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**Thursday May 13, 2021
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HVAC Trade is Still Dominated by Men, But It's Women Who Hold the Purchasing Power

There is a tendency among many of us in the HVAC trade to gear our communications and sales efforts toward men, but don't be fooled into thinking that men are your primary sales audience. In fact, women are more likely to hold the buying power when it comes to residential HVAC. Consider this:

- Women drive between 70-80% of all purchasing decisions in the U.S. ([Forbes](#)).
- According to [data](#) from Lowe's and Home Depot, women make up half of the big-box stores' customers, initiate 80% of all home improvement projects, and spend about 50% more on purchases than their male counterparts.



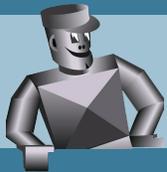
Skeptics might push back on those statistics saying, "but HVAC is different because it's technical, not visual like many other home improvements. Men have greater mechanical aptitude and a clearer understanding of how HVAC works."

But supposing that's true, does it really matter? Is it really necessary for a homeowner to understand HVAC concepts like static pressure and airflow in order to make a sound purchasing decision? In the end – regardless of gender – what it all really boils down to is having an efficient, reliable HVAC system that works.

HVAC companies tend to overestimate the level of importance a home's HVAC system holds for men. In a [2021 survey](#) of 1,369 home shoppers, 73% of the women cited "updated HVAC" as their number one most-desired feature in homes that already include a garage, main floor bathroom, and master bath. Among men, HVAC failed to even make the top five.

Given all this information about the priorities and buying power of women, it's clear that a residential HVAC company (or any home remodeling contractor, for that matter) that clings to an outdated male-centric mindset runs the risk of getting left behind in today's market. Therefore, it's important to pursue sales strategies that resonate with women and avoid what turns them off.

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Know Your HVAC Customers: It's Women That Drive Most Large Buying Decisions

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First, consider adding women to your HVAC sales staff. In survey after survey, both men and women say they are more trustful of saleswomen than they are of salesmen. Women are usually more patient, better listeners, and less confrontational in their sales approach. Furthermore, they have a more natural understanding of what's important to female customers and what isn't.

HVAC salespeople should always keep in mind that women tend to do a lot of research before making large home improvement decisions. Most care less about the technical aspects of a system and more about efficiency and performance. Women are more resistant to high-pressure sales tactics, and dislike being "talked down to". Along these same lines, many HVAC salesmen and technicians direct their conversations toward the male partner, which can be perceived by women as gender bias. Sexism is never a good look, even when unintentional.

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HVAC RIGGING: Basic Safety Training Safeguards Workers, Equipment & Property

Use of cranes, derricks and hoists for rigging HVAC equipment is a routine part of mechanical construction, but many HVAC workers have little training in rigging techniques and safety. Not only can lack of training result in damage to property and expensive equipment, it is often the cause of serious injuries and fatalities.

During a recent E.P. Homiek webinar, an instructor from a major HVAC manufacturer described how company representatives attending equipment startups frequently observe units damaged due to rigging errors. Large package air handling units are often partially crushed by slings lacking a spreader bar, while other units are twisted, racked, or suffer bent frames due to improper support or weight distribution while hoisting. These damages can result in all sorts of equipment problems, from leaking condenser coils to crooked condensate pans that flood into the building. In some cases, equipment is so badly damaged that it must be completely replaced.

Any HVAC contractor that performs routine lifts should invest some time in training their workers on [basic rigging safety](#) guidelines to prevent accidents and injuries. (Critical lifts, such as those that involve multiple cranes, lifts over occupied buildings, close to power lines, etc. require a much higher level of training and certification.) These include determining load weight, understanding angles and tension, selecting the right hitches, slings, and hardware for the load, inspecting slings and hardware before use, protecting slings from cuts and tears, and determining a load's center of gravity. Most manufacturers include load weights and dimensions as well as specific rigging instructions in their equipment Installation, Operation and Maintenance (IOM) manuals.