



# **February 2012**

# **Spending & Saving Tracker**

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A research report prepared for:



# Research Method

- This research was completed online among a random sample of consumers aged 18+. A total of 2,000 interviews were completed.
- In addition to a general population sample, two sub-groups – affluents, and couples were targeted and balanced by the general population.
  - n= 578: Affluents – defined as having a minimum annual household income of \$100,000
  - n= 788: Couples – single living with a partner or single with a significant other
- Interviewing was conducted by Echo Research between January 18 - 20, 2012.
- The margin of error at the 95% confidence level for each audience illustrated in this deck...

<b>Total (n=2,000)</b>	<b>+/- 2.2</b>
Couples – married or single with a partner (n=1,700)	+/- 2.4
Married or single living together (n=1,153)	+/- 2.9
Single (n=1,088)	+ - 3.0
Unmarried couples (n=788)	+/- 3.5

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American Express Spending & Saving Tracker

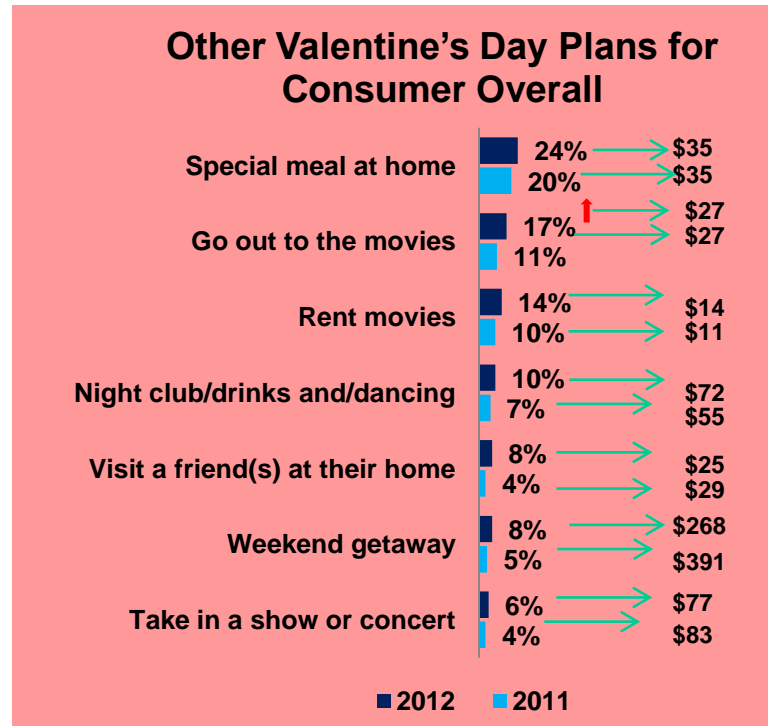
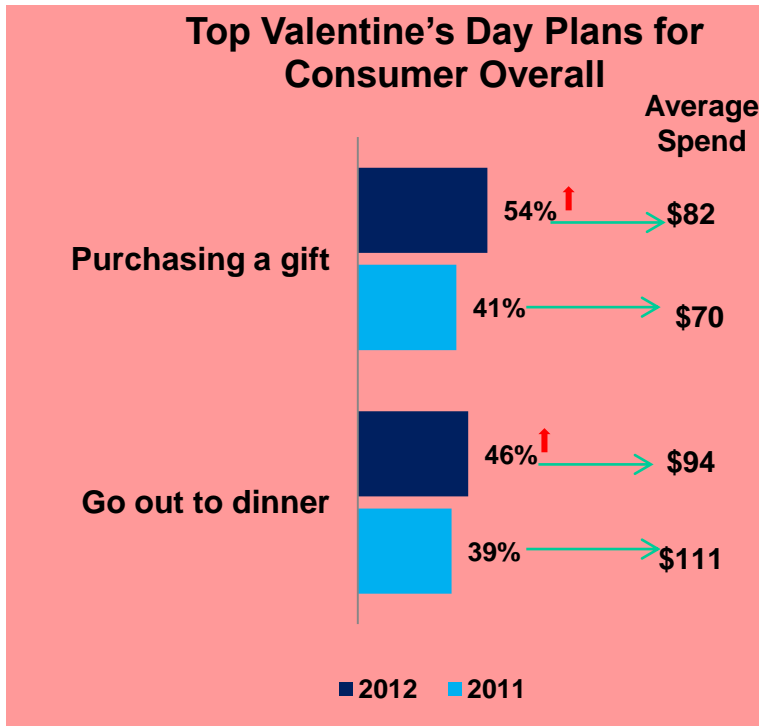
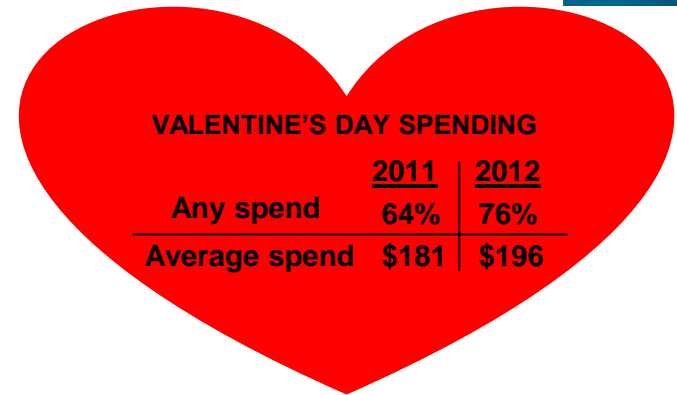
# VALENTINE'S DAY SPENDING

# Valentine's Day Spending



Consumers expect to increase spending to an average of **\$196**, up 8% over last year.

This year, more than half of consumers (54% vs. 41%) plan to purchase Valentine's Day gifts, followed by going out to dinner (46%, up from 39% last year).



Not shown: respondents volunteered an other response and is included in the total spend.  
 V1 – Valentine's Day Spending Plans.  
 BASE: Total respondents

↑ ↓ Significantly higher / lower in 2012 versus 2011

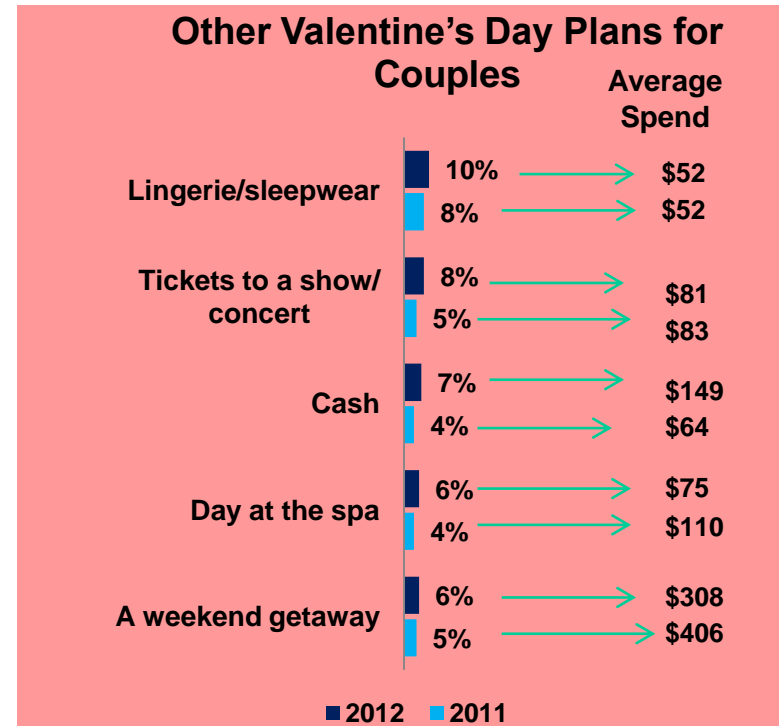
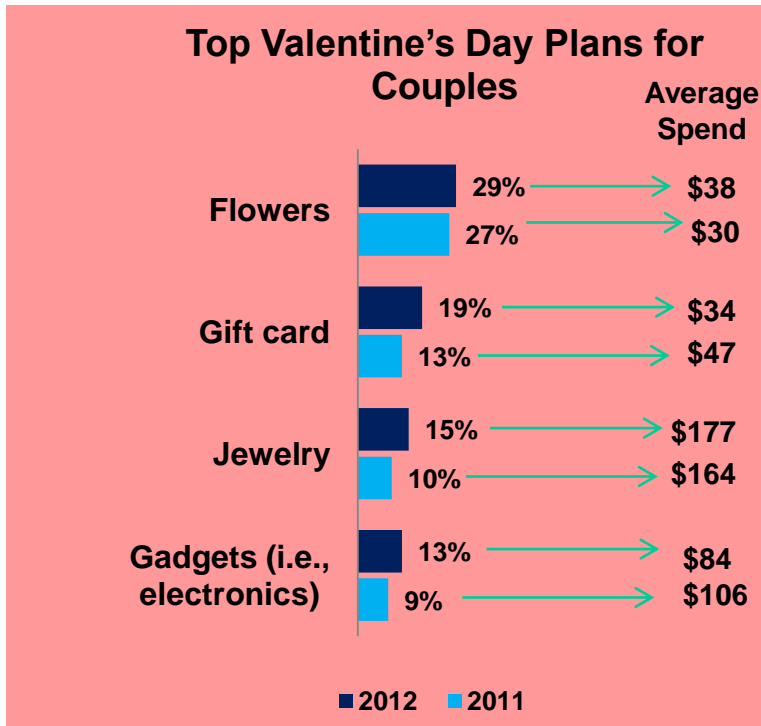
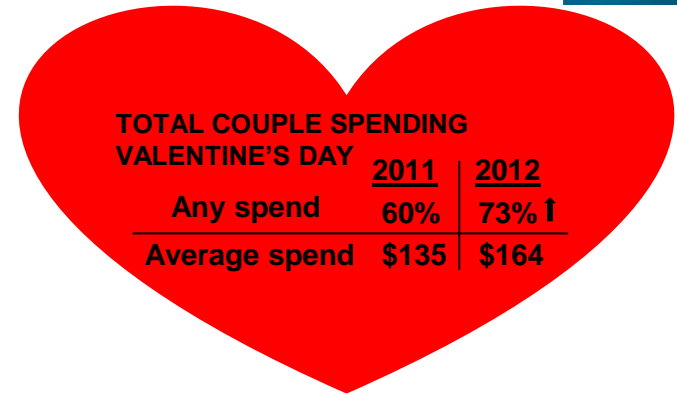


# Types of Gifts Couples will Give on Valentine's Day



The most popular tokens of affection among couples include flowers (29%), gift cards (19%), jewelry (15%) and electronics (13%).

Overall, more couples are choosing to purchase something for their partner on Valentine's Day this year versus last year (73% vs. 60%).



Not shown: respondents volunteered an other response and is included in the total spend.  
 V5 Which of the following do you plan on giving your spouse, partner or significant other for Valentine's Day this year and how much do you plan to spend? Total couples



# Valentine's Day Proposals

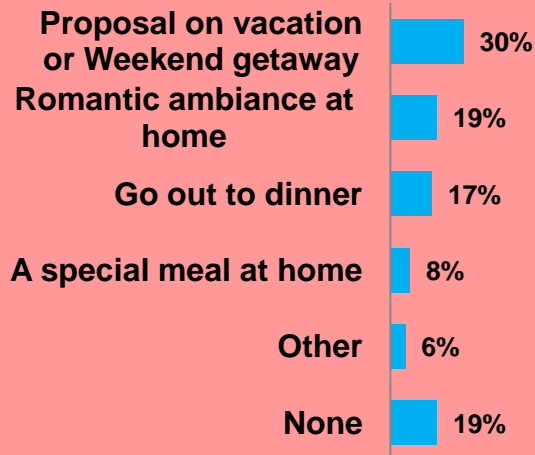


The best setting for a marital proposal is one that is during a weekend getaway (30%).

Nearly one half (48%) of unmarried couples feel the appropriate amount to spend on an engagement ring is between \$1,000 and \$5,000 or an average of \$2,284.

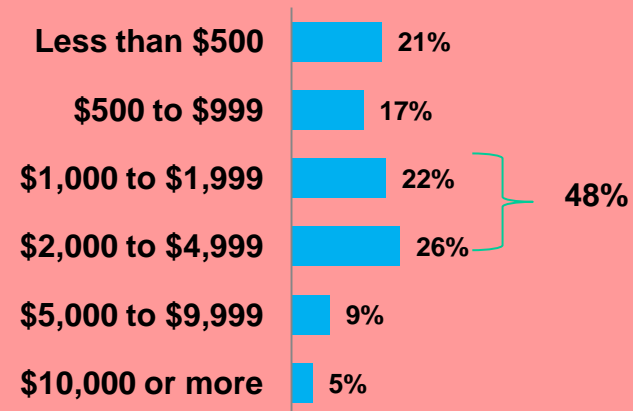


## Best Proposal Setting for Couples Looking to Get Married



## Appropriate Amount for Couples to Spend on the Engagement Ring

Average Spend is \$2,284



V6/ V7. Are you planning or expecting a marital proposal between you and your significant other or partner before the end of the year?

V8. Which of the following do you feel is the best proposal setting for couples looking to get married this year?

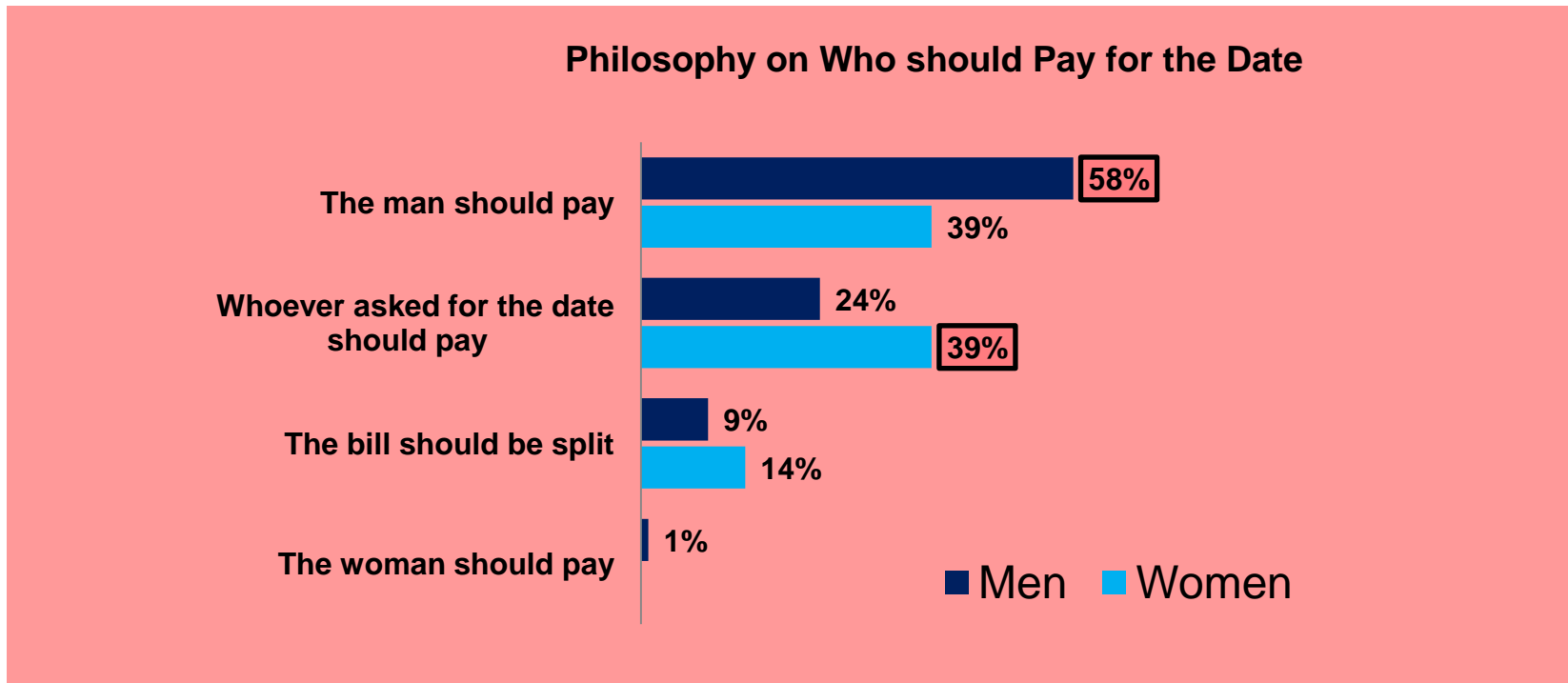
V9 How much do you think is appropriate for couples looking to get married this year to spend on the engagement ring? BASE: Total unmarried couples



# Who is expected to pay for a date?



Men overwhelmingly identified themselves as expected to pay for the date (58%), while significantly fewer women (39%) expect men to foot the bill. The same percentage of women expect to break out their own wallets despite tradition – 39% believe whoever asked for the date should pay, and 14% would split the bill.



Q.V19 What is your philosophy on who is expected to pay for a date?  
BASE: Total single

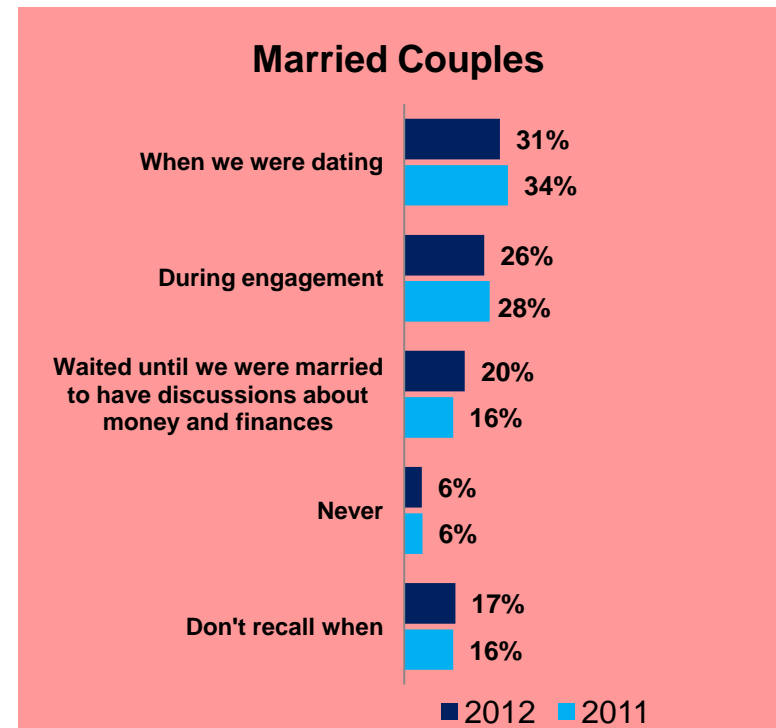
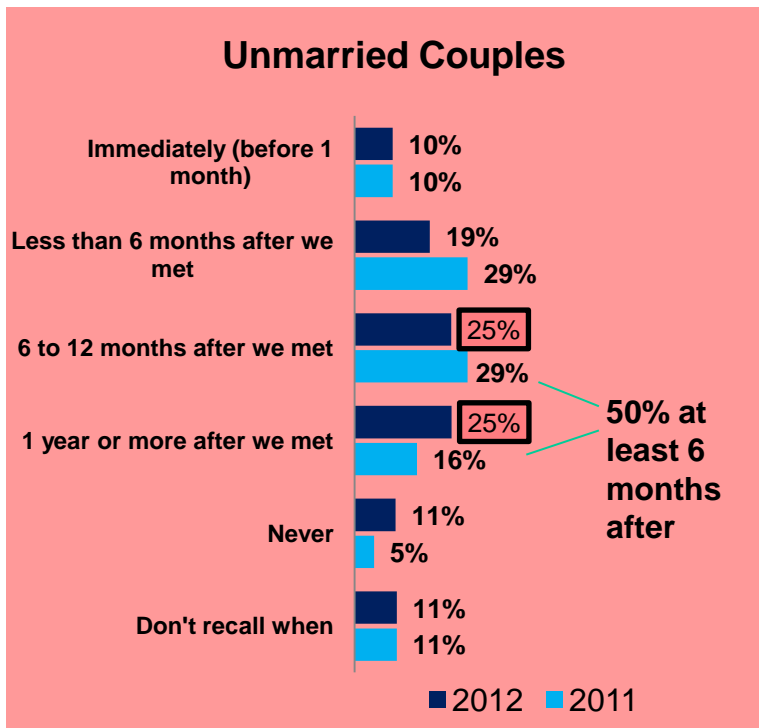


# When are finances discussed?



One half of unmarried couples report that they waited at least six months before discussing their finances.

Among married couples, one in five (20%) waited until after saying 'I Do' and 26% broached the subject during their engagement.



Q.V10a Thinking back, when you met your significant other - at what point in this relationship did you begin discussions of money and finances?

BASE: Total single with a partner

Q.V10b Thinking back, when you met your spouse - at what point in this relationship did you begin discussions of money and finances?

BASE: Total married



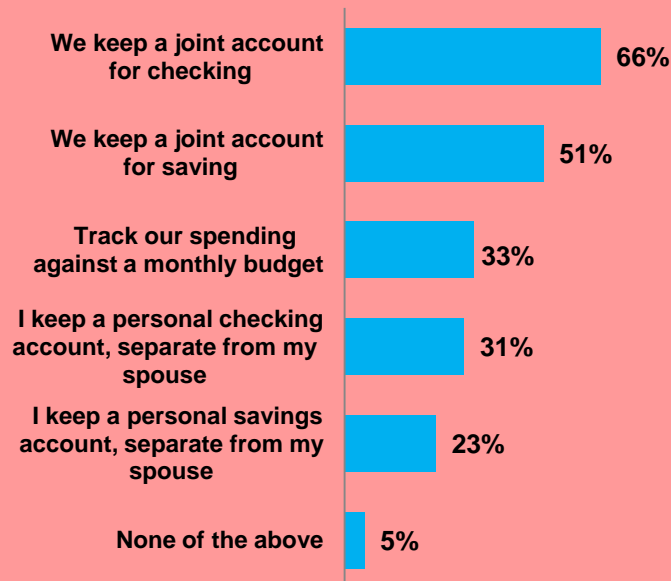
# Couples & Money



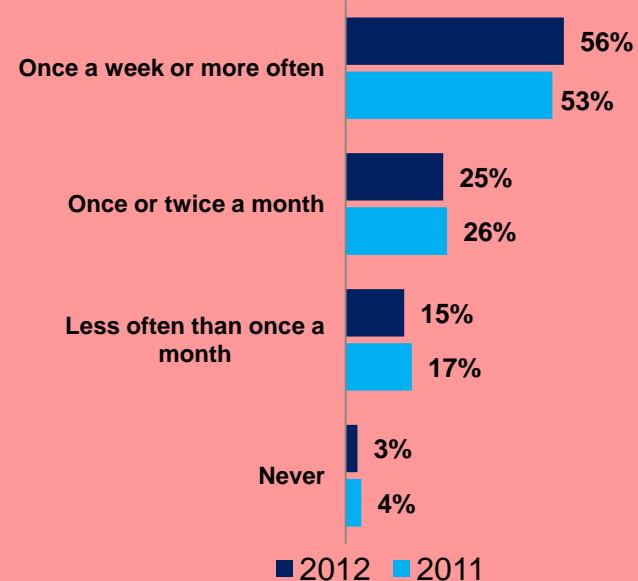
The majority of married couples surveyed maintain joint checking (66%) and/or saving (51%) accounts, and many discuss their finances on a regular basis.

More than half of couples say they speak about money once a week or more with their spouse, while 25% opt to discuss finances once or twice a month.

## Resources for Managing Household Finances



## Frequency of Discussing Household Finances



Q.V14 How do you and your spouse or significant other presently manage your household finances?

Q.V12 How often do you and your spouse or significant other discuss household finances?

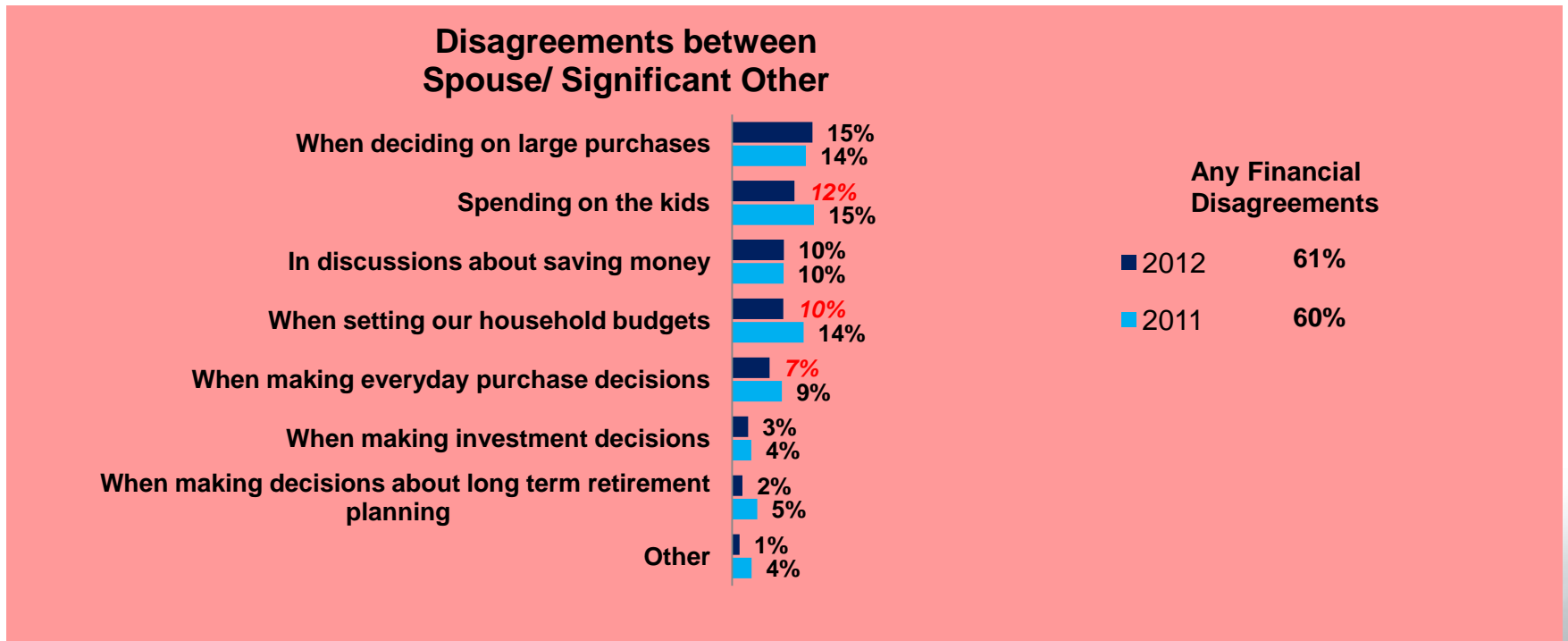
BASE: Total married or single living with a partner

# Financial Situations That Most Often Lead To Disagreement



More than six in ten (61%) couples married or living together have financial disagreements.

Arguments are decreasing over spending on the kids (12% vs. 15% in 2011), setting household budgets (10% vs. 14%), and making everyday purchase decisions (7% vs. 9%).



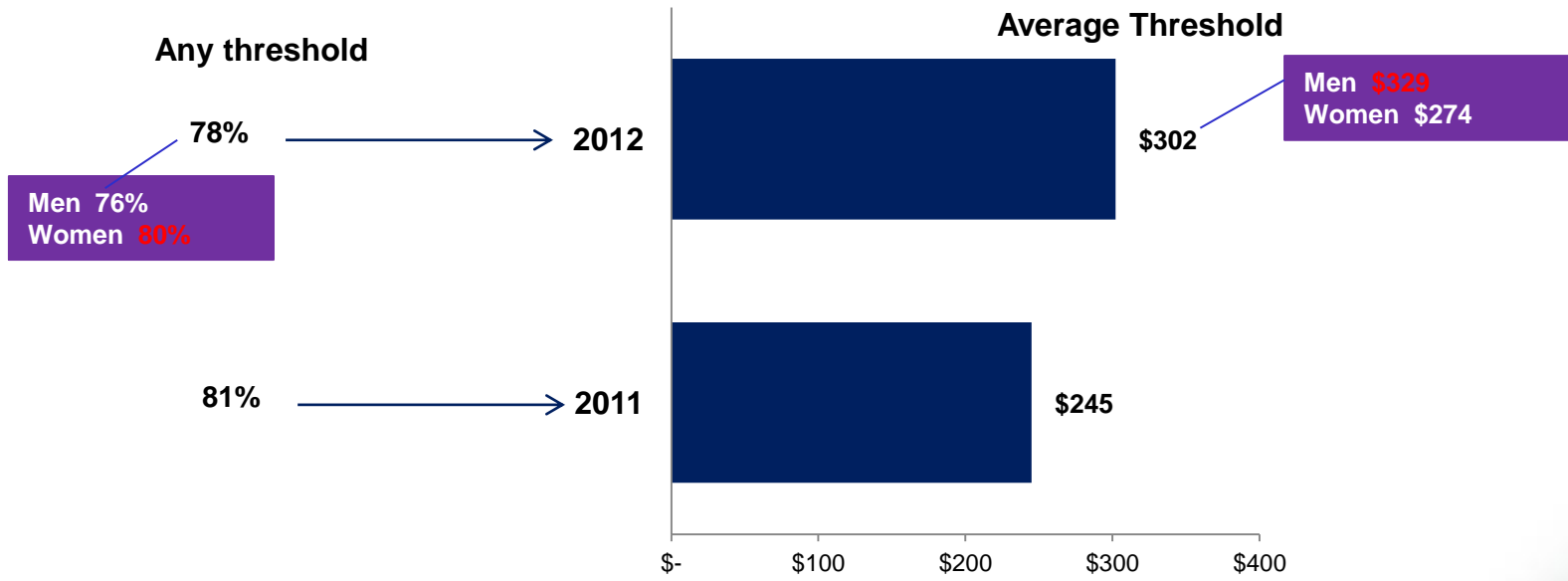
Q.V15 When it comes to managing personal finances, in which of these situations do you and your spouse or significant other most often disagree? BASE: Total married or single, living with a partner



# Average Dollar Threshold in Consulting with Partner on Purchase Decisions



The threshold at which spouses feel they should get permission before purchasing has increased to an average of \$300, up from \$245 in 2011.



V17 What is the dollar threshold at which you feel the need to consult with your spouse/significant other on a purchase? BASE: Total married or single, living with a partner

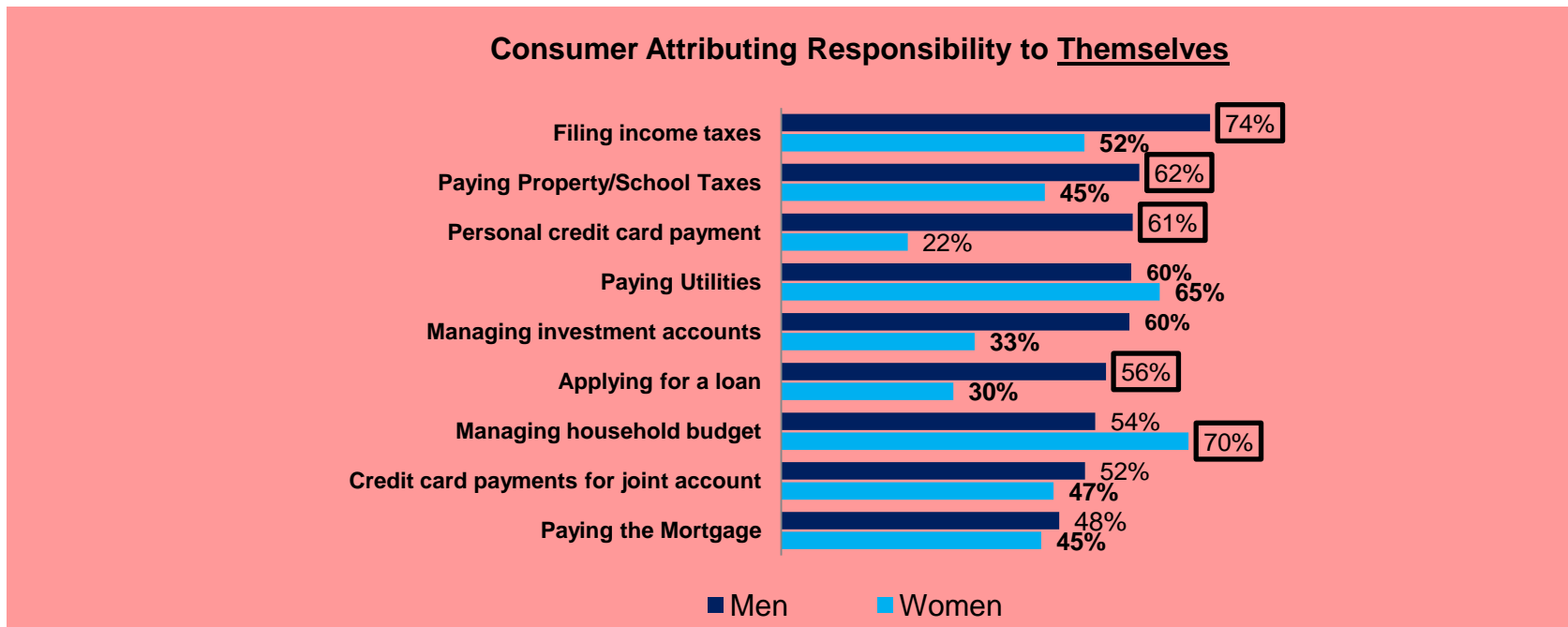


# Household Financial Responsibilities



**More men than women credit themselves as primary handler of filing taxes, paying property/school taxes, making credit card payments, and applying for a loan.**

**More women than men take credit for managing their household budgets.**



Q.V13a-j Who most often handles the following financial responsibilities? Choices included: Self, spouse, or neither. Illustrated above is male and females attributing primary responsibility to themselves

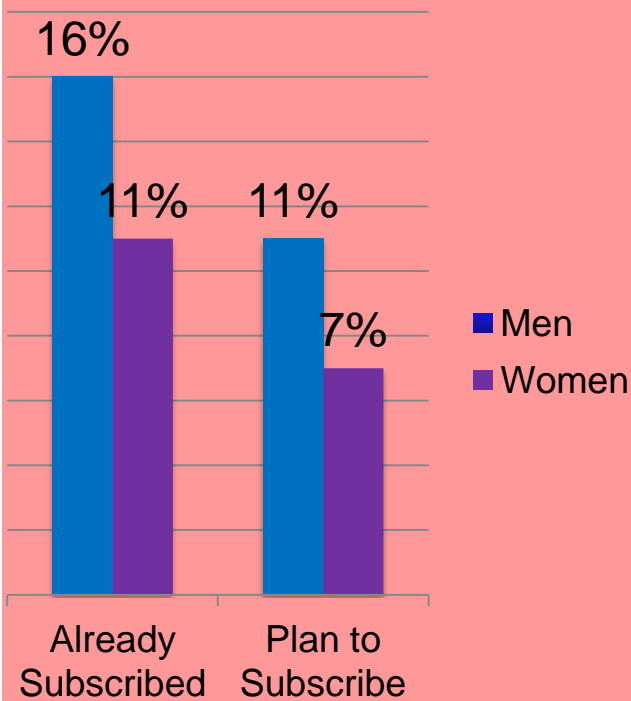
BASE: Total married or single, living with a partner

# Online Dating

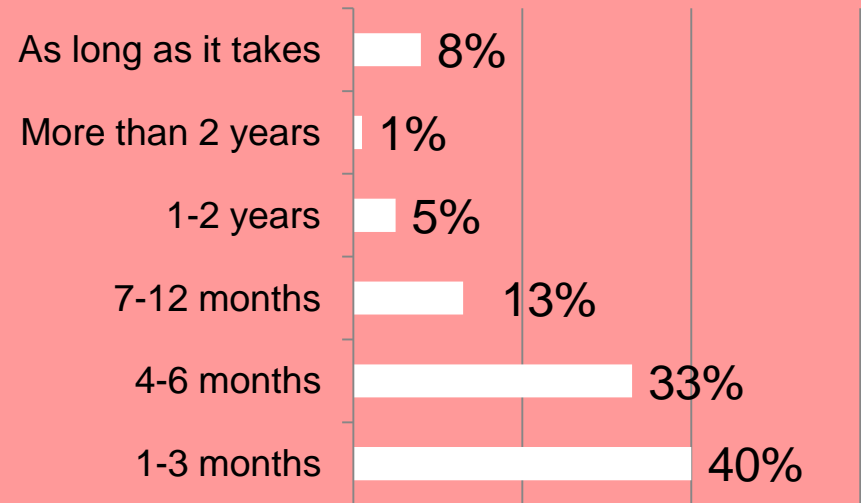


**More men than women subscribed to online dating services. Most consumers aren't willing to pay for the service for more than 6 months without finding a mate.**

**Online Dating Subscriptions**



**Length of time consumers will pay for online dating before finding a mate**



**Average:  
5 months**

Q.V20 Do you currently subscribe to an online dating service or do you plan to subscribe to one in 2012? BASE: Total not married

Q.V21 For how long would you be willing to pay for an online dating service before cancelling your subscription? In other words, how long will you pay if you're not finding love (or finding what/who you're looking for?) BASE: Total not married who currently subscribe or plan to subscribe to an online dating service

