

# Top 10 emerging consumer behavior trends in recession

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



Recession...a word that everyone these days has had at least once on their minds. Changes in our personal lifestyles and even professional directions could not help but happen. There is not so much freedom of realizing our plans and dreams. There is not so much passion any more in things that fueled us before. At the same time, the show must go on and if you are an observant marketer or a simple consumer, you must have started witnessing the following consumer trends driven by these challenging times.

1. "Sellsumers" - the increased need for cash prompted most consumers become "sellsumers" as the folks behind April's 2009 trendswatching report named them. Consumers become very creative in selling "extra" space, services or products. Great examples include: renting space (residential and even parking), reselling unwanted clothes, furniture, jewelry, providing expert advice or extra help in gardening and on. What have you done recently?

2. Fishing for low-cost entertainment - spending more time than money on entertainment, or getting entertained at home becomes another common pastime for recession-conscious consumers.

Some turn to online gaming, which is free and easily accessible, some arrange for more movie/favorite show nights using hulu.com or renting a bunch of DVDs on Netflix or elsewhere. According to eMarketers' analyst Paul Verna, "comScore's measurements (up 27% more unique visits and 42% more total playing time in December 2008 than in December 2007) highlight the ongoing shift from high-cost, console-based gaming toward free, browser-based alternatives."

3. If affluent, buying more online with discretion - people with extra money now flock on web to keep their shopping lifestyle in a more discrete way. According to emarketers' article, affluent shoppers comprise of one fourth of all US internet audience, mostly focusing on buying PCs and mobile devices. Online merchants - this is your audience to court these days! 4. Increased online services and social media usage - increased unemployment and job "insecurity" causes many people spend more time online while looking through the classified ads for jobs, services and then "some".

According to the Pew Research Center, the use of online classified advertising Websites doubled from 2005 to 2009. Emarketer also points out that "Twenty-two percent of US Internet users went on the sites in 2005, and in 2009, the proportion climbed to 49%. Daily use went from 4% to 9% in the same timeframe". The "some" represents becoming more engaged in social networking sites to collectively share ideas, connections and any other information that simultaneously adds flavor to the trends # 6, 9 and 10.

5. Smart shopping - looking for bargains offline and online becomes more usual pastime in efforts to economize on price and value, while trading in more time. Internet shopping again becomes a more preferable channel to accommodate this buying behavior. Do you use any of the shared secrets to get your best deals? 6. Increased propensity to social harmony - our natural inclination to re-prioritize our values in "cold and severe" economic climate drives us to spend more time with our families, friends and loved ones.

We tend to turn to our families to get through the tough slides on the way. Companies that cater to these emerging “ quality time” experiences can bolster loyalty and engagement of their existing customers and gain a number of new ones! 7. Increased value of health- focusing on health as the “ real wealth” motivates increased popularity of engaging into various sports activities to maintain this “ somewhat” controllable asset we all have. Finding happiness in health of bodies versus stock market is much more feasible and tangible.

While gym owners might ponder on this trend, consumers can still choose from a variety of free alternatives, including jogging, walking and biking. 8. Skills enhancement and training - laid off or not, people tend to become more genuinely interested in continuing their education to add value to their employability, or to cope with the reduced resources to maintain their career or a small business or to get distracted from the “ depressed job market”. . More love and dating - who knew that recession induces romance? According to NYTimes, “ Online and offline matchmakers are reporting that dating interest is up, way up. Match. com, for instance, had its strongest fourth quarter in the last seven years, and brick-and-mortar outfits like Amy Laurent International, a matchmaking service with outposts in New York, Los Angeles and Miami, say business is up 40 percent among women over the last four months.

The reasons vary from more time on hands due to being unemployed or underemployed, more affordable way to meet singles online to seeking comfort in relationships during the difficult times (closer to trend # 6)! 10.

Cooking from scratch to save and have fun - less money as discretionary income translates into less often dining out and more cooking at home choices. Simultaneously, the propensity to cherish relationships and social affiliations drives consumers to arrange for more cookout get-togethers. Sharing a meal made from scratch both provides quality dining experience and befriends all engaged participants!