

New Survey from Better Homes and Gardens Reveals Consumer Attitudes Towards Home Ownership, Design and Function

The American Dream of Owning a Home is Still Very Much Alive

Consumers Use Social Media to Curate Dream Homes, and are Focused on Using Space Wisely, Small Renovation Projects and Personalizing their Living Spaces

ORLANDO, Fla., Feb. 10, 2012 [PRNewswire](#) -- *Better Homes and Gardens*, America's largest selling consumer magazine, today released proprietary research and insights into the ideas, inspirations, and strategies driving consumers as they consider the function, style and efficiency of their homes.

In a presentation given at the International Builders Show, Jill Waage, Editorial Director for Home Content for *Better Homes and Gardens* revealed survey results about consumer attitudes towards home ownership, upkeep and renovations, design and personalization, and more. A primary point revealed in the presentation shows that, despite continuing economic uncertainty, consumer thoughts toward home ownership remain strong with 8 in 10 saying home ownership is still a good investment and an important part of the American Dream. The BHG survey also found that consumers are more proactive in designing and curating their homes and, in fact, are spending more time planning design changes for the home (up to 38% from 33% the year prior).

"Our homes are the physical expression of ourselves and lives. In addition to spending more time planning and hunting for the right elements for living spaces, consumers are also turning to social media platforms like Pinterest to gather and share design inspirations, smart products, creative ideas and space-wise solutions," said Waage.

Better Homes and Gardens is one of the largest shelter brands followed on Pinterest, and its most popular Pinterest boards include Smart Storage Solutions, DIY Ideas for Your Home and Beautiful Bathrooms. To date, *Better Homes and Gardens* images have been re-pinned more than 27,000 times by followers. Waage continued: "If you want to see what a 'dream home' means to consumers, simply look online where consumers are taking command of their design dreams, one pin and share at a time. The future is full of design dreaming and planning!"

Living space and the way it's utilized also continues to be top of mind for consumers. In this latest survey, conducted in December 2011, consumers wished for a median square footage of 1,791 sq. feet, down from 1,846 sq. feet the year prior. Waage shared: "There's more attention given towards the aesthetic and function of a space, rather than the amount of space. They're not as willing to invest in the bigger, but instead investing in what's better. Affordability and efficiency – both in space and energy – ranks topmost."

Among the survey's key findings:

- Owning a home is still an important part of the American Dream (According to 8 in 10 surveyed)
- Consumers are taking more time to plan for home improvement projects (39% in 2011 compared to 33% in 2010) and are shopping around for more deals and bargains before committing to home improvement plans (42% in 2011 compared to 40% in 2010)
- Consumers find it more important than ever to get the most value out of every dollar (61% in

2011, up from 56% in 2010), and will spend more time looking for bargains and deals in order to get the most value for their money (Up to 54% in 2011, from 52% in 2010)

- Consumers are more willing to get rid of excess "stuff" and not willing to mortgage for more storage space. Multi-purpose rooms are a necessity in the home. Consumers aren't interested in "bonus rooms" or "media rooms" unless they have a multi-functional purpose
- Style upgrades claim even greater prominence as being the most important feature in consumers' upcoming home improvement plans, followed by storage. For future projects, style upgrades on countertops, flooring, faucets and fixtures is up to 55% in 2011 from 50% in 2010. Expanded/improved storage space stayed flat at 39% in 2011, same as in 2010
- In terms of remodeling priorities for consumers, baths are outpacing kitchens. Bathroom remodeling stayed constant in 2011 and 2010 (31%) and kitchen remodeling was stable at 25% in 2011, compared to 24% in 2010

About the survey: The Better Homes and Gardens Next Home Survey was fielded online from December 2-13, 2011 surveying over 4,000 *Better Homes and Gardens* readers who identified themselves as prospective home buyers or those planning major home improvements. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 2%.

About *Better Homes and Gardens*: Reaching nearly 40 million readers every month, the Better Homes and Gardens brand extends across the web, tablet, mobile, broadcast, broadband and numerous licensed products, serving and connecting women who are passionate about their homes and the lives they create there. Better Homes and Gardens inspires women to dream and gives them the confidence to move from dreaming to doing. For more information, visit www.bhg.com

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