**Marketers target moms armed with smartphones**

**By** [**Cecilia Kang**](http://www.washingtonpost.com/cecilia-kang/2011/02/28/ABFs9eL_page.html)**, Published: July 18**

Companies looking to make money on the Web are trying to understand a fast-growing and big-spending demographic: moms.

From Procter & Gamble to AT&T and Pandora, firms are taking notice that mothers, [newly armed with smartphones](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/a-smartphones-proliferate-some-users-are-cutting-the-computer-cord/2011/07/11/gIQA6ASi9H_story.html), are becoming a new kind of shopping force online. A decade ago, these women were single and childless 18- to 34-year-olds who captured the hearts of Madison Avenue marketing executives with their voracious consumer appetites. Now, they are older and often in charge of the household wallet.

[Apple hits and misses: Apple is known for having many successful product launches. But it had some unsuccessful ones too.](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/apple-hits-and-misses/2011/06/02/AGvNHvJH_gallery.html)

[Top consumer gadgets: For the technophile in your life, these items are must-haves.](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/top-consumer-gadgets/2011/03/04/ABXETgQB_gallery.html)

* [Apple victory means Android headache over patents](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/faster-forward/post/apple-victory-means-android-headache-over-patents/2011/07/18/gIQAV4v8LI_blog.html)
* [A growing rift between Silicon Valley, unemployed America](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/technology/a-tale-of-two-countries-the-growing-divide-between-silicon-valley-and-unemployed-america/2011/07/17/gIQAv5oRJI_story.html)
* [‘Magical’ iPhone put to use in actual magic](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/magical-iphone-put-to-use-in-actual-magic/2011/07/15/gIQA6FqSKI_story.html)
* [Tech companies and the magic of the invitation](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/innovations/post/tech-companies-and-the-magic-of-the-invitation/2011/07/17/gIQA4EuHLI_blog.html)

**Smartphone users cutting computer cord**

Moms are the fastest-growing buyers of iPhones, and they are tuning in more frequently and for longer periods than any other group on media Web sites such as Pandora, a streaming music service. Nielsen Research says mothers are far more likely to share photos and news stories on Facebook via smartphones and computers than anyone else.

“We’ve known about the opportunity of online moms for a while now, but then mobile technology came along and blew everything up,” said Marshal Cohen, chief retail analyst at research firm NPD Group.

Between business meetings, in carpool lines and at sports practices, moms are spending downtime on [smartphones](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/technology/comscore-one-in-three-us-mobile-phones-is-a-smartphone/2011/07/05/gHQAPJbTzH_story.html) to update the family calendar, buy soccer cleats, research cheap flights and fit in a few rounds of Angry Birds.

Nielsen calls these women“power moms.” They represent one in five online users — a proportion that is growing quickly — and some research shows they are an even greater force on mobile devices.

The number of moms with smartphones is about equal to men of the same age, but they are adopting the technology at a faster pace. The number of moms who purchased iPhones grew 132 percent in the first quarter of 2011 compared with the same time last year — outpacing men, who rose by 121 percent, according to NPD. Overall, adult purchases of the smartphone grew 117 percent.

Women with children are also among the biggest spenders on the Web — either buying directly from mobile apps or researching products that they buy later.

“Early adopters are no longer young people and men,” said Candace Corlett, president of marketing consulting group WSL Strategic Retail in New York. “What the smartphone does is allow women who are hungry for information to get what they want from the Internet instead of calling up a sister or friend for advice.”

Take Denise Stoner, 48, who on a recent morning pulled out her hot-pink-encased iPhone at least a dozen times within a couple hours. The Vienna resident sent texts to her husband about plans for the day, listened to the Jimmy Buffett channel on Pandora on the way to Tysons Corner and made a few moves on a multiplayer Scrabble app against her sister, who lives in Florida.

As Stoner waited for her 11th-grade daughter to finish her hair appointment, she fired up Netflix. But before she watched her streaming video, she updated friends on Facebook about an annoying run-in with a security guard who gave her a hard time about putting her manicured bare feet up on a mall couch.

“It was just annoying enough to share,” she said.

Indeed, the always-connected and -sharing ethos of moms is what marketers hope to better understand. In the parlance of marketing, these are the most “engaged” users and, in many ways, the most valuable consumers online.

Online coupon site Living Social launched its “Family Deals” division last year because it found so many of its kids-oriented deals outsold other types of offers. In Raleigh, N.C., a deal for Monkey Joe’s bounce house indoor playground sold 3,172 coupons within a few hours. Disclaimer: Living Social’s chief executive, Tim O’Shaughnessy, is the son-in-law of Washington Post Co. Chairman Donald E. Graham.

Apple victory means Android headache over patentsA growing rift between Silicon Valley, unemployed America‘Magical’ iPhone put to use in actual magicTech companies and the magic of the invitation

.“We know mom is CEO of the house and maybe CEO or COO of a company, too, and putting 40 to 60 hours a day at their paid job and their unpaid job at home,” said Maire Griffin, a spokeswoman for Living Social. “We need to make things easier for her and help her find the efficiency in her life she’s searching for.”

Firms are dissecting the habits of mothers in hopes of increasing their chances of turning ads into purchases. Web firms are collecting personal information about moms, including what times of the day they’re logged on, if they are connected from home or on the road, and how often browsing turns into a purchase. Firms such as Procter & Gamble, Walt Disney, Comcast and AT&T, which recently commissioned a study on online moms, want to use that kind of data to tailor ads to that demographic.

Pandora is also focusing on those kinds of details. The streaming radio site stumbled upon its huge mom following last year, when it was flooded with queries for children’s musical groups such as “The Sippy Cups.”

A Pandora survey found that the average mom spent twice as much time on the site — and mobile app — than the average listener. About seven out of 10 of those mothers tune in every day.

Pandora is now sharing that information with its advertisers, said Heidi Browning, senior vice president of strategic solutions at Pandora. “This is the greatest gift ever to marketers,” she said.

And as moms pull each other into the smartphone fray, retailers see their opportunities growing.

Teverra Fernandez wouldn’t have bought her Sanyo Zio smartphone this year without the urging of her sister and mom friends. When her son turned 18 months old, friends told her to “get with the program,” the District resident said.

That meant mining smartphone apps for entertainment and learning tools for her toddler. One of her favorites is ToddlePhone Lite, an app that teaches colors and numbers that a friend helped her download onto her Android phone.

“They give me time to take a break,” she said enthusiastically while her son, Malachi, scooped up sand at Friendship Park in the District. When Fernandez, 25, started the app, its familiar music drew Malachi’s attention, and he came running toward the phone.

“A lifesaver,” she joked.

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http://www.learnvest.com/living-frugally/current-events/is-child-free-the-way-to-be-100/?utm\_source=email&utm\_medium=lvdaily&utm\_campaign=image

Is Child-Free The Way To Be? Posted 5 hours ago by Alden Wicker

First comes love, then comes marriage, then comes … a jet-setting lifestyle, a novel and posh townhouse in London.

For Sonja Lewis, an expat in her 40s, there was never a carriage,

stroller or burp cloth. Or childcare. Or school tuition. Instead,

Sonja opted out of the idea that all women need children in order to

be fulfilled and complete—and now wants to tell the tale.

In her new novel The Barreness, Lewis explores the fraught and

emotional territory of going child-free. We called up this

Georgia-born journalist and writer in her current home in London—where

she happily lives with her husband—and asked her all the questions you’d be too polite to ask.

Why did you write this novel?

I guess you could say I got married late (about 37 or 38) and became

obsessed with whether I would have children. And I eventually

concluded that being a mother wasn’t the right thing for me.

The previous generation seemed to stereotype non-mothers as selfish,

hardcore people, and I wanted to make it clear that women can be

fulfilled without becoming mothers. Exploring the subject in the form

of a novel gives me free range in how I approach it.

Women who don’t have children are more scrutinized. People believe

Oprah when she says she’s fulfilled. But for other women, it’s

different.

Why did you decide not to have children?

You have to consider the commitment; it’s a lifetime role. As much as

I love children, when it really became a viable option for me, the

financial commitment, the personal commitment, everything I had to

take into consideration … It just didn’t make sense.

Raising children, of course, is costly. Did that factor into your decision?

It wasn’t the deciding factor, but I did think about money. My husband

and I are normal middle-class people. I think my child would have had

a good life, but I would have wanted the very best, including paying

for school. I read an article about how expensive it is to raise a

child in the U.K., and the figures are just astounding. Plus, we

already travel to the U.S. two or three times a year, and I would have

wanted to go more often with a child. And that can get quite expensive.

Was this a solely personal decision, or did you involve your husband?

It was definitely a personal choice for me. We both agreed that I

couldn’t wake up one day and blame him for this decision. It’s

important to talk to your partner, though, and my husband was very

supportive and wonderful. We did a lot of research and even considered

adopting an older child, but I came to the conclusion that it wasn’t

right for me.

What did you do with the money you would have otherwise spent on a child?

Travel, by far. Without kids, you can come and go as you please. I

also enjoy some level of creature comforts in London. I go to the

salon once a week; this morning I got a massage. We also have a

townhouse in London. If we had a child, we would have had to consider

living in the suburbs.

There are other ways to support children, though, from being involved

with my nieces and nephews to supporting a lot of children’s

charities.

We’ve heard it said that motherhood is an accomplishment, even if a

woman hasn’t made it in the professional sphere. Do you think not

having children puts more pressure on you to be successful?

I suspect it does. Women who don’t have children are more scrutinized.

People believe Oprah when she says she’s fulfilled. But for other

women, it’s different. I personally feel quite fulfilled, having

written a novel, having worked as a journalist, having done quite a

bit of travel and now, having my communications consultancy here.

Do you ever regret not having children?

I do have a “what if” moment every now and again, but it’s fleeting. I

don’t have any regrets. It is so important to own that decision. It’s

not one I can go back on.

It’s very easy to walk into a school or an event and make friends with

other mothers. Being a writer can be isolating, so I’ve had to be

creative about how I make friends here in England. But I have greater

flexibility than I would have had otherwise. Because I don’t have

children, I have a very different relationship with my nieces and

nephews and godchildren. If I have any extra money or time, I can

spend it in my role as their auntie. I’m a very active auntie, and

they see a different take on life from me.

For example, they don’t mind being Facebook friends with me, even

though they do mind parents in their social media circle. I can talk

about things others aren’t able to.

Do you think about not having children to take care of you as you get older?

I thought about this when I was making the decision. After talking to

women with children, I concluded that there are no guarantees, anyway.

Whether you have children or not, you need to be smart about

retirement. I do have the benefit of a large family, with nieces and

nephews and godchildren. They talk about how they would never leave me

alone, but I don’t count on that.

Have you faced social backlash because of this decision? How have you

dealt with it?

Backlash is a strong word. People ask if I have children. I say, “No,”

and they say, “There’s still time.”

People want to believe you’re missing something. My choice is

absolutely considered unconventional. What I try to stress is that it

may be unconventional, but it’s not abnormal. It’s your life, and you

have to own it.

Have you met women who regret having children or say they envy you?

I have, but I won’t name them! I’ve met women who have said, “I

absolutely love my child, but I am just so jealous.” Not every woman

feels that way, but I’ve met a good handful who’ve said that if they

had to do it over again, they’d do it differently. They never thought

it was a choice; it was so much a part of their socialization.

My mother is a wonderful, wonderful woman. She had seven children,

loves us all and would do anything in the world for us. But she did

not want seven children. I don’t remember a time when she didn’t make

that point.

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really cost you?CLICK HERE

What should people make sure not to say to a childless woman?

“Why didn’t you have children?” That is a deeply personal question,

even for a woman like me who didn’t have fertility issues. If someone

tells you she doesn’t have children, don’t look at

her like you feel sorry for her.

What legacy would you like to leave behind?

It’s so important to remember that women without children can leave a

legacy, too.

Women who don’t have children are of equal value as women who do. I

want girls to know that as they become women. That’s the legacy