



## For Consumers, Love and Nostalgia Are in the Air

February 11, 2015

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Lower gas prices are just one factor contributing to the highest consumer confidence level since 1985. Consumers have more savings to spend this year, and while some plan to pay off holiday bills, many will take the opportunity to spoil someone this Valentine's Day, spending nearly \$142 – \$8 more than last year, according to the [National Retail Federation](#). For retailers to keep optimism (and spend) high this Valentine's Day, it's important they tap into all that's warm and fuzzy. It's the sentiment of [Valentine's Day](#) that really makes it so sweet, which is why 39% of consumers prefer gifts that are personal and from the heart.

Reminding consumers of their happy, heartfelt memories will inspire them to give and share love with everyone. Our recent Valentine's Day research shows where consumers find inspiration for gift-giving:

- In stores – 80%
- Store advertisements – 55%
- Pinterest – 26%
- Instagram – 13%

In addition to knowing where consumers find ideas, it's important to understand that Valentine's Day feelings and celebrations change over the course of our lives. Imagine a couple in their early 20s, in love for the first time. To them, everything about Valentine's Day feels new and exciting. The romance behind it all is energizing, and they want to live up to the hype of their peers, pulling out all the stops when it comes to celebrating – surprises, gifts, and special treats. Valentine's Day still brings on those famous "butterflies."

A couple who has been together for a long time might not need as much fluff. They've had years and many opportunities to cherish each other, and they don't mind keeping Valentine's Day low key. Staying in and watching a movie on the couch is just as special, because they do it together. In fact, 39% of consumers say they'd prefer to celebrate with a cozy night in.

Now let's flash back – remember celebrating Valentine's Day in elementary school? You probably exchanged cards with everyone in your class. There was no pressure back then; Valentine's Day was just about kindness. Still today, children make Valentine's Day boxes and hand out those little cards, reminding us that feeling appreciated can be just as satisfying as romance.

Retailers who tap into the inclusive [memories](#) of childhood are the retailers who will win Valentine's Day. With a little extra cash in their pockets, it's a good time to encourage consumers to spread love beyond their significant others – to family, friends, coworkers, teachers, and even pets (actually, 40% of consumers would like a pet as a V-Day gift). After all, Valentine's Day should be a sweet experience for everyone, and encouraging more festivities means more love, more happiness, and more sales.

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