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## **Network of Executive Women report reveals gender divide in Canadian retail industry**

Survey findings indicate gender bias, disagreement

CHICAGO (Feb. 8, 2012) –Women and men disagree on gender diversity in the Canadian consumer products and retail industry, according to a survey of 428 industry executives conducted by the Network of Executive Women, Consumer Products and Retail.

More than eight in ten (82 percent) of the men responding to the survey believe men and women working in the industry receive equal pay for equal work. Fewer than half -- 49 percent -- of the women answering the survey agreed their gender receives equal pay for equal work.

The survey was conducted for an upcoming study, “Women, Leadership and the Power of the Purse: Gender Diversity in Canada’s CPG/Retail Industry,” which will be published in March.

The survey reveals that women working in the Canadian consumer products and retail industry view their value in their companies much differently than men do - and believe there is a gender bias affecting their careers.

A significantly higher percentage of female respondents (40 percent) believe qualified women in the Canadian cpg/retail industry are “often bypassed for promotion in favor of less qualified men.” Just 17 percent of the male respondents agreed with that statement.

At the same time, more than half (52 percent) of the men agreed their gender has helped their career, while only one-third (32 percent) of the women thought so.

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Women and men also view opportunity at their companies differently. Nearly all -- 93.5 percent -- of the men said their company's culture is supportive of women. Far fewer -- 84 percent -- of the women believed that to be true.

While nearly three-fourths (73 percent) of the men responding said women are well represented in their companies' highest leadership roles, only 60 percent of the women say their gender is well represented at the highest levels.

Women also place a higher value on their gender as a business advantage in the industry. While nearly 88 percent of the women respondents agreed or strongly agreed "women are better attuned to female consumers," only 70 percent of male respondents felt the same way.

An overwhelming number of both men (94 percent) and women (84 percent) thought the culture at their own companies was "supportive of women."

The NEW online survey was completed in December 2011 and early January 2012 by 428 senior executives (18 percent), mid-level managers (41 percent), emerging leaders (14 percent), store managers (6 percent) and others, including independent business owners (21 percent), working in the Canada cpg/retail industry. Forty-five percent of the respondents were men; 55 percent were women.

For more information on the Network and its NEW Canada group based in Toronto, visit [www.newonline.org](http://www.newonline.org).

### **About the Network**

The Network of Executive Women is the consumer products and retail industry's largest diversity organization, with more than 5,000 members representing 400 industry companies. The Network has more than 70 national sponsors and 19 regional groups in the United States and Canada. It hosts dozens of local events and three national conferences each year. For more information visit [www.newonline.org](http://www.newonline.org).