Younger and middle-aged suburban families

Who They Are

The lure of good jobs in the mining, oil and gas industries fueled the rise of All-Terrain Families, a working-class suburban lifestyle found mostly in Alberta’s large and midsize cities like Airdrie, Grand Prairie, Edmonton and Calgary. These younger and middle-aged households are among the nation’s most mobile, with 60 percent having moved in the last five years. Nearly two-thirds of the maintainers are under 45 years old, and more than 70 percent of children in these households are under the age of 15. Originally attracted to Alberta’s oil boom during the early 2000s, residents have turned moderate educations into well-paying blue- and grey-collar jobs and upper-middle incomes. With three-quarters of the housing built since 2006, residents own a mix of single-detached, semi-detached and row houses valued around $400,000. In their free time, these family households have high rates for participating in team sports like hockey, baseball and curling. Their idea of weekend entertainment is going to a sports bar, rock concert or food and wine show. Given their high-energy approach to life, it’s not surprising they value a healthy diet and regular exercise (Effort Toward Health).

The suburban families of All-Terrain Families have created a child-centred lifestyle. They enroll their kids in lots of sports programs, typically shuttling them around in intermediate SUVs and large trucks. On weekends, they head to kid-friendly destinations like amusement parks, zoos and aquariums, making regular stops at burger joints and coffee shops. For parents, it’s a daily challenge to carve out me-time to do crafts, take a yoga class or enjoy a dinner date at a favourite steakhouse. Living close to rugged country, these households often own campers, boats and fishing and hunting equipment. As a result they have little interest in most media, too busy to read a newspaper or magazine other than The Hockey News or Live Better and mostly limiting their TV viewing to sports, reality shows and DIY programs. But their mobile phones keep them connected to the digital world, where they often access news sites, book travel tickets, search maps and shop for essentials. On the road, these families pay attention to billboard ads.

How They Think

Members of All-Terrain Families are hard-working Canadians who believe people get what they deserve, for good or bad, based on the choices they make (Just Deserts). They tend to follow the golden rule and believe a person needs to work hard to get ahead (Work Ethic). With their jobs in primary industries, they accept today’s environmental problems as necessary for job creation and economic advancement (Ecological Fatalism). Financially secure and hopeful about the future, they use reason rather than emotion when making decisions (Financial Security, Personal Optimism, Emotional Control), but they also believe people need to take risks to succeed (Pendant for Risk). Occasionally, isolation and economic downturns lead this group to feelings of alienation (Anomie-Aimlessness), and the overwhelming stresses of their busy lives cause many to feel the Need for Escape. Status-conscious, they seek to gain the respect of others through their image and dress (Concern for Appearance). Indeed, they describe themselves as enthusiastic consumers who enjoy the thrill of the purchase (Joy of Consumption) and don’t spend time researching products beforehand (Buying on Impulse).
Where They Live

How They Live

LEISURE
- power boating
- hockey
dancing/nightclubs
- travel by RV/camper

SHOPPING
- Walmart
- Sport Chek
- big-box/warehouse stores
gas station rewards programs

TRADITIONAL MEDIA
- TV reality shows
- TSN
- modern rock radio
- Outdoor Canada

INTERNET
- home improvement sites
- download music online
- subscription-based video
- purchase toys/games online

FOOD/DRINK
- frozen peas, corn, cut green beans
- sports energy drinks
- burger restaurants
taco restaurants

FINANCIAL
- stocks/bonds
- mobile banking
- term life insurance
- overdraft protection

AUTOMOTIVE
- large pickup trucks
- compact SUVs
domestic vehicles
- 2010-2016 model years

SOCIAL
- Twitter
- Snapchat
- LinkedIn
- social media on mobile phone

MOBILE
- access news on phone
- play games on phone
- listen to radio on tablet
- sports apps

HEALTH
- Are physically active

ATTITUDES
- “It is important to me that people admire the things I own”
- “It is acceptable that an industrial society such as ours produces a certain level of pollution”
- “Premium-priced brands are generally worth the extra money”
- “I am open to receiving relevant marketing messages on my mobile device”

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