

## THE OPPORTUNITY

- The World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that people with disabilities are one of the largest and fastest growing minority groups, representing over 750 million individuals worldwide.
- Over 60 million people with disabilities live in the United States, affecting one in three households.
- The President's Executive Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities reports that individuals with disabilities control well over \$220 billion in discretionary income in the U.S. alone.
- The National Organization on Disabilities states that this powerful group controls over \$3 trillion in discretionary income worldwide, a number that industry analysts predict will soon spike.
- Adding to this population is the 76 million strong "Baby Boomer" generation. The Administration on Aging projects that we will see a dramatic leap in the number of people developing disabilities for the first time in their lives.
- The U.S. Department of Labor Office of Workforce Solutions Policy indicates that as the population ages, approximately 40% of those over 65 will likely acquire a disability.
- People with disabilities are an untapped spending, buying, and voting power.
- Marketing studies of the Atlanta Paralympics (Solutions Marketing Group, 2003) reveal that even households with no disability connection feel goodwill towards companies that include people with disabilities and are more likely to buy their products.
- There is increasing accessibility legislation worldwide. Companies that are proactive in addressing accessibility turn a potential liability into a marketplace advantage.
- The compelling evidence of the increasing influence of this market segment has lead experts to predict that businesses who conduct operations in ways that attract customers with disabilities to their goods and services will stand to gain market share, customer loyalty, and positive brand recognition.

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