



Demystifying the Feminine Mystique

BY PAUL FORESMAN

Design Basics' woman-centric approach to home design, building and marketing begins with our two-day Think Tanks held several times a year in Omaha, Nebraska. This is where homebuilders, new home sales professionals and industry suppliers come to get a first-hand look at the woman-centric approach and see how it would impact their businesses.

Limited to 20 attendees, the Think Tanks start off with a brief history of the woman-centric approach, followed by an informative presentation that reveals keen insights into women's role as the primary decision makers. They then identify key attributes of a woman-centric home; provide a glimpse into how and why women buy what they do; look at design from a uniquely female perspective; and finally delve into woman-centric home design.

That introductory session is followed by a battle of the sexes, putting into practice the concepts just learned by re-designing an existing, popular home plan to make it woman-centric and more marketable. One of Design Basics' male designers becomes "the pencil" for the men in attendance, while the women Think Tank attendees form their own group in a private conference room to re-design the same plan with the aid of one of Design Basics' female designers. Afterwards, each team presents their design to the entire group in what is always a spirited discussion.

Next, Quanta Basics, the web site design and development division of Design Basics, presents "The 10 Commandments of Woman-Centric Web Site Design." Experts throughout the homebuilding industry agree that a builder's web site is often their #1 marketing tool. Yet many homebuilders' web sites look alike. The presentation includes tips to make your web site stand out from other builders in your area by becoming relevant and memorable to female home buyers.

A new track was added to our Think Tanks in 2006, *Introduction to Boomer-CentricSM Home Design*. Born out of in-depth research with

women home buyers born in the late 1940's through the early 1960's, this presentation refines the woman-centric approach to appeal to the more specific needs, wants and desires of this tremendous segment of buyers.

The second day of our Think Tanks begins with a woman-centric review and critique of home plans brought by the attendees. Design Basics' design team presents initial recommendations for the designs, then attendees get to hear comments and suggestions from their peers.

At the request of former Think Tank attendees, day 2 includes an introduction to our woman-centric home building and home buying experience. Nothing affects a home buyer's perception of the quality of her builder and home more than the quality of her buying and building experience! Testimonials and referrals from a delighted woman home buyer can be an awesome source of new business. This track identifies essential elements builders need to address to create a positive experience that gets her buzzing about her builder to all of her friends and co-workers.

We are also blessed to be able to tour one of the home building industry's finest woman-centric personalization studios during the second day of the Think Tank. This design center embodies many of the concepts discussed during the Think Tank, especially those related to increasing sales, profits and customer satisfaction through a woman-centric approach to options and upgrades. It is an environment attendees never forget!

There you have, in a brief overview, the first step to becoming a remarkable, woman-centric home builder. Builders who have attended the Think Tank and are interested in pursuing this approach are given the opportunity to license the Her Home[®] and Woman-Centric MattersSM "brands" within their market area and select from a menu of proven resources offered by Design Basics to ensure their success. Interested? Read on! **SB**



DESIGN CHALLENGE

men VS women

Comments from Recent Think Tanks

"Design Basics' Think Tank gave us keen insight into the woman-centric approach. From engaging model home signage, to designing our garage sales centers and personalization studio, to web site enhancements, a custom edition of their Her Home magazine and public relations, the marketing program is first-rate."

– **Jerry Standerford,**
Lane Building Corporation, Omaha, NE

"I was working with a couple relocating from Chicago. It was a fairly heated competition between ourselves and another builder. I couldn't believe how helpful the information from your Think Tank was, and I was amazed how much of a difference it made in dealing with these buyers. We won their business!"

– **Terri Sharrer,**
George M. Sherman, Inc., Greenfield, IN

"We were delighted and excited with the content of the Think Tank. I felt it would be good to go and hear how some others were approaching the market. Little did I know how much we would learn or how sophisticated your approach was. It was a pleasure to hear and a wonderful learning experience."

– **Tom French,**
Tom French Construction, Inc.,
Overland Park, KS

"Her Home has become an invigorating jumpstart to rejuvenating our company. And the Think Tank provided by Design Basics is an opportunity to help the participants set themselves apart. I feel as if I started a new company, being able to implement so many of the ideas."

– **Colin King,**
K and V Homes, Urbandale, IA

"I was very impressed with the entire team assembled for our Think Tank. The Design Basics organization is far superior to any other design companies I and my builders work with. They take a simple livable floor plan and design it for the buyer's needs, especially for today's woman. The special attention to ways to help women deal with home life after a hectic work day or dealing with the family, was the biggest piece of information I brought back to my builders in North and South Carolina."

– **Mary Beth Shealy,**
The Shealy Team, Lake Wylie, SC

"Following your training, our salesman tested the floor plan colorization approach. He showed the new plans to a couple that came into our showroom. The prospect's feedback was immediate, as she said, 'Wow! Now this I can understand!'"

– **Rob Reimenschneider,**
Reimco Homes, Chelsea, MI

