



Retailers Re-Think Senior Discounts

Growing Senior Population Has Retailers Changing Policies

The gray in your hair may buy you less in the marketplace these days.

Discounts for older Americans have been around since the 1950s. But now a growing senior population is causing some retailers and other companies to re-think the discounts they have offered.

Americans are living longer. Almost 13 percent of the population is over 65. Some say they would never dream of using a senior citizen discount. And as a group, Americans 50 and older are wealthier than previous generations.

But there is a huge money gap. The median income for women over 65 is less than \$11,000. And overall, seniors are depression-era children, who still value a bargain, regardless of income.

Some of those bargains may be drying up, according to the current issue of Modern Maturity Magazine, a publication of AARP.

"It gives me much more for my dollar. And if I can get a break anywhere, I will. Essentially what we're finding is some discounts are being reduced or eliminated, or some that are being pushed in age from 65 to 70," magazine spokeswoman Hugh Delehanty said.

Delehanty says, for example that Delta Airlines has eliminated its senior discount club, which offered bargain basement fares to seniors. It now offers a 10 percent discount and a coupon book program.

The New York Mets have eliminated dollar days, which made block seating available. It has been replaced with half-price assigned seating. The cheapest ticket is now \$6.

There are still discounts available to older Americans as well as places to look for them. For example, Kohl's stores offer seniors a 15 percent discount. JoAnn stores have regular senior shopping days, generally every Wednesday.

And Web sites SeniorDiscounts.com/ and ModernMaturity.org/ can help you search for discounts.

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