

Getting to know you

Neighbours share many common bonds. Marketers are keen to find out what they are.

STORIES BY LAURA THOMPSON

What is it that makes your community unique? How does the Mountain differ from the East End? Or Dundas from Waterdown?

This series is a look at how our neighbourhoods define who we are, and what that tells retailers, builders, politicians and even charitable organizations about us.

Eight distinct areas of the city were analyzed, and the information was provided to The Hamilton Spectator by Environics Analytics, a Toronto-based geodemography company that can predict, to some extent, who you

are by your postal code, based on surveys, polls and recorded purchases.

Spectator interns Laura Thompson, Paul Choi, Matt Kruchak and Baha Abushaqra poured through the data provided free by Environics to The Spectator. Most organizations pay to get this detailed information about neighbourhoods.

"There's an overly simplified preconception that Hamilton is a blue-collar factory town. Clearly, that's not the case," said Rupen Seoni, vice-president of client services at Environics.

The firm cross-references census data with market research to predict

what your neighbourhood is like. Its sister company, Environics Research, collects information about people's views on pretty much everything, including family, personal security, spending, spirituality, health, social responsibility, technology and identity.

The information provides a glimpse into how people "think and view the world," Seoni said.

For The Spectator's purposes, Environics compiled consumer behaviour information from a recent NADbank survey, a research tool used by Canada's newspaper industry in major markets, including Hamilton.

The Spectator also based its neighbourhood interpretations on the Environics "clusters," which are snapshots of social groups in Canada. Environics has identified 66 different clusters. They have cute names, like Lunch at Tim's, Money and Brains and Grey Pride.

Everyone fits into a group and chances are your neighbours belong to the same kitschy cluster you do. There are a lot of clichés and stereotypes in that, but perhaps also a fistful of reality.

The principle behind geodemography is that birds of feather flock together. Which means you choose to

live in a neighbourhood with like-minded people. You have the same interests, the same types of behaviours, you likely shop at the same stores.

And that's the crux of this information. Its purpose is to predict what you're all about. The profiles provided to The Spectator are also used by banks, retailers, politicians, corporations and, well, pretty much anyone who wants to understand "the hearts and minds" of the consumer.

We used it to understand our communities.

And to take a peek at how retailers, politicians and builders use this information to look at you.

What do you like? Take a look

COMMON KNOWLEDGE

How marketers see you
A look ahead:

Day 1: The neighbourhood

Day 2: Comparing communities

Day 3: Watch what you swipe

Day 4: Hamilton's future

Waterdown

- Like to raise a pint at the local pub or stay inside watching a documentary.
- Big on golfing, but not curling.
- Like to log on a lot.
- Like to fill plentiful free time at the theatre or art gallery.
- Willing to spin the wheel at a casino.
- Next to the slightly wealthier Ancaster, you and your neighbours show the least insecurity in this city about your financial future.
- Family is important.
- Greater tendency than other Hamiltonians to embrace unexpected and unplanned events.
- Attracted to simpler pleasures like gardening or household chores.
- Distinguished by a feeling of lack of kinship with your neighbours.
- You're proud to be Canadian — the proudest in all of Hamilton — and base much of your identity on nationality.

Stoney Creek

- Like to raise a pint at the local pub or stay inside and watch sports.
- Like to tune into the tube for a sitcom, the latest news or listen to the radio.
- Love bowling.
- Biggest purchasers of lottery tickets in the city.
- Propensity to adopt a more frugal lifestyle.
- Like to drink cappuccino, eat pasta, and shop at midscale stores.
- Equality of the sexes is a more entrenched social value than in other neighbourhoods.
- Likely to hold conservative views.
- Family is more important in Stoney Creek than any other neighbourhood in Hamilton.
- You're likely more rational than emotional.
- You crave a stable life.

East Mountain

- Enjoy golf and bowling.
- Like to read print and online.
- Health conscious and like walking.
- Mixed bag of young and old, blue- and white-collar workers.
- Hold conservative values.
- Family is important to you.
- Like to tune in to CBC news.
- Tend to go online for information, shopping and banking.



GARY YOKOYAMA, THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

Andrea and Larry Dorman each have a laptop and share a Rottweiler. That puts them into the Pets and PCs group for marketers.

So, you're a Pets and PCs. Just what does that look like?

BY PAUL CHOI

We not only fit into neighbourhoods, in marketer's terms, we fit into buying groups.

What's a Lunch at Tim's, a Winner's Circle, a Money and Brains? These are really just terms used by a marketing firm to classify the kind of lifestyle we lead, our general income level, the kind of values we hold and how we might behave as a buyer.

Take a look at a pair of typical Pets and PCs.

Andrea and Larry Dorman recently bought their first home in the suburbs of Ancaster — a two-storey townhouse built after 1996.

They married in August 2005, and moved into their new home in January, taking along one all-terrain vehicle, four TVs, two laptop computers, one desktop computer, a couple of digital cameras, a PlayStation and a Rottweiler named Junior.

As a young couple — Andrea is in her mid-20s, and Larry, his early 30s — it's clear the two have already moulded into the prototypical Pets and PCs clan, Hamilton's fastest-growing cluster.

Like many other young families in this group, the pair consider themselves upper-middle

class. And while they don't have any children yet, both say they'd like to have at least two kids — just like many of the equally young and established families who live in the couple's neighbourhood.

Andrea is training to be a chiropractor and hopes to open her own practice soon. Larry is a superintendent for a general contracting company dealing with water- and sewage-treatment across Ontario.

Their life involves a lot of commuting time — Larry in his truck, Andrea in her sedan.

When the two are finally home together, they do what every other typical Pets and PCs family does: They indulge in their many toys.

Larry loves to relax by playing Tiger Woods PGA Tour on his PlayStation, and Andrea enjoys watching TV or surfing the Internet on her laptop.

When they go out, Larry enjoys swinging real golf clubs on the green or at the driving range, and the two frequently visit the movie theatre and the local bar with friends.

During the summers, the family also has plenty of free time to head north to cottage country, where Larry loves to fish and Andrea enjoys staying active by biking and walking.

a sitcom than sci-fi or a soap opera.

East end

- Big on the tube, especially religious programs and soaps.
- Avoid the Internet.
- Plenty of worries but find comfort in family and friends.
- Your blue-collar community has the highest sense of fatalism in the city, the tendency to believe that society and your life is governed by forces beyond your control.
- One of highest neighbourhoods for fear of violence and greatest concern over mortality.

- Like to buy lottery tickets.
- Tend to be skeptical about the motives and ethics of businesses and whether new technologies cause more problems than they solve.

- Likely to rely more on reason than intuition in making decisions.
- Tend to be reserved when it comes to personal feelings.
- Twice as likely as other parts of the city to have a Ford or Chrysler than a Honda or a Toyota.
- Twice as likely to watch

Downtown residents are likely to patronize a local neighbourhood pub where they can meet friends.

- No. 1 in seeking a connection to roots.
- Aging area where most kids have already left home.
- Least likely to join a gym.
- Attraction to nature ranks No. 1 in the city, third for bird watchers.
- Lowest number of four-car garages. Look for the Chevrolet Cavalier, Dodge Caravan and Pontiac Grand Am.

Dundas/Westdale

- Biggest readers in the city, both print and online.
- Like to golf, swim and ice skate.
- Like to watch TV documentaries and religious programs.
- Enjoy museums, art galleries, ballet, symphony and jazz more than any other area's residents.
- That Ticat game is another big draw.
- Add to your list of interests sewing, needlework and knitting.
- Likely to accept others, believe strongly in social causes and are just fine with civil disobedience.
- Willingness to accept nontraditional definitions of family is the second lowest in city.
- More vehicles predating 1994 than anywhere else in the city.
- Likelihood of someone moving into a nursing or retirement home within the next year is the highest in the city.
- More toothpaste, soap, deodorant, hair care and facial cleansers are sold than in any other area.

Downtown

- Less sporty than the rest of Hamilton, but enjoy camping.
- Like to log on away from home.
- Likely to have a local watering hole where the conversation is engaging.
- Important to feel connected to your neighbourhood: read local and editorial sections of newspaper, socialize with friends at familiar eateries, and likely to participate in a community group.
- Many see consumption as a means of gratification, material possessions can be a safeguard against feelings of insecurity created by a changing world.
- Living downtown also means you have a greater fear of violence than residents in most other neighbourhoods.
- You aspire to be more spiritual (though not necessarily religious), and you may want to be more intuitive and open to mysterious forces.
- Your "family" is often your friends, and you're likely to consider yourself a citizen of the global village.

Ancaster

- Two or three cars in the driveway.
- Sense of control of destiny and will work hard to make things happen.
- Sense of more vigour and initiative than most people.
- In some ways, similar to Waterdown. Both communities strongly believe technology makes life easier and that good taste and fine manners should be held in esteem by others.
- Likely to have a passion for gourmet cooking, live theatre and gardening.
- More active than the average Hamiltonian. More likely to be found on a treadmill than in front of the TV. Strong likelihood on a reduced calorie diet. Sports are important and none more so than golf. Swimming and cycling are also popular.



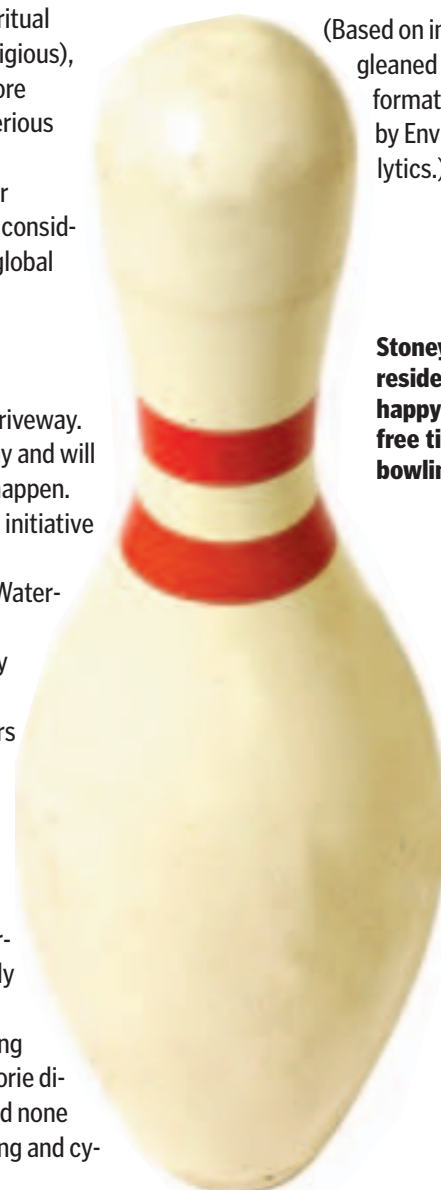
Skating is a favourite activity in Dundas and Westdale, along with golf and swimming.

- Feel safe and secure in community.
- Generally believe that big government benefits society.

West Mountain

- Keen on ice skating, but not snowboarding.
- Like to spend on technology, yet cautious about logging on.
- Attracted to the fun side of the tube, the Family Channel and cartoons.
- Mix of young and old service sector and blue-collar workers, a diverse group that includes newly arrived immigrants and Ontario-raised retirees.
- Prefer to save, but attracted to video game systems, computers, and flashy home theatres.
- Likely place a high value on hard work, simplicity of life, openness to others, and family time.
- The younger suburbanites are likely to be more open to social change and progressive trends.
- May believe violence is an inevitable part of city life, with feelings of aimlessness or a sense of no life goals.
- May try to find direction and meaning through spiritual fulfilment, although traditional, organized religion holds little attraction.

(Based on information gleaned from Prizm information provided by Environics Analytics.)



Stoney Creek residents are happy to spend free time bowling.

