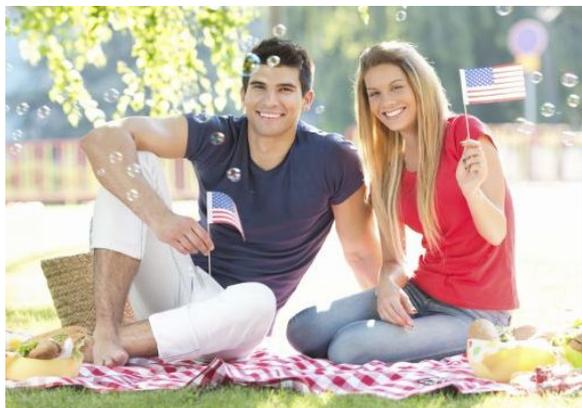


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“Americans have endless choices to make on a daily basis and even the simple act of buying staple household products can be overwhelming to those who have yet to establish a routine or build brand loyalties. Consumers are looking to others’ opinions and experiences to validate their choices and to avoid feeling buyers’ remorse.”

– Fiona O’Donnell, Category Manager – Multicultural, Lifestyles, Leisure, and Travel

### This report looks at the following areas:

“Constantly connected” is a phrase often used to describe American lifestyles. From sleeping next to a smart phone to checking messages the minute they wake up, the need to stay connected to work, family, and friends is well documented. Besides sharing photos and commenting on a status, people are looking for answers – and providing opinions – on everything from where to eat dinner (and what entrée to order), the auto dealership that gives the best service, to which shoes to buy (and how to score a discount). The collective intelligence of online review sites and Americans’ online networks has become consumers’ gut check on purchases, and many feel the need to get second opinions to validate their choices. Others are using their networks as a starting point in their buying process for bigger ticket items or in areas for which they lack expertise (eg technology, new vacation destinations).

As Americans seek input from others before buying (and offer their own opinions), the buying process is less individual, and purchases may ultimately reflect collective input from a variety of connections. In this way, for some categories, the connected collective may have a stronger influence than individual preference.

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Women find independent review sites useful – less trustworthy

Figure 138: Review site usefulness and trustworthiness, by gender January 2015

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## The Consumer – How Extra Money is Spent

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##### Characteristics

##### Insights

#### Segment 2: Easily Swayed

##### Demographics

##### Characteristics

##### Insights

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##### Demographics

##### Characteristics

##### Insights

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### Appendix – Fan Chart Forecast Methodology

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