

# The Wall Street Woman

It's no surprise that women today play a significant role in earning, saving, spending and investing. But what is surprising is that the numbers are so compelling:

- As of 2005, there are 10.1 million majority owned privately held, women owned firms in the U.S. generating \$2.32 trillion in sales.
- Women-owned businesses account for one in three US firms.
- Women-owned businesses employ more people than the Fortune 500 companies put together.

(Source for above: Center for Women's Business Research)

On the domestic side, women...

...comprise 1.3 million of the top wealth-holders in the U.S. with a combined net worth of almost \$1.8 trillion.

...account for 43% of Americans with \$500,000+ in financial assets.

...control more than 80% of household spending.

...account for more than half of online spending.

...control 70% of the financial assets in the United States

...own 53% of all stocks.

(Source for above: Forrester Research and Jupiter)



As women, we also face unique financial challenges. We can expect to live seven years longer than men, earn 75% of what they make, and average 11 years out of the work force to care for children or parents compared to 16 months for men. These "missing years" impact salary, 401(k) plans and other benefits (U.S. Dept. of Labor). With these serious challenges, building financial competence and confidence becomes extremely important.

The 9th Annual Invest in Yourself Conference is a valuable tool for any woman who is serious about her finances. If that sounds like I'm a bit biased, I am. It comes with chairing the conference. Sponsored by the non-profit organization WISE (Women Investing in Security and Education) the Invest in Yourself Conference will be held Saturday, September 10 from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Hilton in Costa Mesa. Three financial makeovers by a panel of experts will be interesting and in essence, will draw on information from the day's 15 workshops in a practical application. In reviewing the makeover candidates, I was surprised to note that 90% of those who applied indicated they had no estate planning. Other applicants had 401(k) plans but were not contributing. Others expressed that they had recently become widowed or divorced and wanted (and needed) to understand their finances better. For more information about the conference or to register go to [www.invest-in-yourself.net](http://www.invest-in-yourself.net).

Women have come a long way and have juggled multiple roles while doing it – wife, mother, businessperson, entrepreneur, executive, volunteer. Traditionally the keeper of the household checkbook, women have evolved into sophisticated bookkeepers to portfolio managers. Whether married or single, working in the home or outside the home, women now play an active role in personal and family investments. To do this, they are using brokerage, banking and financial services more than ever before. Even the most money savvy continue to seek ways to increase their financial knowledge and confidence, and the Invest in Yourself Conference is a great way to do that. ☺

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