new. Cars designed by women however, are still a novelty. Which is why it's such a pity that **Volvo's YCC** (Your Concept Car—"the first car designed and developed almost exclusively by women") remains just that: a concept car. Leaving a nice market opportunity to the likes of Toyota or some up and coming Chinese automotive brand.

And where there are tools, there are courses: German hardware store Hornbach is offering **Women at Work** tiling courses, while in the US, Home Depot's Clinics **Do-It-Herself** program is still going strong. Last but not least, **Design Basics** offers woman-centric home plans for builders. As they point out on their site: "There are four primary filters through which women evaluate designs: how the home entertains; how the home helps her de-stress; the flexibility of the home's design; and the home's ability to address her storage needs."

Meanwhile, **Street Diamond Motorcycles** are taking to the streets. Their bikes are designed to address the most common complaints that have been expressed by women riders for years: motorcycles are too heavy, too high, too wide and women can't reach the ground comfortably. **Wicked Women Choppers** goes after the same target audience, while New Zealand based **Towanda** is more of an intermediary: a motorcycle tours provider for women by women. The industry's icon, **Harley Davidson**, runs a website dedicated to female bikers, but no word yet on an actual women-only Harley.
For women and girls looking for a lighter two-wheel ride, Hero Honda India introduced a Pleasure scooter and Just4her sales points last fall, opening 22 dedicated Just4her stores across 20 cities (source: Rediff). Apart from having an all-women sales staff—the company is working on creating all-women teams of mechanics as well—the stores’ ambience and scooter’s design adheres to one strict rule: appeal to women. There’s even a mirror in front of the scooter, pandering to the feminine habit of checking how a potential purchase looks—whether it's a scarf, a shopping bag, or in this case, a scooter. The company also introduced the Lady Rider Club, offering special benefits that include milestone rewards, personal accident insurance and special events for members. So far, the Pleasure has notched up sales of over 100,000 units.

Last male bastion in the automotive world: the repair shop. Expect female-friendly versions to multiply. To get started, check out Detroit-based Motor City Sales and Service and FrauenAUTOwerkstatt in Salzburg.

Taxis | Being chauffeured around town should be as much fun as owning a car. Unfortunately, that isn't always the case. In London alone, 10 women are attacked each month after getting into an unlicensed mini-cab. No wonder that many women feel safer taking a taxi driven by a woman. Pink Ladies spotted a business opportunity, and created the UK's first women-only private car hire franchise. The Pink Ladies drive Renault Kangoo's that are pink inside and out, making them highly visible. Passengers sign up as members, and fares are either pre-paid, paid by credit card or with a 'pink account', which is convenient for members and safe for drivers. Booking is done over the phone, and a text message is sent to the customer to let her know the vehicle is approaching, which means she doesn't have to wait outside. Drivers are trained in self-defense and will wait outside a customer's home after a drop-off to ensure she gets in safely.

The phenomenon is spreading globally: there's recently launched Forsche in Bombay, whose taxis include conveniences like wet wipes and perfumed talcum powder to freshen up on the way to a work meeting, nail polish remover and nail clippers and women's magazines. Nice detail: Forsche's female founder is former amateur rally driver Revathi Roy. Expansion to Pune, and starting a driving school for women is next on her agenda (no website yet,

www.trendwatching.com
unfortunately). In Moscow, Pink Taxi and Ladies Red Taxi are vying for female business. Still leaves a lot of cities to bring this service to!

Beer and wine | Liqueur-style beverages aimed at women have been around for ages, but beer and wine makers are now actively pursuing the female palate, too. There’s Karmi, a regional brand produced by the Polish division of Carlsberg. Karmi is a dark beer that has been around for a while, characterized by its sweet caramel flavour that wasn’t aimed at a specific gender. Categorized as a near-beer for its low alcohol content (0.1%), the drink has been revamped and is now being targeted to women. Besides pretty new packaging, Karmi has also introduced three new flavours: Poema di Caffè (coffee), Selua (pineapple/pina colada) and Lamai (guava, dragonfruit and mint).

In Holland and Belgium, three major players have recently introduced rosé beers aimed at women. Heineken’s Wieckse Rosé, Hoegaarden Rosée and Gulpener Rosé are sweet, low-alcohol beers with fruit flavours and colours. This vets them against Dutch Sophie & Sophie, who peddle their wine refresher for women as "a low-calories and low-alcohol drink made of rosé wines from Mediterranean Spain."

German brewer Karlsberg is also convinced that it can get more women to drink beer, though its Karla beer comes with a different twist: health benefits. Which has to do with the fact that in Germany, many women view beer as unhealthy, fattening or unsophisticated. So Karla, a beer for women, is marketed as improving health and well-being. The mixed drink comes in three varieties: Balance, Well Be and Acti-Fit. All are low in alcohol content (1%) and are blends of beer and fruit juices. Emphasis on health prompted an unusual distribution channel: Karla is sold through pharmacists.

Sports | We know, there are plenty of dedicated stores for athletic wear for women these days. However, as Nike Women is showing with its constant expansion and initiatives, there’s also a healthy appetite for ever-more-sophisticated brands and retail outlets. Besides Nike Women, check out Sporteve, Paiva, South African Femme Sportif, Outdoor Divas (tagline: "Women are not small men"), and Patagonia Women's Clothing and Gear. Feels like a distribution or franchise deal waiting to happen for eager female entrepreneurs?
Women in the United States can now sign up to test-drive new products in exchange for their honest opinions and reviews at SheSpeaks. Here's how it works: when users sign up, they complete a questionnaire about their interests, hobbies, likes and dislikes. SheSpeaks selects an appropriate product match, which the members receive in two to three weeks. Products are theirs to keep, and to try out in their own homes and as part of their everyday lives. In exchange, members provide their candid feedback online on the SheSpeaks website. Discussion boards allow testers to exchange views and opinions with other women who have tested the same products. After the review process, users can get the scoop on how their reviews may have impacted a product before it goes to market, which creates a nice feedback loop. Over 30,000 women from across the country have already signed up.

Procter & Gamble's Vocalpoint has a similar set up, but obviously focuses on P&G products ("for moms") only. According to BusinessWeek, Vocalpoint had more than 600,000 members in 2006. Time to partner with these folks?

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If you need more inspiration from this field, then sample Republic of Tea's Nutritional Iced Tea for Women, French Meadow Bakery Woman's Bread and Woman's Tortillas and recently resurrected Tab Energy.

And let's not forget functional foods and cosmeceuticals. Four "functional beverages" to get you going:

Danone Essensis, recently launched in a number of European countries, is a drink made from fermented milk and fruit, with Omega 6, green tea extract and vitamin E. According to the French company, 'the natural ingredients in Essensis reach the deepest skin layers through the circulation system. Essensis makes sure that the cells in the skin that arrive to the top layers during the skin renewal process are of the best quality. Moreover, apart from improving the quality of the skin, Essensis also reinforces the skin barrier, thus limiting external aggressions whilst ensuring that the skin is adequately hydrated." View one of their commercials here.

In the US, keep an eye on BORBA Drinkable Skin Care. While experts by no means agree on proven benefits of functional foods, consumers are more than willing to give them a try.

Last but not least, Coca-Cola and L'Oreal are to introduce a "nutraceutical drink" called Lumaé next year (no website yet). The drink will include skin-care ingredients, and will be marketed as a beauty brand, not a soft drink.
For friskier functionality, check out Swedish Nexcite, a soft drink containing five "love herbs": damiana, ginseng, guarana, mate and schizandra, plus a little caffeine. The mixture allegedly jump-starts the female libido and increases stamina and endurance. In addition to a 200 ml bottle, Nexcite is also available in a 750 ml champagne-style bottle for special occasions.

Where to buy these functional foods and other convenience items? Why, in Tokyo convenience store Happily, of course. In Happily's own words, the stores is "of, for and by women." The first outlet, located in Tokyo's Toranomon business district, offers cosmetics and nutritional supplements. Only 20 percent of the products are the same as those at conventional convenience stores owned by the same chain. Clerks are all women, except at night. To enable women—especially so-called office ladies—to have fun and relax while shopping, the store not only offers a wide range of skin-care products and dietary supplements, but also boasts a lavish powder room with a dressing table, full-length mirror and a stool for changing stockings. Aromatic oils are used to scent the air. The Happily store is owned by AM/PM, which last year also launched a chain of outlets that offer DVD rentals and book sales in addition to traditional convenience store fare. One to ponder for the 7/11s and Fresh & Easy's of this world?

Oh, and last AND probably least: South Korean MrPizza sells a low-fat Pizza for Women. Spotted in Seoul, and the jury is still out on whether this is an advertising play or a serious attempt at diversification ;-)
For further inspiration, there’s networking site LadiesAway, or take some cues from Lufthansa’s Woman’s World, a magazine for Lufthansa’s female frequent flyers.

Exclusive access  If access is the new luxury must-have (more on the ACCE$$ trend in our upcoming 2008 Trend Report), then the following initiatives may well succeed: Italian La Spiaggia in Rosa, a women-only beach with all female staff and on-site services like a hairdresser, make-up artist, fitness classes and a low-calorie menu at the beach restaurant. Or how about an entire women-only town in China? A women-only island in Iran? Women-only metros and trains in Japan, Taiwan, Russia and Egypt? Which of the services that you’re currently providing could be made accessible to women only?

Banking, investing and insurance  Financial institutions around the world are finally recognizing that women often have their own needs and goals when it comes to banking, investing and insurance. Women & Co (more on them below) list some useful US-based numbers on their website, arguing why women need different kinds of financial advice:

- Average life expectancy for women is 81 years versus 73 years for men (Social Security Administration, 2006).
- The average age of widowhood for women is 55 years old (US Census, 2006).
- By 2010, women are expected to own half of wealth in the United States (Women in Higher Education, 2007).
- Women 65 years or older today have a 44% chance of entering a nursing home at some point in their lives (Genworth Financial, 2006).
- The typical woman spends 10 years out of the workforce for care giving, while the typical man spends just two years (Joint Economic Committee, March 2006).

A quick list for the financially inclined:

**Banks**

- Mujer Banorte, the first bank to go after the female market in Mexico. Services include insurance for illnesses common to women, including cervical cancer.

- Standard Chartered Bank in Kolkata, India, boasts an all-woman bank branch. All staffers at Standard Chartered Bank’s
Jodhpur Park branch in Kolkata, which opened this May, are women—down to the security guards. And though men won't be driven away, the purpose behind opening the branch is to attract more women customers. The launch of the branch was based on customer feedback which indicated that female customers would prefer a ‘non-inhibiting’ environment. On the cards are workshops for women on financial planning and investments. Particular efforts are being made to provide information related to investments, and the concept will also be taken to other Indian cities. (Tip of the hat to Times of India and Hindu Business Line.)

- Pakistani **First Women Bank** was founded in 1989 and strives for the economic empowerment of women.

- And in Kenya, **Equity Bank** is about to open women-only bank branches. The initiative will receive a USD 75 million cash injection from the United Nations Development Programme.

### Investing

Available nationwide in the US, Citigroup’s **Women & Co** is aimed at women under 55 with at least USD 100,000 in investable assets. An annual USD 125 membership fee gives members access to an advisor from Salomon Smith Barney or Citicorp Investment Services, newsletters and seminars, and special rates for mortgages, child care facilities and saving funds.

United Arab Emirates investment firm **Forsa** is hoping to tap into the largely overlooked market of wealthy GCC women with the launch of investment funds worth AED 250 million (USD 68 million) open to female investors only. Forsa, set up by Dubai World this January, controls an AED 200 million dirham general fund and an AED 50 million real estate fund. Forsa is open to Emirati and expatriate women with a minimum investment of AED 50,000 to one million.

Also, British fund manager **Bramdean** is also considering introducing its women-only service, **Bramdiva**, in Dubai. The service is already available in Britain. The fund is lead by Nicola Horlick—dubbed the superwoman of the UK’s fund management world—who, after Dubai, hopes to expand Bramdiva to Saudi Arabia, targeting super wealthy women.

Dutch **ABN Amro** just launched **Lady Delight**, an investment fund for and by, you guessed it, women. Lady Delight invests in three major funds managed by women: Odin Europa, JPMorgan UK Smaller Companies and Morgan Stanley Latin America.

### Insurance

South African **1st for Women** offers motor vehicle and household insurance for women only. Based on the belief that women are a safer bet because they don't put one another in senseless danger, the company is expanding quickly: there's now a **1st for Women** in Australia, too. German women have access to **LadyCarOnline** (car insurance) and Aspecta's **Frauen.invest** (life insurance).
How about 'Don’t question pink profits' instead?

(This is the second of three FOREVER TRENDS covering women, the gay community and baby boomers. To start at the beginning, go here.)

Many brands now actively target the gay community, as even the most conservative execs have come to realise that there’s just too much money to be made from well-to-do, happy-to-spend GLBT consumers. And merely acknowledging consumers who sadly are used to being ignored if not vilified, does wonders for brand loyalty.

So how much money (PINK PROFITS!) are we talking about here?

- According to PR and marketing firm Witeck-Combs, the buying power of US gays and lesbians will exceed USD 835 billion by 2011. Witeck-Combs’ report for this year pegs the 2006 buying power of gays and lesbians at USD 660 billion, an amount that will increase significantly as the gay and lesbian population, estimated at 15.3 million, grows to a projected 16.3 million in 2011. For more numbers, check out their report.

- British gays—accounting for around 6% of the population, or about 3.6 million—pocket an estimated USD 130 billion annually. Openly gay men in full-time jobs earn USD 18,000 a year more than the male national average. For lesbians, the premium is USD 12,000. (Source: Out Now Consulting, April 2006.)

Two more sources of PINK PROFITS numbers and examples: Gay Market Express and Gay Marketing 101.

More ads here.

Advertising | Let’s first (briefly) highlight gay-friendly advertising, which for most companies is a first step towards more inclusive product development. From Time Magazine (August 2006): “Advertising in gay-oriented outlets is flourishing. Beverage companies like Anheuser-Busch, holiday firms including Travelocity and automakers such as Ford helped nudge advertising spend in the US gay and lesbian press to USD 212 million last year, up more than a quarter since 2003.”

To get started, or to further hone your GLBT advertising skills, check out Commercial Closet Association, a New York City-based group that counsels firms on smarter representation of gays in advertising, and has numerous overviews of gay-inclusive ads and commercials, including the nominees for the Images in Advertising Award 2007.

Now, back to product and service innovation:
Construction | Brazilian civil construction firm Tecnisa hired a GLBT market consultant three years ago, training sales teams to sell to the GLBT segment. As a result, 12% of Tecnisa's total sales now come from this segment. As anyone entering this field will quickly find out: a little respect for the gay audience goes a long way in terms of loyalty!

Publishing | There are thousands of gay blogs and sites, but even in this field, there's room for innovation: check out stylish HeSaidPublications, a new local ezine that targets the gay community and covers cool new restaurants, nightclubs, art and boutiques in Denver. Taking a cue from successful 'must do/must buy' entities like dailycandy.com (and we all know how much they made when they sold part of the business last year), the company has just launched HeSaidDallas and HeSaidSeattle. Gay Chic, anyone?

Retirement & communities | Many gays and lesbians reject the traditional retirement community lifestyle. After years of living freely, they don't want to move back into the closet. So make way for the following alternatives:

- RainbowVision has developed gay and lesbian retirement communities in Santa Fe, New Mexico and Palm Springs, California.
- Currently under development, Paradise One Condominiums is part retirement community and part upscale condominium, "a progressive community that is as Straight-Friendly as it is Gay Friendly."
- Stonewall Communities' vision is to develop and offer a range of options for older GLBT people. Stonewall Audubon Circle, currently under development, will be open to anyone regardless of race, colour, national origin, religion, familial status, age, handicap, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.
- The Resort on Carefree Boulevard bills itself as Southwest Florida's premier lesbian destination, with a mixture of full-time and holiday residents ranging in age from 40 to 85 years, both working and retired.
- Despite its name Finnish Mummolaakso ('Grandma Valley'), is a solidarity group open to women of all ages, with most members aged between 30 and 60. The organisation aims to provide healthcare and terminal care for lesbians and bisexual women, with the ultimate aim of providing retirement housing services, too.
Banking | This one sounds like it could do with some upgrading within (and expansion outside) North America: every time a Rainbow Card owner charges an item, a portion of the transaction goes directly to the non-profit Rainbow Endowment. The Rainbow Endowment awards grants to organisations that provide social and health services, advocacy and educational information to the GLBT community, such as the National Lesbian and Gay Health Association and the AIDS Information Network. Rainbow Endowment has given nearly USD 2 million to these organisations since 1996. The Rainbow Card is available from Bank of America in the US and from MBNA in Canada.

Insurance | My Way Versicherungen claims that 80% of German insurers offer homosexuals limited benefits when it comes to health insurance, disability insurance or partner benefits for life insurance. Gay applicants are often automatically marked as high-risk, with high premiums to match. Which is why My Way's all-gay/bi/lesbian team specializes in better conditions and better service for gay customers and their partners. No doubt a similar issue outside Germany, which means yet another business opp.

Automotive | GayWheels is a gay-friendly automotive resource, providing information about gay-friendly car companies and facilitating commerce with gay-friendly companies during the entire buying process. GayWheels rates various brands for gay-friendliness, something that will increasingly happen in other industries, too. After all, this is the age of TRANSPARENCY TYRANNY. Or how about UK-based Pink Pound leasing, an established car leasing company that offers its gay customers peace of mind in a sometimes prejudiced environment, something GayCar (the competition) aims to do as well.

Telco | “Over and Out: Så er det slut. GAYmobile findes ikke mere. Et eksperiment er over og det gik ikke så godt.” Sadly, Danish GayMobile is no longer: the mobile virtual network operator targeting Denmark's approximately 250,000 gay consumers with "a service that's gay all the way." Besides telephony, think Kylie Minogue and Slyvester ringtones, and wireless same-sex dating. Perhaps the market was too small: who's going to try this in the US or UK? And if that's still too risky, then which major, cash-rich operator will step in, not for revenue reasons, but for branding's sake?

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Gay community and travel | Definitely one of the most developed 'pink industries', there's a bewildering number of gay-friendly and gay-only travel companies out there. Not to mention every country, city and village trying to lure gay visitors. So a brief list of some of the leading companies in this field—to study or emulate—should do:

- **Olivia**, the travel and lifestyle company for lesbians, is a leader in lesbian cruises and resort packages and is also creating an online community.

- **Atlantis Events** is the largest gay and lesbian tour operator in the world, operating all-gay cruises and resorts.

- **R Family Vacations** caters to the non-party-scene, offering relaxed family-friendly cruises for the gay and lesbian community. Kids are welcome, but not essential.

- **RSVP Vacations** offers a selection of gay-friendly and gay-welcoming package holidays and cruises to must-see destinations worldwide.

- **Orbitz**. The online travel company offers a comprehensive range of airfares and rates for accommodation, car hire and other holiday essentials in its gay and lesbian section, with discounts on fares to pride events and charity auctions supporting GLBT community charities.

- **American Airlines Rainbow**—AA has a dedicated GLBT sales team, offering special discounts on air fares to GLBT events.

- **Pink Choice** is the gay and lesbian equivalent of tripadvisor.com, reviewing hotels, B&Bs and other forms of accommodation.

- **Damron** publishes guides for gay travellers, with five annual publications and site listings of tour operators and GLBT events.

Same-sex marriage | With same-sex marriage now legal in countries like Belgium, Spain, the Netherlands, Canada and South Africa (and many more countries accepting civil unions, domestic partnerships or registered partnerships), a whole new cottage business is springing up. Two well-designed examples, one from Spain, one from Denmark:

**BY** is Spain's first shop for gay wedding clothes. Located in Barcelona, its designer wedding threads are made to order. Customers can choose from designers like Delgado Buil, Ion Fix, Juanjo Oliva, Locking Shocking and Helena Rohner.

When it's time to pick a ring, Danish **Carbon de Luxe** is a strong contender for PINK PROFITS. A new Danish jewellery brand, it designs diamond jewellery specifically for (male) gays. Objects come with a twist: cufflinks can be turned into piercing jewellery, while the bracelet can be turned into something less 'SFW'.
Home improvement! Coming soon in the UK, Pink Paint, a website to pair gay homeowners with gay and gay friendly tradesmen. One to build out and then sell to Yellow Pages? ;-)

TV! Gay networks are popping up all over the world, perfect for getting your pink products in front of the right audience, reaping those PINK PROFITS. Here’s a list of gay networks to watch:

- **Logo** is MTV Networks’ channel for “Gay America.” Series include Curl Girls, Prom Queen and The Big Gay Sketch Show. Launched in June 2005, the channel is now available in 27 million US households. It has tripled its TV revenue in 2006 vs. the first six months since its launch in 2005. For the first half of 2007, TV dollars are up 60% compared to the same period a year ago.

- **Outzone TV**: owned by NBC Universal, this is Bravo’s broadband channel specifically for the online gay community. Launched in June 2006.

- **Here!** is pitched as “Gay Television. No Apologies.” This cable and internet-tv network was launched in 2002 and is available across the US.

- **GAY-TV** is an Italian satellite channel that’s also available online, featuring lifestyle programs aimed at gay men.

- **Pink TV** is a French pay tv station broadcasting gay-centric television 24/7, throughout France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland. Launched in October 2004.

- Canadian **OUTtv** was the world’s first 24-hour GLBT television network. Launched in 2001.

- **Q Television Network** began in late 2004, and “ceased regular operations as of February 2006, amid allegations of corporate thievery and management incompetence.” Just to remind you that in the end, it’s not just about ideas, but good execution, too :-) Launching this fall, **Timm** is the first German television channel targeted at gay men.

- Also kicking off this fall, **Out.TV** is a Dutch gay lifestyle channel based on Canadian Out.tv, which will feature music, news, fashion, travel, a dating program and drama.
BOOMING BUSINESS is what baby boomers are. Anyone from Tom Peters to Faith Popcorn to Wikipedia will be able to shower you with mouth-watering numbers and indicators, highlighting the amassed wealth of baby boomers in mature consumer societies around the world.

And let’s not forget about dedicated boomer sites and blogs, from The Boomer Blog to The Mature Market. Check out Focalyst (the AARP’s research branch), the Mature Market Institute and 50plus, all keeping track of the ever-more sophisticated needs and wants of cash AND time rich 50+ consumers seeking to get the most out of their second or third life. A quick rundown of the numbers:

- Born between 1946 and 1964, boomers number some 450 million worldwide (source: MIT AgeLab).
- The world’s population is aging at a staggering rate. The 50+ population is the fastest growing segment worldwide and predicted life expectancies are at a historical high. An American turns 50 once every seven seconds. Within the next few years, 50% of the European Union’s population will be 65+. By 2030, in Italy, retirees will outnumber active workers. By 2050, the median age in Thailand will rise to 50. (Source: MIT AgeLab.)
- In the UK, over-50s are currently 20 million strong, growing fast, and hold 80% of the nation’s wealth (source: BBC).
- Estimated annual spending power of baby boomers is more than USD 2 trillion. Younger boomers (born 1956-1964) spend most of their money on their children and the mortgage. Older boomers (born 1946-1955), many of whom are empty nesters, put their money into upgrading their homes and on clothing, spending 13% and 11% more than average on women’s and men’s apparel, respectively. (Source: MetLife 2005.)
- However, not ALL boomers are well-off: in a Focalyst study of more than 30,000 adults over the age of 42 in the US, only 1 in 10 baby boomers can be classified as “Boomer Elites,” defined as having an annual household pretax income of USD 150,000 or USD 100,000 if retired. Keep this in mind when dreaming up new products for and with this audience.

So what caught OUR eye?

Ringtones | The main attraction at Booseytones is its wide range of less pedestrian ringtones. Being the world’s largest publisher of classical music, Boosey & Hawkes can draw from an immense catalogue of music by such distinguished 20th century composers as Stravinsky, Shostakovich, Britten, Adams and Reich. Previous centuries are represented by a host of venerable composers, from Handel to Tchaikovsky. After replacing Nokia’s Gran Vals with a truetone version of Adam’s Short Ride in a Fast Machine, dedicated followers of classical music (read: boomers) will also be pleased to swap standard cellphone wallpapers with a photograph of a pensive Prokofiev, or an engraving of Mozart’s dapper silhouette. The company now has local sites for the US, UK and Germany. Which leaves plenty of space for expansion and competition.
Dating | With more boomers online than ever, and (online) dating becoming more accepted by romance-seeking boomers, the list of boomer-dating sites and related services will continue to grow exponentially.

The US is leading; check out sites like 55Alive, Senior Friend Finder, Prime Singles, Senior Match, Metrodate Seniors, Executive Senior Dating, and Age Match. But the appeal is global (when is it not in these global times!): French Meetic, the country’s leader in online-dating, recently launched Ulteam, a dating site that targets daters over 40, many of whom are turned off by the short-term nature of relationships at Meetic’s main site. And then there are Dutch 50 Plus Match, Danish Senior Date and so on. If not something to start up yourself, than at least some good web space to advertise your dedicated baby boomer goods and services?

Now, the social network craze is not going to bypass silver surfers, either: Eons, a full-fledged social network and information portal for baby boomers, encourages them to celebrate life, get things done, learn and connect with other people over the age of 50. Eons now has 300,000 members. Other social networks for boomers include Friends Over 50, Second Prime, Over 50s and recently launched BOOMJ. May the best one (yours?) win and sell to MySpace the moment that juggernaut realizes their business needs to become more segmented?

Health | Health and boomers is another no-brainer: expect the number of DIY health monitoring services and first aid devices to skyrocket, as boomers and their families will do everything to prevent deteriorating health from messing up their ‘third’ life.

Check out the Philips HeartStart Home, a USD 1,150 defibrillator designed for use by virtually anyone to provide immediate treatment for sudden cardiac arrest. The device provides voice instructions that guide responders through every step of the defibrillation process, as well as reminding them to call for emergency help and providing CPR coaching. After a successful US launch, the device is now being sold in US, Canada, UK, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and the Netherlands.

Or what about the Exmocare wristwatch, which monitors the physical and emotional state of the wearer and notifies him/her or a care provider when there’s an issue. (Note that the company is still looking for distributors and partners.)

For keeping tabs on blood pressure, the Braun SensorControl will do the trick.

And now that we’re at it, why on earth has Target’s ClearRx pill bottle, which is easier to hold, easier to read and easier on the eyes, STILL not been copied, improved on, partnered with, etc on a global scale? Come on!
Tryvertising | Get them when they're still junior senior citizens: upon retirement, Belgian boomers receive a Mediobox gift package full of useful gadgets, product samples and gift vouchers tailor-made for their specific needs. After all, trying out is the new advertising ;-) 

Travel | Quirky Swedish travel company Rosa Bussarna (pink caravan) operates over twenty pink buses that travel around the world. Passengers embark on three to eight week trips. Two years ago, the company added trips exclusively targeted at people over 50, proving a success: today, Pink Caravan offers 14 trips solely targeted at youthful, adventurous baby boomers who want to relive their backpacking years. New travel services for boomers are plentiful: from Eldertreks to tripwiser.com. However, as travel ranks high on virtually every boomer's priority list, there's room for countless new travel concepts across the globe. One you can't go wrong with, if you focus and execute well.

Homes & housing | More housing-related inspiration: in Sweden, Nordic bank SEB offers a special mortgage designed for those who are 55 or older. With their home as security, customers can realize a part of the value that's locked into their houses or apartments (minimum 200,000 SEK). It doesn't hurt that many Swedish baby boomers have little or no mortgages on their apartments, while house prices have soared over the last few years. SEB's customers over 55 don't need to pay instalments, the interest is tax-deductible, and they are guaranteed to be able to stay in their home for the rest of their life. Since SEB gets a “security” percentage of the property, they too will benefit from a potential increase in value once the apartment sells. With real estate being the new currency, financial wizards should have fun with this from Cape Town to Copenhagen.

At the same time, millions of boomers will opt for swapping their old digs for serviced apartments and communities. Which is why the City of Burbank and Meta Housing Corporation have partnered to develop The Burbank Senior Artists Colony. A first-of-its-kind 141-unit senior apartment community, The Burbank Senior Artists Colony will feature a senior theatre group, senior independent film company, senior fine arts collective, an intergenerational arts program in partnership with the Burbank Unified School District, a resident-run internal cable TV station and the following amenities for artists in their second 50 years of creativity: 45-seat Theatre & Screening Room, Arts Studios & Classrooms, Computer Media Arts Centre, Digital Filmmaking Equipment, Digital Video Editing Bay, Read Aloud Library, Outdoor Performance Areas and an Art Gallery & Sculpture Garden.

Also take a look at Seoul Seniors Tower, Del Webb, and Residencia La Ciguena. The latter is for Dutch retirees who want to spend their golden years in warmer climates. As any trend guru will confirm: boomer real estate is where the real money is right
now. You know, Dubai is the new Spain, Panama is the new Florida, and so on ;-)  

Food | Upgrade everything! Boomers want convenience AND luxury, preferably combined in one appealing package. Which is what TASTE claims to deliver to mature foodies. Billing itself as the world’s premier luxury canned food line, the company will soon start selling canned fish, fruits, nuts, candy and vegetables. From their website: “Premium hand-filleted Chinook Salmon from the Pacific Ocean. Ocean fresh-packed and dolphin safe. Incomparable quality, this fine salmon is the best we’ve ever tasted. Not farm raised, this delicious pink salmon is loaded with healthy Omega-3. Excellent for high-end dips and hors d’oeuvres. Quite simply the finest you’ll ever encounter.” Repeat after us: EVERYTHING can be upgraded, made more attractive and command premium margins, and those boomers are happy to pony up a bit more for their indulgent third life ;-)  

Fitness | Club 50 Fitness aims to provide a non-intimidating environment for men and women 50 and older who want to improve their fitness levels, both through structured thirty-minute workouts in their fitness centres and through a line of dietary supplements. The instructor-supervised group workouts are suitable for all levels of experience. They are designed to increase mobility and strength, as well as promote weight loss and improve blood pressure and balance—all areas of concern to this age group. Attention entrepreneurs: Club 50 is actively promoting franchise opportunities, with franchise fees at USD 24,900. Watch a video here. Lots of global expansion opps for this one.  

Fashion | Readerwear is a specialty retailer in Vancouver that sells hundreds of fashion-forward, ready-to-wear reading glasses,
which are a far cry from the inexpensive but unstylish varieties found in drugstores and department stores. “We recognized that today's baby boomer wasn't satisfied with the usual selection of reading glasses—they wanted more choice and more style, without having to pay a few hundred dollars for prescription glasses,” says the company, which also sells a limited range via their online store. Readerwear offers inexpensive yet high quality fashionable eyewear in up to 60 different styles in each diopter, compared to the handful of styles normally offered by drugstores. The company has two stores (Vancouver and Victoria) and is looking for franchisees in cities like Toronto and Calgary. Which of course shouldn't stop you from getting involved if you're based outside Canada.

**Transportation** | **Driving Miss Daisy** is a cab and companion service for senior citizens that takes them shopping, to doctor's appointments, social events, etc. The company prides itself on providing extra care and security to its elderly customers, at affordable prices. Driving Miss Daisy currently has seven cars in Edmonton, Calgary, and is looking to expand to other cities. How about expanding to Japan and Europe, getting city governments to outsource their often very expensive, inefficient, in-house 'elderly transport' arrangements?


So what is it? An online store that sells baby and children's wear from the time when grandma herself was a wee lass. (Mormor.nu is Danish for Grandma.now). In fact, the company's employees stem from an era when everything was made by hand, the youngest employee being 68 years old. All products are handmade, from pure wool, alpaca wool or cotton. Old knitting and crochet techniques and patterns have been revived, and colours and materials updated, making the products meet modern demands for fashionable children's clothing, as well as for old-fashioned quality and honest materials. Cool touch: clothes come with a small nametag signed by the grandmother that made the item. Seniorpreneurs (and storytellers) unite!

Get started on that riveting brainstorming session ;-)
Whether it's women, the gay community, baby boomers, or other enduring favourites like health, wellness, metrosexuals and the environment.

Which is why we've dubbed these trends FOREVER TRENDS, which is not to say that they won't change. You will have to track them to see how they develop. But they're not question marks. They're proven, well-researched, established opportunities. And they make for the easiest brainstorming sessions. However, we assume you understand that to succeed, your team will have to include a number of women, boomers or gays. Anything else is a recipe for disaster.

Oh, and demographic trends are perfect for pairing with other trends: what does (STILL) MADE HERE mean to baby boomers? How do women relate to CUSTOMER-MADE? You get the point.

For trends that are still fresh and emerging, continue to read our monthly trend briefings (no FOREVER TRENDS for a while, we promise) or check out our new 2008 Trend Report. Happy spotting and happy doing!