

DIGITAS

RECESSION STIRS RESOURCEFULNESS



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Outsmarting the economic pinch may be one more item on their already full plates, but moms everywhere are rising to the challenge with gusto. Combining old-fashioned resourcefulness with digital-age savvy, today's moms are pioneering new ways to keep their families afloat.

They are leaning on social networks, tapping into online digital mom groups, scouring the Web for local events and freebies, and spending more time together as a family - which just might be the biggest silver lining in this whole financial mess.

Moms are learning new behaviors and adopting a mindset of homegrown innovation. Rather than viewing these changes as drastic sacrifices, moms are accepting them as necessary for the times and even consider them empowering. This dichotomy presents an opportunity for marketers to step up and provide these moms with innovative solutions.

What these moms are doing in response to the recession can be summarized into the following seven themes:

1. Shopping Smarter

Moms have always been smart shoppers but now they're elevating it to a science. It's not just that they are shopping less, but they are changing the way they shop. They are making more considered purchases and placing priority on basic needs. Thanks to web and mobile technology, they are also spending more time online, scouring sites such as Coupons.com.

2. Homemaking Is Back

The economy has got moms turning on the "nesting" dial. They are retro-fitting old-fashioned homemaking to save money. Rather than splurging on take-out, the humble brown-bagged lunch is all the rage. Beyond meal prep, moms are also cutting back on outside cleaning services, landscaping, etc., and trading off with their spouses for weekly chores.

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3. Going Green To Save Green

The economy is prompting moms to shift into greener behaviors, protecting their pockets along with the environment. Many are routinely monitoring their thermostats and making sure to turn off unnecessary appliances. Following suit with the First Lady, moms are planting gardens and cooking vegetarian once a week to save on meat costs. Others are taking public transportation instead of driving and are tapping into tap water rather than purchasing bottled water.

4. The Family That Plays Together

Spending time together and participating in family-related activities seem to be other positive results of the economic downturn. Families are deciding to spend more nights at home, playing board games or renting movies. Rather than spending money on expensive sporting programs and faraway vacations, families are taking advantage of free local events at festivals and parks.

5. Making It Last

Taking a page from their frugal grandmothers and great-grandmothers, Gen X and Y moms are determined to make things last. Digitally savvy moms are turning to the Internet to find ways to recycle and reuse by selling unwanted items on eBay and buying used toys and fitness equipment from Craigslist. Moms' trips to the mall are being replaced with trips to their own closets. They're even extending the life of their cars and homes with do-it-yourself, fix-it projects.

6. Staying Healthy

In an effort to stave off the economy's toll on their mental and physical state, moms are boosting their mind and body resistance. Of all the extra services they're willing to cut out of their budgets, many won't let go of their gym memberships. They understand that staying healthy is the best way to steer clear of preventable sickness and unnecessary medical bills.

7. Kids Come First

The belief that kids come first has only been intensified as moms are forced to make top-line priorities. They're sacrificing name-brand apparel and personal care items for themselves but continue to purchase quality items for their children. It's all about priorities, and moms are clear as to where their focuses lie: It's about getting it right for their families first rather than themselves.