

Over 50s Put Health And Wellness First As One Third Change Habits In Last Year

Contributed by Future Thinking
Tuesday, 10 January 2017

A new pan-European study has revealed that for 87% of Baby Boomers (50-70 year olds) ageing well is important and one in three (35%) have changed their habits to age well and increase wellness in the last year.

Health was a major priority for those who changed their habits in 2016: 80% prioritised changing their diet, 65% focused on physical exercise and 47% have made efforts to sleep better.

The research canvassed 2,000 respondents aged 50-70 years and was carried out across 5 countries: UK, France, Germany, Spain and Ireland, by business intelligence research consultancy Future Thinking and Seniosphère Conseil, a strategic and marketing consultancy specialising in Baby Boomers.

The study comes as new estimates suggest between now and 2030, the 60+ category will be the only segment of the UK population that will increase, expecting to reach 31% of the population (UNO: 2015).

According to the study, three out of four UK respondents (74%) stated that for people to age well they should be thinking about it before they turn 40. Their top priorities for ageing well were:

- Seeing your children and grandchildren (59%)
- Balanced diet and varied foods (50%)
- Staying in touch with friends and family (48%)
- Having activities, outings, reading, music or other hobbies (45%)

Over 50s' attitudes to health extended beyond physical wellbeing according to the research: nearly a quarter (23%) ranked 'continuing to be able to do what you enjoy in life' and one in ten (10%) ranked 'making the most out of life' health when asked what ageing well meant to them.

When asked what they would do if they had an extra £300 to spend on ageing well, consumers ranked healthy eating first (56%), dental care second (36%), spending on new clothes third (33%) and further education in fourth (31%).

The research also found that Baby Boomers aren't the digital luddites they are traditionally believed to be: they're very comfortable with new technology (80%) and they purchase products online (59% at least one or two times per month).

56% of Baby Boomers also enjoy trying new products, while innovation in healthcare was a top priority for British 50-70 year olds, with 59% picking treatment and prevention of health issues as one of their top 3 choices where they would like more innovation. 40% included well being and 24% opted for personal security. They will also pay extra for a premium product with more innovation (47% strongly or somewhat agree).

Sophie Schmitt, CEO at Seniosphère Conseil, comments: "While it can be easy to resort to stereotypes, it is important to remember that the Baby Boomer generation is not one fixed, homogenous unit. Amongst over 50s, there are distinct groups that are very different in terms of engagement, attitudes, behaviour and motivations. This is why we've developed a segmentation that identifies 6 key segments focussing on ageing well and innovation."

Adele Gritten, managing director of corporate development at Future Thinking, adds: "With the increasing value of the pound and the growth of the 50+ age group as a proportion of the population, it is important to understand how this group thinks and behaves."

Through this study, we've found that health and wellbeing is a significant priority for 50-70 year olds, with as many as one third changing their habits in the last year alone. Tapping into this desire to age well and live happily will provide fruitful and valuable commercial opportunities for those who pursue them."