

Part 1: 1-4 Life-Cycle Stages and Lifestyle Factors for Segmenting Markets

**Life-Cycle Stages** are the stages a consumer passes through during his lifetime. These stages may or may not encompass marrying young, having children, buying a home, divorcing, having children going away to college and/or having children leave home, with the couple becoming “empty nesters”. In each of these stages family members will have specific product needs and will react or be motivated to buy through the employment of different marketing techniques and merchandise presentations.

For example, the grandmother, who is more than likely a Baby Boomer or a consumer in the Mature Market segment, will select more expensive merchandise in an upscale children’s store for her grandchild than the child’s young mother who must adhere to a strict household budget. This young mother might shop in a discount store or a lower price specialty store where she can get more value for her money. The consumers from these two life-cycle stages shop at stores with unique store environments or images and expect very different merchandise presentations and marketing techniques in order to motivate them to purchase.



Furthermore, the **Lifestyle** of the consumer or her/his pattern of living is one of the most important components to analyze when identifying market segments. The **lifestyle** of the consumer consists of how and where the consumer lives, works, and plays. It includes the activities (i.e., occupations, sports, talents, and cultural events), interests (i.e., avocations, hobbies, politics, religion, organizations) and opinions on products, social issues, and trends of the target consumer.

Lifestyle depicts what is important to the consumer or the values the consumer holds. It also indicates types of products the target consumer needs for the lifestyle experiences. Finally lifestyle suggests how

to motivate that consumer to buy those products. Therefore, the retailer and visual merchandiser can identify marketing vehicles and visual merchandise presentation techniques that attract and motivate that target consumer.