"Black median household income decreased by slightly more than $2,000 from 2008-11. Yet, prices for everyday essentials such as food, transportation, and utilities continue to rise. This means that Black household budgets are being shifted from discretionary categories to cover more essential household expenses."

– Leylha Ahuile, Senior Multicultural Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

• How is the economy affecting the choices Black consumers make in the marketplace?
• What household expenses are taking a greater share of Black households’ budget?
• Compared to 2010, how has spending and saving changed for Black consumers?

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Black population is expected to reach 43.8 million by 2018, a 12% increase from 2008. Currently at $1 trillion, Black spending power is expected to climb to $1.3 trillion by 2017, representing a 313% gain from 1990. Higher education levels, and the resulting higher paying jobs, are the primary drivers behind this increasing purchasing power. However, the recession and subsequent down economy have been particularly hard on Black consumers, who have suffered high unemployment levels and high rates of foreclosure. Mintel's last issuing of this report in 2010 reflected these economic hardships with a high percentage of Black respondents—regardless of household income—reporting that they were spending less in most categories. More than two years later, Black consumers are still dealing with the effects of the economy and working to stretch budgets to meet their household expenses. Higher prices for everyday goods like groceries are causing many households to cut back on spending in other areas such as entertainment and apparel. Corporations and brands will want to focus their marketing messages on value so Black consumers, like all consumers, can feel better about their purchasing decisions.


This report examines the spending and saving habits of Black adults, and offers a direct comparison to Mintel’s 2010 report on Black consumers’ share of wallet. Black household income and purchasing power trends will be examined, in addition to trends in household expenses and spending. Expenditures to personal insurance and pensions, healthcare, education, housing, food and beverage, transportation, entertainment, apparel, and personal care will also be explored to provide insights for targeting this valuable consumer segment.

DID YOU KNOW?
This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.
Table of Contents

Scope and Themes

What you need to know
Definition
Expenditure
Data sources
Consumer survey data
Advertising
Abbreviations and terms
Abbreviations

Executive Summary

Category expenditures
Black household expenditures increased in almost all categories at a higher rate than other households
Figure 1: Percent change of average annual expenditures 2003-11, by category and race of reference person, 2011
Blacks spend higher percentage of income on housing, apparel, cash contributions
Figure 2: Distribution of average annual expenditures, by category and race of reference person, 2011
Higher income Black households report spending more this year
Figure 3: Changes in spending habits, by household income, 2010 and 2012
Households spending more on basic necessities, cutting back on other items
Figure 4: Changes in household spending, October 2012

The consumer
Black consumers less likely to say they are significantly worse off
Figure 5: Economic status in the last 12 months, by race/Hispanic origin, April 2011-June 2012
Black respondents least likely to report being good financial managers
Figure 6: Attitudes toward personal finance, by race/Hispanic origin, April 2011-June 2012
Black purchasing power
Figure 7: Purchasing power, by race/Hispanic origin, 1990-2017
U.S. Black population
Figure 8: Population, by race/Hispanic origin, 2008-18
Blacks have lowest median income compared to other groups
Figure 9: Median household income, by race and Hispanic origin of householder, 2011

What we think

Issues in the Market

How is the economy affecting the choices Black consumers make in the marketplace?
What household expenses are taking a greater share of Black households’ budget?

Compared to 2010, how has spending and saving changed for Black consumers?

Trend Applications
Black Consumers' Share of Wallet - US - January 2013

Key points

Household income
Blacks have lowest median income compared to other groups
Figure 10: Median household income, by race and Hispanic origin of householder, 2011
Figure 11: Median household income, by race and Hispanic origin of householder, 2008 and 2011

Two fifths of Black households earn less than $25K
Figure 12: Household income distribution for all households and Black households, 2011

Changes in household income
From 2008-11, number of Black households earning less than $25K increases
Figure 13: Household income distribution for Black households, 2008 and 2011

Households earning more than $50K decreased from 2001-11
Figure 14: Share of Black households with incomes of $50K or more versus total U.S. households, 2001, 2006, and 2011

Those earning less were more likely to see a decline in household income
Figure 15: Changes in household income, by household income, October 2012

College-educated Black consumers most likely to see income increase
Figure 16: Changes in household income, by education, October 2012

Household size
Blacks most likely to live in one-person households
Figure 17: Household size, by race/Hispanic origin of householder, 2011

Purchasing power
Black purchasing power expected to rise significantly by 2017
Figure 18: Purchasing power, by race/Hispanic origin, 1990-2017
Figure 19: Purchasing power, by race/Hispanic origin, 1990-2017

Buying power concentrated in South and Northeast
Figure 20: Top 10 states/regions with the largest share of Black buying power, 2012

Growth in other areas due to Black migration
Figure 21: Top 10 states, by rate of growth of Black buying power, 2000-12

Affluent Blacks most prevalent in Northeast

Changes in Household Expenditures

Key points

Increase spending
Blacks increased spending at higher rates than other consumers for most categories
Figure 22: Amount of average annual expenditures for black CU, by category, 2011
Figure 23: Amount of average annual expenditures of all CUs, by category, 2011

Annual expenditures

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Black households under index for healthcare, education, and entertainment

Apparel and personal care items have higher index levels

Blacks spend highest percentage of expenditure budget on housing

Changes in household spending

Respondents spending more on basic needs, less on discretionary items

High Index Expenditure for Black Households

Key points

Apparel and services

Apparel is significant spending category for Black consumers

From 2008-11 Black spending on apparel has dropped more than other races

Black consumers spend most on footwear and apparel for young people

Those earning $75K+ are spending more on clothing and footwear

Personal care

Black households spend more on personal care services versus products

Black consumers making different choices with personal care budget

Housing

Black consumers more likely to rent

Black households earning less than $25K most likely to be spending more on mortgage/rent

Distribution of housing expenditures

Respondents with a college degree spending more on mortgage/rent

Transportation

Black CUs have seen significant increase in transportation spending in past eight years

Blacks spend more on gasoline compared to other races

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Those earning $75K+ slightly more likely to be spending more on transportation

Beyond housing, household expenses
Aside from rent/mortgage, utilities and groceries are the top household expenses

Household income does not have a significant impact on highest household expenses

Food
Respondents spending more on groceries
Black households spend a lower percentage of their food budget on dining out
Blacks under index for alcohol expenditures

Low Index Expenditures for Black Households

Key points
Personal insurance and pensions
Blacks spend less on personal insurance and pensions when compared to other races
Black adults less likely to have health insurance than the average consumer
Lower-income households are the least likely to have insurance

Healthcare and medical expenses
Black households spend more on health insurance, less on medical services
About a quarter of all income brackets spending more on medical expenses

Entertainment
About two fifths of Black households report spending the same or less on entertainment
Entertainment spending focused on audio and visual equipment

Education
Spending on college tuition lower than other groups
Blacks owe more than Whites on student loans

One fifth of those earning $75K+ are spending more on education
Spending and Saving Habits

Key points

Changes in spending habits
- Blacks report spending more in 2012 compared to 2010
  - Figure 56: Changes in spending habits, 2010 and 2012
- Black women report spending less in 2012
  - Figure 57: Changes in spending habits, by gender, October 2012
- Blacks in higher-income brackets most likely to spend and save more
  - Figure 58: Changes in spending habits, by household income, October 2012

Changes in saving habits
- Even among savers, most save less than $250 a month
  - Figure 60: Monthly saving habits of households that save money, 2010 and 2012
- More than a third of those earning $75K save more than $500 a month
  - Figure 61: Monthly saving habits, by household income, October 2012

Attitudes Toward Personal Finance

Key points

Economic status
- Majority of Black consumers say they are better off or the same financially compared to a year ago
  - Figure 62: Economic status in the last 12 months, by race/Hispanic origin, April 2011-June 2012
- Black consumers are optimistic about future financial wellbeing
  - Figure 63: Economic status in the next 12 months, by race/Hispanic origin, April 2011-June 2012
- Black respondents most likely to report bad habits with personal finances
  - Figure 64: Attitudes toward personal finance, race/Hispanic origin, April 2011-June 2012

Discretionary income
- One fifth of Blacks say they will make a major purchase in next month
  - Figure 65: Likelihood of making a major purchase in the next 30 days by race/Hispanic origin, April 2011-June 2012
- Young Blacks most likely to treat themselves to something extra
  - Figure 66: Attitudes toward monthly expenses, by age, October 2012

Attitudes toward monthly expenses
- Fewer Black respondents say they can only afford basic necessities now than in 2010
  - Figure 67: Attitudes toward monthly expenses, by age, October 2012
- Perception about what households can afford may be shifting as economy improves
  - Figure 68: Attitudes toward monthly expenses, by household income, October 2012
  - Figure 69: Attitudes toward monthly expenses, by household income, 2010 and 2012

Marketing Strategies
Key points

TV advertising

Tide
Figure 70: Tide, TV ad, 2013

Chrysler
Figure 71: Chrysler, TV ad, 2012

Nike
Figure 72: Nike, TV ad, 2013

John Frieda
Figure 73: John Frieda, TV ad, 2012

McDonald’s
Figure 74: McDonald’s, TV ad, 2012

Online strategies

Cîroc

Print strategies

Dove
Figure 75: Dove VisibleCare Body Wash ad

U.S. Black Population

Key points

U.S. population by race/Hispanic origin
Figure 76: Population, by race/Hispanic origin, 2008-18
Figure 77: Population, by race/Hispanic origin, 1970-2020
Figure 78: Asian, Black, and Hispanic populations, 1970-2020

Age

Generations by race
Figure 79: U.S. population by race, and by generation, 2011

Black population by age
Figure 80: U.S. Black population, by age, 2008-18
Figure 81: U.S. population, by age, 2008-18

U.S. Black geographic concentration
Figure 82: Black geographic concentration, by region, 2007

Black population by state
Figure 83: States with largest Black population, 2011
Figure 84: States with largest Black population, by distribution, 2008

Population by geographic concentration
Figure 85: States (including District of Columbia) ranked with the highest share of Black residents, 2011

Black metros
Figure 86: Metropolitan status of Black households, 2006 and 2011
Figure 87: States ranked by change in black population, 2000-10
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**Figure 88:** Top 10 metropolitan areas with the largest number of Black residents, 2010

**Black households**
- Figure 89: Average household size, by race/Hispanic origin/race of householder, 2001 and 2011
- Figure 90: Presence and ages of children in the household, by race/Hispanic origin, 2011
- Figure 91: Marital status, by race and Hispanic origin, 2011

**Appendix – Other Useful Information**
- Figure 92: Likelihood of making a medium-level purchase in the next 30 days, by race/Hispanic origin, April 2011-June 2012
- Figure 93: Distribution of average expenditures of the apparel category, by race of reference person, 2011
- Figure 94: Changes in household spending, spending more, by age, October 2012
- Figure 95: Changes in household spending, spending less, by age, October 2012
- Figure 96: Changes in household spending, spending the same, by age, October 2012
- Figure 97: Changes in household spending, by education, October 2012
- Figure 98: Changes in household spending on utilities, by household income, October 2012
- Figure 99: Changes in household spending on childcare, by household income, October 2012
- Figure 100: Average annual expenditures on food and beverage, by Black and other races, 2008-11

**Appendix – Trade Associations**

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