

## **WOMEN AND AGING: A HOT TOPIC**

25,000 Women Visit Defineyourself.ca Community in First Week

TORONTO, May 9. The premiere of the first online community devoted to understanding how women feel about and approach the aging process - was a huge success! Over 25,000 women visited defineyourself.ca during its first week to watch “webisodes”, participate in polls, read blogs and join the community. “This is a tremendous success story that demonstrates the power of telling real stories and building a sense of community around those experiences,” said Catharine Fennell, SWINGThink partner, creative director and visionary behind the project. “Women love to relate to other women and to know they are not alone in the way they think and feel, and it’s clear they have a lot to say about aging!”

The community revolves around the stories of six women who are confronting the realities of aging and who are exploring their options – all documented in a series of six consecutive webisodes (like a television episode). Women who have joined the community have told us...

“Turning 50 has made me evaluate what I have done so far and what I am looking forward to!”  
Terri Lessard-Seguin

“I will continue to highlight my hair & the facials are religious every 8 weeks, but my view on “older” is “WISER”. I am who I am.” Nancy Regan

“I am really interested in following the other webisodes. This is a very interesting concept.” Margo

“Educational, non-commercial, and is empowering women to get involved. Getting boomer women to talk with each other is collaborative marketing at its best.” Lina Ko - Boomerwatch.ca

The community was designed with the following elements:

**NARRATIVE:** Six real women were chosen to tell their stories over the course of six “webisodes”. Video on the site introduces the women, and weekly updates give the audience the latest on their individual journeys; as well as how their spouses, families and friends – and they themselves – are reacting to the process.

**ENGAGEMENT:** Visitors can come to the site, sign up to receive notification of future webisodes, provide input into how the community will evolve, and share their opinions via blog, email and video submissions.

**EMPOWERMENT:** This community is driven by the women who are participating in it. An advisory committee was formed immediately after the site launch to ensure that the women who are following the stories also have a say in how the community evolves, the type of content and experience they are looking for on the site, and its future direction.

An online community is a membered group aligned by particular interests who communicate and interact via the Internet. A community elevates the involvement of the participant beyond the “consumer” level by inviting participatory engagement.

“Medicis is dedicated to really understanding the attitudes underlying women’s thinking as they contemplate the aging process,” says Alan Chan, Director of Marketing, Medicis Aesthetic Holdings Canada. “We are committed to investing in this conversation between women and believe that an online community is one of the best ways to do that.”

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Margaret, one of the "real" women whose journey of exploration is followed in the webisodes, had this to say on participating in the project, "I thought it was a great opportunity, selfishly for myself but hopefully (and sincerely) to make an impact on other people, other women especially I would love to make an impact on - even just one person, to know it's ok to ask yourself these questions about aging and the way you look and how it makes you feel."

About SWINGThink

SWINGThink is a Toronto-based marketing boutique that works with businesses to help them understand, reach and build communities of women. SWING eliminates the guesswork by bringing women into the research and marketing process early. Visit [www.swingthink.com](http://www.swingthink.com) for more information.

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