



## Women Are In the Donation Driver's Seat

Business guru and author Tom Peters (*The Brand You 50*, *The Circle of Innovation*) describes women as “the largest national economy on earth.”

American women control more than half of commercial and consumer consumption that contributes to America's gross domestic product, according to Peters, “larger than the entire Japanese economy,” or in excess of \$5 trillion.

According to studies, women now comprise the majority of college degree recipients. And the number of female entrepreneurs is exploding: 10.4 million firms with 50 percent or more ownership by women, generating \$1.9 trillion in annual sales and employing 12.8 million people, according to The Center for Women's Business Research (CFWBR).

So, if women made the charitable decisions before, imagine the powerhouse donors they can be today. Consider these other facts, provided by The Institute for Women and Wealth:

- Women make 84 percent of all philanthropic decisions and 80 percent of all major consumer-buying decisions.
- The number of women-owned businesses with 500 or more employees grew by 125 percent from 1997 to 2003.
- Business owners give on average 7 percent of their annual income versus 2 percent for the average household.
- Donations by women are two-and-one-half times greater to organizations at which they contribute their time and talent.
- A survey by the CFWBR found that by 2010, women will control more than 60 percent of the nation's wealth, estimated to be more than \$22 trillion. (That's before taking into account the expected intergenerational wealth transfer estimated by the Center on Wealth and Philanthropy to be \$41 trillion or more during the next 40 years.)
- According to the Internal Revenue Service, 43 percent of all individuals in North America with \$500,000 or more financial assets are women.
- Women represent 39 percent of the “top wealth holders,” according to the IRS, or those with gross assets of at least \$625,000.
- There are 16.5 million women with a net worth in excess of \$500,000.
- Wealthy women are generally self-made.
- Women's philanthropy has increased by more than \$15 billion annually since 1996.

\*\*\*

*This article is from NPT Weekly, a publication of The NonProfit Times.*