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The She Spot: Why Women are the Market for Changing the World and How to Reach Them

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Most people associate pink with girls. But attracting women clients, supporters, or customers goes beyond packaging messages in a shade. Authors Lisa Chen and Lisa Witter write that the needs and wants of women have changed since the days of "women's liberation." What promoters and politicians may think women are interested in probably, if not definitely, is not what they want at all.

Message shapers need only apply a few simple principles based on how women think and interact with one another to improve the female response to marketing calls. Moreover, the writers claim, when women are sold, so are men.

Chen, a former journalist and current marketing guru, has authored messages on topics ranging from education reform to health care. Witter serves as consultant to many high profile non-profit organizations on how to communicate to women. Both are colleagues at Fenton Communications, one of the largest and most prestigious public interest communications firms in the country. They imbue their text with stories from years of experience crafting messages to inspire, excite, and encourage women.

Their approach to reaching women is neatly reduced to four Cs: care, connect, cultivate, and control. A product or program that touches on one or more of these four areas will possess the elements of success among the female public.

For example, using real-life stories in a marketing tactic hits on the element of "care." Witter explains that she selected an obstetrician based on a vivid story told to her about a physician who went to extremes to reach a patient during the Northeast blackouts in 2003: "Undeterred, the obstetrician leaped on her bicycle and rode all the way along the Westside Highway—and made it to her patient's bedside with time to spare."

The Web site, AskPatty.com, demonstrates the importance of "control" to women. The site offers car maintenance and buying tips for women—"an answer to the strain of male

chauvinism in the automotive world."

If one agrees with the premise that marketing has been male-centered or that the strategies they present are uniquely suited to impact women, then this text offers plenty of practical advice for those courting female clientele. "Take-away" summaries at the end of each chapter guide readers looking for quick inspiration.

It is likely that pink will forever remain a "feminine" color. But perhaps the followers of these principles may be less likely to tint their women-directed messages simplistically rosy.

Mary Spiro