Instructor’s Manual

Consumer Behaviour
A European Perspective

Second edition

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Preface

HOW TO USE

The European Edition of the Solomon’s Consumer Behaviour has a complete set of supplemental learning and teaching aids. The Instructor’s Resource Manual plays a central role in organizing this package. This manual has been designed so the instructor can plan lectures, demonstrations, discussions, visual presentations, and written assignments in a co-ordinated and efficient manner.

All 17 chapters of the textbook have been carefully reviewed in order to develop the most logical and helpful manual for you, the instructor. Primary features of the Instructor’s Manual are described below.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Each chapter of the textbook is summarized in the Chapter Summary. This section provides the instructor with a condensed version of the information included in the chapter. This material is consistent with the Chapter Summary material found at the end of each chapter in the text. This condensation of material is especially helpful in planning chapter sequence presentation and any desired chapter combinations. In addition, this section may help the instructor plan introductory lecture remarks.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

This section is the core of the Instructor’s Manual. This teaching outline is a thorough outline (specifically tied to the actual phrases and definitions used in the textbook) of the material included in the text chapters. This outline includes major and minor headings from the textbook. The instructor will notice special information sections that appear periodically in the body of the outline. This material is indicated with bold type and bold asterisks (*****). The purpose of the information block is to indicate to the instructor where key material appears in the textbook and when to use teaching aids. These information blocks may contain the following items of information: Key Terms (term is identified); Consumer Behaviour Challenge questions (discussion question is listed by number); Chapter Cases (listed by title – comments on the chapter cases may be found in a separate section of the Instructor’s Manual); Chapter Figures (listed by number); Chapter Tables (listed by number). It is recommended that the instructor carefully reviews the Chapter Outline prior to preparing a chapter lecture. This review will help in co-ordinating the learning activities that are available with the textbook.

In addition, the instructor will find it useful to use the Discussion Topics that periodically appear in the Chapter Outline to aid discussion of the pertinent issues. Students have found these topics to be interesting and useful to supplement the formal lecture.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

This section has been developed to aid the instructor in understanding which of the concepts or activities contained in the textbook chapters may be difficult learning assignments for the average student. By reviewing this section, the instructor may be able to direct preparation toward those topics that are perceived as being difficult. In addition, this section also provides suggestions for dealing with difficult learning concepts. Please note that this section and the Student Project section are somewhat complementary in that the learning exercises suggested in the Student Project section may be used to deal with many of the difficult subjects identified in this section.
STUDENT PROJECTS

This section suggests several projects that may be assigned to the students for a specific class or for several class periods (a term project). The projects may be assigned to individuals (Individual Projects) or to groups (Group Assignments). The instructor may require that the material be analysed in a written format or just as discussion motivators. All of the material contained in this section has been written in a student assignment format. Please consider co-ordinating this section with the Barriers to Effective Learning section or the Discussion Topics boxed inserts for more beneficial discussion sessions.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

Discussion questions and associated comments appear in this section. The questions appear in the text book (so assignments can be made from textbook chapters), however, the comments only appear in the Instructor’s Resource Manual. Note that proper placement of the Discussion Question is up to the instructor, however, placement suggestions do appear in the Chapter Outline section.

July 2001
Ynte K. van Dam
Chapter 1
An introduction to consumer behaviour

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Consumer behaviour is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.

A consumer may purchase, use, and/or dispose of a product, but these functions may be performed by different people. In addition consumers may be thought of as role players who need different products to help them play their various parts.

Market segmentation is an important aspect of consumer behaviour. Consumers can be segmented along many dimensions, including product usage, demographics (the objective aspects of a population, such as age and sex) and psychographics (psychological and lifestyle characteristics). Emerging developments, such as the new emphasis on relationship marketing and the practice of database marketing, mean that marketers are much more attuned to the wants and needs of different consumer groups.

Marketing activities exert an enormous impact on individuals. Consumer behaviour is relevant to our understanding of both public policy issues (e.g. ethical marketing practices) and of the dynamics of popular culture.

It is often heard that marketers create artificial needs. Although this criticism is oversimplified, it is true that marketers must accept their share of responsibility for how society develops and what is considered necessary to have and what is acceptable, nice and fun to do in society.

The field of consumer behaviour is interdisciplinary; it is composed of researchers from many different fields who share an interest in how people interact with the marketplace. These disciplines can be categorized by the degree to which their focus is micro (the individual consumer) or macro (the consumer as a member of groups or the larger society).

There are many perspectives on consumer behaviour, but research orientations can roughly be divided into two approaches. The positivist perspective, which currently dominates the field, emphasizes the objectivity of science and the consumer as a rational decision-maker. The interpretivist perspective, in contrast, stresses the subjective meaning of the consumer’s individual experience and the idea that any behaviour is subject to multiple interpretations rather than one single explanation.

Lecture Suggestions
(a) The outline below closely follows the outline in the text. (b) In regular italics you will find questions that should help get a discussion started. (c) You will find inserts that refer to interesting consumer behaviour facts that might be used to make or enhance a point (End Notes are provided at the end of each chapter in the Instructor’s Resource Manual).

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Consumer Behaviour: People in the marketplace

a. The average consumer can be classified and characterised on the basis of:
   1). Demographics – age, sex, income, or occupation.
   2). Psychographics – refers to a person’s lifestyle and personality.
b. The average consumer’s purchase decisions are heavily influenced by the opinions and behaviours of their family, peers, and acquaintances.
c. As a member of large society, consumers share certain cultural values or strongly held beliefs about the way the world should be structured.
   1). Some of the values are based on subcultures (such as ethnic groups or teens).
   2). Some of the values are those of reference groups.

d. Brands have clearly defined images or ‘personalities’ in order to appeal to specific segments of the market.

e. The images or ‘personalities’ of brands are created by product advertising, packaging, branding, and other marketing strategies that focus on positioning a product in a certain way.

f. When a product succeeds in satisfying a consumer’s specific needs or desires, it may be rewarded with many years of brand loyalty.
   1). This bond is often difficult for competitors to break.
   2). However, a change in one’s life situation or self-concept can weaken the bond.

g. Consumers’ evaluations of products are affected by their appearance, taste, texture, or smell.

h. In a modern sense, an international image has an appeal to many consumers. This might be labelled the ‘country-of-origin’ effect. Increasingly, consumers’ opinions and desires are shaped by input from around the world.

What is Consumer Behaviour?

i. Consumer behaviour is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.
   1). Consumers are actors on the marketplace stage.
      a). The perspective of role theory takes the view that much of consumer behaviour resembles actions in a play.

Discussion Topic: What are some of the roles you play in life? What kind of ‘costumes’ do you have in your closet?

   b). People act out many roles and sometimes consumption decisions are affected by the play they are in at the time.
   c). The classical consumer play is ‘making the right choice’, but other plays can be ‘constructing our identity’, or ‘searching for pleasure’, or ‘rebelling against the power of producers’.

2). Consumer behaviour is a process.
   a). Most marketers recognize that consumer behaviour is an ongoing process, not merely what happens at the moment a consumer hands over money or a credit card and in turn receives some good or service.
   b). The exchange, in which two or more organizations or people give and receive something of value, is an integral part of marketing.
      1]. The expanded view emphasizes the entire consumption process.
      2]. This view would include issues that influence the consumer before, during, and after a purchase.

3). Consumer behaviour involves many different actors.
   a). The consumer is generally thought as a person who identifies a need or desire, makes a purchase, and then disposes of the product during the three stages in the consumption process.
   b). The purchaser and user of a product might not be the same person.
   c). A separate person might be an influencer.
d). Consumers may be organizations or groups (in which one person may make the decision for the group).

2. Consumers’ Impact on Marketing Strategy

a. Understanding consumer behaviour is good business. A basic marketing concept states that firms exist to satisfy consumers’ needs.
   1) Consumer response is the ultimate test of whether or not a marketing strategy will succeed.
   2) Data about consumers helps organizations to define the market and to identify threats and opportunities in their own and different countries.

Segmenting Consumers

b. The process of market segmentation identifies groups of consumers who are similar to one another in one or more ways, and then devising strategies that appeal to one or more groups.
   1) Demographics are statistics that measure observable aspects of a population, such as birth rate, age distribution, and income.

****Use Table 1.1 Here****

2). Important demographic segmentation variables include:
   a). Age.
   b). Gender.
   c). Family structure.
   e). Ethnicity.
   f). Geography.

Discussion Topic: How would you describe yourself demographically? What bearing would this have on your purchase patterns? How could a marketer find out about you in a demographic sense?

Relationship Marketing: Building Bonds with Consumers

c. Relationship marketing occurs when a company makes an effort to interact with customers on a regular basis, and giving them reasons to maintain a bond with the company over time.

****Use Key Term relationship marketing Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here****

Discussion Topic: What types of organizations can make best use of relationship marketing?

d. Database marketing involves tracking consumers’ buying habits very closely, and crafting products and messages tailored precisely to people’s wants and needs based on this information.

Discussion Topic: How can database marketing help an organization improve its relationship marketing?

3. Marketing’s Impact on Consumers

a. For better or worse, we all live in a world that is significantly influenced by the actions of marketers.

Marketing and Culture

b. Popular culture consists of the music, movies, sports, books, celebrities, and other forms of entertainment consumed by the mass market, and is both a product of and an inspiration for marketers.
1). The meaning of consumption – a fundamental premise of consumer behaviour is that people often buy products not for what they do, but for what they mean.

2). People, in general, will choose the brand that has an image (or even a personality) that is consistent with his or her underlying needs.

*****Use Key term popular culture Here*****

Discussion Topic: Can you give an illustration of some product you purchase just for its image? Can you give an example of a popular song that was launched into the charts by a television commercial?

3). People may have various relationships with a product:
   a). **Self-concept attachment** – the product helps to establish the user’s identity.
   b). **Nostalgic attachment** – the product serves as a link with a past self.
   c). **Interdependence** – the product is a part of the user’s daily routine.
   d). **Love** – the product elicits emotional bonds of warmth, passion, or other strong emotion.

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of product that you have a strong attachment for and explain the relationship.

4). A consumption typology is a way products have different meanings for people. Examples of different consumption activities are:
   a). ** Consuming as an experience** – an emotional or aesthetic reaction to consumption objects.
   b). **Consuming as integration** – learning and manipulating consumption objects to express aspects of the self or society.
   c). **Consuming as classification** – the activities that consumers engage in to communicate their association with objects, both to self and to others.
   d). **Consuming as play** – consumers use objects to participate in a mutual experience and merge their identities with that of a group.

5). One highly visible – and controversial – by-product of sophisticated marketing strategies is the movement toward a global consumer culture, where people around the world are united by their common devotion to brand name consumer goods, movie stars, and musical celebrities. The ‘Euro-consumer’, for what this concept is worth, will be discussed in chapter 16.

**4. Marketing Ethics and Public Policy**

**Business Ethics**

a. Business ethics essentially are rules of conduct that guide actions in the market-place – the standards against which most people in a culture judge what is right and what is wrong, good or bad. European consumer protection laws and codes of ethics include:
   - disclosure of substantial risks associated with a product or service
   - identification of added features that will increase the cost
   - avoidance of false or misleading advertising
   - rejection of high-pressure or misleading sales tactics
   - prohibition of selling or fund-raising that is disguised as market research

**Socially responsible behaviour**

b. In some instances marketers deliberately mislead or deceive consumers, in other instances marketing practices may have detrimental effects on society without being explicitly illegal. Some companies also run into trouble because their activities are rejected by sizeable portions of the consuming public. Corporate social responsibility refers to the public acceptability of marketing practice. A crucial barometer of ethical conduct is what actions a marketer takes once a company is made aware of a problem with its advertising or products. Faced with the rising phenomenon of the ‘political consumer’
and many pressure groups that focus on business behaviour the industry is increasingly realizing that ethical behaviour is good business in the long run.1

Public Policy and Consumerism

c. Consumer research and consumer welfare.
Consumer behaviour research can play an important role in improving the lives of consumers. Research aids in the formulation or evaluation of policies concerning various issues like product labelling, information provision, or commercial television shows aimed at children. The major priorities for the future development of consumer policy in the European Union are listed in table 1.2 on page 19.

Discussion Topic: What do you think is the worst ‘anti-consumer’ practice used by business? What would you do about it?

5. Needs and Wants: do marketers manipulate consumers?

a. One of the most common criticisms of marketing is that marketing (especially advertising) is responsible for convincing consumers that they cannot do without many material things that they do not really need. 1). This has been argued not to apply to purely informational advertising, giving only product and store information. 2). Functionality and utility are also seductive product elements.

Do marketers create artificial needs?
b. A need may be viewed as a basic biological motive, whereas a want is the socially learned satisfier for a need (we need a drink, we want a Coke or a cup of tea). 1). However, beyond the level of banality, needs are always formed by the social environment 2). As needs are always ‘artificial’, that is formed by the social environment, marketers have their share in the socialization of consumers that leads to the construction of artificial needs.

Is advertising necessary?
a. Given the overwhelming supply of goods, advertising is an indispensable way to communicate the existence of products and the needs and wants that these products may satisfy. 1). Advertisers are important communicators, which must be followed by a sense of responsibility concerning social and individual effects of their messages.

Do marketers promise miracles?
a. Advertising functions as mythology: it provides simple, anxiety-reducing answers to complex problems. 1). Advertisers do not know enough about people to manipulate them directly. 2). Advertising in general offers a worldview that success and status are dependent on consumer choices.

6. Consumer Behaviour as a Field of Study

a. It is rather recent that consumers have become the objects of formal study.

Interdisciplinary Influences on the Study of Consumer Behaviour

b. Consumer behaviour may be studied from many points of view – such as psychology, sociology, social psychology, cultural anthropology, economics, et cetera.

*****Use Figure 1.2 Here; Use Table 1.3 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here*****
The Issue of Strategic Focus

c. Many regard the field of consumer behaviour as an applied social science. Accordingly, the value of the knowledge generated should be evaluated in terms of its ability to improve the effectiveness of marketing practice.

The Issue of Two Perspectives on Consumer Research

d. One general way to classify consumer research is in terms of the fundamental assumptions the researchers make about what they are studying and how to study it. This set of beliefs is known as a paradigm.

1). The dominant paradigm currently is called positivism (or sometimes called modernism). It emphasizes that human reason is supreme, and that there is a single, objective truth that can be discovered by science. Positivism encourages us to stress the function of objects, to celebrate technology, and to regard the world as a rational, ordered place with a clearly defined past, present, and future.

2). The emerging paradigm of interpretivism (or postmodernism) questions the above assumptions.

a). Proponents argue that there is too much emphasis on science and technology in our society, and that this ordered, rational view of consumers denies the complex social and cultural world in which we live.

b). Others say positivism puts too much emphasis on material well-being, and that its logical outlook is dominated by an ideology that stresses the homogeneous views of a culture dominated by white males.

c). Interpretivists instead stress the importance of symbolic, subjective experience, and the idea that meaning is in the mind of the person.

e. The terms positivist and interpretive are very broad, and each encompasses many diverse viewpoints. The positivist perspective includes such approaches as logical positivism, modern empiricism, and objectivism. The interpretive paradigm includes subjective, naturalistic, qualitative, and humanistic approaches and is sometimes referred to as post-positivism.2

Discussion Topic: Do you consider yourself more a ‘positivist’ or an ‘interpretist’? (Don’t say both – we all are!)

7. Taking it From Here: The Plan of the Book

a. The plan is simple – it goes from micro to macro.

b. Each chapter provides a ‘snapshot’ of consumers, but the lens used to take each picture gets successively wider.

c. The wheel of consumer behaviour presented in the text is a simple, integrated perspective that encompasses the major issues considered in the text and emphasizes their interrelatedness. Instructors who are interested in a more traditional perspective may prefer to introduce the field by referring to one of the more elaborate models of consumer decision-making, such as the well-known Engel–Kollat–Blackwell Model, that attempts to organize relevant variables pertaining to information processing and decision-making.

Suggestions for Use of Barriers to Effective Learning:
Students come to your class with varied backgrounds (some come from marketing, other business disciplines, psychology, sociology, or other majors), varying experiences (some have had many marketing courses, some only a few or none), and varying intellectual skills. The purpose of this section is remind you of some of the common difficulties students have with material contained in the chapter. Foresight of problems is often very helpful. The author hopes this material will help you stimulate and help your students.
BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. The first barrier to effective learning experienced by the student in this chapter comes from the basic definition. Definitions are often taken for granted. In the case of the definition of consumer behaviour, it will be beneficial for long-term understanding and retention to carefully cover what the definition is and what it is not. Ask students to give examples of consumer behaviour to verify that understanding is present.

2. The second major barrier comes from understanding the acting roles that may be performed by the consumer in the consumption process. Using the Discussion Topics suggested in the Chapter Outline will help the students to see the variety of roles that might occur. How can marketers use the variation of roles to their advantage?

3. Many students do not understand how important demographics can be or how the information can be obtained by marketing organizations. Ask students to bring credit card applications, review the forms, and show the information can be useful. Ask students to indicate (after having read the chapter) what demographic traits of their own most influence their purchase decisions. How could marketers identify and categorize those traits? Describe the differences between specific and general traits.

4. The last major barrier in the chapter is the difficulty students often have in understanding the two paradigms (positivism and interpretivism). The Chapter Outline provides examples and extended material that might be used to stress these concepts. The best way is to have the students give illustrations so reinforcement will go beyond mere definitions. Since these terms are contained at the end of the chapter (and, after all, it is the first chapter), it is sometimes difficult to cover all the material on the first or second day of class. However, these are important concepts. Be sure to save time for them.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Suggestions for Use of Student Projects:
For each class you might want to assign two or three students or a group of students one or more of the following Student Project assignments and ask them to be ready to give a short oral presentation on their topic at the beginning of class. This gets students more deeply involved in the class and gives them opportunities to work on their oral skills. You might ask them to turn in a short paper (one or two pages) so they can also practice their writing skills. Many of these projects can be done on the Internet (which also gives them practice with their research skills). If given proper credit, the students will also see that they can earn extra points to help them over the rough spots on exams. Most instructors find that by having a few students bring in fresh ideas to each class, the class becomes more enjoyable and personalised. Remember that when assignments are made with plenty of lead time, students tend to do a better job. Since this often presents a challenge in the first several class meetings, some of the early chapter projects might be pushed back to the second week of class.

Individual Projects

1. Ask a student to think of a product brand that is used frequently, and make a list of the brand’s determinant attributes. Without sharing what was on the list, have the student ask a friend, of the same gender and approximate age, to make a similar list for the same product (although the brand may be different.) Then have the student ask someone of the opposite sex to perform the same task. Have the student compare and contrast the identified attributes and report their findings to the class.

2. This assignment can really be fun for the class and the presenter. Have a student wear or bring to class a recent clothes purchase. Have them explain how his or her purchase decision was influenced by different economic, social, cultural, and/or psychological variables.

3. Have one of your students conduct a recognition or recall test by first collecting images of product icons depicted in advertisements. Ask the student to have a few friends or the class then identify the products and companies represented by the icons.

4. Have a student observe a consumer shopping and attempt to infer the variables involved in the situation. Ask the student to report to the class the observed behaviour and the inferences drawn.
5. Here’s a chance for a student to start some networking. Have the individual interview a business person and ask this person to define consumer behaviour. Encourage the student to ask how the business person believes greater knowledge of consumer behaviour could help in job performance. See if the student can relate the responses given to the marketing concept and/or relationship marketing. If so, how?

6. Ask a student to interview a peer about the variables thought to be important influences on consumer behaviour in the purchase of a specific product (e.g. car, stereo, house, holiday, camera, etc.). Ask them to do the same for an older person and compare and contrast the responses.

7. Demonstrate with a recent purchase that you have made how that you are following the positivism or interpretivism perspective on consumer research.

**Group Assignments**

8. Have your group select a product of interest to your group (e.g., a car, entertainment centre, vacation spot, movie, sporting event). Have each person in the group make a list of what they consider to be the product’s main attributes. Compare and contrast the attributes listed by the women and by the men to see how they may vary. Next, if there are any age or ethnic differences in the group see if differences appear. Based on these differences formulate strategies for appealing to the various subgroups within your group.

9. Have your group collect ads for three different brands in an identical product category (e.g., detergent, cars, toothpaste, et cetera). Prepare a report on the segmentation variables used within the ads or media format in which they appear.

10. Have your group find an example of a recent product, service, or program that was a failure. National marketing journals, industry and sector magazines, or other marketing publications are excellent sources. Have students explain to the class how knowledge of consumer behaviour, or the lack of it, could have contributed to the success or failure of the effort.

11. Have your group go online on the Internet to three Web pages of your choice. Demonstrate how the Web pages segment markets, collect information from the consumer (after the person has come to the Web page), and might be used to build a database.

**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE**

Suggestions for Use of the Consumer Behaviour Challenge:

These questions are meant to challenge a student’s understanding of chapter material and to enable them to develop an ability to creatively use the chapter material to solve problems. These questions appear at the end of each chapter, however, the summarized answers do not. The questions may be used purely for discussion (if so, they might be assigned in advance of the discussion), they can be given to selected students for in-class presentation, they can be used as short essay questions on in-class quizzes or in formal examinations, or they can be used by the students to enhance the chapter summary. Answers are provided to each question, however, the answers are only intended to be suggestions (differing student answers should be judged on their own merit – there is usually more than one creative way to answer these questions).

1. This chapter states that people play different roles and that their consumption behaviours may differ depending on the particular role they are playing. State whether you agree or disagree with this perspective, giving examples from your own life.

   Most students will be able to identify the different roles that individuals play at different times, so agreement should be almost universal. After agreeing with this notion, the student will be more likely to accept the idea that consumption behaviour is intimately tied with the role itself. The goal of this exercise is to make the student aware that consumption helps to define the roles consumers play and is a central part of those roles. For example, many family social occasions are accompanied by food and drink, and the
consumption of these goods act as a shared bond that the group uses to define membership in that group. Another example is the styles of clothing worn by young people to define their group membership.

2. Some researchers believe that the field of consumer behaviour should be a pure, rather than an applied, science. That is, research issues should be framed in terms of their scientific interest rather than their applicability to immediate marketing problems. Do you agree?

Instead of viewing research in an either-or framework, i.e., that consumer behaviour research must be either pure scientific research or applied knowledge, the student should be encouraged to view it as both. Much research is done on a ‘knowledge for knowledge sake’ basis, but the field of consumer behaviour has the potential to make a significant contribution to how the makers of goods and services can best reach the consumer. For example, business firms are able to take the knowledge developed in a pure science research setting and apply it to their marketing efforts by utilising the results of studies that investigate how consumers process advertising messages. Areas such as space exploration have been able to use pure science research and apply their finding to immediate problems. Consumer behaviour knowledge has this same quality.

3. In recent years, there has been a large debate about the influence that internet shopping will have on our consumer lives. Try listing the changes that you personally have made in your buying and consumption patterns due to e-commerce. Compare these changes with changes experienced by other people from various social groups, e.g. somebody from your parental generation, an IT freak, or somebody with lower educational background.

Individual responses could be compared.

4. Name some products or services that are widely used by your social group. State whether you agree or disagree with the notion that these products help to form the group bonds, supporting your argument with examples from your list of products used by the group.

Discussion of this question is similar to that pertaining to the first question. In both cases, the focus is on whether consumption behaviour has a wider meaning – that of group bonding or identification. The actual products used are not the most important aspect of this discussion. Instead, the focus should be on consumption behaviour as more than the satisfying of primary (basic/physiological) needs. It is assumed that most students will agree that consumption has meaning beyond satisfying primary needs. However, differences will be found in (1) the situations in which consumption takes on this additional meaning, (2) the products that do so, and (3) the form of the broadened meaning. Encourage students to examine the products that bring forth meaning, as well as their consideration as to why this phenomenon occurs.

5. Although demographic information on large numbers of consumers is used in many marketing contexts, some people believe that the sale of data on customers’ incomes, buying habits, and so on, constitutes an invasion of privacy and should be banned. Comment on the issue from both a consumer’s and a marketer’s point of view.

As with many questions of this type there are few objectively right or wrong answers. The goal is, of course, to make the student think about the issues and be able to critically examine the arguments on both sides. Regardless of the student’s specific comments on this issue, the discussion should acknowledge the legitimate interest of both parties and the possibility of a compromise suitable to both groups. This discussion could draw upon the student’s personal experiences with receiving mail that obviously came as a result of information about the student being sold to a company that compiles lists. Ask the student about his or her reactions to it and encourage the student to make a special attempt to discuss the advantages and disadvantages to both the direct marketer and potential buyer.

Do the students think their university or college sells demographic information about them to database firms? If so, do they think this is legal? (see chapter information on database marketing).

6. List the three stages in the consumption process. Describe the issues that you considered in each of these stages when you made a recent important purchase.

Students can use the material presented in Figure 1.1. The three stages in the consumption process shown are (1) pre-purchase, (2) purchase, and (3) post purchase. The student selected should develop fairly
unique sets of issues related to each of these phases based on the different products and purchases situation. Figure 1.1 provides a list of issues for each stage from both the consumer’s and marketer’s perspectives.

7. State the differences between the positivist and interpretivist approaches to consumer research. For each type of inquiry give examples of product dimensions that would be more usefully explored using that type of research over the other.

The differences between positivism and interpretivism, according to the text, are in their views on (1) the utility of reason towards solving problems, (2) the proper role of technology, and (3) the form of reality. Allowing for these differences, positivism would be more useful than interpretivism in exploring utilitarian product functions, i.e. what the product does and how well it does it. Alternately, interpretivism, with its inclusion of subjective aspects of products, would be more appropriate than positivism when examining the meaning of product dimensions to consumers, the role played by products in individuals’ self-definition, and/or cultural and social factors that influence purchase and use. Note that the appropriate areas of research for the two views have considerable overlap. For additional information see boxed inserts in this section in the Chapter Outline.

8. What aspects of consumer behaviour are likely to be of interest to a financial planner? To a university administrator? To a graphic arts designer? To a social worker in a government agency? To a nursing instructor?

The listing of the aspects of consumer behaviour corresponding to these positions should reflect the particular aspects of each position. For example, a financial planner depends on consumers’ willingness to postpone consumption in order to save and invest money to have more later. A social worker must be concerned about people’s attitudes towards government, social work in general, the role of government in people’s lives. What each of these positions share, and what should underlie the discussion, is their connection to the consumption process, and the fact that consumers will themselves have different needs and wants associated with their consumption. Each of the listed parties would attempt to influence consumers by using a different aspect of consumption, and these differences need to be discussed and analysed.

9. Select a product and brand that you use frequently and list what you consider to be the brand’s determinant attributes. Without revealing your list, ask a friend who is approximately the same age but of the opposite sex to make a similar list for the same product (the brand may be different). Compare and contrast the identified attributes and report your findings.

The purpose of this exercise is to make students realize that there may be individual (and gender related) differences in attribute selection and attribute rating. Students may come up with different attribute lists, or at least with differences in which attributes are determinant for preference formation and choice. Within the positivist perspective this implies that a pre-constructed list of product attributes should contain all attributes that may be relevant to any consumer, and as a consequence that it will contain several attributes that are irrelevant to some consumers. Within the interpretivist perspective this implies that consumers select those attributes in product perception and evaluation that help them in their individual construction of meaning in consumer goods. (possible field project)

10. Collect ads for five different brands of the same product. Report on the segmentation variables, target markets and emphasized product attributes in each ad.

The actors and situations depicted in different ads will appeal to different segments of the market. The goal of this exercise is to make students aware of the connection between market segmentation, target market, and marketing communication. Students should come up with a consistent picture of how target markets differ by segmentation variables and how and why the emphasized product attributes appeal to those different target markets.

END NOTES
Chapter 2  
Perception and interpretation

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Perception is the process by which sensations such as sights, sounds, and smells are selected, organized, and interpreted. The eventual interpretation of a stimulus allows it to be assigned meaning. A perceptual map is a widely used marketing tool which evaluates the relative standing of competing brands along relevant dimensions.

Marketing stimuli have important sensory qualities. We rely on colours, odours, sounds, tastes, and even the ‘feel’ of products when forming evaluations of them.

Not all sensations successfully make their way through the sensory process. Many stimuli compete for our attention, and the majority are not noticed or comprehended.

People have different thresholds of perception. A stimulus must be presented at a certain level of intensity before it can be detected by sensory receptors.

Some of the factors that determine which stimuli (above the threshold level) do get perceived are the amount of exposure to the stimulus, how much attention it generates and how it is interpreted. In an increasingly crowded stimulus environment, advertising clutter occurs when too many marketing-related messages compete for attention.

A stimulus that is attended to is not perceived in isolation. It is classified and organized according to principles of perceptual organization. These principles are guided by a Gestalt, or overall, pattern. Specific grouping principles include closure, similarity and figure-ground relationships.

But beyond perception, interpretation is the decisive factor in getting meaning from our surroundings. We make sense of the world through the interpretation of signs. This interpretation is often shared by others, thus forming common languages and cultures. The degree to which the symbolism is consistent with our previous experience affects the meaning we assign to related objects. Every marketing message contains a relationship between the product, the sign or symbol, and the interpretation or meaning. A semiotic analysis involves the correspondence between message elements and the meaning of signs.

Signs provide meaning in various ways and may be typified as icons, indexes, and symbols. The intended meaning may be literal (e.g. an icon like a street sign with a picture of children playing). The meaning may be indexical; it relies on shared characteristics (e.g. the horizontal stripe in a stop sign means do not pass beyond this). Finally meaning can be conveyed by a symbol, where an image is given meaning by convention or by agreement by members of a society (e.g. stop signs are octagonal, while yield signs are triangular).

Semiotic analysis is becoming increasingly popular in our attempts to understand meanings attached to products or brands and their positioning, but also in understanding e.g. shopping environments.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Introduction
   a. We live in a world overflowing with sensations.
      1). Marketers contribute to the overflow by supplying advertisements, product packages, radio and television commercials, and billboards.
      2). Each consumer copes with the bombardment of sensations by paying attention to some stimuli and turning out others.
b. **Sensation** refers to the immediate response of our sensory receptors (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, fingers) to such basic stimuli as light, colour, and sound.

c. **Perception** is the process by which these sensations are selected, organized, and interpreted. The study of perception, then, focuses on what we add to or take away from these raw sensations as we choose which to notice, and then go about assigning meaning to them.

d. People undergo stages of information processing in which stimuli are input and stored. People only process a small amount of information (stimuli) available to them. An even smaller amount is attended to and given meaning.

e. The perception process is made up of three stages:
   1. **Exposure.**
   2. **Attention.**
   3. **Interpretation.**

****Use Key Terms sensation and perception Here; Use Figure 2.1 Here****

A classic misunderstanding stemming from a marketer’s promotional campaign illustrates what can happen when the stimulus categorization process goes awry. Sample bottles of Sunlight dishwashing liquid, which contains 10 percent lemon juice, were mailed to consumers. Almost 80 people were treated at poison centres after drinking some of the detergent. These individuals apparently assumed that the product was actually lemon juice, since many of the packaging cues resembled Minute Maid frozen lemon juice. Among the characteristics of the Sunlight stimulus used during the cue check stage in the perceptual process was the yellow bottle with a prominent picture of a lemon. During confirmation check, a juice schema was selected instead of a dishwashing liquid schema. Consumers found out their mistake the hard way following confirmation completion.1

2. Sensory Systems
   a. External stimuli, or **sensory inputs**, can be received on a number of channels.
      1. The inputs picked up by our five senses constitute the raw data that begin the perceptual process.
      2. External stimuli can trigger memories from the past. The resulting responses are an important part of **hedonic consumption** (the multisensory, fantasy, and emotional aspects of consumers’ interactions with products).
      3. The unique sensory quality of a product can play an important role in helping it to stand out from the competition.
      4. Virtual reality, creating a perceptual environment that is experienced as being real, is being adapted for marketing purposes, like virtual catalogues or virtual shops.

****Use Key Term hedonic consumption Here****

Discussion Topic: **Tell us about the sensations you experience when you walk through a shopping mall.**

Vision
b. Marketers rely heavily on visual elements in advertising, store design, and packaging.
   1. Meanings are communicated on the visual channel through a product’s colour, size, and styling.
   2. Some reactions to colour come from learned associations (such as black for funerals in the Western world).
   3. Colours may impact our emotions directly.
   4. Colour frequently is a key issue in package and web page design.
   5. Some colour combinations come to be so strongly associated with a corporation that they become known as the company’s **trade dress**, and the company may even be granted exclusive use of these colours (for Eastman Kodak’s defence of their use of yellow, black, and red in court).
Discussion Topic: What colours can you think of that are uniquely associated with a company or a product?

Lower-income consumers prefer simple colours (grass green, blue sky); higher-income people like complex colours (grey-green with a hint of blue); and the wealthiest 3 percent like forest green and burgundy. A recent colour preference survey of 5000 adults found red, blue, and black to be the favourite colours for clothing. Beige was favoured for big-ticket home products such as carpets and upholstered furniture. Older people are more likely to prefer beiges and browns, while younger respondents prefer black.

The colour red is arousing, but this quality may be only in the eye of the beholder. A survey of colour preferences found that while men, particularly younger ones, prefer to buy bright red and hot pink undergarments for women, the wearers themselves are more likely to choose white, beige, or pale pink.

A recent study on executional cues in advertising manipulated three dimensions of colour: hue (pigment), chroma (saturation), and value (lightness). Chroma and value were particularly potent mediators of ad likability.

Smell
Odours can stir emotions or create a calming feeling. They can invoke memories or relieve stress.
1). Fragrance is processed by the limbic system, the most primitive part of the brain and the place where immediate emotions are experienced. Some of our reactions to odour depends on our cultural backgrounds.
2). Smell is a direct line to feelings of happiness, hunger, and even memories of happy times (such as childhood years).

Discussion: What is your favourite scent (associated with products)? Least favourite?

Fragrances can be classified into various types: floral, woody, green citrusy, spicy, and oriental. Experts create fragrances by combining a number of individual scents from as many as 200-300 ingredients. Like colour, our perception of fragrance has three components, known as the top, middle, and bottom notes. Top notes, perceived with the first sniff, provide only a fleeting sensation; middle notes carry the aromatic theme; and bottom notes retain the character of the fragrance.

In recent studies, students who smelled chocolate during a word memorization exercise were better able to recall the words the next day when they were again exposed to the smell.

Fragrances play an obvious role in interpersonal attraction and feelings about our immediate environment. A large Japanese construction company was granted a patent on a computerised system for environmental fragrancing. The system delivers fragrances to large buildings through the ventilation ducts and is intended to combat sick building syndrome, a problem in many energy-efficient structures whose windows are sealed to save fuel. The company found in tests that the error rate of keypunch operators dropped by almost 50 percent following exposure to a lemon scent and almost 80 percent after exposure to lavender. The system is in use in several buildings in Japan, including a retirement complex. Future projects that are under development include casinos, airport terminals, and the interiors of aeroplanes and trains.

Sound
Many aspects of sound affect people’s feelings and behaviour.
1). There is general agreement that background music influences mood and buying behaviour.
2). This has not been proven
**Discussion Topic: How do you use sound to stimulate yourself during the day? Give an example of how an advertiser might use sound to stimulate your purchasing.**

**Touch**

e. Though much research needs to be done in this area, moods are stimulated or relaxed on the basis of sensations of the skin. Touch has been shown to be a factor in sales interactions.

1. People associate the textures of fabrics and other surfaces with product qualities (e.g., smooth, rough, silky, et cetera).
2. Men often prefer roughness, whereas females prefer smoothness and softness.

****Use Table 2.1 Here****

**Discussion Topic: What surface (or product) do you love to touch the most? The least?**

**Taste**

f. Our taste receptors contribute to our experience of many products.

1. Specialized companies (called ‘flavour houses’) try to develop new concoctions to please the ever changing and demanding palates of consumers.
2. Ethnicity affects taste preferences.
3. Food companies go to great lengths to ensure that their products taste as they should.

‘Plain’ vanilla has become a flavourful marketing concept. Vanilla flavoured or scented products, from perfumes and colognes to cake frosting, coffees, and ice cream, are currently big sellers for the flavour industry. U.S. based Coty Inc. introduced Vanilla Fields cologne spray in 1994, and reported $25 million in retail sales over a four-month period. One industry executive explains that the flavour’s popularity is because vanilla ‘evokes memories of home and hearth, warmth and cuddling.’

3. **Exposure**

a. **Exposure** is the degree to which people notice a stimulus that is within range of their sensory receptors.

1. When we define the lowest intensity of a stimulus that can be registered on a sensory channel, we speak of a **threshold** for that receptor.
2. The **absolute threshold** refers to the minimum amount of stimulation that can be detected on a sensory channel (the sound emitted by a dog whistle is beyond our absolute threshold).

3. The **differential threshold** refers to the ability of a sensory system to detect changes or differences between two stimuli. The minimum differences that can be detected between two stimuli is known as the **JND** (just noticeable difference), e.g., marketers might want to make sure that a consumer notices that merchandise has been discounted.

4. People selectively expose themselves to some stimuli and filter out other stimuli. **Experience** (which is the result of acquiring information over time), is one factor that determines how much exposure to a particular stimulus a person accepts.

a. **Perceptual Vigilance** is a factor in selective exposure – consumers are more likely to be aware of stimuli that relate to their current needs.

****Use Key Term absolute threshold Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 1 Here****

**Discussion Topic: Ask the class to write down the price of the following goods on a piece of paper: (a) a litre of 2% milk, (b) a Big Mac (or any other favourite snack meal), (c) a pair of top-of-the-line Nike tennis shoes. Then see if they can figure out the differential threshold they have for these goods. (See how much the price would have to change before they would actually know it.)**
4. **Perceptual Selection**
   a. Consumers are often in a state of **sensory overload**, exposed to far more information than they are capable or willing to process. Because the brain’s capacity to process information is limited, consumers are very selective about what they pay attention to.
   b. The process of **perceptual selectivity** means that people attend to only a small portion of stimuli to which they are exposed.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 here*****

**Discussion Topic:** Ask students to think of examples when they have used perceptual vigilance and perceptual defence. Think of examples and circumstances when advertisers consciously are able to overcome these effects in consumers. Identify the techniques that might be used to break through these barriers.

**Stimulus Organization**

   c. One factor that determines how a stimulus will be interpreted is its assumed relationship with other events, sensations, or images.
      1). Our brains tend to relate incoming sensations to others already in our memory based on some fundamental organizational principles.
         a). These principles are based on **Gestalt psychology** (meaning is derived from totality). In German, **Gestalt** means whole.
         b). Sometimes the ‘whole is greater than the sum of its parts.’
      2). Principles include:
         a). The **closure principle** – people tend to perceive an incomplete picture as complete. We fill in the blanks.
         b). The **principle of similarity** – consumers tend to group objects that share similar physical characteristics.
         c). The **figure-ground principle** – states that one part of a stimulus will dominate (the figure) while other parts recede into the backdrop (the ground).

**Discussion Topic:** When you walk through a room when Wheel of Fortune is on, do you find yourself stopping to solve the puzzle? When you hear ‘Less Filing....’, what do you think of? Give an illustration of how advertisers can use or must be aware of (a) the closure principle, (b) the principle of similarity, and (c) the figure-ground principle.

**Attention**

   d. **Attention** refers to the extent to which processing activity is devoted to a particular stimulus.
   e. **Adaptation** – the degree to which consumers notice a stimulus over time.

   Several factors lead to adaptation:
   1). Intensity.
   2). Duration.
   3). Discrimination.
   4). Exposure.
   5). Relevance.

1). Many marketers are attempting to counter the perceptual overload caused by advertising clutter in order to call attention to their products. Different strategies are followed to draw attention to an ad.
2). In general, stimuli that differ from others around them are more likely to be noticed. This **contrast** can be created in several ways:
   a). Size.
   b). Colour.
   c). Position.
   d). Novelty.
5. Interpretation
a. **Interpretation** refers to the meaning that we assign to sensory stimuli. Two people can see the same event but their interpretation can be completely different.
   1). Consumers assign meaning to stimuli based on the **schema**, or set of beliefs, to which the stimulus is assigned. **Priming** is a process where certain properties of a stimulus typically will evoke a schema.
   2). Identifying and evoking the correct schema is crucial to many marketing decisions, since this determines what criteria will be used to evaluate the product, package, or message.
   3). **Polysemy** indicates that each sign conveys a number of meanings – it’s up to us to determine the meaning based on our experiences, expectations, and needs.

**Discussion Topic:** What might be the schema for (a) a suit or a dress, (b) a hair dryer, or (c) a calculator to be used in school?

The role of symbolism in interpretation
c. Interpretation of stimuli is always in the light of associations we have with the images.
   1) **Semiotics** examines the correspondence between signs and symbols and the assignment of meaning.
   2) A semiotic analysis studies the relation the **object** (the product that is the focus of the message), the **sign** (the image that represents the intended meaning) and the **interpretant** (the derived meaning).

***** **Use Key Terms object, sign and interpretant Here*****

3) Signs are related to object in one of three ways
   a). An **icon** resembles the product in some way.
   b). An **index** is related to the product by shared characteristics
   c). A **symbol** is related to a product by convention or by agreement by members of a society

***** **Use Key Term icon Here; Use Figure 2.3 Here*****

Semiotic analysis
d. Semiotic analysis of ads has been used to establish guidelines about when in the product and brand life cycle to use more complex advertising forms.

*Other studies have linked semiotic analysis to Means-End-chains in order to understand the meaningful relations between brands and advertisements and consumer values.*

4) Semiotics of goods analyses the syntactics, semantics and pragmatics of products. Just like in verbal languages also products (e.g. food) are subject to a syntax – stating what products may be combined and which rules organize these combinations. Semantics properties of products concern the functional or cultural values that a product refers to. Pragmatics look at the use of products for serving communicative purposes.

5) A technique for semiotic analysis is the **Semiotic Square**
   a. All meanings are based on opposition (e.g. black versus white, day versus night).
   b. Both sides of this pair of oppositions can be negated to create a second level of opposition (e.g. non-black – non-white; non-day – non-night)
   c. The four resulting squares are related to a deep level of consumer values (cf. Archetypes or Mythology)
   d. Applying this technique to brands, products, or retail outlets provides four basic values or meanings that explain a hidden level of symbolic understanding.

***** **Use Key Term Semiotic Square Here*****
Brand Positioning

e. Products are interpreted in a double context:
   1) Products are interpreted within a given product category
   2) Products are interpreted in the light of existing brands

f. Typical product evaluations are the result of what the product means rather than what it does
   1) A perceptual map is a way to represent the position of brands or products relative to each other
      within the consumers’ minds.
   2) Positioning Strategy uses elements of the marketing mix to influence the consumer’s interpretation of its meaning.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. The first barrier to learning that occurs in this chapter is associated with the basic definition of perception. The text presents a clear definition of what perception is, however, many students seem to apply their own definition (‘how we see things’) which is rather limiting within a consumer behaviour context. Try to get the students to illustrate the parts of the definition (‘how sensations are selected, organized, and interpreted’). This will help to broaden the definition in their minds.

2. The second area that must be watched is within the context of each of the sensory areas discussed in the chapter (vision, smell, sound, touch, and taste). Be sure to carefully use the text’s illustrations and examples so each student will see that perception can be an important ally or a formidable enemy to the marketer. Several of the Consumer Behaviour Challenges will help to demonstrate perception within the sensory context.

3. Take class time to carefully cover and demonstrate ‘the absolute threshold,’ and ‘the differential threshold’. These key terms have many good illustrations in the text. Be sure to confirm that the students understand these concepts before going forward.

4. If the instructor chooses to emphasize the concept of subliminal persuasion or perception, it would be wise to have one or two students do some outside research (see chapter footnotes and Instructor’s Resource Manual End Notes) on the subject. In this way additional visual material can be presented to the class. This area is always fun for the students to discuss, however, be careful to avoid spending too much time with this subject and not allowing enough time for the more important material that follows this section.

5. Be sure to carefully cover the concepts of ‘perceptual vigilance,’ ‘perceptual defence,’ and ‘adaptation.’ These terms will be used later in the text. Think about an example or two that will reinforce this material in the minds of the students. See Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 and 7 for additional material.

6. Semiotics can be a difficult subject, especially to students (and instructors) who are raised in a tradition of cognitive psychology and classical communication theory. Once you get the hang of finding vivid examples it is easily explained – though still difficult for students to reproduce. A special handicap arises if your students are already familiar with the semiology of R. Barthes, which differs in approach – though not in implications – from the approach of Pierce that is advocated by the authors.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Ask a student to find three ads that contain symbolism. Examine the symbols, and discuss the meaning they convey. Then encourage the student to identify the different types of signs used in the ads and the product qualities being communicated by each.

2. Here is a field project that students always like. Have a student photocopy a collection of brand/product symbols and then have this student quiz fellow classmates to see if they can recognize the product or
company. This will show students how effective symbols are and how much involuntary learning has taken place in their life. You might give a reward to the student who had the most correct responses and the least correct.

3. Have a student bring to class several brands of well-known products and their ‘look-a-like’ counterparts. (The slick ads in the Sunday paper are often a good source of pictures of these products if the student can’t physically bring in the real thing.) Then have the student compare the shared physical attributes of these products. What are some of the psychological attributes of pricing and packaging? Are there any legal or ethical implications for the producers of these products?

4. Ask a student to visit a toy store and take note of the various types of toys that are displayed. Then have the student categorize these toys on the basis of age, sex, socio-economic class, and educational level. Have them discuss how manufacturers and retailers use these attributes to appeal to potential customers.

5. Here is a tough assignment for an undergraduate. Ask a student to spend an afternoon watching a popular soap opera or an evening watching a favourite television show. Ask them to be particularly observant of the various products and services that are used as props during the show. Do these products or services have any symbolic value? Are they used to help develop the plot? How?

6. Have a student visit two different types of restaurants and make a note of how each establishment appeals to the five senses. How are they the same? How are they different?

7. Ask a student to bring in three ads from a favourite magazine. Have the student identify examples of the stimulus factors that the advertiser used to capture attention. What are some of the other stimuli that could have been chosen to accomplish the same thing?

8. Find a product or an advertising example where a consumer could easily misperceive the intent or message of the product or advertisement. How could this difficulty be corrected?

9. Go to the library and look through several foreign magazines. How are the advertisements different from those in your country? What sensory cues (based on the advertisements you see) seem to be cultural in nature. See if you can find an ad that is for the same product but done differently between your country and some other country and comment on the differences (besides language).

10. Think of an illustration of how ‘absolute threshold’ and ‘difference threshold’ could be demonstrated to the class. Relate your findings to the class.

11. Give an example of an instance when you have used or experienced ‘perceptual vigilance’ and ‘perceptual defence.’ Share your findings with the class.

12. Find an illustration of the ‘closure principle,’ the ‘principle of similarity,’ and ‘figure-ground principle.’ Share your findings with the class.

13. Ask students to bring in a collection of sexually-oriented ads to stimulate discussion of the different techniques and types of products that use sexual themes in their ads. Did they find more nudity magazines targeted toward men or women? See if they think these ads are effective. What are the ethical issues?

14. Have your students look for several examples of magazine advertisements that use sexual themes or illustrations which seem to capture the reader’s attention or in some way influence their perceptual process. Are these methods appropriate for the target market the advertiser is trying to reach?

15. Ask students to choose any two restaurants or pubs that are frequented by friends. Have them measure their image profiles by asking ten fellow students or friends to write a list of descriptive words that apply to each restaurant or pub. It will be easier for the subjects if the students provided the subjects with a list of potential descriptions. What conclusions can be drawn from this data?
Group Assignments

16. Have three or four students develop ten brand names for a new (a) hamburger, (b) hair-care centre, (c) car, or (d) a product of their choice. Then test these names on the class to capture their reaction. Have the project leaders describe the process they went through to choose the names.

17. Ask a group of students (10-15) what their favourite advertisements are. Look at the lists. What do these ads tell you about the person that responded? What do these ads do differently to increase perception or remembrance? What percentage of the ads were sexually-oriented? After your respondents have given you their lists, be sure to ask them whether they use the products displayed in the ‘favourite’ ads? Comment on your results.

18. Ask students to build a semiotic square. Starting with a common product, work out the opposite and provide both with a meaningful label that maintains and explains the opposition. Then turn to the negation of both labels and work out which products match with this second order opposition. Finally describe the personality of each of the four products.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. Many studies have shown that our sensory detection abilities decline as we grow older. Discuss the implications of the absolute threshold for marketers attempting to appeal to the elderly.
   It would be wise to begin this exercise by identifying the particular senses and the ways in which they decline as the consumer gets older. Once this has been done, students should brainstorm to develop a list of the ways that a message may not be received or interpreted correctly. Students might be encouraged to develop a matrix, placing the senses down the left-hand side and forms of communication across the top. The matrix then should be filled in with descriptions of how communications may fail and how these failures could be avoided. For example, print advertisements aimed at an older audience could use larger type, or radio and television ads could decrease the pace of information presented and slightly increase the volume to allow older recipients to more fully process the information. Retail store and restaurants can increase lighting.

2. Interview 3-5 male and 3-5 female friends regarding their perceptions of both men’s and women’s fragrances. Construct a perceptual map for each set of products. Based on your map of perfumes, do you see any areas that are not adequately served by current offerings? What (if any) gender differences did you obtain regarding both the relevant dimensions used by raters and the placement of specific brands along these dimensions?
   Have the students start this project by listing a number of descriptive words that are or could be used when positioning perfumes in the market place. Have them ask the respondents to position various perfumes on the map according to their impressions of the perfumes selected. (Possible Field Project)

3. Assume that you are a consultant for a marketer who wants to design a package for a new premium chocolate bar targeted to an affluent market. What recommendations would you provide in terms of such package elements as colour, symbolism, and graphic design? Give the reasons for your suggestions.
   Most students will recognize that the label (package), the weight of the product and the brand name of the product are all combined to communicate the image of the product. In this exercise the students are examining a premium product targeted to an affluent market. Obviously the suggestions developed by students are likely to reflect their own experiences. What needs to be added to the discussion of product labels and names is (1) the colours that will augment the desired premium image, (2) the smell that is associated with candy, (3) the sound of the candy wrapper in your hand, and (4) the symbolism that may be used to position the product in the consumer’s mind. The issue of symbolism may provide the best avenue for discussion, and a broader discussion of how symbols can be used in advertising and promotion would be helpful.
4. Do you believe that marketers have the right to use any or all public spaces to deliver product messages? Where would you draw the line in terms of places and products that should be restricted?

This question needs to split into two parts: (1) whether marketers have the right to use any public spaces, and (2) whether they have the right to use all public spaces. These are the two extremes on the issue, and the students will most likely find themselves somewhere between complete and unlimited access for marketers on one hand, and a complete and total ban on the other. A key concept in this discussion is the definition of ‘public spaces’ and, therefore, a common definition should be adopted early in the discussion. To develop their position on this issue, students should be encouraged to list both appropriate and inappropriate places for product messages and offer reasons why each place should be categorized in a particular way. See if they think signs on the highway should be eliminated. If they agree, ask them how they would ever find McDonald’s!

5. Find one ad that is rich in symbolism and perform a semiotic analysis of it. Identify each type of sign used in the ad and the product qualities being communicated by each. Comment on the effectiveness of the signs that are used to communicate the intended message.

This question is intended to be an action project. Since this is the second chapter in the text, this question might be assigned and discussed at a later stage. The question is an excellent way to reinforce the material in the text on semiotics.

6. Collect a set of current ads for one type of product (e.g., personal computers, perfumes, laundry detergents or athletic shoes) from magazines, and analyse the colours employed. Describe the images conveyed by different colours, and try to identify any consistency across brands in terms of the colours used in product packaging or other aspects of the ads.

See if the students will notice how similar many of the products and brands are in terms of shape, weight, colour, and size. (Possible Field Project)

7. Look through a current magazine and select one ad that captures your attention over the others. Give the reasons why.

After students have indicated why the ad caught their attention, probe to see if there are any other reasons. Ask the class if it was struck by any other aspects of the ad. (Possible Field Project)

8. Find ads that utilize the techniques of contrast and novelty. Give your opinion of the effectiveness of each ad and whether the technique is likely to be appropriate for the consumers targeted by the ad.

Opinions will vary here. Some people like novelty in almost everything while others want people to be more serious. (Possible Field Project)

9. Try to construct a new and alternative chains of meaning to Figure 2.3. after it has become known that the actor impersonating the Marlboro Man for many years died of lung cancer.

The lowest level of analysis should stay the same: the cigarette, the man and the interpretation of a smoking man are unchanged. Changes may already occur in the second level of analysis or even only in the third level. In the second level the object may shift from ‘Marlboro Man’ to ‘Lung Cancer Man’ and/or the interpretation may shift from ‘Rugged American’ to ‘Pathetic Nicotine Addict’ or something as unappealing as that. From here the third level may go anywhere, depending on the second level interpretation chosen. If the second level of analysis is retained unchanged, the third level becomes quite interesting, because now it may turn into serious social criticism of basic U.S. values and ‘The American Way Of Life’, because now the connection with lung cancer and the consequent negative interpretations first appear at this general level.

END NOTES

3 Helen Mundell, ‘How the Color Mafia Chooses Your Clothes.’ American Demographics (November, 1993) 21 (2).
Chapter 3
Learning and memory

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Learning is a change in behaviour that is caused by experience. Learning can occur through simple associations between a stimulus and a response or via a complex series of cognitive activities.

Behavioural learning theories assume that learning occurs as a result of responses to external events. Classical conditioning occurs when a stimulus that naturally elicits a response (an unconditioned stimulus) is paired with another stimulus that does not initially elicit this response. Over time, the second stimulus (the conditioned stimulus) comes to elicit the response as well.

This response can also extend to other, similar stimuli in a process known as stimulus generalization. This process is the basis for such marketing strategies as licensing and family branding, where a consumer’s positive associations with a product are transferred to other contexts.

Operant or instrumental conditioning occurs as the person learns to perform behaviours that produce positive outcomes and avoid those that result in negative outcomes. While classical conditioning involves the pairing of two stimuli, instrumental learning conditioning occurs when reinforcement is delivered following a response to a stimulus. Reinforcement is positive if reward is delivered following a response. It is negative if a negative outcome is avoided by not performing a response. Punishment occurs when a response is followed by unpleasant events. Extinction of the behaviour will occur if reinforcement is no longer received.

Cognitive learning occurs as the result of mental processes. For example, observational learning takes place when the consumer performs a behaviour as a result of seeing someone else performing it and being rewarded for it.

Memory refers to the storage of learned information. The way information is encoded when it is perceived determines how it will be stored in memory. Consumers have different forms or levels of memory. The memory systems are known as sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory. Each play a role in retaining and processing information from the outside world.

Information is not stored in isolation; it is incorporated into knowledge structures, where it is associated with other data. The location of product information in associative networks, and the level of abstraction at which it is coded, help to determine when and how this information will be activated at a later time. Some factors that influence the likelihood of retrieval include the level of familiarity with an item, its salience (or prominence) in memory, and whether the information was presented in pictorial or written form.

Products also play a role as memory markers; they are used by consumers to retrieve memories about past experiences (autobiographical memories) and are often valued for their ability to do this. This function also contributes to the use of nostalgia in marketing strategies.

Memory for product information can be measured either through recognition or recall techniques. Consumers are more likely to recognize an advertisement if it is presented to them than to recall one without being given any cues.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. The Learning Process
   a. Learning refers to a relatively permanent change in behaviour that is caused by experience.
1). Instead of direct experience, the learner can learn vicariously by observing events that affect others.
2). We can learn without even really trying – just observing brand names on shelves. This casual, unintentional acquisition of knowledge is called incidental learning.

b. Learning is an ongoing process. Our world of knowledge is constantly being revised as we are exposed to new stimuli and receive ongoing feedback.

****Use Key Term learning Here****

2. Behavioural Learning Theories
a. Behavioural learning theories assume that learning takes place as the result of responses to external events.
   1). With respect to these theories, the mind might be perceived as being a ‘black box.’ Observable aspects of behaviour are emphasized.
   2). The observable aspects consist of things that go into the box (the stimuli, or events perceived from the outside world) and things that come out of the box (the responses, or reactions to these stimuli).

b. The above view is represented by two views:
   1). Classical conditioning.
   2). Instrumental conditioning.

c. The sum of the activities is that people’s experiences are shaped by the feedback they receive as they go through life. People learn that actions they take result in rewards and punishments, and this feedback influences the way they will respond in similar situations in the future.

****Use Key Terms behavioural learning theories Here; Use Figure 3.1 Here****

Classical Conditioning
d. Classical conditioning occurs when a stimulus that elicits a response is paired with another stimulus that initially does not elicit a response on its own.
   1). Over time this second stimulus causes a similar response because it is associated with the first stimulus.
   2). This phenomenon was first demonstrated by Ivan Pavlov’s ‘dog experiments’ when doing research on digestion in animals.
      a). Pavlov induced classical conditioning learning by pairing a neutral stimulus (a bell) with a stimulus known to cause a salivation response in dogs (he squirted dried meat powder into their mouths).
      b). The powder was an unconditioned stimulus (UCS) because it was naturally capable of causing the response.
      c). Over time, the bell became a conditioned response (CS); it did not initially cause salivation, but the dogs learned to associate the bell with the meat powder and began to salivate at the sound of the bell only.
      d). The drooling of these canine consumers over a sound, now linked to feeding time, was a conditioned response (CR).
   3). This basic form of classical conditioning primarily applies to responses controlled by the autonomic and nervous systems.
   4). Classical conditioning can have similar effects for more complex reactions (such as in automatically using a credit card for purchases).

****Use Key Term classical conditioning Here****

Discussion Topic: Can you think of some examples of classical conditioning? In advertising and marketing? What are the strengths of these campaigns?

e. Conditioning effects are more likely to occur after the conditioned and unconditioned stimuli have been paired a number of times (repetition). Notice how often ad campaigns are repeated.
f. **Stimulus generalization** refers to the tendency of stimuli similar to a CS to evoke similar, conditioned responses. Pavlov’s dogs might respond to sounds similar to a bell.

g. **Stimulus discrimination** occurs when a stimulus similar to a CS is not followed by a UCS. When this happens, reactions are weakened and will soon disappear.

*****Use Key Terms stimulus generalization and stimulus discrimination Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** Can you think of some products that have similar packaging? Similar shapes? Similar names?

**Marketing Applications of Behavioural Learning Principles**

h. Many marketing strategies focus on the establishment of associations between stimuli and responses. Examples would be:
- 1). Distinctive brand image.
- 2). Linkage between a product and an underlying need.
- 3). **Brand equity** is where a brand has a strong positive association in a consumer’s memory and commands a lot of loyalty as a result.
- 4). Repetition can be valuable, however, too much repetition results in **advertising wearout**.

i. Advertisements often pair a product with a positive stimulus to create a desirable association.
- 1). The **order** in which the conditioned stimulus and the unconditioned stimulus is presented can affect the likelihood that learning will occur. Normally, the unconditioned stimulus (**backward conditioning**) should be presented prior to the conditioned stimulus.
- 2). Product associations can be **extinguished**.

j. The process of **stimulus generalization** is often central to branding and packaging decisions that attempt to capitalize on consumer’s positive associations with an existing brand or company name. Strategies include:
- 1). Family branding.
- 2). **Product line extensions**.
- 3). Licensing.
- 4). Look-alike packaging.

*****Use Key Term brand equity Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** Think of examples of stimulus generalization.

k. An emphasis on communicating a product’s distinctive attributes vis-à-vis its competitors is an important aspect of **positioning**, where consumers differentiate a brand from its competitors. Stimulus discrimination attempts to promote unique attributes of a brand.

**Instrumental Conditioning**

l. **Instrumental conditioning (operant conditioning)** occurs as the individual learns to perform behaviours that produce positive outcomes and to avoid those that yield negative outcomes. This approach is closely associated with B.F. Skinner (he taught pigeons and other animals to dance using this method).
- 1). While responses in classical conditioning are involuntary and fairly simple, those in instrumental conditioning are made deliberately to obtain a goal and may be more complex.
- 2). Desired behaviour may be rewarded in a process called **shaping**.
- 3). Instrumental conditioning (learning) occurs as a result of a reward received following the desired behaviour.

**Discussion Topic:** Can you think of an example of instrumental conditioning in marketing? Which do you think has more application to marketing: classical or instrumental conditioning?

m. Instrumental learning occurs in one of three ways:
1). When the environment provides **positive reinforcement** in the form of a reward, the response is strengthened, and appropriate behaviour is learned (a woman wearing perfume and receiving a compliment).

2). **Negative reinforcement** also strengthens responses so that appropriate behaviour is learned.

3). In contrast to situations where we learn to do certain things in order to avoid unpleasantness, **punishment** occurs when a response is followed by unpleasant events. We learn the hard way not to repeat these behaviours.

n. When a positive outcome is no longer received, **extinction** is likely to occur and the learned stimulus-response connection will not be maintained.

**Discussion Topic:** What are some products that promise ‘good things will happen’ if you buy them? Can you think of products which tell you that you will be ‘punished’ if you don’t buy them? Can you think of products or behaviours where you are told that you will be ‘punished’ if you do buy them or use them? How would this be possible?

o. An important factor in operant conditioning is the set of rules by which appropriate reinforcements are given for a behaviour. Several **reinforcement schedules** are possible:

1). **Fixed-interval reinforcement**.

2). **Variable-interval reinforcement**.

3). **Fixed-ratio reinforcement**.

4). **Variable-ratio reinforcement**.

Applications of Instrumental Conditioning Principles

p. Principles of instrumental conditioning are at work when a consumer is rewarded or punished for a purchase decision.

1). Most companies reinforce consumption.

2). A popular technique called **frequency marketing** reinforces regular purchasers by giving them prizes with values that increase along with the amount purchased.

*****Use Key term frequency marketing Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here*****

3. **Cognitive Learning Theory**

a. **Cognitive learning theory** approaches stress the importance of internal mental processes. This perspective views people as problem-solvers who actively use information from the world around them to master their environment.

*****Use Key term cognitive learning Here *****

Is Learning Conscious or Not?

b. There are several schools of thought.

1). One school believes that conditioning occurs because subjects develop conscious hypotheses and then act on them.

2). There is also evidence for the existence of non-conscious procedural knowledge. We move toward familiar patterns (automatic responses).

Observational Learning

c. **Observational learning** occurs when people watch the actions of others and note the reinforcements they receive for their behaviours – learning occurs as a result of **vicarious** rather than direct experience.

1). Memories are stored for later use.

2). Imitating the behaviour of others is called **modelling**.

3). Four conditions must be met for modelling to occur:

   a). The consumer’s attention must be directed to the appropriate model, who for reasons of attractiveness, competence, status, or similarity is desirable to emulate.

   b). The consumer must remember what is said or done by the model.
c). The consumer must convert this information into actions.

d). The consumer must be motivated to perform these actions.

****Use Key term observational learning Here; Use Figure 3.3 Here****

Applications of Cognitive Learning Principles

d. Consumers’ ability to learn in this way has helped marketers.

1). People’s willingness to make their own reinforcements has saved the marketers from having to do it for them.

2). Consumers seem to enjoy using ‘models’ as role models and for guidance in purchasing.

Discussion Topic: Who are some of the ‘models’ chosen to sell products? Can you think of some ‘models’ that companies probably won’t hire again? How can a company use a somewhat negative model and still have success?

4. The Role of Memory in Learning

a. Memory involves a process of acquiring information and storing it over time so that it will be available when needed.

1). Contemporary approaches to the study of memory employ an information-processing approach.

a). In the encoding stage, information is entered in a way the system will recognize.

b). In the storage stage, this knowledge is integrated with what is already in memory and ‘warehoused’ until needed.

c). During retrieval, the person accesses the desired information.

****Use Key Terms memory, encoding, storage, and retrieval Here; Use Figure 3.4 Here****

Encoding Information for Later Retrieval

b. The way information is encoded, or mentally programmed, helps to determine how it will be represented in memory.

1). A consumer may process a stimulus simply in terms of its sensory meaning (such as its colour or shape).

2). Semantic meaning refers to symbolic associations, such as the idea that rich people drink champagne or that fashionable men wear earrings.

3). Episodic memories are those that relate to events that are personally relevant.

4). Flashbulb memories are those that are especially vivid.

Discussion Question: Can you give an illustration of each of the forms of meaning or memory just discussed (sensory meaning, semantic meaning, episodic memory, and flashbulb memories)? How could these be used to motivate purchases?

Memory Systems

c. There are three distinct memory systems:

1). Sensory memory permits storage of the information we receive from our senses. This storage is very temporary.

2). Short-term memory also stores information for a limited period of time, and its capacity is limited. This is often called working memory. It holds information we are currently processing. This information is stored by combining small pieces into larger ones in a process known as ‘chunking.’

a). A chunk is a configuration that is familiar to the person and can be manipulated as a unit.

b). An example would be a brand name.

3). Long-term memory is the system that allows us to retain information for a long period of time. To get information into this form elaborate rehearsal is required.

****Use Key terms sensory memory, short-term memory, and long-term memory Here; Use Figure 3.5 Here****
Discussion Topic: One way to demonstrate the memory functions to the students is to use a phrase at the beginning of class and then ask each of them to write out the phrase once the instructor gets to this point in the lecture. Another method is to ask one of the students to describe another of the students (in their immediate vicinity) without looking at them. Lastly, ask students how these forms of memory (sensory, short-term, and long-term) impact marketing.

Storing Information in Memory

d. Relationships among the types of memory are a source of controversy.
   1). The traditional view (multiple-store) is that the short-term memory and long-term memory are separate systems.
   2). Recent work says they may be interdependent (activation models of memory). Deep processing means that the information will probably be placed in long-term memory.

*****Use Key term activation models of memory Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here*****

e. Activation models propose that an incoming piece of information is stored in an association network containing many bits of related information organized according to some set of relationships. This is how the consumer can organize brands, manufacturers, and stores.
   1). These storage units are known as knowledge structures (think of them as spider webs full of knowledge).
   2). According to the hierarchical processing model, a message is processed in a bottom-up fashion (processing begins at a very basic level and is subject to increasingly complex processing operations that require greater cognitive capacity).
   3). Preference categories are known as evoked sets. The task of the marketer is to position itself as a category member and to provide cues that facilitate its placement in the proper category.

*****Use Key terms knowledge structure and evoked set Here; Use Figure 3.6 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here*****

f. Consumers go through a process of spreading activation as they shift back and forth between levels of meaning. Memory traces are sent out. They could be:
   1). Brand-specific.
   2). Ad-specific.
   3). Brand-identification.
   5). Evaluative reactions.

g. Knowledge is coded at different levels of abstraction and complexity.
   1). A proposition links two nodes together to form a more complex meaning, which can serve as a single chunk of information.
   2). Propositions are integrated into a schema, which is seen as a cognitive framework that is developed through experience.
   3). One type of schema is a script, where a sequence of events is expected by an individual. Think of all the activities they go through when they go to the dentist.

Discussion Topic: Give an example of a schema and a script. How could these terms be used by the researcher in a consumer behaviour context?

Retrieving Information for Purchase Decisions

h. Retrieval is the process whereby information is accessed from long-term memory. Factors that influence retrieval are:
   1). Age.
   2). Situational variables (such as the environment).
   3). The viewing environment.
i. In a process called state-dependent retrieval, people are better able to access information if their internal state is the same at the time of recall as when the information was learned.

1. This phenomenon, called the mood congruence effect, underscores the desirability of matching a consumer’s mood at the time of purchase when planning exposure to marketing communications.

2. As a general rule, prior familiarity with an item enhances its recall. However, familiarity can also result in inferior recall (since the product can be ‘taken for granted’ and assumed to have no new information worth processing).

j. The salience of a brand refers to its prominence or level of activation in memory.

1. Almost any technique that increases the novelty of a stimulus also improves recall (called the von Restorff Effect).

2. Putting a surprise element in an ad can be effective.

***** Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here (previously cited)*****

Factors Influencing Forgetting

k. Marketers obviously hope that consumers will not forget about their products. The forgetting process consists of:

1. Decay – the structural changes in the brain produced by learning simply go away.

2. Forgetting also occurs due to interference; as additional information is learned, it displaces the earlier information.

Discussion Topic: Illustrate both of the forgetting concepts (decay and interference). How can marketers use the concepts? How can marketers overcome the forgetting process?

*****Use Key term decay and interference Here*****

Products as Memory Markers

l. Products and ads can themselves serve as powerful retrieval cues.

1. Nostalgia has been described as a bittersweet emotion, where the past is viewed with both sadness and longing. This has an appeal for many consumers.

2. Retro marketing attempts to bring back old commercials to appeal to the nostalgia market.

Discussion Topic: Identify recent nostalgia campaigns. What is nostalgic to you? How could an advertiser appeal to this side of you?

Measuring Memory for Marketing Stimuli

m. Surprisingly, consumers do a rather poor job of recalling significant pieces of information about most products. This is especially true with television ads (only 7 percent of television viewers can recall the product or company featured in most of the recent ads they have watched).

1. The impression made is called impact.

2. Measures of impact are:

a. Recognition.

b. Recall.

3. Recognition tends to stay longer than recall.

4. One test for measuring recognition and recall is the Starch Test.

Discussion Topic: How many commercials can you name from last night’s television viewing experience? How many outdoor signs (billboards) can you remember from coming to class today?

Discussion Topic: As an illustration between recognition and recall, the instructor can devise an experiment using common corporate symbols, jingles, phrases, headlines, or spokespersons that shows that students can recognize without really recalling specifics.
Problems with Memory Measures

While the measurement of an ad’s memorability is important, the ability of existing measures to accurately assess these dimensions has been criticised for several reasons.

1. **Response bias** – results obtained from a measuring instrument are not necessarily due to what is being measured, but rather to something else about the instrument or the respondent. Simply, people tend to give ‘yes’ answers.

2. **Memory lapses** – people are prone to unintentionally forgetting information.

3. **Memory for facts versus feelings** – it is very difficult to take ‘feelings’ out of impressions about ads (especially if the ad raises strong emotions). Recall does not translate into preference.

**Discussion Topic:** What is something hard for you to remember (in a personal sense and in a consumer behaviour or product sense)? Why do you think this happens? What do you think would be a good strategy to attempt to overcome this problem?

**BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING**

1. The first major barrier to learning in this chapter is the students’ ability to understand the various behavioural learning and cognitive learning theories found in the first part of the chapter. To overcome this difficulty remind them to carefully read the information prior to class, develop an example of each form, and be prepared to explain what they have done in class. In this way, each student will put forth a special effort with this material. The author has done an excellent job with the material, however, it must be read to be understood. Lecture alone will not accomplish this task. Seek to involve students in the discussion of these topics.

2. Once the students are familiar with the techniques of consumer behaviour learning and the various theories associated with those learning processes, application should be attempted. Notice that the chapter supplies numerous application illustrations (see the boxed inserts and ‘in text’ examples). Pick a few of these illustrations to cover in detail. Write the examples next to the appropriate material in the Chapter Outline provided in this chapter of the Instructor’s Resource Manual. If you have time, assign a few of the students to provide examples of the more common subjects and terms. However, be sure to do this before class or the examples will not usually be very good.

3. The third area that needs emphasis is exploring memory. All of the facts are in the chapter. Make sure the students understand the various ideas on how the process works (see examples in text). Think about designing short memory tasks to illustrate the concepts (see Discussion Topics in the Chapter Outline for some suggestions). The concept of memory is not difficult, however, some of the vocabulary does require special attention. Push students to talk about how marketers can use memory in organizing successful campaigns for consumers. These discussions will reinforce text material.

4. Lastly, if time permits, spend some time with the process of forgetting. Since the material in the chapter is detailed and forgetting is the last subject covered, it might happen that the instructor will run out of class time before the subject is covered. Be sure to plan wisely and save at least 5-10 minutes to discuss forgetting. The subject that seems to be the most interesting to students is how marketers can devise strategies to overcome consumer forgetting. Students should be encouraged to discuss their own strategies for overcoming forgetting (and in the process they will not forget about forgetting).

**STUDENT PROJECTS**

**Individual Projects**

1. Assign a student to visit a popular mall or supermarket. From observations, have the student cite specific examples of how retail stores made use of behavioural learning principles. Which behavioural learning principles did the student notice? Ask for an oral report.
2. Send a student to the supermarket to identify a package where the marketer’s knowledge of stimulus generalization and/or discrimination was obvious in the packaging. If possible, have the student bring the item to class and explain his or her observations.

3. Encourage a student to find three advertisements – one each based on (1) cognitive learning, (2) classical conditioning, and (3) instrumental conditioning. Allow the student to discuss with the class the nature of each advertisement and how it utilises a specific type of learning.

4. Have a student ask two friends to look through the same magazine. After a few minutes, ask them to list the ads that they remember. Then ask them if any of these ads are for products they use. To what extent do they use the products advertised in the ads they didn’t list? How would learning theory apply?

5. Have a student design an experiment to demonstrate the difference between sensory, short-term, and long-term memory. Present the experiment and its results to the class.

6. Have a student design an experiment to demonstrate the differences between recognition and recall. Usually, advertisements are an easy way to do this, however, products and package symbols could also be used. Present the results to the class.

**Group Assignments**

7. Ask a group of students to develop a number of environmental or ecological design suggestions for a department store manager to use to encourage people to shop at that store. Explain what learning and memory processes these designs were intended to stimulate.

8. Recite for the class something you have memorized (poem, limerick, spoonerism, an old jingle, a song, Boy or Girl Scout Oath, etc.) Encourage someone to recite something they have memorized. Then ask someone to repeat something you said at the beginning of this class and something you said last week. Discuss personal strategies for using memory (such as preparing for a test). Discuss how consumers use the memory process to simplify their purchase decisions (Long-term and short-term memory exercise.)

9. Break the class into groups and have each group make a list of commercials that have used popular songs in the ad. Ask them why they think the advertiser chose these songs to be placed in the ad and have them describe the target markets.

10. Have a student or a team identify a convenience product such as toothpaste or bath soap and then suggest ideas on how this product might be promoted using both positive and negative reinforcement theories.

**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE**

1. **Identify three patterns of reinforcement and provide an example of how each is used in a marketing context.**
   
   The three patterns of reinforcement noted in the text are discussed in the section on operant conditioning. They are (1) positive reinforcement, (2) negative reinforcement, and (3) punishment. After reviewing the examples of each type of reinforcement provided by the students, the instructor may ask students to examine the relative frequency with which each is used in various marketing contexts. Additional discussion might focus on the advantages and disadvantages of each type of reinforcement and situational factors that may influence the effectiveness of each.

2. **Describe the functions of short-term and long-term memory. What is the apparent relationship between the two?**
   
   The functions of both short- and long-term memory, and the relationship between the two are discussed in the chapter. The concept of associative networks also was introduced. In discussing the relationship
between short-term and long-term memory, special emphasis should be placed on the transfer of information from short-term to long-term memory, and its implications for marketing. Marketing stimuli from the environment must be transferred, retained, and withdrawn in order to be effective. Efforts to increase the effectiveness of marketing activities, therefore, depends on an understanding of memory functions. The instructor might ask students to analyse a variety of marketing stimuli to assess why some stimuli are more memorable than others and the relationship between memory (or recall) of a particular item and actual purchase of that item.

3. **Devise a ‘product jingle memory test.’** Compile a list of brands that are or have been associated with memorable jingles, such as Opal Fruits or Heinz Baked Beans. Read this list to friends, and see how many jingles are remembered. **You may be surprised at the level of recall.**

   Students should be able to generate a large number of product jingles for the ‘memory test.’ Most of these will be highly advertised products that students have been exposed to recently. It might be surprising to note that many of the advertised products are not targeted at the student/consumer, and yet students will have high levels of recall for the jingles. As the instructor you may want to develop your own list of older jingles (many of which the students will not remember) that students will find interesting and fun.

4. **Identify some important characteristics for a product with a well-known brand name.** Based on these attributes, generate a list of possible brand extension or licensing opportunities, as well as some others that would most likely not be accepted by consumers.

   The list of characteristics will, of course, depend on the product chosen. Generally it will include distinctive aspects of products. For example, BIC has been a successful brand extension each time a new product is promoted. Also the existing brand name benefited from the characteristics consumers associate with the name BIC – namely, cheap, plastic, and disposable. However, their attempt in the perfume category was a disaster. Because brand extension is based on the transfer of some positive product characteristic(s), either physical or emotional, to the new product, the list students generate should lend itself to identification of that ‘something’ that would enable an extension to be successful.

5. **Collect some pictures of ‘classic’ products that have high nostalgia value.** Show these pictures to consumers, and allow them to free associate. Analyse the types of memories that are evoked, and think about how these associations might be employed in a product’s promotional strategy.

   Consumers’ responses to ‘classic’ product pictures should prove interesting to students. They should be encouraged to evaluate the types of meaning associated with products and asked to determine the relative effectiveness of various messages for different target consumer groups. The real emphasis, however, should be placed on students’ recommendations for translating the special meaning of these products for consumers into effective promotional messages.
Chapter 4
Motivation, values and involvement

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Marketers have claimed that they try to satisfy consumer needs, but the reasons any product is purchased can vary widely. The identification of consumer motives is an important step in ensuring that the appropriate needs and wants will be met by a product.

Traditional approaches to consumer behaviour have focused on the abilities of products to satisfy rational needs (utilitarian motives), but hedonic motives (e.g., the need for exploration or for fun) also play a role in many purchase decisions.

The same products can satisfy different needs, depending upon the consumer’s state at the time. In addition the consumer’s degree of involvement with the product must be considered.

Since consumers are not necessarily able or willing to communicate their underlying needs to marketers, various techniques such as projective tests can be employed to indirectly assess needs.

Consumer motivations are often driven by underlying values. In this context, products take on meaning because they are seen as being instrumental in helping the person to achieve some goal that is linked to a value, such as individuality or freedom.

Values are basic, general principles used to judge the desirability of end-states. All cultures form a value system, which set it apart from other cultures. Some researchers have developed lists to account for such value systems and used them in cross cultural comparisons.

One approach to the study of values is the means-end chain, which tries to link product attributes to consumer values via the consequences that usage of the product will have for the consumer.

It is often heard that marketers create artificial needs. Although this criticism is oversimplified, it is true that marketers must accept their share of the responsibility for how society develops and what is considered necessary to have and what is acceptable, nice and fun to do within society.

Materialism may be considered a more general value underlying other consumer values, thus reassuring that an obvious way of realizing one’s values is through consumption.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. The Motivation Process
   a. **Motivation** refers to the processes that cause people to behave as they do. Once a need has been activated, a state of tension exists that drives the consumer to attempt to reduce or eliminate the need.
   b. **Needs** can be:
      1). **Utilitarian** – a desire to achieve some functional or practical benefit.
      2). **Hedonic** – an experiential need, involving emotional responses or fantasies.
   c. The end state is the consumer’s **goal**. Marketers try to create products and services that will provide the desired benefits and permit the consumer to reduce this tension.
   d. With the consideration of unmet needs, a discrepancy exists between the consumer’s present state and some ideal state. Tension is created. The consumer seeks to reduce tension. The degree of arousal is called a **drive**.
   e. Personal and cultural factors combine to create a **want**.
      1). Once a goal is attained, tension is reduced and the motivation recedes.
      2). Motivation can be described in terms of:
a). Its strength.
b). Its direction.

****Use Key Terms motivation, need, goal, and want Here****

2. Motivational Strength
   a. The degree to which a person is willing to expend energy to reach one goal as opposed to another reflects his or her underlying motivation to attain that goal.

Biological Versus Learned Needs
   b. Early work on motivation ascribed behaviour to instinct.
   c. Drive theory focuses on biological needs that produce unpleasant states of arousal.
      1). Tension reduction has been proposed as a basic mechanism governing human behaviour.
      2). Homeostasis – goal oriented behaviour that attempts to reduce or eliminate an unpleasant state and return to a balanced one.
   d. Expectancy theory suggests that behaviour is largely pulled by expectations of achieving desirable outcomes – positive incentives – rather than pushed from within.

   ****Use Key Terms Drive Theory and Expectancy Theory Here****

Discussion Topic: Can you think of purchase situations that illustrate drive theory and expectancy theory? Which one of the theories do you think is superior?

Discussion Topic: If a car of tourists drive into an unfamiliar town at meal time and stop at McDonald’s instead of an equally attractive and price competitive JOE’S Eats, which of the two theories (expectancy or drive) would probably be at work? How would JOE’S combat this?

3. Motivational Direction
   a. Most goals can be reached by a number of paths.

Needs Versus Wants
   b. The specific way a need is satisfied depends upon the individual’s unique history, learning experiences, and his or her cultural environment.

   Types of Needs
   c. Needs can be:
      1). Biogenic needs – food, water, air, and shelter.
      2). Psychogenic needs – power, status, affiliation.
      3). Utilitarian needs – emphasizes objective, tangible attributes (miles per litre).
      4). Hedonic needs – subjective and experiential (excitement, self-confidence, fantasy).

   Discussion Topic: What is a product or service you could purchase to fulfill a psychogenic, utilitarian, or hedonic need? How would a marketer advertise to you with respect to fulfilling these needs? How would you know that you had fulfilled the need?

Motivational Conflicts
   d. A goal has valence, which means that it can be positive or negative. Therefore, goals can be sought or avoided.

   Discussion Topic: Think of goals that are sought and those that are not. Give some examples.

   e. Conflicts can occur. Three different types of goal conflicts are:
      1). Approach-approach conflict – a person must choose between two desirable alternatives.
a). The *theory of cognitive dissonance* is based on the premise that people have a need for order and consistency in their lives and that a state of tension is created when beliefs or behaviours conflict with one another.
b). People attempt to reduce dissonance.
c). A state of dissonance exists when there is a psychological inconsistency between two or more beliefs or behaviours.

Discussion Topic: How could a marketer use theory of cognitive dissonance to their advantage?

2). **Approach-avoidance conflict** – many products or services we desire have negative consequences attached to them.
3). **Avoidance-avoidance conflict** – a choice between two undesirable alternatives.

****Use Key Term theory of cognitive dissonance Here; Use Figure 4.1 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 1 Here****

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of each of three major forms of conflict. How can marketers use these conflicts to their advantage?

Classifying Consumer Needs

f. Much research has been done on classifying human needs.
   1). Universal need classifications have been attempted.
   2). There seems to be no universally accepted list (though many needs are common to all lists).
g. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs implies that the order of development is fixed. This hierarchy is most closely associated with product benefits that people might be looking for. Lower order needs must be satisfied before climbing the needs ladder.
The needs are:
   1). **Physiological**.
   2). **Safety**.
   3). **Social**.
   4). **Esteem**.
   5). **Self-Actualization**.

****Use Figure 4.2 Here****

h. Problems with Maslow’s method include:
   1). Climbing the ladder is not set in stone. Some activities cover several levels of needs.
   2). The hierarchy may be culture-bound.
   3). The social and cultural formation of needs is ignored.

Discussion Topic: (a) Tell the class about a product you could buy that could fit into all five levels of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. (b) Bring an advertisement to class that demonstrates each one of the needs (you may have to bring five ads).

4. Hidden Motives

a. Consumers may be *unaware* of the need or want he or she is attempting to satisfy, or he or she may be *unwilling* to admit that those needs or wants exist.
b. If the consumer is unwilling or unable to express his or her needs or wants, these needs or wants have to be *inferred* by the researcher.
Freudian theory
c. Sigmund Freud developed the idea that much of one’s adult personality stems from a fundamental conflict between a person’s desire to gratify his or her physical needs and the necessity to function as a responsible member of society. His principles included:
1). The id (which is entirely oriented toward immediate gratification). It operates on the pleasure principle (behaviour guided by the primary desire to maximize pleasure and avoid pain).
   a). The id is selfish.
   b). The id is illogical.
2). The superego is the counterweight to the id. It is a person’s conscience.
   a). It internalizes rules.
   b). It works to prevent the id from seeking selfish gratification.
3). The ego is the system that mediates between the id and the superego. The ego tries to balance these two opposing forces according to the reality principle, whereby it finds ways to gratify the id that will be acceptable to the outside world. Much of this battle occurs in the unconscious mind.

d. The Freudian perspective hints that the ego relies on symbolic cues in products to make the compromise suggested above. There is a connection between symbolism and motivation.

****Use Key Term Freudian Theory Here*****

Discussion Topic: What are some products that are usually sold by telling you that the use of the product will make you attractive to the opposite sex?

Discussion Topic: What are some products that make their appeals primarily to the id? Bring an example if you can. What are some products that make their appeals to the superego? Bring an example if you can. Do products make an appeal to the ego? If so, how?

e. The first attempts to apply Freudian ideas to understand the deeper meanings of products and advertisements were made in the 1950s and were known as motivational research.
   1). This research focused on interpretations from the subconscious.
   2). Ernest Dichter pioneered the work.
   3). Motivational research was attacked for two reasons:
      a). It was felt that it does work (or work well).
      b). Others felt it worked too well and gave marketers the power to manipulate.
   4). Positives were that:
      a). It was less expensive that traditional forms of motivational research.
      b). It was thought to aid in communication.

****Use Key Term motivational research Here*****

Discussion Topic: Bring evidence of symbolism (that might be considered to be Freudian) that you have found in magazine advertisements.

Desire
f. Desire may better capture the seductive spirit of brand positioning and the deep feelings involved in the formation of consumer’s self-images through consumer goods.

****Use Key Term desire Here*****

Consumers’ desire for adventure, even tinged with a bit of danger, has meant big business for the adventure travel industry, which specializes in providing white-knuckle experiences. Bungee jumping, which originated in 1979, has now been joined by white-water rafting, sky diving, mountain biking, and other physically stimulating activities that are increasing in popularity. This segment of the travel industry has been estimated to account for 1/5 of the U.S. leisure travel-market.
5. Consumer Involvement
   a. **Involvement** refers to ‘the level of personal importance and/or interest evoked by a stimulus (or stimuli) within a specific situation.’ The definition implies that the aspects of the person, the product, and the situation all combine to determine the consumer’s motivation to process product-related information at a given point in time.
      1. A person, however, may not bother to pay any attention to the same information if it is not seen as relevant to satisfying some need.
      2. Involvement can be viewed as the motivation to process information.
      3. As involvement increases, people devote more attention to ads related to the product, exert more cognitive effort to understand these ads, and focus their attention on the product-related information in them.

*****Use Key Term involvement Here*****

Levels of Involvement: From Inertia to Passion
   b. The type of information processing that will occur depends upon the consumer’s level of involvement:
      1. **Simple processing** – only basic features of a message are considered.
      2. **Elaboration** – information is linked to one’s pre-existing knowledge systems.
   c. Since a person’s degree of involvement can be conceived as a continuum, consumption at the low end of involvement is characterised by **inertia**—where decisions are made out of habit because the consumers lack the information to consider alternatives. Other decisions can be very passionate.

*****Use Key Term inertia Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here *****

The Many Faces of Involvement
   d. Involvement can be cognitive or emotional. There are several types of broad involvement:
      1. **Product involvement** is related to a consumer’s level of interest in a particular product. Sales promotions increase this involvement.
      2. **Message-response involvement** (or advertising involvement), refers to the consumer’s interest in processing marketing communications.
         a). Television is considered a low-involvement medium.
         b). Print is considered a high-involvement medium.
      3. **Ego-involvement** (or enduring involvement) refers to the importance of a product to a consumer’s self-concept. Social risk is considered.

Discussion Topic: Illustrate each of the ‘faces of involvement.’ How would marketers make appeals in these areas?

Measuring Involvement
   e. Measurement is important for a variety of reasons.
      1. An involvement profile can be constructed:
         a). Personal interest in a product category.
         b). Perceived importance of the potential negative consequences associated with a poor product choice.
         c). The probability of making a bad purchase.
         d). The pleasure value of the product category.
         e). The sign value of the product category.

*****Use Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 Here *****

Discussion Topic: Construct a simple scale that would measure one of the five profiles described in ‘Measuring Involvement.’
Involvement level is an important consideration in political marketing. Not surprisingly, for example, people who are more interested in political campaigns and are more likely to vote are also more likely to watch candidates’ debates and political conventions on television. 

Discussion Topic: What are some products that people buy that seem to require a great deal of involvement?

2). It is possible to segment by involvement levels. There is diversity among involvement groups.
3). There are specific strategies that can be used to increase involvement.
   a). Appeal to hedonic needs (sensory appeals).
   b). Use novel stimuli (cinematography, sudden silences, or unexpected movements in commercials).
   c). Use prominent stimuli (loud music, large ads, colour, fast action).
   d). Include celebrity endorsers (see also chapter 6).
   e). Build a bond with the consumer (relationship marketing; see also chapter 8).

***** Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 (used previously) Here*****

6. Values
   a. A value is a belief that some condition is preferable to its opposite.
      1). Two people can believe in the same behaviour but their underlying belief systems may be quite different.
      2). Consumers often seek out those that have similar belief systems to their own.

*****Use Key Term value Here*****

Core Values
   b. Every culture has a set of values that it imparts to its members. In most cases, values are universal. However, values change over time.
      1). What sets cultures apart is the relative importance or ranking of universal values. This set of rankings is a culture’s value system.
      2). Every culture is characterized by its members’ endorsement of a value system.
      3). Each set of core values that uniquely define a culture is taught to that culture by socialization agents (parents, friends, and teachers).
         a). The process of learning the beliefs and behaviours endorsed by one’s own culture is termed enculturation.
         b). Acculturation is the process of learning the value system and behaviours of another culture.
         c). Still the meaning of the core values itself is dependent on the local cultural context, providing different connotations to the same words.

*****Use Key Terms value system, enculturation, and acculturation Here*****

Discussion Topic: What are some values that are important to you? Which of these values are transferred to your purchase behaviour? In what way?

Instructors wishing to expand their coverage of values may wish to consult an additional perspective on values. Sheth, Newman, and Gross developed a theory of market choice based on what they term consumption values. The five consumption values are functional, social, emotional, epistemic, and conditional. This approach focuses to a great extent on the benefits perceived as deriving from brand choice, rather than to the view of products as helping to obtain culturally-valued goals. It provides specific guidelines for operationalization, measurement, and application.
Applications of Values to Consumer Behaviour

c. Despite their importance, values have not been as widely applied to direct examination of consumer behaviour as might be expected. The reason is that many values are very general or relative by nature (e.g., freedom, security, inner peace).

1). Research has tended to classify values as being:
   a). Cultural (such as security).
   b). Consumption-specific (such as convenient shopping or prompt service).
   c). Product-specific (such as ease of use or durability).

2). Research in values:
   a). Holbrook suggests that the consumer experience may generate eight types of consumer value:
      1]. Efficiency
      2]. Excellence
      3]. Status
      4]. (Self-) esteem
      5]. Play
      6]. Aesthetics
      7]. Ethics
      8]. Spirituality
   b). The Rokeach Value Survey – the psychologist Milton Rokeach identified two sets of values:
      1]. Terminal values – desired end-states that apply to many different cultures.
      2]. Instrumental values – composed of actions needed to achieve these terminal values.

*****Use Key Terms terminal values and instrumental values Here; Use Table 4.4 Here*****

For an application of Rokeach’s work to consumer behaviour that focuses on sets of these values rather than just the highest-ranked ones and identifies value-based segments in a Brazilian sample, see Wagner A. Kamakura and Jose Alfonso Mazzon’s article. 4

c). The List of Values (LOV) – identifies nine consumer segments based on the values they endorse (and then relates these to consumption).

d). Schwartz Value survey containing 56 values organized in 11 motivational domains has been demonstrated to be cross culturally valid.

3). The Means-End Chain Model – specific product attributes are linked at increasing abstraction to terminal values via ‘laddering.’ Laddering is a technique whereby consumers’ associations between specific attributes and general consequences are uncovered.

*****Use Key Term laddering Here; Use Figure 4.4 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 Here*****

4). MECCAs
   a). Advertising uses the notion that products are consumed because they are instrumental to attaining values in ‘Means-End Conceptualization of the Components of Advertising Strategy’ (MECCAs)
   b) In this approach researchers first generate a map of the relationships between attributes and values. This information is used to identify key advertising elements
   c) Elements include:
      1]. Message elements – which attributes or product features.
      2]. Consumer benefit – positive consequences of use.
      3]. Executonal framework – style and tone of ad.
      4]. Leverage point – how to link terminal values with product features.
      5]. Driving force – end value on which the advertising will focus.

7. Materialism

a. Materialism refers to the importance people attach to worldly possessions.
b. Since the 1950s in Western Europe, and recently elsewhere as well, new products rapidly are becoming necessities to consumers.

c. Materialism is not directly linked to affluence or ‘Westernness’, but to several factors, including social stability, access to information, reference models, historical development, and cultural values.

d. Consumers cope with their own materialism either by finding justifications or by finding excuses.

***** Use Key Term Materialism Here *****

e. The why of consumption can not be answered without references to questions of ‘who’, ‘where’, ‘when’, ‘how’, and ‘what’.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. In all honesty most students will not have much difficulty with the material presented in this particular chapter. The authors do an excellent job of explaining the concepts and the material is not particularly difficult (if a good foundation has been laid in the previous chapters). Please pay particular attention to stressing the vocabulary. If students do not build their consumer behaviour vocabulary diligently and constantly, they will have difficulty in later chapters.

2. One area that might be designated for special attention is the explanation of the basic motivation process. This process is directly tied to the development of goals, drives, wants, and needs. Understanding of these terms is crucial for later material. Allow a few extra minutes to explain the concept of expectancy theory. You will find this to be beneficial in later chapters.

3. For many students Freudian theory may be difficult to understand. Take care to stress the internal conflict inherent in Freudian theory, and its relation to motivational research and hidden motives.

4. If the instructor uses the suggestions and discussion topics in the Chapter Outline, most students will understand the various forms of motivation conflicts. These conflicts should be related to purchasing and advertising. Explore how companies deal with these conflicts.

5. Allow time to discuss values, and especially materialism, with the students. Since many of the students are from Generation X, their values are thought to be different from those of other generations. Most students enjoy talking about these differences and what ‘turns them on and off.’ The students should realize that marketers must be able to sell to all generations if they are to be successful. Ask the students how to effectively (using any product examples you wish) market to their parents. Then ask how to effectively market to themselves. Finally, ask how to market to the generation behind them (primary grades through junior high school). What do they think about that generation?

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Assign a student the task of finding a couple of ads that seem to have indirect appeal to latent motives. Ask the student to show the class the ad and point out the indirect appeals. Does the class agree? Do they perhaps see other latent motives?

2. Ask a student to have 10 people describe the personality of one of the products listed below or another product. How are the descriptions similar? How are they different? (Possible products: light or foreign beer, Macintosh computer, your college or university, the leading brand in toothpaste, a favourite local restaurant or pub.)

3. Find a student who is not too shy to do this one. Ask the student to search for unconscious motives by asking six people if they are wearing perfume or cologne. Make sure they keep asking until at least three people say, ‘Yes.’ Then have them ask the respondents, ‘Why do you wear cologne?’ Ask three of those who said they were not wearing cologne, ‘Why not?’ Ask the three who said, ‘No’ if they wore any the last
time they had a date. Share their responses with the class and evaluate them. Can the class uncover any hidden motivations?

4. Tell the class about products or services you have purchased that fit the three types of Motivational Conflicts found in Figure 4.1.

5. Ask students to sit down and see if they can come up with a list of products or services that people primarily buy because they want to ‘belong’. Have them explain why they listed the particular items.

6. Have your students think of some product or service they have purchased recently. Ask them to explain the stages they went through making this decision.

7. Have students find advertisements that attempt to persuade consumers to think of products as objects that satisfy one of the motives described in this chapter. Have them identify and classify that motive.

8. Ask five students to each find a print ad that appeals to each level of Maslow’s hierarchy. (Make sure they co-ordinate their activities so you’ll have all five levels.) Have each student explain why their ad appeals to this level. Ask why they think the firm selected this particular appeal. Is there an overlap between levels? Is this good or bad?

9. Have each student list what they perceive to be their own most important 5 (or 10) values. How do these values transfer to purchase decisions? How would marketers find out about their values?

10. Have each student list what they perceive to be the five most important values to their parents. How do these values transfer to purchase decisions? How would marketers find out about their values? Is there a similarity between the values of other student’s parents and yours?

11. Have students examine advertisements and determine which appear to be Freudian in nature. How can you tell? What are the messages in the advertisements?

12. Find five advertisements that seem to be directed toward enhancing the consumer’s pleasure principle. What is stressed in the advertisements: product features, benefits, price, location, or other factors?

**Group Assignments**

13. Have members of a club, fraternity, or sorority analyse how members of their organization are following Maslow’s hierarchy in their purchases. (Different products can be used to demonstrate the various motives.)

14. Ask a group of students to observe a table of people eating. See if they can identify any of the major motives at work. Have them report on their conclusions. [Hint: Watch the respondents’ behaviour while they eat and during their conversation. Perhaps they might like to video tape part of the meal (5 minutes max.).]

15. Have the class keep a diary of their consumer decisions for a two-day period. (Make sure they include both actual purchases and conscious decisions not to buy.) At the end of the period have them review their diaries and classify their apparent motives. (Maslow’s scheme may be useful here.) During this process were they more aware of ads?

16. Have the group go to a shopping centre or mall and observe others behaviour. What conclusions can they make about motives, involvement, and values after having made the observation?
CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. Describe three types of motivational conflicts, citing an example of each from current marketing campaigns.

The text lists the three types of motivational conflicts as: (1) approach-approach (choosing between two desirable alternatives [e.g. new car or new entertainment centre]), (2) approach-avoidance (referring to the negative and positive aspects of many products that the consumer must consider [e.g. I want a new car but I would have to pay higher insurance and I couldn’t take a vacation]), and (3) avoidance-avoidance (having to choose between two undesirable alternatives [e.g. do I have the mechanic overhaul my motor or do I buy a motor out of a wrecked car]). In citing examples, students should identify the particular characteristics of the marketing campaign that define it as one type of conflict or another. Additional discussion could be centred on the effectiveness of using each type of conflict for particular product types.

2. Should consumer researchers have the right to probe into the consumer’s unconscious? Is this a violation of privacy, or just another way to gather deep knowledge of purchase motivations?

Students may come up with conflicting views, depending on the alleged motive of marketing. If hidden motives are thought to be probed to seduce consumers at an unconscious level, they may be fairly critical. If hidden motives are thought to be probed in order to develop products and services that meet consumers’ real but unacknowledged needs and wants, they should be more positive. Either way it is not the act of probing in the unconscious but the way in which the information is used that determines the acceptability of this type of research.

3. What is the difference between a want and a need? Do marketers have the power to create needs?

Needs are viewed as basic, biogenic necessities for our survival as human beings in human societies. Wants are viewed as the learned expressions of these needs, guiding consumer demand for specific need satisfying products and services. The difference is less clear when needs are also viewed as covering sociogenic necessities, because then you have to draw a distinction between learned needs and learned wants. Marketers do not have the power directly to create needs, but they do play an influential role in the socialization of consumers and the construction of a society that promotes certain needs at the expense of others.

4. Describe how a man’s level of involvement with his car would affect how he is influenced by different marketing stimuli. How might you design a strategy for a line of car batteries for a segment of low-involvement consumers, and how would this strategy differ from your attempts to reach a segment of men who are very involved in working on their cars?

Different levels of involvement with a product influence the amount of attention paid to marketing stimuli, affecting the amount of cognitive processing capacity directed toward stimuli (e.g., the product related information in an ad). In discussing the development of advertising targeted at low involvement consumers, students should recognize that peripheral cues are used in place of product-related information. Behaviours resulting from such cues do not last long and are likely to change over time. Conversely, developing advertising directed toward high involvement consumers will rely less on peripheral cues and more on substantial product-related information (i.e., the central route to persuasion). Behaviours resulting from this emphasis will be more resistant to change. (How many amps? How many minutes of reserve capacity? What are the cold cranking amps? What are the marine cranking amps?)

5. Interview members of a celebrity fan club. Describe their level of involvement with the ‘product,’ and devise some marketing opportunities to reach this group.

Student responses to this exercise might consider a variety of celebrities – movie stars, musicians, politicians – living and dead. They might be asked to consider the Elvis Presley fan club phenomenon in terms of the tremendous marketing opportunities that have derived from tours of his home in Memphis (Graceland), his personal property displayed in ‘museums’ (guitars, clothing, music awards, etc.), his ‘signature’ hairstyle and sideburns, other actors’ and musicians’ remakes of his movies and songs, television programmes, Elvis parades, books, postage stamps, etc. The quickest way to do this project is to ‘go online’
to a ‘favourite site.’ Most of the recognized search engines (for example, Yahoo!) will have ways for you to reach the celebrity sites.

(Possible Field Project)

6. ‘High involvement is just a fancy term for expensive.’ Do you agree?

If students have an inadequate understanding of involvement, it is likely that they will agree with this statement. What needs to be made clear is that the price of a product is only one potential determinant of product involvement. The instructor should stress the role that personal relevance of the product has for an individual, and point out that it is influenced by the person, the product, and the unique purchase/consumption situation. A good exercise would be for students to develop a list of items that they would classify as high involvement. Along with the list, they should provide price estimates for each item (or simply note them as ‘expensive’ or ‘not expensive’). This type of display would illustrate the lack of association between involvement and price.

7. Collect a sample of ads that appear to appeal to consumers’ values. What value is being communicated in each, and how is this done? Is this an effective approach to designing a marketing communication?

Encourage students to look at the types of values in either the Rokeach Value Survey or List of Values (LOV) to determine which consumer values they would like to share with the class. (Possible Field Project)

8. Construct a hypothetical means-end chain model for the purchase of a bouquet of roses. How might a florist use this approach to construct a promotional strategy?

Students should be encouraged to review the text discussion of the means-end change model and incorporate the laddering technique of probing for more and more abstract associations between products and desired outcomes in completing this exercise. Attributes of a bouquet of roses are beauty, pleasant scent, deep and vivid colours. If you kept probing you could probably find feelings of being loved, a sense of respect and admiration, sympathy, or romance. In discussing how florists might use this approach to construct a promotional strategy, students should include the Means-End Conceptualization of the Components of Advertising Strategy (MECCAs).

9. Think about some of the excuses or explanations you have used towards yourself or towards others for materialistic wants. How do they correspond to the explanations and excuses accounted for here?

Students may require some encouragement and persuasion before they engage in this critical self-reflection on such a basic and unquestionably accepted value as materialism. Especially if they never have felt any need to motivate their materialistic wants, this is a challenging exercise. It should be quite easy to label any possible explanation they come up with as either justifying or excusing.

As a critical reflection you could add the final question whether it would be conceivably possible to come up with an answer or explanation that would not fit into either justification or excuse.

END NOTES

Chapter 5
Attitudes

CHAPTER SUMMARY

An attitude is a predisposition to evaluate an object or product positively or negatively.

Social marketing refers to attempts to change consumers’ attitudes and behaviours in ways that are beneficial to society as a whole.

Attitudes are made up of three components: beliefs, affects, and behavioural intentions

Attitude researchers traditionally assumed that attitudes were learned in a predetermined sequence, consisting first of the formation of beliefs (cognitions) regarding an attitude object, followed by some evaluation of that object (affect), and then some action (behaviour). Depending upon the consumer’s level of involvement and circumstances, though, attitudes can result from other hierarchies of effects as well.

A key to attitude formation is the function attitudes play for the consumer (e.g. is it utilitarian, or ego defensive?).

One organizing principle of attitude formation is the importance of consistency among attitudinal components – that is, some parts of an attitude may be altered to be in line with others. Such theoretical approaches to attitudes as cognitive dissonance theory, balance theory, and congruity theory stress the vital role of the need for consistency.

The complexity of attitudes is underscored by multi-attribute attitude models, in which sets of beliefs and evaluations are identified and combined to predict an overall attitude. Factors such as subjective norms and the specificity of attitude scales have been integrated into attitude measures to improve predictability.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. The Power of Attitudes
   a. The term attitude is widely used in popular culture. For our purposes, an attitude is a lasting, general evaluation of people (including oneself), objects, advertisements, or issues.
      1) Anything toward which one has an attitude is called an attitude object (Ao).
      2) An attitude is lasting because it tends to endure over time.
      3) An attitude is general because it applies to more than a momentary event.
      4) Attitudes help us to make all forms of choices (some important and some minor).

****Use Key Terms attitude and attitude object (Ao) Here****

Discussion Topic: List all the ways the term ‘attitude’ is used in our society.

The Functions of Attitudes
   b. The functional theory of attitudes was initially developed by psychologist Daniel Katz to explain how attitudes facilitate social behaviour. According to this pragmatic approach, attitudes exist because they serve some function for the person. That is, they are determined by a person’s motives.

****Use Key Term functional theory of attitudes Here****
c. The following attitude functions were identified by Katz:
   1). Utilitarian function – based on reward and punishment.
   2). Value-expressive function – goes to the consumer’s central values or self-concept.
   3). Ego-defensive function – protect the person from threats or internal feelings.
   4). Knowledge function – the need for order, meaning, and structure.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Bring in an advertisement that displays each of the attitude functions.

d. Understanding the attitude function of people can be useful to marketers trying to devise strategies that will appeal to different customer segments.

The ABC Model of Attitudes

e. Most researchers agree that an attitude has three components:
   1). Affect refers to the way a consumer feels about an attitude object.
   2). Behaviour involves the person’s intentions to do something with regard to an attitude object (this intention does not always result in behaviour).
   3). Cognition refers to the beliefs a consumer has about an attitude object.

*****Use Key Terms affect, behaviour, and cognition Here*****

Discussion Topic: Construct an example to illustrate each of the components of the ABC model of attitudes.

f. The relative importance of the components of an attitude vary depending upon the level of motivation.
   1). Attitude researchers have developed the concept of a hierarchy of effects to explain the relative impact of the three components.
   2). Three hierarchies are:
      a). The Standard Learning Hierarchy. This is a problem-solving process. Beliefs lead to feelings, which in turn influence behaviour.
      b). The Low-Involvement Hierarchy. Based on good or bad experiences. Beliefs directly influence behaviour, which in turn generates feelings.
      c). The Experiential Hierarchy. An emotional response. Feelings lead to behaviour, which in turn generates beliefs.

1]. The subdivision of this model could include the cognitive-affective model where affective judgement is the last step in a series of cognitive processes.
2]. The independence hypothesis says that affect and cognition are separate.

*****Use Key Term hierarchy of effects Here; Use Figure 5.1 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 1 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of the hierarchy of effects model. How does this apply to consumer behaviour?

Mood-management theory assumes that consumers strive to get rid of or at least diminish bad moods and perpetuate good ones by selecting appropriate programming. For example, when given a choice, bored subjects select exciting TV programmes to watch, while stressed subjects opt for relaxing shows.  

Discussion Topic: As far as you are concerned, which of the ABCs (in the hierarchy of effects model) do you believe has the strongest influence over you when you want to buy a CD player? When you take a special friend out to lunch? When you take this same friend out to dinner? When you buy a soft drink? Explain your reasoning in each case.
There’s more to marketing than Product Attitudes

g. Marketers must understand that in decision-making situations people form attitudes towards objects other than the product itself that can influence their ultimate selections.
   1). People’s attitudes can be influenced by advertising.
   2). One special type of attitude object is the marketing message itself.
   3). The attitude toward the advertisement (Aad) is defined as a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion. Determinates include:
      a). Attitude toward the advertiser.
      b). Evaluations of the ad execution itself.
      c). The mood evoked by the ad.
      d). The degree to which the ad affects viewers’ arousal levels.
   4). The ad has an entertainment value.
   5). Feelings are generated by an ad. Emotional responses can be varied.
h. At least three emotional dimensions have been identified in commercials.
   1). Pleasure.
   2). Arousal.
   3). Intimidation.
i. Special feelings that can be generated are:
   1). Upbeat feelings – amused, delighted, or playful.
   2). Warm feelings – affectionate, contemplative, or hopeful.
   3). Negative feelings – critical, defiant, or offended.

***Use Key Term attitude toward the advertisement (Aad) Here****

Discussion Topic: Think of ways your attitude is affected by advertising. As an example, what is your attitude toward the ‘Energizer Bunny’ commercial? Do you buy Energizer batteries? (Other current ads can be used to get a response.)

Discussion Topic: Can you think of any ads that give you an upbeat feeling? Warm feeling? Negative feeling? How do the ads do this? What affect does it have on your attitudes? Do you buy any products that project a negative attitude (what about toward competition)?

While Aad does appear to affect brand attitudes, its impact can be inflated when items measuring the two components are presented contiguously, rather than being separated by filler items. This effect is particularly pronounced for brands that are familiar to the respondent. ²

Many executional factors can affect Aad, and students will probably have strong opinions about ads they do and do not like. Some of these factors will be considered more specifically in Chapter 6. For a discussion of one controversial executional cue on nudity, see Michael LaTour and Tony Henthorne’s article. ³

Under some conditions, Aad may not exert as large an effect on consumer decisions as is commonly believed, and positive affect may even result in decreased ad effectiveness if liked executional cues draw the perceiver’s attention away from the brand claims presented in the ad. ⁴

2. Forming Attitudes
   a. Attitudes can form through:
      1). Classical conditioning – using a jingle.
      2). Instrumental conditioning – the attitude object is reinforced.

Discussion Topic: Pick one area and demonstrate how you think you learned an attitude. Give examples to illustrate. How could a marketer have influenced you?
Levels of Commitment to an Attitude

b. Consumers vary in their commitment to an attitude; the degree of commitment is related to their level of involvement with the attitude object.
   1). Compliance – formed to gain reward or avoid punishment.
   2). Identification – formed to be similar to others.
   3). Internalization – has to become part of a person’s value system (hard to change once formed).

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of how attitudes were formed by you in each of the three ways (levels of commitment). Which were the stronger attitudes? Which were eventually replaced?

The Consistency Principle

c. According to the principle of cognitive consistency, consumers value harmony among their thoughts, feelings, and behaviours, and they are motivated to maintain uniformity among these elements. People will change to remain consistent with prior experiences.
   1). The theory of cognitive dissonance states that
      a). When a person is confronted with inconsistencies among attitudes or behaviours, he or she will take some action to resolve this ‘dissonance,’ perhaps by changing an attitude or modifying a behaviour.
      b). People seek to reduce dissonant behaviour or feelings. This can be done by eliminating, adding, or changing elements.

Discussion Topic: Demonstrate when the principle of cognitive consistency and the theory of cognitive dissonance have occurred in your purchase decisions. Do you ever catch yourself reading ads (for a car, for example) for products that you have already purchased?

d. Do attitudes necessarily change following behaviour because people are motivated to feel good about their decisions?
   1). Self-perception theory provides an alternative explanation of dissonance effects. It assumes that people use observations of their own behaviour to determine what their attitudes are.
      a). Is relevant to the low-involvement hierarchy.
      b). Explains the foot-in-the-door technique, which is based on the observation that the consumer is more likely to comply with a request if he or she has first agreed to comply with a smaller request.

Discussion Topic: Think of an illustration when someone has used the foot-in-the-door approach on you. Did you buy the product? Why or why not?

2). Balance theory considers relations among three elements a person might perceive as belonging together.
   a). Each triad contains:
      1]. A person and his or her perceptions of ……
      2]. An attitude object and of ……..
      3]. Some other person or object.
   b). Perceptions of the links between either pair are either positive or negative. The weakest held perception is altered to make the three consistent.
   c). Balance theory accounts for the widespread use of celebrities in advertising.

Discussion Topic: Use Key Term balance theory Here; Use Figure 5.4 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 (used previously) and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here

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Discussion Topic: Think of a consumer behaviour situation where balance theory would seem to be operating.

Discussion Topic: Name some celebrity endorsers who have fallen in disfavour with the public? How do you suppose this has affected the sales of the product they endorsed? Did any of the companies stop using these endorsers? Do you believe celebrity endorsement works? If so, under which circumstances?

3. Attitude Models
   a. Attitude models have been developed to specify and explore the different elements that affect attitudes.

Multi-Attribute Attitude Models
   b. A consumer’s attitude is affected by an object’s attributes. Multi-attribute attitude models have attempted to explore the many attributes that might impact a consumer’s decision-making process.
      1). This type of model assumes that a consumer’s attitude (evaluation) of an attitude object (Ao) will depend on the beliefs he or she has about several or many attributes of the object.
      2). Basic multi-attribute models specify three elements:
         b). Beliefs. Cognitions about the specific attitude object.
         c). Importance weights. Reflects the priority consumers place on the object.

   ****Use Key Term multi-attribute attitude models Here****

   3). Attitudes may be measured with different types of scales
      a). Single Item Scales directly ask for someone’s evaluation of the object, whereas Multiple Item Scales cover the different attributes of the multi-attribute model.
      b). Likert type scales are a list of statements covering the various attributes, for which the respondent must rate his/her level of agreement.
      c). Semantic Differential Scales cover the attributes with pairs of opposing adjectives to which the respondent must answer by indicating which way his/her evaluation of the object leans.

   c. The most influential of the multi-attribute models is the Fishbein model. The model measures:
      1). Salient beliefs.
      2). Object-attitude linkages.
      3). Evaluation of each of the important attributes.

   ****Use Table 5.1 Here****

   d. Strategic applications of the multi-attribute model would include:
      1). Capitalize on relative advantage.
      2). Strengthen perceived product/attribute linkages.
      3). Add a new attribute.
      4). Influence competitors’ ratings.

   **** Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 (used previously) and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here****

Discussion Topic: Using the material and formula from the chapter, see if you can find an illustration to apply the Fishbein model to. If not be sure to carefully work through the example and then propose an application of your own.

4. Using Attitudes to Predict Behaviour
   a. You can’t always predict from knowledge of attitudes. A consumer can love a commercial but not buy the product.
The Extended Fishbein Model

b. This model is called the **theory of reasoned action**. Additions include:
   1. Intentions versus behaviour – past behaviour is a better predictor than intentions.
   2. Social pressure – others have a strong influence on behaviour.
   3. Attitude toward buying – **attitude toward the act of buying (Aact)** focuses on perceived consequences of purchase.

*****Use Key Terms theory of reasoned action and attitude toward the act of buying (Aact) Here

*****

Discussion Topic: Who are some people who tend to have a strong influence on your behaviour? Can you think of anyone whose behaviour you have influenced? What was the result?

Discussion Topic: Can you think of something you bought that you really didn’t want to buy? Do you know why you bought it anyway?

c. There are certain obstacles to predicting behaviour (the improved Fishbein model).
   1. It was designed to deal with actual behaviour not outcomes of behaviour.
   2. Some outcomes are beyond the consumer’s control.
   3. Behaviour is not always intentional (impulse actions).
   4. Measures of attitudes do not always correspond with the behaviour they are supposed to predict.
   5. The relationship between attitude and behaviour weakens with the amount of time passing.
   6. Direct personal experience is stronger than indirect exposure (saw an ad).

d. When researchers attempt to track attitudes over time they must remember to take many snapshots, not just a few.

e. Changes to look for when tracking attitudes include:
   1. Changes in different age groups (the life-cycle effect).
      a). The cohort effect.
      b). Historical effects.
   2. Scenarios about the future.
   3. Identification of change agents.

*****Use Figure 5.6 and Figure 5.7 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 and 5 Here (both were previously cited)*****

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. This particular chapter has few barriers to learning (partially because of the material and partially because the author has prepared the student to receive information about attitudes). However, one of the areas that the instructor might be sure to spend some extra time with is the concept of an ‘attitude’ itself. Be careful to make sure that students see the consumer behaviour-related meaning of the term rather than the slang-way of using the term. This will prevent problems in the future.

2. The next area that should receive special attention is the various components that may make up an attitude – beliefs, affect, and behavioural intentions. Each of these is explained very well in the chapter, however, be sure the student sees these for what they are because it will help to understand how to measure and evaluate attitudes and changes therein.

3. As indicated in the text, one organizing principle of attitude formulation is the importance of consistency among attitudinal components. Various theories (cognitive dissonance theory, self-perception theory, and balance theory) were discussed. Each student should understand how consistency of attitudes is an objective that can be sought or used by the marketer. Each student should be prepared to create examples to demonstrate the different theories and the consistency concept.

4. The last major barrier is that of the multi-attribute models (be sure to cover the Fishbein models very carefully). Since many marketers have difficulty finding the right variables with which to evaluate a set of
beliefs so that overall attitudes can be predicted, it is of little wonder that students might have difficulty with this also. It is recommended that the instructor approach this subject carefully. Read the material in the chapter carefully before preparing the lecture. Examine the bibliography for this chapter for additional scholastic aid. Be sure to prepare examples to illustrate the primary points of this section. Several small discussion projects are provided within the Chapter Outline itself (see Discussion Topics). Students seem to respond to examples more readily than to the actual concepts themselves.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. This one can get controversial – be ready. Have a student explain to the class what sources are influential in their attitude toward one of the following: your college or university, the current governing (or opposition) party, a recent President or Prime Minister, their religious faith, or any organized group (e.g. labour movement, Planned Parenthood, Greenpeace.) Or, instead, have the student interview a few friends about one of these organizations and report on that survey to the class. What can be learned about attitudes by having these discussions? What would be of value to a marketer?

2. Invite a student to prepare a short paper and report to the class about three experiences that led to cognitive dissonance (buyer’s remorse), i.e. buying expensive jewellery for a girl friend/boy friend, buying a car, buying expensive clothing, buying expensive electronic equipment, choosing a college or university, renting an apartment, buying a house.

3. Have a student design a product positioning map for a weight-loss product. Perhaps the student could use types of diets, exercise, emphasis in changing habits, and use of nutritional supplements in designing a map, or perhaps they might like to include the degree to which social pressure is brought to bear in the process. Then address the various niches in the weight loss industry, identifying some of the more successful ones and giving reasons why this is so. Relate this to attitudes.

4. Have a student assemble ads for physical fitness and/or weight loss programmes or products, and have them analyse these ads in terms of how they are trying to influence or change consumers attitudes toward their body image. What emotional and rational appeals were used (e.g. fear, health, vanity, social acceptance, peer pressure)? See how the student evaluates the effectiveness of the ads.

5. Ask a student to keep track of five television commercials that use celebrities to endorse brands. What were the products and what types of shows were these aired on? Find out whether the student thinks that the particular celebrity was the right person to use in representing the particular product or service to the public.

6. Have a student explain the consistency, balance, and Fishbein theories to a friend. Then ask the friend to analyse two of his or her recent experiences that seem to confirm or disconfirm one or more of these theories. Report the findings to the class.

7. It’s time for true confessions. Have a student describe three instances when their purchase behaviour was inconsistent with their attitude toward the product, or service, they were buying. Ask the student to try to explain why this happened. Now ask the class if they agree with the explanation or whether they have other notions.

Group Assignments

8. This is a good in-class project in which you or a group of students can lead a class discussion. Give the class a list of eight or ten common generic products (e.g. cars, peanut butter, detergent, toothpaste, petrol, toilet paper, microwave dinners, professional football team, airline, soft drink) and ask them to list their favourite brand(s) of the product. See if those who are participating know how they developed their brand preference and how the products’ attributes are related to their attitudes toward the product.
9. Here is another good in-class project. Ask your students to write down on a piece a paper a consumer product that they just ‘love’ and one they just ‘hate’. Find out if they can remember how long they have felt this way. Do they remember when they first developed these attitudes? Why do they suppose that they still feel this way? See if they have ever tried to change their attitude.

10. Do project 9 above, except take up the pieces of paper and randomly distribute them to the class. Then have each class member take the piece of paper they have received and have them make a case for the product (even if they do not like the product). This can be very amusing when males have to ‘sell’ female-oriented products (such as make-up) and vice-versa. See if this experiment shows anything about attitude change.

11. Divide the class into teams and have each team come up with a set of about ten descriptive words that could be used to positively or negatively describe a consumer good (e.g. stereo, car, expensive clothing). Send students out to interview a friend who owns this product. Determine the length of time the respondent has owned the product and then have the respondent evaluate the product according to some criteria determined by the class. See if the people who more recently purchased the product have a more positive attitude toward it than those who have owned it for a longer period of time. Because of time length, the instructor may wish to do this in class between groups or only have a few students participate in the project.

12. Ask a group of students to have three people write down the names of the best and worst provider of an identical service – e.g. a bank, a dentist, a dry cleaners, a hairdresser, an airline, a fast food restaurant. Have the respondents give five descriptive words for each provider – ask them to use negative words that can be used in polite society. How could both service providers use this information? What would you do to change the image for these firms?

13. Ask a group of students to think about restaurants they like and don’t like to patronize. Have them design a multi-attribute model for three of these restaurants, making sure both spectrums are included. Have students make suggestions how the managers could improve the restaurants’ images by following the strategies and tactics found in this chapter.

14. You can either facilitate this project yourself or have a group of students do it. Bring to class a number of products (or pictures of products) and ask those assembled about their attitude toward the products. This is a good way to start a conversation about the characteristics of attitudes. Notice that if someone disparages a product that is someone else’s favourite they may rebut the comments. Product defence is a common reaction.

15. Have a group of students search various types of magazines that appeal to different target markets, and then ask them to lead a discussion on how these ads were designed to appeal to the specific target market.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. Contrast the hierarchies of effects outlined in the chapter. How will strategic decisions related to the marketing mix be influenced by which hierarchy is operative among target consumers?

The ‘standard learning’ hierarchy assumes a purposeful and involved process in attitude formation leading to a decision that may lead to brand loyalty. On the other hand, the ‘low-involvement’ hierarchy assumes a minimal amount of knowledge and sees the attitude formed ‘after-the-fact.’ The chapter specifically notes that the use of marketing stimuli would be more effective in the low-involvement situation because the consumer uses these inputs as a basis for selection and attitude formation, instead of product-related characteristics. However, students should note that the product is the key ingredient in the marketing mix and consequently, long-term success is less likely to result from simple low-involvement attitude formation.
2. List three functions played by attitudes, giving an example of how each function is employed in a marketing situation. To examine European countries’ attitudes towards a wide variety of issues go to the website: http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/dg10/infcom/epo/eo.html

Utilitarian Function – related to the principles of reward and punishment.

Example: Pleasure of owning a sports car/pain of paying for it;
Example: Some people enjoy drinking alcohol. If they drink too much, however, the result is a headache.

Value-Expressive Function – expresses the consumer’s central values or self-concept.

Example: People who wear Diesel Jeans feel that they are in fashion; they feel different from everyone else.

Ego-Defensive Function – protects the person from external threats or internal feelings.

Example: People may use mouthwash in order to feel confident about their breath and their overall attractiveness to members of the opposite sex.

Knowledge Function – the result of a need for order, structure, or meaning.

Example: ‘Have you driven a Ford lately?’ Consumers may want to explore why they should test drive a Ford. What does the product offer the consumer?

[When providing examples of these functions, students should also be able to describe the types of marketing activities that most often are associated with each function. Discussion could include students’ reasons for pairing a particular function with a specific marketing activity, or the type of consumption situation in which each function would lead to an ‘optimal’ decision.]

3. Think of a behaviour exhibited by an individual that is inconsistent with his or her attitudes (e.g., attitudes toward cholesterol, drug use, or even buying things to attain status or be noticed). Ask the person to elaborate on why he or she does the behaviour, and try to identify the way the person has resolved dissonant elements.

Students should be able to generate many diverse examples of this type of consumer behaviour. Assume you are a high school student who is health conscious but who may smoke occasionally because your friends smoke. The reason you smoke may be to ‘fit in’ with a group, or the behaviour may serve as some type of initiation into the group. You may resolve dissonant elements by telling yourself that an occasional cigarette won’t hurt you as long as you keep exercising and eating right.

4. Using a series of semantic-differential scales, devise an attitude survey for a set of competing automobiles. Identify areas of competitive advantage or disadvantage for each model you incorporate.

The semantic-differential scale often is used to describe a consumer’s beliefs about product, brands, and/or companies. Students are likely to develop scale items reflecting a variety of beliefs about individual products, where a set of product attributes are rated on a series of scales. For example:

My travel agent is:

very efficient 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 very inefficient
very accessible 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 very inaccessible
very friendly 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7 very unfriendly

Semantic-differential scales also may be used to compare the images of competing brands, as in the following example:
Honda Accords have good interior features.
  Agree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7  Disagree

Peugeots 306 have good interior features.
  Agree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7  Disagree

Opel Astras have good interior features.
  Agree 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – 6 – 7  Disagree

(Possible Individual or Group Field Project)

5. Construct a multi-attribute model for a set of local restaurants. Based on your findings, suggest how restaurant managers can improve their establishment’s images via the strategies described in the chapter.

The multi-attribute models that students develop for a set of local restaurants should include:
(1) a number of product attributes – characteristics of the restaurants, such as price, type of foods, number of menu items, location, etc.
(2) beliefs regarding specific restaurants (in terms of attributes)
(3) importance weights reflecting the relative priority of specific attributes for them individually

While there will likely be some common elements in the models developed, students should be encouraged to think about how each model is reflective of the individual responsible for the product evaluation. The instructor should point out to students the complexity of consumer attitudes, as demonstrated by the diversity of attitudinal statements, product attributes, beliefs and importance weights that might be chosen. (Possible Individual or Group Field Project)

END NOTES

Chapter 6
Attitude change and interactive communications

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Persuasion refers to an attempt to change consumers’ attitudes.

The communication model specifies the elements needed to transmit meaning. These include a source, message, medium, receiver, and feedback.

Two important characteristics that determine the effectiveness of a source are its attractiveness and credibility. While celebrities often serve this purpose, their credibility is not always as strong as marketers hope.

Some elements of a message that help to determine its effectiveness are whether it is conveyed in words or pictures, whether an emotional or rational appeal is employed, the frequency with which it is repeated, whether a conclusion is drawn, whether both sides of the argument are presented, and whether the message includes fear, humour, or sexual references.

Advertising messages often incorporate such elements from art or literature as dramas, lectures, metaphors, allegories and resonance.

The relative influence of the source versus the message depends upon the receiver’s level of involvement with the communication. The elaboration likelihood model specifies that a less-involved consumer will more likely be swayed by source effects, while a more-involved consumer will more likely attend to and process components of the actual message.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Changing Attitudes Through Communication
   a. Consumers are constantly bombarded by messages inducing them to change their attitudes. How can attitudes be created and modified? This is a valid question for the marketer to answer.
      1). Persuasion refers to an active attempt to change attitudes.
      2). Persuasion attempts to work in negative ways, too.

   Discussion Topic: When was the last time you were ‘persuaded’ to change an attitude? Describe what, how, and the outcome.

   Decisions, Decisions
   b. To craft persuasive messages that might change attitudes, a number of questions must be answered:
      1). Who is featured in the ad that seeks to change an attitude? Who would be best, given the circumstances?
      2). How should the message be constructed?
      3). What media should transmit the message?
      4). What characteristics of the target market might influence the ad’s acceptance?

   The Elements of Communication
   c. Marketers and advertisers have traditionally tried to understand how marketing messages can change consumers’ attitudes by thinking in terms of the communications model, which specifies that a
number of elements are necessary for communications to be achieved. The basic model can be perceived as having five parts:
1). **The source** – the person who chooses and encodes (i.e., initiates the transfer of meaning by choosing appropriate symbolic images that represent that meaning).
2). This meaning must be put in the form of a **message**. There are many ways to say something.
3). The message must be transmitted via a **medium** (such as television or magazines).
4). The message is then decoded by one or more **receivers**.
5). Finally, **feedback** must be received by the source (who uses the reactions of the receivers to modify aspects of the message).

****Use Key Term communications model Here; Use Figure 6.1 Here****

**Discussion Topic:** Provide an illustration of the communications model described in the chapter. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this model? How can the source be a better communicator?

**An Updated View: Interactive Communications**

d. Traditional models of communications do not tell the whole story about the communication process.
1). Consumers have many choices in today’s dynamic world of interactivity.
2). The traditional model was developed by what was known as the Frankfurt School (it dominated communication theory for most of this century).
3). One of the flaws was that the receiver was largely seen as being passive or just ‘fed’ by the media.

e. Proponents of the **uses and gratification theory** argue instead that consumers are an active, goal-directed audience that draws on mass media as a resource to satisfy needs.
1). This view emphasizes that media compete with other sources to satisfy needs, and that these needs include diversion and entertainment as well as information.
2). There is a blur between information and entertainment.
3). Consumers are becoming more like partners than ever before. They may seek out messages.
4). The remote control device is an example of this ‘seeking’ behaviour.

****Use Key Term uses and gratification theory Here; Use Figure 6.2 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here ****

**Discussion Topic:** Provide examples of how you are passive and active in information acquisition. How do you interact with the media to receive information?

f. A key to understanding the dynamics of interactive marketing communications is to consider exactly what is meant by a response. A variety of responses are possible:
1). Buying the product.
2). Building brand awareness.
3). Acquiring information about product features.
4). Reminders.

g. There are two basic types of feedback:
1). **First-Order Response** – a product offer that yields a transaction.
2). **Second-Order Response** – customer feedback in response to a marketing message that is not in the form of a transaction.

**Discussion Topic:** Give an example of a second-order response. Did this response eventually result in a transaction?

**2. The Source**
a. Regardless of how a message is received, common sense tells us that the same words uttered or written by different people can have very different effects.
1. Under most conditions, the source of a message can have a big impact on the likelihood the message will be accepted.
2. Two very important source characteristics are **credibility and attractiveness**.

**Source Credibility**

b. **Source credibility** refers to a source’s perceived expertise, objectivity, or trustworthiness. The belief that a communicator is competent is important to most consumers.

1. Credibility can be enhanced if the source’s qualifications are perceived as somehow relevant to the product being endorsed. This linkage can overcome many objections.
2. A consumer’s beliefs about a product’s attributes can be weakened if the source is perceived to be the victim of bias in presenting information.
   a). **Knowledge bias** implies that a source’s knowledge about a topic is not accurate.
   b). **Reporting bias** occurs where a source has the required knowledge, but his or her willingness to convey it accurately is compromised.

*****Use Key Term source credibility Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** What celebrity sources do you perceive as being most credible? Is this for a specific product or service categories or across the board?

**Source Attractiveness**

c. **Source attractiveness** refers to the source’s perceived social value. This quality can emanate from the person’s physical appearance, personality, social status, or similarity to the receiver.

1. When used correctly famous or expert spokespersons can be of great value.
2. Celebrities embody cultural meanings to the general society.
3. The **match-up hypothesis** says that celebrities that match the product are the most successful endorsers.

*****Use Key Terms source attractiveness and match-up hypothesis Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** Give an example of a celebrity that you perceive to be an illustration of the match-up hypothesis.

**Discussion Topic:** What categories of products would want to make sure their source is credible? .....is attractive?

**Discussion Topic:** Can you think of company spokespersons who do seem to fit the company or the product image? What should the company do about this? How much difference does it really make? Give an illustration of where celebrity image has really hurt a company’s marketing effort.

4. A **halo effect** often occurs when persons of high rank in one dimension are assumed to excel in others as well. Be careful of the stereotype ‘what is beautiful is good.’
5. However, a physically attractive source tends to facilitate attitude change.
   a). Beauty serves as a source of information.
   b). The **social adaptation perspective** assumes that information seen to be instrumental in forming an attitude will be more heavily weighted by the perceiver.
6. Matching credibility and attractiveness is a strong match. The choice between the two often depends on the product or the product situation.
7. Experts are effective for products that have **high performance risk**.
8. Celebrities are effective for products that have **high social risk**.
9. Exceptions do occur. This is called the **‘sleeper effect.’** Explanations include:
   a). The **dissociative cue hypothesis** – over time the message and the source become disassociated in the consumer’s mind.
b). The availability-valence hypothesis – emphasizes the selectivity of memory owing to the limited capacity.

*****Use Key Term sleeper effect Here*****

Discussion Topic: Can you think of a product that you have tried because of a celebrity endorsement? Be honest – can you think of one? Who are spokespersons that you perceive to be the best ‘attention-getters’? Who is your favourite celebrity endorser? Why?


3. The Message
   a. Are commercials effective? Research indicates that those that have a brand-differentiating message are consistently the most effective.
   b. Characteristics of the message itself have an impact on attitudes. Issues facing marketers include:
      1). Should the message be conveyed in words or pictures?
      2). How often should the message be repeated?
      3). Should a conclusion be drawn, or should this be left up to the listener?
      4). Should both sides of an argument be presented?
      5). Is it effective to explicitly compare one’s product to competitors?
      6). Should blatant sexual appeals be used?
      7). Should negative emotions, such as fear, ever be aroused?
      8). How concrete or vivid should the arguments and imagery be?
      9). Should the ad be funny?

*****Use Table 6.1 Here*****

Sending the Message
   c. Great emphasis is placed on sending visual messages. However, words may be necessary to communicate factual information. Both elements used together are especially strong.
      1). Verbal messages are stronger in high-involvement situations.
      2). Visual messages result in a stronger memory trace that aids retrieval over time.
   d. Visual elements may affect brand attitudes by:
      1). The consumer may form inferences about the brand and change his or her beliefs because of an illustration’s imagery.
      2). Brand attitudes may be affected more directly through strong negative and positive reactions.

*****Use Figure 6.3 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Think of examples when (a) words, (b) pictures, and (c) both would be the best suggestions for influencing attitudes.

Both the size and colour of illustrations can have a strong impact on responses to an ad and in causing attitude change. The use of one-colour newspaper ads in a field study resulted in 41 percent more sales volume than when the same ads were run in black-and-white. ¹

e. Elements:
   1). Vividness – powerful descriptions and graphics help us remember.

Attempts to influence attitudes by highlighting the behaviour of other people in the same situation are more successful when put into concrete terms. For example, a commercial that features five people explaining their product choice is more vivid than the abstract claim that four out of five consumers chose Brand X.
2). **Repetition** – repetition helps us remember, but ads ‘wear out.’
   a). The **two-factor theory** proposes that two separate psychological processes are operating when a person is repeatedly exposed to an ad. The positive side increases familiarity. The negative side breeds boredom over time.
   b). Advertisers have to watch too much repetition. Provide variety in the basic message.

*Use Key Term two-factor theory Here; Use Figure 6.4 Here *****

**Discussion Topic**: Think of ads that illustrate vividness and repetition. What do you remember about them? Why do you think you remember what you do?

**Constructing the Argument**

f). Arguments can be presented in a variety of ways. Examples include:

1). The **One-versus Two-sided Argument**.
   a). The supportive argument is one-sided and most often used.
   b). Two-sided messages give positive and negative information and are seldom used. This seems to be most effective when the audience is well educated.
   c). Refutation arguments raise a negative issue and then dismiss it.

*Discussion Topic*: Give an illustration of (a) a supportive argument, (b) a two-sided argument, and (c) a refutation argument. Find an example of each in a print media form.

Quaker Rice Cakes reacted to their consumer research that told them people felt rice cakes tasted like Styrofoam or cardboard. In ads for a new line of flavoured cakes, the company showed a picture of a foam cup with a piece bitten off. The copy read: ‘If this is what you think of rice cakes, wait till you taste ‘em now.’

Another factor that may influence the persuasive potential of a message is syntactic complexity. For example, the statement, ‘Trident gum is sugarless’ is less complex than the statement, ‘Trident gum does not contain sugar.’ These alternatives can make a difference, especially when motivation to process the statement is relatively low.

2). **Drawing Conclusions**. The question becomes should the advertiser draw conclusions or leave it to the consumer to decide?

*Discussion Topic*: Do you think it is smarter to draw conclusions in an ad for your customers or to let them do it themselves?

*Use Consumer Behaviour Challenges 5 and 8 Here*****

**Types of Message Appeals**

g). **Emotional versus rational appeals**. Emotional appeals try to bond the consumer with the product. However, ads that make you think are easier to recall. Effects of emotional ads are very hard to gauge.

*Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 6 Here*****

**Discussion Topic**: Think of illustrations when a (a) rational or (b) emotional appeal works best. What is the effectiveness dependent upon?

h). **Sex appeals**. These appeals range from subtle hints to blatant displays of flesh. Most assume, however, that ‘sex sells.’

1). Does sex work?
   a). It draws attention.
   b). It is ineffective if the consumer sees it as a trick or gratuitous.
c). It is most effective if the product is sex-related (such as perfume).
d). It may distract attention from the ad’s contents and the brand name.

****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 Here *****

**Discussion Topic:** Do you find more nudity in ads in men or women’s magazines?

**Discussion Topic:** What are your feelings about using sex in advertising? What are the dependent factors? Even if you are against it, are there circumstances when it would be OK?

i. **Humorous Appeals.** What is funny to one is offensive to another.
   1). Humour can be a distraction.
   2). Subtle humour is usually the best.

One reason for the mixed findings regarding humour is that humorous appeals increase in persuasiveness.
Over time humour creates generalized arousal that results in a more active memory trace process and an enhancement of cognitive processing in the long term. (This effect would not show up on conventional measures of ad effectiveness that are taken immediately following exposure to the humorous ad.)

**Discussion Topic:** What are some of your favourite ads that use humour? Do you buy those products or products from their competition?

j. **Fear appeals** emphasize the negative consequences that can occur unless the consumer changes a behaviour or an attitude.
   1). This appeal can be directed toward social fear.
   2). It can also be directed toward fears about careers and love life. This is called a slice-of-death.
   3). Fear is effective if used in moderate amounts.

****Use Figure 6.5 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9 Here*****

Some evidence indicates that downscale, more traditional consumers are more susceptible to fear appeals.

**Discussion Topic:** Who can think of an ad in which the models fear losing their jobs? Think of ways that career fear can be used.

**Discussion Topic:** What are some of the products that you can think of that seem to use fear to attract customers?

Research on the effectiveness of fear appeals has yielded mixed results. One reason may be due to the assumption that a specific type of message will uniformly generate a high level of fear among all consumers.

The Message as Art Form: Metaphors Be with You

k. A **metaphor** involves the use of an explicit comparison. Metaphors allow the marketer to activate meaningful images and apply them to everyday events.

l. **Resonance** is another literary device that is frequently used in advertising to form a presentation that combines a play on words with a relevant picture.

****Use Key Terms metaphor and resonance Here; Use Table 6.2 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 10 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** Give an illustration or bring an ad that displays a metaphor or resonance in advertising.

m. The story told in many ads can be told in words or in pictures.

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Discussion Topic: Find an ad where a story is being told. Do you ever catch yourself reading an ad just to see how the story ends?

4. The Source Versus the Message: Sell the Steak or the Sizzle?
   a. Variations in a consumer’s level of involvement result in the activation of very different cognitive processes when a message is received.

   The Elaboration Likelihood Model
   b. The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) assumes that once a consumer receives a message he or she begins to process it. Depending on the personal relevance of this information, one of two routes to persuasion will be followed. The routes are:
      1). Under conditions of high involvement, consumer takes the central route to persuasion.
      2). Under conditions of low involvement, a peripheral route is taken.

   Discussion Topic: Illustrate the central route to processing information.

   c. In the central route to processing, the consumer will determine if the message is relevant. The person will actively think about the arguments presented and generate either positive (cognitive responses) or negative (counterarguments) responses. This route usually involves the traditional hierarchy of effects.

   Discussion Topic: Illustrate the peripheral route to processing information.

   d. In the peripheral route to persuasion, the consumers are (sometimes) not motivated to think about the argument, and use other cues in deciding on the suitability of the message (such as looking at the package).

   Discussion Topic: If you were the producer of a product that was being examined by the consumer in a peripheral way, what strategies could you suggest for dealing with this? In what instances would this not be bad for the producer?

   e. The ELM model has received a lot of research support. Crucial variables to this model are:
      1). Message-processing involvement – high or low.
      2). Argument strength – use strong or weak arguments in ads.
      3). Source characteristics – viewed as positive or negative by receivers.

   When a consumer is more motivated to process an ad because it is relevant to his or her goals, the impact of central processing on brand attitudes is increased and that of peripheral cues is decreased. During a persuasive message, advertisers may attempt to provide distractions to reduce the amount of counter-arguing a person is able to do. This strategy is effective when the argument for choosing the product is fairly weak. A similar result can sometimes be obtained by embedding the message in an involving programme. The viewer is distracted as he or she processes the show’s contents, so the commercial message is more easily accepted.

   BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

   1. Like Chapter 5, this chapter has only a few areas that represent barriers to effective learning. The instructor can easily side-step these barriers. First, the instructor will want to be sure to firmly establish in the mind of the student what persuasion is and how it relates to attitudes and attitude change. In essence,
this is the primary point of the chapter. However, a firm and solid introduction to this material will forego problems. Be sure students carefully read the opening material in the chapter and take a few minutes to cover it with them.

2. Be prepared to cover the basic communication model. Remember that some students might be confused because they have had other models in Advertising, Principles of Marketing, or Business Communications. Try to draw them out and relate the model presented in the chapter (which is very standard) to other material. The example used in the text is a good way to demonstrate the material. It is a little harder for the students to see the interactive view (however, this view is more practical and modern). Be sure to spend enough time to resolve any difficulties before progressing forward.

3. Be sure to get the students involved in a discussion of source credibility and attractiveness. Use the Discussion Topic suggestions contained in the Chapter Outline to get them to think about the material they have just read and how to apply the material. Remember the purpose of the learning experience – to get them to see how communication can be used to formulate or change attitudes. There are many areas for them to discuss – using beauty, celebrities, et cetera.

4. The last area to be emphasized is that of how to construct messages. In addition to material provided in the text and the Chapter Outline, the instructor might try to get students to construct messages that can be reviewed as to their effectiveness. The techniques match well to advertising techniques. If there is time, the instructor might invite a representative from an advertising agency or a copywriter to give their views on message construction. These people (especially if you will supply them with a copy of the chapter in advance) generally make great speakers that the students always enjoy. One caution, however, be careful when discussing the sex appeal and fear appeal section. Make sure that no one is offended and proper classroom discussion format is maintained.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Have a student visit an ad agency and interview an advertising executive. Ask the executive about one of the advertising campaigns he/she has developed and how (or whether) it was designed to change consumers’ attitudes toward the product, service, or company. Have the student summarize the interview with the class.

2. Ask one of your students to interview three people and have each respondent identify an advertisement that they have a positive attitude toward and an ad that they have a negative attitude toward. Be sure to inquire to find out how their attitudes toward the ads influence their attitudes toward the products and likelihood of purchase.

3. Here is a project for someone who likes to be creative. Have this person select an existing product or service and design a couple of ads (print or electronic media) which make use of the principles discussed in this chapter. The student should explain why he or she thought these particular ads would be effective.

4. Find someone who is nostalgic or likes history to select a product brand and look up advertisements for it over the past 20 years or so. [Good library sources include glossy magazines. Most national brands have excellent videos of their old ads and the students tend to enjoy watching these.] Demonstrate how these ads reflect your perceptions of changes in consumer attitudes.

5. Ask a student to read some ads from print media or view or listen to ads on the broadcast media. Find out to what extent the following message appeals appear to be used: (a) emotional, (b) rational, (c) sex, (d) humorous, (e) fear. Which does he or she feel is most powerful? Which is most persuasive? Which is most credible?

6. Here is an activity for the class comedian. Have a student bring in three television ads that employ humour. Then ask the student to analyse the ads and explain what makes the ads funny and what causes them to wear out. What types of products can change your attitude by using humour in the message?
7. Negative attitudes are often difficult to change. Ask a student to think of a company that has had some bad press. How has the company handled the news? Have they been successful in turning the situation around? What techniques did they employ (or are they employing)? What suggestions do you have for the company?

8. Ask a student to identify several spokespeople in recent TV ads. Speculate on the ages of the spokesperson and the age of the target audience. Do companies seem to let a spokesperson age along with the target audience or do they seem to find a new spokesperson? Why you suppose certain spokespersons were selected for these roles?

**Group Assignments**

9. Bring in a number of print or television ads that use celebrity endorsers (or have students do it). Ask the class how effective they think the ads are. By evaluating the spokesperson as either ‘good’ or ‘poor’, determine whether the class likes the celebrity. Do they find the ads believable or contrived? Probe to find out why they feel this way.

10. Bring in a number of print or television ads that rely on the use of metaphors or resonance (or have your students do it.) What are your student’s initial reaction to the ads? How effective do they think they are? Do they think some other approach would be more convincing? Why?

11. Ask a group of students to interview several of their friends to find out what non-aerosol products they use. Did they formerly use an aerosol product? If so, see if you can determine why they changed their buying decision. Have them explain their attitude toward the environment in general. Find out what other measures they take to protect the environment.

12. Have students make a list of all the commercials shown on evening or late news on each of the major television channels. Then ask them to categorize each ad according to product category, and whether it used drama or argument to persuade the viewer. Also have them record the number of minutes during the 30-minute news programmes allotted for ads.

13. Encourage two or three students to compare and contrast high-involvement processing and low-involvement processing as is found in the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion in (Figure 6.6). Have the students relate these stages to the processes they followed on a recent purchase. See if any of the stages were reversed in the mind of the student.

14. There is probably a pub or a restaurant near campus that many students avoid because of its lack of cleanliness. Ask one of your students or a team to take charge of this establishment and develop a promotional campaign that would change consumers’ attitude toward this pub or restaurant. What is the difference between atmosphere and cleanliness? Could a manager clean the place up ‘too much’? Explain.

**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE**

1. The chapter’s opening vignette discusses the theoretical and managerial issues in changing attitudes through communications. Identify and discuss the ethical issues of using marketing techniques which promote the use of tobacco. Are these issues similar to the ethical issues in promoting ‘wet shaving’ among European women? Why or why not?

   Use this question to encourage discussion on the mixed responsibilities of those employed in attitude change and marketing communication. Marketing managers and advertisers should take responsibility for the social and individual effects of their actions, but they also have responsibilities to their companies and the shareholders.
2. Create a list of celebrities who match up with products in your country. What are the elements of the celebrities and products which make for a ‘good match’? Why? Which celebrities have a global or European-wide appeal, and why?

Students should be encouraged to think carefully about a variety of product categories in order to do this project. Listing celebrities, their characteristics, brand characteristics, and match-ups is a good way to begin. Many of the match-ups will be product specific. Many of the celebrities will only have national appeal. Encourage discussion with this question.

3. A government agency wants to encourage the use of designated drivers by people who have been drinking. What advice could you give the organization about constructing persuasive communications? Discuss some factors that might be important, including the structure of the communications, where they should appear, and who should deliver them. Should fear appeals be used, and if so, how?

Steps the government agency should take:
- The target market(s) should be established. (teenage drivers)
- Both the source and the message must be considered.
- The source must be both credible and attractive to the target audience.
- Make a list of possible sources for the message.

One of the largest target markets would be teenage drivers, thus making it necessary for the source to be aligned with that group. Such a person, or organization, would also have to be perceived as having social value, or having source attractiveness, in order to have the greatest persuasive impact. Likewise, the structure of the communication would need to be tailored to meet the processing needs and likes of the target market. Recall that uninvolved consumers will respond to peripheral cues best, and therefore the use of celebrity endorsers and other non-product-related aspects will have a greater effect. Fear appeals should be used judiciously and only with moderate emphasis on the negative aspects.

The instructor may elect to provide samples of public issue advertisements, or encourage students to collect some advertisements that can be used to stimulate discussion of issues relevant to the design of this form of advertising. [Possible Field Project Idea.]

4. Go to the Martell cognac website at www.martell.com and review the company’s site. To attract more young men to the lagging spirits brand, the ‘I am Martell’ ad campaign and website aims to build a cult following around French women, synonymous with the brand. Martell’s new global campaign relies heavily on sex-appeal. How does this campaign seem to match up with your country’s cultural values? Does the campaign seem persuasive to you? Why, or why not?

This certainly is a tough one to comment upon. The campaign is obviously aimed at young male adults, but I wonder whether it has sufficient sex-appeal to compete with more promising web-sites. Try to start a discussion by finding or designating two opposing views: one student or group who finds the campaign attractive, and one who finds it not appealing.

5. Why would a marketer consider saying negative things about his or her product? When is this strategy feasible? Can you find examples of it?

The use of two-sided arguments is effective when the audience is well educated and not loyal to the product. These conditions exist for many new product introductions and brand extensions. When the advertised product is complex, something negative can be said about the minor attribute without producing an overall negative affect, as long as positive descriptions of major attributes of the product also are included. For example, Curtis Mathis has advertised that its televisions are very expensive (a negative attribute) while countering with information about the superb quality, workmanship, and service provided.

6. A marketer must decide whether to incorporate rational or emotional appeals in its communications strategy. Describe conditions that are more favourable to using one or the other.

Students’ responses should include the issues of product involvement and complexity. Emotional appeals can be used with low involvement products to increase the level of consumer’s involvement with the products. Emotional appeals also are appropriate for homogeneous or commodity-type products.
Alternatively, rational appeals are recommended when there are significant differences between product alternatives.

7. Collect ads that rely on sex appeal to sell products. How often are benefits of the actual product communicated to the reader?

Students will be able to find examples of products that use sex appeals in almost any magazine, but magazines targeted toward either men or women are the best sources. Be sure to examine ads before they are presented to the class. Some students get carried away (especially the males) and might present material that might be offensive to other class members (especially to the females). The instructor should not just rely on the students’ judgement in this matter. (Possible Field Project Idea)

8. To observe the process of counter-argumentation, ask a friend to talk out loud while watching a commercial. Ask him or her to respond to each point in the ad or to write down reactions to the claims made. How much scepticism regarding the claims can you detect?

Students will enjoy this project. You might encourage a student to video tape a few ads and show the tape to a friend. This will give the student an opportunity to choose a few ads that make a number of claims that can be analysed. (Possible Field Project Idea)

9. Make a log of all the commercials shown on one network television channel over a six-hour period. Categorize each according to product category and whether they are presented as drama or argument. Describe the types of messages used (e.g., two-sided arguments), and keep track of the types of spokespeople (e.g., television actors, famous people, animated characters). What can you conclude about the dominant forms of persuasive tactics currently employed by marketers?

The instructor might want to encourage students to work in pairs in order to better manage the recording of 10 and 15 second commercials. One person could write about one commercial while the other person is listening to the next commercial – this is especially important because of the number of 10 and 15 second ads. (Possible Field Project Idea)

10. Collect examples of ads that rely on the use of metaphors or resonance. Do you feel these ads are effective? If you were working with the products, would you feel more comfortable with ads that use a more straightforward, ‘hard-sell’ approach? Why or why not?

Make sure students review the section of the text that describes how metaphors and resonance are used in advertising before they go in search of ads. Encourage the students to discuss both the positive and the negative aspects of metaphors or resonance. (Possible Field Project)

END NOTES


Chapter 7
The self

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The self-concept refers to the beliefs a person holds about his or her attributes, and how he or she evaluates these qualities. In other words, consumers’ self-concepts are reflections of their attitudes toward themselves. Whether these attitudes are positive or negative, they will help to guide many purchase decisions; products can be used to bolster self-esteem or to ‘reward’ the self.

Many product choices are dictated by the consumer’s perceived similarity between his or her personality and attributes of the product. The symbolic interactionist perspective on the self implies that each of us actually has many selves, and a different set of products is required as props to play each. Many things other than the body can also be viewed as part of the self. Valued objects, cars, homes and even attachments to sports teams or national monuments are used to define the self when these are incorporated into the extended self.

A person’s sex-role identity is a major component of self-definition. Conceptions about masculinity and femininity, largely shaped by society, guide the acquisition of ‘sex-typed’ products and services.

Advertising and other media play an important role in socialising consumers to be male and female. While traditional women’s roles have often been perpetuated in advertising depictions, this situation is changing somewhat. The media do not always portray men accurately either.

A person’s conception of his or her body also provides feedback to self-image. A culture communicates certain ideals of beauty, and consumers go to great lengths to attain these. Many consumer activities involve manipulating the body, whether through dieting, cosmetic surgery, tattooing, and so forth.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Perspectives On The Self
   a. Many products, from cars to cologne, are bought because the person is trying to highlight or hide some aspect of the self.

   Does the Self Exist?
   b. The concept of the self is relatively new. It only developed in medieval times. Prior to that time (and in many cultures today), the collective self was emphasized.
      1). The self is seen by Western and Eastern cultures as being divided into the:
         a). Inner self.
         c). Outer, public self.
      2). Expression of self is more popular in the Western cultures.

   The place valued on individuality and a distinction between an inner and an outer self developed with the self-consciousness wrought by Puritanism between 1500 and 1800. The notion of secular fulfilment (and the conflict between an individual’s needs and those of society) that drives much of modern-day hedonistic marketing was a dominant issue in the Romantic period (the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century).

   According to objective self-awareness (OSA) theory, our conscious attention flips back and forth between the self and the external world. When a person is in an OSA state, he or she sees the self as others do, which usually arouses negative feelings, because we are often critical of the image we see. A somewhat similar perspective regards self-awareness as a feedback loop, much like the regulatory mechanism in a
thermostat. We check our current self against our goals, altering our behaviour if necessary to get back on track.  

**Self-Concept**

c. The self-concept refers to the beliefs a person holds about his or her attributes, and how he or she evaluates these qualities. Evaluations may be positive, more positive, or negative.

1). Components of the self-concept include:
   a). Content – such as facial attractiveness versus mental aptitude.
   b). Positivity or negativity – such as self-esteem.
   c). Intensity, stability over time, and accuracy – the degree to which one’s self-assessment corresponds to reality.

****Use Key Term self-concept Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** In half a page to one page, evaluate yourself as to your self-concept. The instructor can choose to ask students to not put their name on the paper, mix them up, and pass them out to the class. Have class members read the paper they have received and see if the class can guess (based on the description) who the class member is based on the written description.

2). Self-esteem refers to the positivity of a person’s self-concept.
   a). Those with low self-esteem do not think they will perform well.
   b). Those with high self-esteem expect to be successful.

3). Marketing communications can influence a consumer’s level of self-esteem.

4). Self-esteem advertising attempts to change product attributes by stimulating positive feelings about the self.

**Discussion Topic:** What are some ads that promote self-esteem?

5). Self-esteem is influenced by a process where the consumer compares his or her actual standing on some attribute to some ideal.
   a). The ideal self is a person’s conception of how he or she would like to be.
      This self is partly moulded by heroes (or advertising depictions) in one’s culture.
   b). The actual self refers to our more realistic appraisal of the qualities we have and don’t have.

****Use Key Terms ideal self and actual self Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** How would you describe your ideal self, actual self, and your ‘undesired self’?

6). While most people experience a discrepancy between their real and ideal selves, for some consumers this gap is larger than for others.
   a). These people are good targets for fantasy appeals.
   b). A fantasy or daydream is a self-induced shift in consciousness, which is sometimes a way of compensating for a lack of external stimulation or of escaping from problems in the real world.

****Use Key Term fantasy Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** How do advertisers appeal to our fantasies?

**Multiple Selves**

d. In a way, each of us is really a number of different people. We have as many selves as we do social roles. This causes us to prefer different products and services.

1). The self can be thought of as having different components, or role identities.
2). Some of the identities are more central than others (e.g., husband, boss, mother, student).
3). Others might be dominant in certain situations (e.g., dancer, coach, Sunday school teacher).
e. The sociological tradition of **symbolic interactionism** stresses that relationships with other people play a large part in forming the self.
   1. Like other social objects, the meanings of consumers themselves are defined by social consensus.
   2. We tend to pattern our behaviour on the perceived expectations of others in a form of **self-fulfilling prophecy** (by acting the way others expect us to act).
   3. The **looking-glass self** is the process of imagining the reactions of others toward us (also known as ‘taking the role of the other’).

****Use Key Terms symbolic interactionism and looking-glass self Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** How many multiple selves do you have? When was an instance when your ‘looking-glass self’ was operating?

**Self-Consciousness**

f. There are times when people seem to be painfully aware of themselves.
   1. Some people are more self-conscious than others.
   2. Self-monitoring is one way to measure self-consciousness. Vanity might be one aspect measured by such a scale.

**Discussion Topic:** What was one of your most embarrassing moments? If the circumstances were different would you have been less self-conscious?

2. Consumption and Self-Concept

   a. Consumers learn that different roles are accompanied by constellations of products and activities that help to define their roles.

   **Products That Shape the Self: You Are What You Consume**

   b. People use an individual’s consumption behaviours to help them make judgements about that person’s social identity.
   c. A person exhibits **attachment** to an object to the extent that it is used by that person to maintain his or her self-concept. Objects act as security blankets.
   d. **Symbolic self-completion theory** predicts that people who have an incomplete self-definition tend to complete this identity by acquiring and displaying symbols associated with it (e.g., men and their ‘macho’ products).
   e. The contribution of possessions to self-identity is perhaps most apparent when these treasured objects are lost or stolen. The victim feels ‘violated.’

****Use Key Term symbolic self-completion theory Here*****

**Self-Product Congruence**

f. Consumers demonstrate consistency between their values.
   1. **Self-image congruence models** predict that products will be chosen when their attributes match some aspect of the self.
   2. The ideal-self seems to be more relevant for highly expressive social products such as expensive perfume.
   3. Research tends to support the idea of congruence between product usage and self-image. However, this theory does not work with all products (such as toasters).

****Use Key Term self-image congruence models Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 1 Here*****

People are more likely to rate more socially desirable products as similar to themselves; person/product congruence also increases with ownership.
The Extended Self
g. Those external objects that we consider a part of us comprise the extended self.

Discussion Topic: What objects do you consider to part of your extended self? What do they have to do with your self-expression? How would an advertiser appeal to your extended self?

Pets are often an integral part of the extended self. Many consumers are devoted to their pets and regard them as family members. This link is so strong that people often infer the features of owners from their pets.4

h. Four levels of extended self have been described:
   1). Individual level – you are what you wear.
   2). Family level – includes your house and furniture.
   3). Community level – includes your neighbourhood and hometown.
   4). Group level – your religion, flag, sports team, et cetera.

*****Use Key Term extended self Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 8 and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of the four different forms of extended self. How might these forms be used by marketers or advertisers?

3. Gender Roles
   a. Sexual identity is a very important component of a consumer’s self-concept. We tend to conform with culture’s expectations, however, these expectations change.

Gender Differences in Socialization
b. A society’s assumptions about the proper roles of men and women are communicated in terms of the ideal behaviours that are stressed for each sex.

c. In many societies, males are controlled by agentic goals, which stress self-assertion and mastery.

d. Females are taught to value communal goals, such as affiliation and the fostering of harmonious relations.

e. The field of marketing has historically been largely defined by men, so it still tends to be dominated by male values.
   1). Competition is stressed.
   2). Power and control are pervasive themes.
   3). Emotions and aesthetics may increase as more women move into marketing.

*****Use Key Terms agentic goals and communal goals Here*****

Discussion Topic: Identify goals that you think are uniquely male and female. How can marketers exploit these goals and the associated needs?

Gender Versus Sexual Identity
f. Sex role identity is a state of mind as well as body.
   1). A person’s biological gender does not totally determine whether he or she will exhibit sex-typed traits or characteristics that are stereotypically associated with one sex or the other. Subjective feelings are important.
   2). Masculinity and femininity are not biological characteristics.
   3). Characteristics change from one culture to another.

g. Many products are sex typed, they take on masculine or feminine attributes.
   1). Masculinity and femininity are not opposite ends of the same dimension. Androgyny refers to the possession of both masculine and feminine traits.
2). Differences in sex-role orientation can influence responses to marketing stimuli, at least under some circumstances. As an exception, women who exhibit male characteristics prefer less feminine advertising messages.

*****Use Key Terms sex-typed traits and androgyny Here; Use Table 7.1 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Why do you suppose we have boys’ toys and girls’ toys? Is society or marketing responsible for this?

Discussion Topic: Are there any role reversal products that you prefer, such as a more feminine lotion (for a male) or a more masculine scent (such as in perfume for a female)? When might role reversal be present (single males having to cook and clean an apartment, therefore paying attention to ads about these products or a female having to wear more masculine business suits)? How do you feel about this?

The decision about how to portray a man or a woman (for example, whether a woman’s family, sexuality, or professional life be emphasized) should take into consideration the intended function of the product. Consumers are most comfortable with role portrayals that are consistent with the product in question; a family role should be emphasized for family products, and so on.  

To protest about the sex role stereotypes perpetrated by children’s dolls, a group of performance artists bought at least 300 talking G.I. Joe and Barbie dolls, switched voice boxes, and replaced the altered dolls on store shelves. The Barbies utter macho phrases like ‘Eat lead, Cobra!’ while the G.I. Joe dolls wonder, ‘Will we ever have enough clothes?’

The traditional demarcation between men and women is perpetuated in Japanese comic books, which are widely read by children and adults (they comprise over 25 percent of Japan’s publishing industry). Female characters in these books tend to have lives centred around their husbands and children. Negative consequences occur when they try to pursue professional careers.

Female Gender Roles

h. Gender roles for women are changing rapidly.
   1). More than six in ten of new car buyers under the age of 50 are female, and women buy almost half of all condoms sold.
   2). The evolution of a new managerial class of women has forced marketers to change their traditional assumptions about women as they target this growing market.

Discussion Topic: What stereotypes of women do you feel are no longer true? How are marketers attempting to appeal to the ‘new’ woman?

   3). Rock videos tend to be the biggest culprits of reinforcing traditional women’s roles. Ads many times reinforce negative stereotypes.
      a). Women are often portrayed as stupid, submissive, temperamental, or as sex objects for men.
      b). Many modern ads, however, are stressing role-reversal.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here (used previously)*****

Male Sex Roles

i. Society’s definition of the male role is evolving.
   1). Many males are now shown as having a ‘sensitive’ side.
   2). ‘Male bonding’ is a popular theme (especially in beer commercials).
   3). Male lifestyles are expressing freedom in clothing choices, raising children, and in overcoming their big dumb jock image in advertising.
   4). Males are also rebelling against being shown as sex objects.
Discussion Topic: Can you think of any ads where they have females performing acts that were predominately male roles in the past?

Discussion Topic: Can you think of an ad in which the male is a sex object?

Gay and Lesbian Consumers
j. In society, in the business place, and in the market, gay and lesbian consumers have ‘come out of the closet’ in the 1990s. Most marketing firms have begun to account for lifestyle segments such as these.

4. Body Image
a. A person’s physical appearance is a large part of his or her self-concept.
   1). *Body image* refers to a consumer’s subjective evaluation of his or her physical self.
   2). Consumers often see themselves differently than they naturally are.

Ideals of Beauty
c. A person’s satisfaction with the physical image he or she presents to others is affected by how closely that image corresponds to the image valued by his or her culture.
   1). An *ideal of beauty* is a particular model, or exemplar, of appearance.
   2). Examples of ideals are physical features, clothing styles, cosmetics, hairstyles, skin tone, and body type.

Discussion Topic: Women: Write down on a piece of paper what your ideal man looks like. Men: Write down on a piece of paper what your ideal woman looks like. Discuss the results with the class. (This often leads to a wild discussion. Relate the findings to ‘ideals of beauty’ as used by our society.

Attractiveness is such an integral part of our culture that it has spawned many terms to describe good-looking people. These include such words as majestic, haunting, fetching, fair, drop-dead, knockout, classic, ravishing, swell, bitchin’, foxy, and more recently fly, Ca-junga!, robo-babe, and babia majora. Students should be able to generate their own list, and can examine these terms for their connotations (e.g., many terms to describe women are animal metaphors, such as chick and fox). What do these terms say about our cultural assumptions regarding beauty?

Psychologists estimate that between 2-10 percent of people are so unhappy with some aspect of their appearance that it constricts their daily activities. Body dysmorphic disorder, or imagined ugliness, is now a formal psychiatric diagnosis.
The market for thinness is a segmented one. Generally, the people who are serious about dieting are those who do not need to be. Despite the abundance of diet related products on the market, the right message is reaching the wrong people. Obesity is considered by many to be a more severe health problem than smoking. It is more prevalent among lower socio-economic groups, rural residents, and African-Americans.  

3) Recent research indicates that preferences for some physical features over others are ‘wired in’ genetically, and that these reactions tend to be the same among people around the world. 

4) Men are more likely to use a woman’s body shape as a sexual cue. 

5) Marketers seem to have a lot to do with ‘packaging’ faces (such as a fashion look). 

6) History shows that women have worked hard to attain beauty. However, what is beautiful in one era may not be considered to be so in another era. 

d. The ideal body type of Western women has changed radically over time, and these changes have resulted in a realignment of sexual dimorphic markers – those aspects of the body that distinguish between the sexes.

Working on the Body 

c. Because many consumers are motivated to match up to some ideal of appearance, they often go to great lengths to change aspects of their physical selves. 

1) As reflected in the expression ‘you can never be too thin or too rich,’ our society has an obsession with weight.

*****Use Figure 7.1 Here*****

2) Exaggeration of appearance importance can result in disorders of great magnitude. Women are especially taught that quality of body reflects their self-worth. 

a). Eating disorders are common in women (such as anorexia or bulimia). 

b). Eating disorders in men tend to emphasize gaining, rather than losing weight (especially in putting on more muscle). 

3). Many American consumers have elected to do cosmetic surgery to change a poor body image. 

a). Many women have the surgery done to reduce weight or increase sexual desirability. 

b). Breast size seems to be one of the main focuses. This is also emphasized either directly or indirectly by marketers. 

c). Across the world different body ideals lead to widely different kinds of cosmetic surgery.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What do you think of the ‘thin is in’ concept? (Notice the differences between the responses of males and females.) Ask students if they have ever known anyone with any of the disorders mentioned in the chapter and (if so) ask them to relate the story to the class. What would this have to do with marketing? Is there a link?

f. Body decoration and mutilation is in the news on a rather regular basis. Decorating or mutilating one’s self is not a new concept. It may, in fact, serve several purposes: 

1). To separate group members from non-members. 

2). To place the individual in the social organization. 

3). To place the person in a gender category. 

4). To enhance sex-role identification. 

5). To indicate desired social conduct. 

6). To indicate high status or rank. 

7). To provide a sense of security. 

g. Tattoos – both temporary and permanent – are a popular form of body adornment. 

h. Body piercing (decorating the body with various kinds of metallic inserts) has evolved from a practice associated with some fringe groups to become a popular fashion statement.
Discussion Topic: Discuss tattooing and body piercing with the class. How many have done it? Why? What type of statement was being made? How might marketers and advertisers use these trends in their promotions? What do you think the long-term trend will be?

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. One of the first major barriers to be overcome in discussing this chapter is the reluctance of students to discuss ‘the self.’ It may help to get them to talk in small groups (and then present group thought that are more anonymous) or talk in the ‘third person.’ If you can get them to overcome this barrier and talk honestly, this chapter will increase in meaning and interest for the students.

2. The second major barrier to be overcome is in understanding ‘the self-concept’ and its relationship to marketing practice and strategy. Using examples from advertising seems to be a good springboard for doing this. Prior to giving this lecture, spend a few minutes going through contemporary magazines to find examples of ads that represent categories discussed in the chapter. If the instructor were to go to the library, he or she could find illustrations of how the self was depicted in the past by reviewing magazines from the past. Many times a ‘Principles of Advertising’ text will also have ads that can be used. This text presents many excellent exhibits that may also be used. Encourage students to read and observe them carefully.

3. The third barrier is in getting students to be honest and see how that they are influenced by advertising and ‘are what they consume.’ Press them to see how the individual consumer makes expression of self through purchases (see Discussion Topics in the Chapter Outline for additional aid).

4. The last major barrier is in getting students to talk about what might be seen as controversial subjects: gender roles, beauty, sexual expression, and the human body. Try using small groups to bring out their feelings or let them talk about friends rather than themselves. Be careful to monitor the discussion closely so no one will be embarrassed or become offended (or violate university or college policy for such discussion). Be sure to relate the discussion to marketing practice and the study of consumer behaviour. The purpose of the discussion is not to revisit SEX 101.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Ask a student to bring to class two brands within the same product category that project different images to the consumer. Have the student discuss the image that is being projected by comparing and contrasting the two different brands. What techniques did the marketer use to project these images? Is the self-concept of the buyer important?

2. Have a student develop a set of scales to measure consumers’ self-images and their image of a car such as the Honda Accord. The student should administer the scales to five people who drive the selected car. Do the images appear to be compatible?

3. Ask students to go out and interview the managers of two retail clothing stores of their choice. See if they can discover the degree to which the managers believe that consumers’ personalities and self-images are important to the marketing and promotional activities of their store. Ask the students if they are in agreement with the managers.

4. Have male students and female students separately interview three women and three men whom they think are just about the right weight for their height and bone structure. The students should ask the respondents if they think of themselves as overweight, underweight, or about right. Then, see if they can determine how the subjects reached their conclusions. And, ask the subjects if they are doing anything to keep their weight under control.
5. If it is a holiday season when you cover this chapter, have students drive through a few different
neighbourhoods to see how many visible signs of the holiday are displayed. Ask them about their
observations. They could video tape what they see and show this to the class.

6. Send the students out in pairs to visit a store that they like. Ask the students to observe and describe
personalities of the sales force. Now send them to visit a store they dislike. Did they notice any difference
in the personalities of the sales force? Do they think that poor or unexciting personalities will have an affect
on salesmanship?

7. Have students write an obituary for two products. The obituary should talk about the individual
personality of the products and should show the differences.

8. Collect advertisements that would tell a stranger something about your self-concept (and image). Put
these ads on a poster board. Display the poster boards in class and see if the class can match the boards to
the correct students.

9. Collect five different advertisements. In five short paragraphs, describe the primary market for the
products and the type of person who would (in your opinion) typically buy the product. What information
from self-concepts did you use to make your evaluation.

10. Describe how a marketer could relate their products to someone who has chosen any of the alternative
lifestyles described in the chapter.

Group Assignments

11. Have each student interview four people (one each in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s) to determine how
important appearance is in a job. Ask your students if they feel that an employee’s appearance should be
considered in performance evaluations. See if their attitudes change when the employee must deal directly
with customers. This activity is also interesting when you ask the subjects about the proper appearance in
church or at an important social function.

12. Ask your students to compile a list of ten household chores. Then have each student interview two
couples (one newlywed and the other seasoned) to determine who usually performs that chore – the husband
or the wife. If possible have the students ask the subject when their spouse is not around. Do they agree?
This can be fun to analyse during class.

13. Have student groups discuss the concept of ‘extended self.’ Formulate strategies that a marketer could
use to reach a person with respect to ‘extended self.’

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. How might the creation of a self-conscious state be related to consumers who are trying on clothing in
dressing rooms? Does the act of preening in front of a mirror change the dynamics by which people
evaluate their product choices? Why?

When women try on clothing in a dressing room the presence of other women and mirrors might create a
self-conscious state. By ‘checking themselves out’ in a mirror, asking other people how something looks,
or hearing someone tell them that they look good in an outfit, women’s self-consciousness is likely to be
heightened. These acts and interactions will determine whether a potential customer feels confident about
wearing the outfit and, therefore, is willing to buy it.

2. Is it ethical for marketers to encourage infatuation with the self?

Students will have their own opinions. Encourage them to think about self-infatuation and the related
concepts of self-consciousness and self-esteem.
3. List three dimensions by which the self-concept can be described.
   1. content – facial attractiveness versus mental aptitude
   2. positivity or negativity – self-esteem
   3. intensity, stability over time, and accuracy – the degree to which one’s self assessment corresponds to reality.

4. Compare and contrast the real versus the ideal self. List three products for which each type of self is likely to be used as a reference point when a purchase is considered.
   The real self is the perception of oneself as one believes one actually is while the ideal self is the perception of oneself as one would like to be.
   The products students choose will differ. For example, a person might buy a PaperMate ballpoint pen for use around the house, but will carry a Cross Pen (which was probably a gift) when out in public.

5. Watch a set of ads featuring men and women on television. Try to imagine the characters with reversed roles (i.e., the male parts played by women and vice versa). Can you see any differences in assumptions about sex-typed behaviour?
   Students will have fun with this challenge though it will be an eye-opener to some. An example of an ad that has women and men playing their traditional roles is a Duncan Hines cake mix commercial. The commercial shows the wife/mother making a cake. When the cake is ready, the father/husband and children are smiling and happy. The ad then says, ‘Nothin’ says lovin’ like a cake from the oven.’ If one switches the roles of the man and woman, the ad somehow would not correspond to our image of having a cake baked by someone who loves us. Most of the time we will want to see ads that reflect a reality as we normally perceive it. (Possible Field Project Idea)

6. To date, the bulk of advertising targeted to gay consumers has been placed in exclusively gay media. If it was your decision to make, would you consider using mainstream media as well to reach gays, who constitute a significant proportion of the general population? Or, remembering that members of some targeted segments have serious objections about this practice, especially when the product (e.g., liquor, cigarettes) may be viewed as harmful in some way, do you think gays should be singled out at all by marketers?
   Students should consider the text discussion of gay and lesbian consumers. There more likely will be a difference of opinion on this issue. The instructor might encourage different groups of students to take each side of the argument, irrespective of their personal opinions on the matter. Due to the potential sensitivity of the topic, the instructor might ask the students to think about segmentation and target marketing efforts, in general, and consider why this case is or is not different from targeting any other consumer group. (Possible Class Activity – Debate)

7. Do you agree that marketing strategies tend to have a male-oriented bias? If so, what are some possible consequences for specific marketing activities?
   Students should consider the discussion of ‘macho marketers’ in the text. Ask them to generate examples of marketing activities that reflect the presence and absence of male bias. In general, the instructor should encourage students to think about the consequences of male-oriented bias across disciplines, not just in the context of marketing activities. (You might ask the men if they see any evidence of female-oriented bias in advertising and marketing.)

8. Construct a ‘consumption biography’ of a friend or family member. Make a list and/or photograph his or her most favourite possessions, and see if you or others can describe this person’s personality just from the information provided by this catalogue.
   Students might like to bring in a short video tape of the types of products the subject owns. This is usually a fun exercise as students love to guess who the subject is. Usually, of course, they can pinpoint who the person is and can come close to describing the person’s personality. (Possible Individual Field Project)

9. Some consumer advocates have protested the use of superthin models in advertising, claiming that these women encourage others to starve themselves in order to attain the ‘waif’ look. Other critics
respond that the media’s power to shape behaviour has been overestimated, and that it is insulting to people to assume that they are unable to separate fantasy from reality. What do you think?

This is a good topic for a debate. An instructor might want to seek volunteers or to simply select two teams each consisting of one male and one female student. Give each team an opportunity to present their side of the argument and then allow time for rebuttal. (Possible In-Class Activity)

END NOTES

Chapter 8
Individual decision making

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Consumers are faced with the need to make decisions about products and services all of the time. Some of the decisions are very important to the consumer and entail great effort, while others are made more or less automatically.

Perspectives on decision making range from a focus on habits that people develop over time to a focus on novel situations involving a great deal of risk where consumers must carefully collect and analyse information prior to making choices.

A typical decision process involves several steps. The first is problem recognition, where the consumer first realizes that some action must be taken. This realization may be prompted in a variety of ways, ranging from actual malfunction of a current purchase to a desire for new things based on exposure to different circumstances or advertising that provides a glimpse into what is needed to ‘live the good life.’

Once a problem has been recognized and is seen as sufficiently important to warrant some action, information search begins. This search may range from simply scanning the memory to determine what has been done to resolve the problem in the past, to extensive fieldwork where the consumer consults a variety of sources to amass as much information as possible. In many cases, people engage in surprisingly little search. Instead, they rely upon various mental shortcuts, such as brand names or price, or they may simply imitate others.

In the evaluation of alternatives stage, the product alternatives that are considered comprise the individual’s evoked set. Members of the evoked set usually share some characteristics; they are categorized similarly. The way products are mentally grouped influences which alternatives will be considered, and some brands are more strongly associated with these categories than are others (i.e., they are more prototypical).

When the consumer eventually must make a product choice from among alternatives, a number of decision rules may be used. Non-compensatory rules eliminate alternatives that are deficient on any of the criteria the consumer has chosen to use. Compensatory rules, which are more likely to be applied in high-involvement situations, allow the decision maker to consider each alternative’s good and bad points more carefully to arrive at the overall best choice.

Very often, heuristics (mental rules of thumb) are used to simplify decision-making. In particular, people may develop many market beliefs over time. One of the most common beliefs is that price is positively related to quality. Other heuristics rely on well-known brand names or a product’s country of origin as signals of product quality. When a brand is consistently purchased over time, this pattern may be due to true brand loyalty, or simply to inertia because it’s the easiest thing to do.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Consumers as Problem Solvers
   a. Most consumers go through a series of steps when they make a purchase. They are:
      1). Problem recognition.
      2). Information search.
      3). Evaluation of alternatives.
      a). Learning occurs on how well the choice worked out.
      b). This learning affects future choices and purchases.
b. Since some purchase decisions are more important than others, the amount of effort we put into each differs.
   1). Sometimes the decision is automatic.
   2). Sometimes the decision is one where a great deal of thinking and analysis is required.

Discussion Topic: Illustrate a situation in which your decision to buy was automatic. Illustrate a situation where your decision to buy required a great deal of thought.

Perspectives on Decision Making

c. Traditionally, consumer researchers have approached decision-makers from a rational perspective. In this view, people calmly integrate as much information as possible with what they already know about a product, painstakingly weigh the pluses and minuses of each alternative, and arrive at a satisfactory decision.
   1). Though this approach is correct in some instances, it does not describe all forms of decision making.
   2). Consumers probably have many strategies for making decisions. This is called constructive processing.
   3). Environmental cues may be used (such as buying on impulse). This form of decision making is called the behavioural influence perspective. This is a low involvement perspective.
   4). In other cases, consumers are highly involved in a decision, but still the decisions cannot wholly be explained rationally. This is called the experiential perspective. This approach stresses gestalt (or totality) of the product or service.

Types of Consumer Decisions

d. Decision processes can be considered by the amount of effort that goes into the decision each time it must be made. Three forms exist:
   1). Extended Problem Solving – there is a fair degree of risk and we use internal search and external sources. This form is fairly central to the self-concept. The consumer tries to collect as much information as possible.
   2). Limited Problem Solving – this is a simple, straightforward decision process. Buyers use simple decision rules.
   3). Habitual Decision Making – these are characterised as simple automatic decisions. This form is characterised by automaticity.

Discussion Topic: Use illustrations of each of the three forms of decision processing. What do you see as the basic differences between the forms? How should marketers deal with these differences? How could marketers convert one form into another (and why would they want to do this)?

2. Problem Recognition

   a. Problem recognition occurs whenever the consumer sees a significant difference between his or her current state of affairs and some desired or ideal state.
      1). The consumer perceives there is a problem to be solved, which may be large or small, simple or complex.
      2). A problem can occur in two ways.
         a). The quality of the consumer’s actual state (running out of petrol for example) can move downward (need recognition).
b). The consumer’s ideal state (desiring an newer flashy car for example) can move upward (opportunity recognition).

c). Either way, a gap occurs between the actual state and the ideal state.

????Use Key Term problem recognition Here; Use Figure 8.3 Here????

b. Need recognition can occur in several ways:
   1). The quality of the person’s actual state can be diminished by:
      a). Running out of a product.
      b). By buying a product that turns out not to adequately satisfy needs.
      c). By creating new needs.
   c). Opportunity recognition often occurs when a consumer is exposed to different or better-quality products.

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of the three forms of need recognition.

Discussion Topic: How do sellers convince you that you have a problem that they can solve?

3. Information Search
a. Once a problem has been recognized, consumers need adequate information to resolve it. 
   Information search is the process in which the consumer surveys his or her environment for appropriate data to make a reasonable decision.

????Use Key Term information search Here????

Types of Information Search
b. Types of search that the consumer may undertake once a need has been recognized include:
   1). Pre-purchase search – an explicit search for information.
   2). Ongoing search – used by veteran shoppers to keep abreast of changes in the product categories of interest to them.

????Use Table 8.2 Here????

c. Information sources can roughly be broken into:
   1). Internal search – a memory scan to assemble information about different product alternatives.
   2). External search – information is obtained from advertisements, friends, or just plain people-watching.

Discussion Topic: Where would you go to find information about a product you purchase regularly (such as a soft drink), a computer, how to have a root canal, or a new car?

d. Search can be deliberate or accidental.
   1). Deliberate search is the result of directed learning – this an active search.
   2). Accidental search is the result of incidental learning – exposure to information over time (passive search).

A Cybermediary is an intermediary that helps to filter and organize online market information to increase consumer efficiency in identification and evaluation of alternatives. Directories and Portals tie together a large variety of sites. Web site evaluators review and recommend sites. Forums, fan clubs and user groups offer product related discussions. Intelligent Agents use collaborative filtering to translate past user behaviour into new recommendations.
The Economics of Information

e. The traditional decision-making perspective incorporates the *economics-of-information* approach to the search process; it assumes that consumers will gather as much data as is needed to make an informed decision.
   1. Consumers form expectations of information.
   2. The utilitarian assumption implies that the most valuable units of information will be collected first.
   3. However, most people do not want to spend a long time collecting information.

*Discussion Topic*: Relate an experience when you spent only a brief time collecting information for a decision and when you spent a long time collecting information. How did your decisions turn out?

f. Consumers do not always search rationally. Low-income consumers search the least.
   1. Consumers are often observed to be in a state of *brand switching*.
   2. This is often caused by a desire to switch (*variety seeking*).
   3. We often switch brands even if we like the old brand.

*Discussion Topic*: Have you switched brands recently? What triggered your desire to change? How do you think an advertiser could trigger this ‘desire to change’ response?

g. There are biases in the decision making process.
   1. A *mental accounting* can take place.
   2. *Framing* occurs because of the way a problem is posed.
   3. The *sunk-cost fallacy* says that having paid for something makes us reluctant to waste it.
   4. *Loss aversion* says that people place more emphasis on loss than on gain in a situation. An example of this would be prospect theory.
   5. There can always be outside influences on our selections.

*Discussion Topic*: What biases do you have when you search for (a) a car, (b) a computer, and (c) a university or college?

How Much Search Occurs?

h. As a general rule, search activity is greater when:
   1. The purchase is important.
   2. When there is a need to learn more about the purchase.
   3. When the relevant information is easily obtained and utilized.
   4. Females search more than men.
   5. Younger, better educated search more than others.
   6. Those who enjoy shopping search more.

i. The consumer’s prior expertise can also affect the search and shopping process.
   1. Search tends to be greatest among those consumers who are moderately knowledgeable about the product.
   2. The type of search varies with varying levels of expertise.
      a). Experts use selective search.
      b). Novices rely on opinions of others.
   3. As a rule, purchase decisions that involve extensive search also entail some kind of *perceived risk* or belief that the product has potentially negative consequences. Types of risk include:
      a). Objective risk forms (such as physical danger).
      b). Subjective factor risk forms (such as social embarrassment).

****Use Key Term perceived risk Here; Use Figure 8.4 and 8.5 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 and 10 Here****
Discussion Topic: Think of products that you use that pose a risk. How does this risk affect your decision-making? Try to think of products that have a social risk. What are they? What products have you not used because of the risk? How could marketers of these products overcome this risk function and get you to use their products?

4. Evaluation of Alternatives

Identifying Alternatives

a. The alternatives actively considered during a consumer’s choice process are his or her evoked set. In reality, this can be a very small set.
   1). The evoked set is composed of those products already in memory (the retrieval set), plus those prominent in the retail environment.
   2). The alternatives that the consumer is aware of but would not consider buying are his or her inept set.
   3). Those products not entering his or her consideration comprise the inert set.

*****Use Key Term evoked set Here; Use Figure 8.6 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here*****

Discussion Topic: How many brands of crisps, men’s cologne, lipstick, or cars can you name? Of this group (in each case), which would you consider purchasing? How could marketers that represent that group you did not select move into your preferred evoked set?

Product Categorization

b. Product categorization is how consumers organize their beliefs about products or services.
   1). Products in a consumer’s evoked set are likely to be those that share some similar features.
   2). This knowledge is represented in a consumer’s cognitive structure (the factual knowledge about products [beliefs] and the way these beliefs are organized in people’s minds).
   3). There are several levels of categorization:
      a). Basic level: items have much in common but a number of alternatives exist.
      c). Subordinate level: individual brands.

*****Use Key Term cognitive structure Here; Use Figure 8.7 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Demonstrate cognitive structure using a product of your choice. How does this relate to evoked set? How could an advertiser use this information that you have provided to alter strategy?

c. Product categorization has many strategic implications. Some of these are:
   1). Product positioning – the conception of the product relative to other products in the consumer’s mind.
   2). Identifying competitors – are different products substitutes?
   3). Exemplar products – the most known, accepted product or brand.
   4). Locating products – consumers often expect to find certain products within certain places within the store environment.

5. Product Choice: Selecting Among Alternatives

a. Once the relevant options from a category have been assembled and evaluated, a choice must be made among them.

Evaluative Criteria

b. Evaluative criteria are the dimensions used to judge the merits of competing options. Forms can be:
   1). Differences – significant differences among brands on an attribute (anti-lock brakes).
2. Supplying the consumer with decision-making rules.

*****Use Key Term evaluative criteria Here*****

Discussion Topic: What are common evaluative criteria you use to evaluate (a) a computer, (b) a business suit, (c) perfume or cologne, or (d) a bicycle?

c. When consumers make decisions, marketers often want to impact their decision making. To do this (effectively recommend a new decision criteria), the marketer must convey three pieces of information:
1. It should point out that there are significant differences among the brands on the attribute.
2. It should supply the consumer with a decision-making rule.
3. It should convey a rule that can be easily integrated with how the person has made this decision in the past.

Heuristics: Mental Shortcuts

d. Consumers often rely on heuristics (mental rules-of-thumb that lead to speedy decisions). These rules can be general or specific. Sometimes these shortcuts are not in the consumer’s best interest.

*****Use Key Term heuristics Here*****

Discussion Topic: Illustrate some common general and specific heuristics that you use to make decisions with respect to purchasing products. Have these rules ever led you down a wrong path to a bad decision? Explain.

e. One frequently used shortcut is the tendency to infer hidden dimensions of products from observable attributes. This can result from:
1. Signals.
2. Covariation.

f. Other assumptions include:
1. Market beliefs – knowledge of the market that is used to guide decisions.

*****Use Key Term market beliefs Here; Use Table 8.3 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Can you think of market beliefs that you use to make decisions. Are these usually sound? Tell about some of your experiences.

2. One of the most pervasive market beliefs is the price-quality relationship.
   a). This is often a signal of quality.
   b). The consumer must avoid stereotypes.
   c). The tendency to prefer products or people of one’s own culture over those from another country is called ethnocentrism.

*****Use Key Term ethnocentrism Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 8 Here; Use Figure 8.8 Here*****

Discussion Topic: List products where you think ethnocentrism applies to you and your purchases. Why do you think this occurs? Does it bother you?

Choosing Familiar Brand Names: Loyalty or Habit?

g. Branding is a marketing strategy that often functions as a heuristic.
1. Marketers treasure brand names and their effect on the consumer.
2). **Brand equity** can be defined as the difference between the market value and the book value of a brand.

3). Many people tend to buy the same brand just about every time they go to the store. This consistent pattern is due to **inertia**, where a brand is bought out of habit merely because less effort is required.

4). **Brand loyalty** is a form of repeat purchasing behaviour reflecting a conscious decision to continue buying the same brand. There is more brand parity today and, therefore, brand loyalty is harder to achieve (and keep).

*****Use Key Terms inertia and brand loyalty Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 6 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Name five brands you are most loyal to and indicate why. What would it take for you to break your loyalty to them?

Decision Rules

h. Consumers consider sets of product attributes by using different rules, depending upon the complexity of the decision and the importance of the decision to them.

*****Use Table 8.5 Here*****

i. Simple decision rules are **non-compensatory** decision rules, meaning a product with a low standing on one attribute cannot make up for this position by being better on another attribute. Rules within this structure can be:

1). The **lexicographic** rule – the brand with the best attribute is selected.

2). The **elimination-by-aspects** rule – must have a specific feature to be chosen.

3). The **conjunctive** rule – the consumer processes products by brand.

*****Use Key Term non-compensatory decision rules Here*****

Discussion Topic: Provide an example of how you could use a non-compensatory decision rule. How could a marketer deal with this if you were not selecting their brand?

j. Unlike non-compensatory decision rules, **compensatory** decision rules give a product a chance to make up for its shortcomings. You weigh the good points against the bad.

1). There are two basic types of compensatory decision rules:

a). **Simple additive rules** – the consumer merely chooses the alternative having the largest number of positive attributes.

b). **Weighted additive rules** – the consumer considers the relative importance of positive attributes.

*****Use Key Term compensatory decision rules Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Provide an example of when you have used a compensatory decision rule. What was the rule? Did you have regrets afterwards? How do you learn to adjust these rules? How can marketers deal with these rules?

**BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING**

1. It is very important that the instructor confirm that the student understands the basic purchasing process as described in the text. Begin with problem recognition and progress to information search and the evaluation of alternatives. The chapter provides an excellent illustrated view of how to do this. The examples really help. However, be sure to spend as much time as needed to accomplish this task. The Discussion Topics found in the Chapter Outline can help to reinforce the learning process. For unless the student understands the unique role and function of these three steps, they will not understand the parts of the consumer behaviour model that will follow in later chapters.
2. Be sure to save enough time to thoroughly explore the area of how choices are made and the possible decision rules that might be used to make choices. The contemporary literature is rich (see Notes following the chapter) with examples in this area. Be prepared to ask students to explain how they use decision rules in everyday living. The authors have found that this method is the best available to reinforce the learning concepts presented in this section of the chapter. Most students have never thought of purchasing and decision making in this way before. Lastly, be sure to illustrate how marketers use knowledge of decision rules to build, implement, or change strategy.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Ask a student to compile a description of three products that include both features and country of origin. Then have the student ask a few people to rate the quality of the products and whether they would probably buy them. See if he or she can find out why the respondents feel this way.

2. Ask a student to interview (perhaps on video tape) a few friends to determine what factors have recently led them to problem recognition for some products or services. They need not have purchased anything. Ask the respondents to explain the similarities or differences that existed at decision time.

3. It is often revealing when a student interviews a manager of a local retail store to determine how the store is attempting to meet the consumer’s need for information. After the interview, suggest that the student use powers of observation to determine how effective the approach seems to be.

4. In this field project, have a student try to find out when customers use internal versus external sources of information and deliberate versus accidental sources of information during the search process.

5. Have a student choose a product category of interest and design a warranty registration card that would require the buyer to provide some insight into the information search-and-evaluation process that a typical consumer would probably go through.

6. Have a student identify countries of origin of popular cars. Find out how many cars that we identify as ‘European’ are made in other countries and how many cars we identify as ‘foreign’ are assembled in Europe.

Group Assignments

7. Compile a list of four or five foreign countries or have a student do it. Ask the class to identify products or classes of products that they usually associate with that country. After they have selected their product categories, have the class evaluate the quality of the products that typically come from each country.

8. Discuss with the class the concept of risk (Figure 8.5). Distribute a list of several different consumer products or have a student do this. Then ask the class what types of risk they associate with each of the products.

9. Have the students keep a diary listing of their highest and lowest involvement product purchase or service transaction each day for a week. Have them identify the decision process they went through and how satisfied they were with their decision. Then have them write a short paper describing the lessons they learned from the purchases.

10. Have students read several recent product rating reports from Consumer Reports and then evaluate the rating system the organization used. (You might want to assign this to a team of students and have each student be responsible for one product rating.) Ask the students what other information they would have found useful.
11. Ask a student or a group of students to bring to class an advertisement that is designed to activate the problem-recognition process. Does the student think that the ad works on the consumer’s actual state or desired state? See if the student(s) can improve the problem recognition features of the ad.

12. [Students will have to be warned in advance for this field project.] Over a one-week period, have the students record ten situations which caused them to enter the problem-recognition stage of the decision-making process. Which types of situations occurred most frequently?

13. Ask a student or a team of students to bring to class three advertisements that attempt to change the reader’s desired or ideal states. See if the students can identify the techniques the advertisers employed to accomplish their goal.

14. Have a student or a group of students construct the Stages in the Consumer Decision Making (Figure 8.1) process that they went through for a recent large-scale purchase (e.g. expensive clothing, car, stereo system, appliance, furniture, etc.) Ask them if they think they gathered enough information before making their decision. See if they were satisfied with the quantity or quality of the information they had at their disposal.

**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE**

1. *If people are not always rational decision-makers, is it worth the effort to study how these decisions are made? What techniques might be employed to understand experiential consumption and to translate this knowledge into marketing strategy?*

   In discussing the utility of studying rational decision-making (or extended problem solving), the instructor should stress the importance of using different methods in investigating the complex nature of consumer decision making. What also needs to be made clear is that other less purposeful methods also play a role. To understand and apply experiential consumption to marketing strategy will require more knowledge of how consumers develop their overall impression of a product and how they integrate it into their decision-making process. Contributions from other disciplines, such as psychology and sociology, also will be important. The real challenge will be applying this disparate information to marketing strategy.

2. *List three product attributes that can be used as quality signals and provide an example of each.*

   Students should draw from the chapter material that identifies the following product attributes used as quality signals:
   1. Price – ‘You get what you pay for.’
   2. Brand Name – well known name will denote high quality to the consumer and a lesser known name will denote low quality.
   3. Country of Origin – particular countries become known for producing high (low) quality products. Students should recognize that these attributes frequently are used by less knowledgeable and/or less involved consumers.

3. *Explain the ‘evoked set’. Why is it difficult to place a product in a consumer’s evoked set after it has already been rejected? What strategies might a marketer use in an attempt to accomplish this goal?*

   It is difficult to place a product into an evoked set after it has been rejected because consumers are ‘cognitive misers.’ This means that people conserve their mental resources and expend only a minimum effort required to solve a problem. Once a product has been eliminated from consideration on the basis of some evaluation process, consumers are not likely to expend additional cognitive resources to re-evaluate that product.

   Promotional strategies can be used to get the consumer to reconsider the product. Price discounts, coupons, special offers, rebates, or free samples will increase the possibility that a product will re-enter the evoked set. Any other means to get the consumer to try the product will increase the possibility of consideration of the product, and successful trials will increase the chances of a product being included in the consumer’s evoked set.
4. Define the three levels of product categorization described in the chapter. Draw a diagram of these levels for a health club.

The text discussed the following levels of product categorization:
1. Superordinate – the broadest and most abstract level (e.g. health clubs)
2. Basic Level – the most useful category to classify products because these items have much in common with each other (e.g. weight/powerlifting clubs)
3. Subordinate Level – the most specific category (e.g. Nautilus Fitness Clubs)

5. Discuss two different non-compensatory decision rules, and highlight the difference(s) between them. How might the use of one rule vs. another result in a different product choice?

The use of a particular non-compensatory rule will influence the product chosen: (1) the lexicographic rule will result in a choice based in a particularly important attribute, (2) the elimination-by-aspects rule will result in a choice based on the particular cut-off points established; and (3) the conjunctive rule will result in a choice based on the particular brands being considered and the cut-off points.

The choice of particular non-compensatory decision rules is not the crucial aspect of this exercise. It is important, however, that students appreciate the differences between the rules they choose to discuss. In addition, students should understand the more basic difference between non-compensatory and compensatory rules and how each uses different information to arrive at a decision. The lecturer should encourage students to think about why particular choice rules are used and ways that marketers could appeal to consumers using each of these rules.

6. Choose a friend or parent who purchases groceries on a regular basis, and keep a log of their purchases of common consumer products over the term. Can you detect any evidence of brand loyalty in any categories based upon consistency of purchases? If so, talk to the person about these purchases. Try to determine if his or her choices are based upon true brand loyalty or based on inertia. What techniques might you use to differentiate between the two?

To begin with, the instructor should ask the students to differentiate between brand loyalty and inertia. Brand loyalty is represented by a pattern of repeat product purchases, accompanied by an underlying positive attitude toward the brand. Inertia describes consumption at the low end of involvement, where decisions are made out of habit because the consumer lacks the motivation to consider alternatives.

For example, a student said that her mother buys the same cereal every week. In discussing the reason for buying the cereal, her mother said she bought it because it was what the student’s father liked. She considered him to be brand loyal. Techniques the student could use to find out if the father is truly brand loyal would be to ask him to try other cereals. After trying this alternative, if he insisted that his was the best, he could be considered to be brand loyal. (Possible Field Project)

7. Find a person who is about to make a major purchase. Ask that person to make a chronological list of all the information sources consulted prior to making a decision. How would you characterize the types of sources used (i.e., internal versus external, media versus personal, etc.)? Which sources appeared to have the most impact on the person’s decision?

The instructor could begin by reviewing the stages in the consumer decision making process: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, product choice, and outcomes. The following scenario might be developed in the context of this exercise:

Jane Smith was in the market for a new computer. She looked at store ads first to compare features and prices of many computers. The next step was to ask friends and colleagues what they thought about the brands she was considering. After much research, she finally decided on a brand and made a purchase.

[The sources used were external, media, and personal. Sources that had the most impact on her were external and personal.] (Possible Field Project)

8. Perform a survey of country-of-origin stereotypes. Compile a list of five countries and ask people what products they associate with each. What are their evaluations of the products and likely attributes of these different products? The power of a country stereotype can also be demonstrated in another way. Prepare a brief description of a product, including a list of features, and ask people to rate it in terms of quality, likelihood of purchase, and so on. Make several versions of the description, varying only the country from which it comes. Do ratings change as a function of the country-of-origin?
Students may have strong association for many countries tied to specific products or product categories. Examples might include American import/luxury cars, French wines, Italian leather goods, Swedish crystal, and Japanese electronics. It may be interesting to expand the notion of country-of-origin, and ask students to talk about areas in Europe that are particularly well-known for specific products. Alternatively, for both country and region of origin, students should be challenged to think of examples that represent weak or poor association that marketers would want to avoid. (Possible Field Project)

9. Ask a friend to talk through the process he or she used to choose one brand over others during a recent purchase. Based on this description, can you identify the decision rule that was most likely employed?

The instructor might begin by reviewing the two types of decision rules, namely, compensatory and non-compensatory. Compensatory decision rules involve averaging information about attributes of competing products where a poor rating on one attribute can be offset by a good rating on another. Non-compensatory decision rules, alternately, would find a brand with a low rating on one relevant/important attribute eliminated from the consumer’s choices, despite higher ratings on less relevant/important attributes. The specific types of compensatory and non-compensatory rules also should be reviewed.

10. Consider the five types of perceived risk in Figure 8.5 of this chapter within the context of making a decision to purchase a new diamond. Review the following websites, and discuss the kinds of risk you would consider in buying a diamond on the web. See the following sites: www.diamond.com, www.mondera.com, www.bluenile.com.

The five types of risk in Figure 8.5 are monetary risk, functional risk, physical risk, social risk, psychological risk. Monetary Risk should be obvious, at least to most students, because the costs of diamonds are beyond the spending power of most. Purchasing on the web increases this Monetary Risk as payment and delivery are separated. The Functional Risk of buying a diamond depends on the task-definition: why or for which occasion is the diamond bought? If it is bought as a gift, the Functional Risk is related to the appropriateness of the gift for this occasion and this person. If it is bought as an investment the Functional Risk is related to the expected return on investment. Any Physical Risk of a diamond does not seem very obvious neither in direct purchase nor in purchase on the web. Social Risk again is obvious, as jewellery is explicitly mentioned as one of the purchases that is subject to social risk. If the diamond would be a personal luxury Psychological Risk may be induced. The latter two types of risk would not seem to differ between direct and online purchase.
Chapter 9
Shopping, buying, evaluating, and disposing

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The act of purchase can be affected by many factors. These include the consumer’s antecedent state (e.g., his/her mood, time pressure or attitude to shopping). Time is an important resource which often determines how much effort and search will go into a decision. Mood can be affected by the degree of pleasure and arousal present in a store environment.

The usage context of a product can be a basis for segmentation; consumers look for different product attributes depending on the use to which they intend to put their purchase. The presence or absence of other people – and the types of people they are – can also affect a consumer’s decision.

The shopping experience is a pivotal part of the purchase decision. In many cases, retailing is like theatre – that is, the consumer’s evaluation of stores and products may depend upon the type of ‘performance’ he or she witnesses. This evaluation can be influenced by the actors (e.g., the salespeople), the setting (e.g., the store environment), and props (e.g., store displays). A store image, like a brand personality, is determined by a number of factors, such as perceived convenience, sophistication, knowledgable of salespeople, and so on. With increasing competition from non-store alternatives, the creation of a positive shopping experience has never been more important.

Since many purchase decisions are not made until the time the consumer is actually in the store, point-of-purchase (POP) stimuli are very important sales tools. These include product samples, elaborate package displays, place-based media and in-store promotional materials such as ‘shelf-talkers’. POP stimuli are particularly useful in stimulating impulse buying, where a consumer yields a sudden urge for a product.

The consumer’s encounter with a salesperson is a complex and important process. The outcome can be affected by such factors as the salesperson’s similarity to the customer and his or her perceived credibility.

Consumer satisfaction is determined by the person’s overall feeling toward the product after purchase. Many factors influence perceptions of product quality, including price, brand name, and product performance. Satisfaction is often determined by the degree to which a product’s performance is consistent with the consumer’s prior expectations of how well it will function.

Product disposal is an increasingly important problem. Recycling is one option which will continue to be stressed as consumers’ environmental awareness grows. Products may also be introduced by consumers into secondary markets during a process of lateral cycling, which occurs when objects are bought and sold second hand, ‘fenced’ or bartered.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Introduction
   a. A consumer’s choices are affected by many personal factors, such as his or her mood, whether there is time pressure to make the purchase, and the particular situation or context for which the product is needed. Influences include:
      1). The salesperson.
      2). The store environment.

   b. Shopping is like a performance of a play, where the customer is involved as either an audience member or an active participant.

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1. The quality of this performance is affected by other cast members (e.g., salespeople or other shoppers).
2. The performance is affected by the setting (e.g., the store environment).
3. The performance is affected by the props (e.g., store decorations).

c. Lastly, a lot of important consumer activity occurs after a product has been purchased and brought home.

Discussion Topic: It has been said that ‘a sale is never complete or finished until the customer is satisfied.’ What does this phrase mean? How should a marketer incorporate this into overall sales planning?

2. Antecedent states

Situational Effects: mood and consumption situations

a. Your mood or physiological condition can affect purchases and how products are evaluated.
   1. Two dimensions, pleasure and arousal, determine if a shopper will react positively or negatively to a consumption environment.
   2. A specific mood is some combination of pleasure and arousal.
   3. In general, a mood state (either positive or negative) biases judgements of products and service in that direction.
   4. Moods can be affected by store design, the weather, or other factors specific to the consumer (such as music or even television programming).

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of how mood has affected your purchase decisions. If you were a salesperson, when would be the best time to sell to you?

b. A consumption situation is defined by factors over and above characteristics of the person and of the product that influence the buying and/or using of products and services.
   1. Situational effects can be behavioural (e.g., entertaining friends).
   2. Situational effects can be perceptual (e.g., being depressed or feeling pressed for time).
   3. Smart marketers understand these patterns and tailor their efforts to coincide with situations where people are most prone to buy.

Hallmark Cards owes much of its success to identifying situations that merit the purchase of a greeting card. As a way to smooth out demand between holidays, the company is now trying a new niche: non-occasion cards for both kids and adults. For example: ‘You’re getting a card and it’s not even your birthday! That’s because you don’t have to have a birthday to be special to me. I love you ALL the time!’

   1

In addition to functional relationships between products and usage situations, another reason to take environmental circumstances is that the role a person plays at any time is partly determined by his or her situational self-image, where the consumer asks ‘Who am I right now’?
   1. The major contexts where a product is used can be considered as a basis for situational segmentation.
   2. Brand loyalty may be dependent on the situation.

*****Use Table 9.1 Here *****

Discussion Topic: Think of situations where situational self-image would be very important to consider in formulating strategy.

Social and Physical Surroundings

d. A consumer’s physical and social environment can make a big difference in motives for product usage and also affect how the product is evaluated.
   1. Examples of the physical environment would include the decor, smells, and even temperature within the selling environment (such as a store).
2). If other consumers are present when sales are made they are called **co-consumers**.
   a). The presence or absence of other customers can be positive or negative.
   b). Crowds can make the experience more intense.
   c). Store customers can serve as a store attribute (e.g., people tend to shop where other shoppers are like them).
   d). Crowds can make a dull situation exciting.

**Discussion Topic:** What goes through your mind when you go to a new restaurant and there are empty tables everywhere?

**Discussion Topic:** On a normal evening, what is your reaction when you go to your favourite restaurant and you are told there will be a 30 to 40 minute wait?

**Temporal Factors**

e. Time is one of the consumers’ most precious resources. Think about how we talk about time:
   1). ‘Making time.’
   2). ‘Spending time.’
   3). ‘Time is money.’

**Discussion Topic:** What is your view toward time when shopping? How could time impact your shopping behaviour?

f. Time is an economic variable; it is a resource that must be divided among activities.
   1). An individual’s priorities determine his or her **time style**.
   2). Many consumers are affected by what they would call **time poverty**.
      a). With an increase in time poverty, researchers are noting a rise in poly-chronic activity (where consumers do more than one thing at a time).

*****Use Key Term time style Here, Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** Think of ways marketers attempt to appeal to consumers that have a sense of time poverty. Give a product illustration.

g. There is a psychological dimension of time, or how it is experienced. This is important in **queuing theory** (a mathematical study of waiting lines).
   1). A consumer’s experience of waiting can radically influence his or her perceptions of service quality.
   2). Many marketers have adopted a variety of tricks to minimise the consumer’s perception of waiting time as being something that is bad (primarily by diverting their attention away from waiting).

*****Use Figure 9.3 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 6 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** Think of a positive and negative experience that you have had with a waiting line. Relate how the marketers handled these situations.

3. **Shopping: Motives and Experiences**

   a. Shopping is an activity that can be performed for either utilitarian (functional or tangible) or hedonic (pleasurable or intangible) reasons.
      1). Hedonic shopping motives include:
         a). **Social experiences.**
         b). **Sharing of common interests.**
         c). **Interpersonal attraction.**
         d). **Instant status.**
         e). ‘The thrill of the chase.’
Discussion Topic: Try to think of other reasons for shopping. How could the marketer use these (and the ones listed in the chapter) to design strategies to attract you into the store?

b. Consumers can be segmented in terms of their shopping orientation, or general attitudes about shopping. These attitudes may vary depending on the particular product categories and store types considered. Several shopping types have been identified:

1). The **economic consumer** – a rational, goal-oriented shopper who is primarily interested in maximising the value of his or her money.

2). The **personalized consumer** – a shopper who tends to form strong attachments to store personnel (‘I shop where they know my name’).

3). The **ethical consumer** – a shopper who likes to help out the underdog and will support locally owned stores against big chains.

4). The **apathetic consumer** – one who does not like to shop and sees it as a necessary but unpleasant chore.

5). The **recreational shopper** – a person who views shopping as a fun, social activity and a way to spend leisure time.

Discussion Topic: How do you characterize yourself as a shopper? What do you think is the best way to market to you? Relate experiences that you have had with the other forms of shoppers mentioned in the text. What type of shopper do you most enjoy going with on a shopping trip?

Trend in the Purchase Environment

c. The competition for customers is getting tougher amongst retailers.

1). One trend is the blurring of boundaries between types of outlets.

2). Another trend is the increase of trade from kiosks.

3). A third trend is the internationalization of (and global competition between) supermarkets.

Discussion Topic: What new environments are you shopping in that you did not shop in only a few years ago? Do you plan to shop online in the future?

4. **E-commerce: Clicks versus Bricks**

a. How will the cyberspace marketplace affect marketing?

1). The growth of e-commerce is systematically overestimated and the largest proportion is still accounted for by business-to-business marketing.

2). Still there is little doubt currently that the e-market will grow.

3). Online commerce allows reaching customers around the world, but simultaneously creates global competition.

4). Online commerce cuts out the retailer.

b. What makes e-commerce sites successful?

1). Good customer service is a prerequisite for a successful e-commerce site.

2). Using technology to provide extra value for customers also is attractive.

3). Consumer experiences in cyberspace can be analysed according to two dimensions:

   a). telepresence is the degree to which the consumer feels immersed in the virtual environment.

   b). bricolage indicates the customer’s control of the information gathered and used.

4). An important concern of e-commerce is security.
5). For many products the lack of direct interaction between consumer and physical product is a drawback.

Discussion Topic: Would e-commerce at this moment be a potential threat to traditional retail outlets or to mail-order companies?

6). Traditional retailers are fighting e-commerce by offering the shopper a stimulating or pleasant environment in which to browse through the merchandise.

5. Servicescapes: Retailing as Theatre

a. Malls are becoming giant entertainment centres, and are becoming the focus point of communities.

Discussion Topic: Is there a mall or store that you like to go even if you don’t want to buy something? What is the attraction?

b. Stores today have distinct personalities or store image. This image includes:
   1). Location.
   2). Merchandise suitability.
   3). Knowledge and congeniality of the sales staff.

c. The overall feeling a store generates is called the store gestalt.

*****Use Key Terms store image and store gestalt Here*****

Discussion Topic: Describe a store that you think has a unique personality or image. How do you think the store maintains that image? Do you think this image was part of their original strategy?

d. Because a store’s image now is recognized as a very important aspect of retailing mix, attention is increasingly paid to atmospherics, or the ‘conscious designing of space and its various dimensions to evoke certain effects in buyers.’ This could include colours, scents, and sounds.

*****Use Key Term atmospherics Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 Here*****

In-Store Decision Making

e. Despite all their efforts to ‘pre-sell’ consumers through advertising, marketers increasingly are recognizing the significant degree to which many purchases are influenced by the store environment. For example, two out of three supermarket product decisions are made in the aisles.
   1). Unplanned buying may occur when a person is unfamiliar with a store’s layout or perhaps when under some time pressure.
   2). Impulse buying, in contrast, occurs when the person experiences a sudden urge that he or she cannot resist. Many impulse items are placed next to checkout stands (such as sweets).
   3). General types of consumers include:
      a). Planner – know specific products and brands.
      b). Partial planners – know the products but choose brand in the store.
      c). Impulse purchasers – do no advance planning whatsoever.

*****Use Key Term impulse buying Here; Use Figure 9.5 Here*****

Discussion Topic: When it comes to shopping, would you describe yourself as a planner, partial planner, or an impulse buyer?

f. Retailers are starting to pay more attention to the amount of information supplied within their store environment. Point-of-purchase (POP) stimuli is being increasingly used. This can range from displays to free samples.
1). **In-store displays** can be simple or very elaborate (see examples in the chapter).
2). **Placed-based media** is a growing specialized medium that targets consumers based on locations in which the message is delivered (such as an airport or a doctor’s office).

*****Use Key Term point-of-purchase stimuli (POP) Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here*****

Discussion Topic: List some interesting or unique POP materials that you have seen. Do you think that it is ethical to put marketing materials in public places such as restrooms or waiting rooms?

**The Salesperson**

g. One of the most important in-store factors is the salesperson, who attempts to influence the buying behaviour of the customer.

1). This influence can be understood in terms of **exchange theory**, which stresses that every interaction involves an exchange of value.
2). A resource exchange is ‘what do I get from the salesperson?’ (such as expertise).
3). A buyer/seller situation is like many other dyadic encounters (two-person groups); it is a relationship where some agreement must be reached about the roles of each participant. An **identity negotiation** occurs.
4). Salespeople differ in their **interaction styles**.

*****Use Key Term exchange theory Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What stores do you like to go to because you like the salespeople? What do you like about them? What are some of the stores you hate to shop at because of the salespeople? How do they make you feel? What specifically do you not like about them? What would you do to correct the situation if you were the management of the store?

6. **Post-purchase Satisfaction**

a. **Consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D)** is determined by the overall feelings, attitude, a person has about a product after it has been purchased.

*****Use Key Term consumer satisfaction/dissatisfaction (CS/D) Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 (used previously) Here*****

**Perceptions of Product Quality**

b. Perceptions of product quality are primarily determined by:

1). Price.
2). Brand name.
3). Advertising.
4). Warranties.
5). Follow-up letters.
6). Phone calls.

c. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction is more than just a reaction to the actual performance quality of a product or service.

1). According to the **expectancy disconfirmation model**, consumers form beliefs about products’ performance based upon prior experience with the product and/or communications about the product that imply a certain level of quality.

2). If a person is not happy in a purchase equation, three responses can occur:

a). **Voice response** – the consumer can appeal directly to the retailer for redress.

b). **Private response** – express dissatisfaction about the store or product to friends and/or boycott the store.
c). **Third-party response** – the consumer can take legal action against the merchant or complain in a public forum.

**Use Key Term expectancy disconfirmation model Here****

*Discussion Topic:* What do you usually do when you are dissatisfied with a product or service? Have you ever made a legal or public complaint? If so, describe the event and the outcome.

### 7. Product Disposal

a. Because people often do form strong attachments to products, the decision to dispose of something may be a painful one.

*Discussion Topic:* Describe a painful disposal situation that you have encountered. What was the end result? Would you do it differently if you had it to do over again? (An example might be the selling of an old car that was a favourite or throwing away something that would now be valuable (such as old football cards).

*Discussion Topic:* How can marketers use the consumer’s reluctance to part with favourite products in their marketing strategy? Apply this to a situation where you would like the consumer to part with an old product and buy a new one.

#### Disposal Options

b. When a consumer decides that a product is no longer of use, three options are available:

1. Keep the item.
2. Temporarily dispose of the item.
3. Permanently dispose of the item.

**Use Figure 9.6 Here****

#### Lateral Cycling: Junk Versus ‘Junque’

C. Interesting consumer processes occur during **lateral cycling**, where already-purchased objects are sold to others or exchanged for still other things.

**Use Key Term lateral cycling Here****

*Discussion Topic:* Think of an example where you have laterally cycled something. Describe the experience. Think of an example where you have purchased something that has been laterally cycled. What did you feel about the experience? How did you deal with doubts? How should the marketer try to persuade you to buy new rather than used? Where do you think new industries in lateral cycling will occur in the future?

### BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. In general, students will have little problem understanding the primary concepts presented in this chapter. The author has laid a good groundwork in previous chapters for the introduction of this material. The purchasing process is something that most college-age students are certainly familiar with and have had a history of experiences both as a private consumer and an employee of firms that sell at the retail level. However, be sure to stress how marketers use the purchasing process (and decisions made in it) to segment markets. One way to emphasize this point is to use the Discussion Topic boxes to generate in-class discussion.

2. The second area is a caution instead of a barrier. Most instructors will find it useful to discuss shopping experiences (in fact, most of the Discussion Topic boxes direct the instructor to do so). However, be careful and not let this discussion proceed and digress into a series of ‘war stories’ that do not relate to the subject matter at hand. Be sure to ask how we as marketers can learn from these experiences and predict what
consumers will do in the future. Several projects to reinforce this concept or approach are available for trial in the Student Project and Consumer Behaviour Challenge section of this chapter.

3. Lastly, be sure to save time to discuss consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. How can we measure this? What changes could be made in policy to enhance satisfaction? What does it take to please and satisfy consumers? How do you win back a dissatisfied customer? How do you get someone else’s dissatisfied customer? All of these questions can be used to enhance the material already supplied by the text and this Instructor’s Resource Manual.

**STUDENT PROJECTS**

**Individual Projects**

1. Ask a student to visit competing discount houses, supermarkets, department stores, or specialty shops in your area and describe the image they have of each store. What factors account for the image differences? For the poorest image store, design a strategy for upgrading its image.

2. Ask one of your students to dress in older clothes and visit one of the finer clothing stores in your area. Have the student express an interest in trying on some clothes and observe the reaction of the store employees. Then ask the student to return in a few days in better clothes and repeat the process. Have the student explain his or her observations to the class.

3. Assign a student to develop a questionnaire to measure consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction with a durable good (such as a car, computer, or CD player) purchased within the last year. Have the student survey a few friends who bought that item and determine their level of satisfaction. See if any action was taken to resolve any dissatisfaction. What are the marketing implications?

4. Have someone visit a local supermarket and question the manager regarding how shelf space is allocated. What and who determines which products are placed on the shelves, how much space they are allocated, and at what level they are displayed on the shelf?

5. Encourage one of your students to visit three small clothing stores and assess their layouts. What differences does he/she observe? What factors might account for these differences? Would the student recommend any layout changes based on observation?

6. See if someone will interview a complaint handler for a local department store to describe a recent experience with a dissatisfied customer. The complaint handler should explain why the customer was unhappy. Have the student explore whether complainers seem to have any common traits.

7. Ask a student to relate to the class a purchase experience in which dissatisfaction resulted from the product or service purchased. Have the student tell the class how he/she reacted in terms of post-purchase dissonance. How could the seller avoid future similar incidents?

**Group Assignments**

8. Distribute to the class a list of specific products and the stores that stock those particular products. Then have each student write down the name of the store where he or she would most probably go to buy that product. Have them explain their choices.

9. Once again a popular word in society is ‘conservation.’ Many consumers have become more interested in conserving than in ‘throwing away’. See what ideas the class has for creative recycling. Can they figure out a way to profitably market these ideas to the public?

10. Ask a student or a group to bring to class advertisements which demonstrate a store’s effort to cultivate a particular image among consumers. Do they think the ads are effective?
11. Have students bring to class two advertisements that they believe promote a product in a way that is inconsistent with what the product can deliver. The students should explain their reasoning.

12. Ask a team of students to visit a nearby popular mall to observe the activities of customers and employees. What non-retailing activities do they observe (art exhibits, performances, fitness walking, socializing, etc.)? Are these activities beneficial or harmful to retailers?

13. Have a student or a group of students bring several mail-order catalogues to class and discuss with the class the differences between the in-store and non-store purchasing processes. You might have the student(s) draw up a ‘profile’ of a typical purchaser from each of these catalogues.

14. Have students describe the profile of someone that shops on the Internet. What type of store would suffer the most if this customer’s business went to the Internet instead of to the store? What strategies might be recommended to prevent this customer from shifting their business elsewhere?

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. Discuss some of the motivations for shopping as described in the chapter. How might a retailer adjust his or her strategy to accommodate these motivations?

   Shopping motives listed in the chapter are: (1) functional and tangible needs, (2) pleasurable and intangible reasons, (3) social experiences, (4) sharing of common interests, (5) interpersonal attraction, (6) instant status, and (7) ‘the thrill of the chase.’ Shopping is a way of acquiring needed products as well as satisfying some important social need.

   Retailers might adjust their strategies to accommodate these motives by creating a theme environment, like that of the Banana Republic. They might offer additional complementary services – for example, a tanning salon might include manicures, massages, makeovers. Encourage your students to think of specific examples appropriate for their favourite stores.

2. What are some positive and negative aspects of requiring employees who interact with customers to wear some kind of uniform or to mandate a dress code in the office?

   Employee uniforms will impact the overall image and atmospherics of some retail outlets. The positive aspects of requiring employees who interact with customers to wear some kind of uniform or to mandate a dress code in the office include: (1) portraying a professional image, (2) helping employees to feel ‘equal’ in terms of dress, and (3) making it easier for customer to identify employees of the business. The negative aspects include some employees might feel uncomfortable in some uniforms, others may feel their ‘freedom’ of apparel (to look good) is being limited, and employees may also feel their individuality is being restricted.

   Students should quite easily identify examples of some jobs or professions that require uniforms (e.g., police, fire-brigade, nurses, priests, McDonald’s staff.)

3. The store environment is heating up as more and more companies put their promotional dollars into point-of-purchase efforts. Shoppers are now confronted by videos at the checkout counter, computer monitors attached to their shopping carts, and so on. Place-based media even expose us to ads in non-shopping environments. Recently, a health club in New York was forced to remove TV monitors that showed advertising on the Health Club Media Networks, since it was claimed that they interfered with workouts. Do you feel that these innovations are overly intrusive? At what point might shoppers ‘rebel’ and demand some peace and quiet while shopping? Do you see any market potential in the future for stores that ‘countermarket’ by promising a ‘hands-off’ shopping environment?

   Student opinion will vary based on their knowledge/experience and feelings/beliefs about place-based media. You might ask your students if they have encouraged this type of promotion and explore their reaction at the time of exposure. Students might also be asked to consider a more objective opinion, in light of what they have learned from this course. They should be challenged to view the advantages and disadvantages of these practices, from the perspectives of both consumers and retailers.

4. List the five stages of a long-term service relationship. How can a practitioner of relationship marketing incorporate each stage into his or her strategy?
The five stages of a long-term sales relationship are (1) awareness, (2) exploration, (3) expansion, (4) commitment, and (5) dissolution. The instructor might highlight the importance of relationship marketing for the 1990s and encourage students to think of creative ways to incorporate each phase into business strategies.

5. Discuss the concept of ‘time style.’ Based on your own experiences, how might consumers be segmented in terms of their time styles?

The concept of ‘time style’ reflects how individuals allocate their time to various activities. You might want to discuss your own time style with the class and encourage students to do the same. A discussion of how consumers might be segmented on the basis of their time styles should be included. Products that benefit from different time styles also could be discussed. For example: how much time do you spend teaching, grading papers, researching, doing college and community service? How much time do you spend with your family, doing household chores, eating, sleeping, exercising, having fun, etc?

6. Compare and contrast different cultures’ conceptions of time. What are some implications for marketing strategy within each of these frameworks?

Conceptions of time are not universal; cultural differences with regard to time exist. Examples of such that are mentioned in the text include: (1) linear separable time – events proceed in an orderly sequence and different times are well defined, (2) procedural time – people ignore the clock completely, and (3) circular or cyclic time – people are governed by natural cycles (Latino cultures.)

Marketing implications that correspond to the above concepts are: (1) under linear separable time – people sell clocks, watches, timers, have lunch hours specials, happy hours, after dinner drinks, etc. (2) under procedural time – people do things when the ‘time is right’ so from a marketers need to show causal relationships to let the consumer know that ‘the time is now,’ and (3) under circular or cyclic time – the future doesn’t make sense so we live for now. These consumers will not wait for a better product, they will buy whatever is available now. Don’t bother trying to sell them insurance.

7. Conduct naturalistic observation at a local mall. Sit in a central location and observe the activities of mall employees and patrons. Keep a log of the non-retailing activity you observe (e.g., special performances, exhibits, socializing, etc.). Does this activity enhance or detract from business conducted at the mall? As malls become more like high-tech game rooms, how valid is the criticism raised in the chapter that shopping areas are only encouraging more loitering by teenage boys, who don’t spend a lot in stores and simply scare away other customers?

Students tend to like this exercise. Now that they have been exposed to a variety of consumer behaviour constructs, they are likely to see things in the retail context that they didn’t notice before. They will probably notice a wide variety of non-retailing activities in the mall. Encourage your students to think about the advantages and disadvantages of these other activities from both the consumers’ and retailers’ points of view. Encourage students to develop a specific plan for dealing with teenage loitering that would work, be legal, and would not interfere with normal store and mall traffic. Students might interview mall officials or security officers to get their viewpoint about loitering. (Possible Field Project)

8. Select three competing clothing shops in your area, and conduct a store image study for each one. Ask a group of consumers to rate each store on a set of attributes, and plot these ratings on the same graph. Based on your findings, are there any areas of competitive advantage or disadvantage you could bring to the attention of store management? (This technique was described in Chapter 5.)

Students should review the section on Store Image (including Store Gestalt and Atmospherics) before beginning this exercise. You might encourage the student to select stores that are very different from each other rather than ‘direct competitors.’ Consider using this as an opportunity to discuss the strengths and weakness of this type of market research. (Possible Field Project)

9. Using Table 9.1 as a model, construct a person/situation segmentation matrix for a brand of perfume.

You might want to ask different groups of students to construct a matrix for other very different types of products such as convenience versus specialty goods. Tell students to look up these terms in the glossary and index for further information. Allow students to experiment with variables to construct their matrix. (Possible Field Project or In Class Group Project)
END NOTES

Chapter 10
Group influence and opinion leadership

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Consumers belong to or admire many different groups and are often influenced in their purchase decisions by a desire to be accepted by others.

Individuals have influence in a group to the extent that they possess social power; types of power include information power, referent power, legitimate power, expert power, reward power, and coercive power.

We conform to the desires of others for one of two basic reasons. People who model their behaviour on others because they take others’ behaviour as evidence of the correct way to act are conforming because of informational social influence. Those who conform to satisfy the expectations of others and/or to be accepted by the group are affected by normative social influence.

Group members often do things they would not do as individuals because their identities become merged with the group; they become de-individuated.

Individuals or groups whose opinions or behaviour are particularly important to consumers are reference groups. Both formal and informal groups influence the individual’s purchase decisions, although the impact of reference group influence is affected by such factors as the conspicuousness of the products and the relevance of the reference group for a particular purchase.

Opinion leaders who are knowledgeable about a product and whose opinions are highly regarded tend to influence others’ choices. Specific opinion leaders are somewhat hard to identify, but marketers who know their general characteristics can try to target them in their media and promotional strategies.

Other influences include market mavens, who have a general interest in marketplace activities, and surrogate consumers, who are compensated for their advice about purchasers.

Much of what we know about products comes about through word-of-mouth communication (WOM) rather than formal advertising. Product related information tends to be exchanged in casual conversations.

While word-of-mouth often is helpful for making consumers aware of products, it can also hurt companies when damaging product rumours or negative word-of-mouth occurs.

Sociometric methods are used to trace referral patterns. This information can be used to identify opinion leaders and other influential consumers.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Reference groups
   a. Humans are social animals. We all belong to groups, try to please others, and take cues about how to behave by observing the actions of those around us. We will often go to great lengths to please the members of a group whose acceptance we covet.
   1). A reference group is ‘an actual or imaginary individual or group conceived of having significant relevance upon an individual’s evaluations, aspirations, or behaviour’.
   2). Reference groups influence consumers in three ways:
      a). Informational.
      b). Utilitarian.
      c). Value-expressive.
Discussion Topic: Make a list of all the groups of which you are a member. Next, identify what type of influence each group has on your behaviour. Based on your list, which groups are the most influential? How could this information be used by a marketer to be more effective?

Types of Reference Groups
b. The term reference group may be used loosely to identify anyone that has an influence on your behaviour. The primary types of reference groups are:
   1). The normative influence – that is, the reference group helps to set and enforce fundamental standards of conduct (for example, our family’s influence).
   2). The comparative influence – where decisions about specific brands or activities are affected (for example, a club that you belong to).

d. While some groups consist of people the consumer actually knows, others are composed either of people the consumer can identify with or admire.
   1). Membership groups.
   2). Aspirational groups – what you want to be, not what you are.
   3). Both of these group types are closely watched by marketers.
   4). The likelihood that people will become part of a consumer’s identification reference group is affected by several factors, including:
      a). Propinquity – people just like us.
      b). Mere exposure – physical nearness or distance (imitate those closest).
      c). Group cohesiveness – greatest with small groups (exclusiveness).

e. Reference groups may exert either a positive or negative influence on consumption behaviours.
   1). Avoidance groups – groups the consumer wishes to distance themselves from.
   2). In most instances, consumers model their behaviour to be consistent with what they think the group expects of them.

g. A virtual community of consumption is a collection of people who interact through the internet.
   1). Their online interactions are based upon shared enthusiasm for and knowledge of a specific consumption activity.
   2). Virtual communities come in different forms and the consumption activity can be an internet based service (like a game setting) or an internet based exchange of information on any product or service.
   3). Virtual communities can be a way for marketers to reach consumers who are highly involved with their products.
4). In virtual communities internet users tend to progress from information gathering to increased participation.

g). The intensity of identification with a virtual community depends on two factors: centrality of the activity to the person’s self and the intensity of social relationships with other members of the virtual community.

1). **Tourists** lack strong social ties and have only passing interest in the activity.
2). **Mingles** maintain strong social ties, but are not interested in the activity.
3). **Devotees** have few social attachments but a strong interest in the activity.
4). **Insiders** exhibit both strong social ties and strong interest in the activity.

When Reference Groups Are Important

h). Reference group influences are not equally powerful for all types of products and consumption activities.

1). Reference groups are most important for publicly consumed goods.
2). Examples would be luxuries, socially conspicuous goods not privately consumed.

****Use Figure 10.2 Here****

Discussion Topic: For what kind of products do reference groups have the most influence on your consumption behaviour? Relate an instance when this might have occurred.

The Power of Reference Groups

i. **Social power** refers to ‘the capacity to alter the actions of others.’ Power bases include:

1). **Referent power** – admired groups are copied (e.g., clothes, cars).
   a). **Affinity marketing** – this strategy allows consumers to underscore their identification with some organization by attaching the group’s identification to aspects of their personal life.
2). **Information power** – those who know things (e.g., editor of Vogue).
3). **Legitimate power** – power by social agreement (e.g., police, doctors).
4). **Expert power** – specific knowledge or skill (CPAs, prominent economists).
5). **Reward power** – power to provide positive reinforcement (e.g., the boss gives raises).
6). **Coercive power** – short-term power (e.g., intimidating salespeople).

****Use Key Terms social power, referent power, affinity marketing, information power, legitimate power, expert power, reward power, and coercive power Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 1, 2 Here****

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of each of the types of power bases mentioned in the chapter. Think carefully about your selection. Once this is done, give a specific instance when this form of power touched you in some way (be specific). How did it alter your behaviour (if it did)?

2. Conformity

a. Conformity refers to a change in beliefs or actions as a reaction to real or imagined group pressure.

1). In order for a society to function, its members develop norms, or informal rules that govern behaviour.
2). Unspoken rules govern many aspects of consumption.

****Use Key Terms conformity and norms Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here****

Discussion Topic: Cite an unspoken rule of consumer behaviour. How do we learn these rules? What happens if we violate them? How do foreigners to our system learn these rules? How do we learn their rules? How can the marketer aid in this process?
Types of Social Influence

b. Just as bases for social power can vary, the process of social influence operates in several ways. Types include:

1). **Normative social influence** – person conforms to meet the group’s expectations to gain reward or avoid punishment.

2). **Informational social influence** – the group’s behaviour is taken as evidence of reality.

*****Use Key Terms normative social influence and informational social influence Here*****

Discussion Topic: Can you think of some behaviour triggered by normative social influence? Informational social influence?

c. Among the factors that affect the likelihood of conformity are the following:

1). **Cultural pressures** – teenagers tend to ‘follow the crowd.’

2). **Fear of deviance** – the group applies penalties to ‘rule violators.’

3). **Commitment** – the more dedication, the stronger the follower.

4). **Group unanimity, size, and expertise** – the ‘law of large numbers.’

5). **Susceptibility to interpersonal influence** – the individual’s need to identify or enhance his or her image in the opinion of significant others.

Discussion Topic: Think of an illustration of each of the reasons for conformity. Think of ways the marketer either can or does use this tendency to conform in their strategies and advertising messages.

Social Comparison: ‘How am I Doing?’

d. Informational social influence implies that sometimes we look to the behaviour of others to provide a yardstick about reality.

1). **Social comparison theory** asserts that this process occurs as a way to increase the stability of one’s self-evaluation, especially when physical evidence is unavailable.

2). Consumers are selective about whom they use for benchmarks. Similarity boosts confidence.

3). In general people tend to choose a co-oriented peer, or a person of equivalent standing, when undergoing a social comparison.

*****Use Key Term social comparison theory Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here*****

Compliance and Obedience

e. Influencers have been found to be more successful at gaining compliance if they are perceived to be confident or expert.

1). The way a request for compliance is phrased or structured can make a difference. Techniques include:

a). **Foot-in-the-door technique** – make a small request first, then a larger one later.

b). **Low-ball technique** – ask for a small favour that turns out to be costly.

c). **Door-in-the-face technique** – make extreme request first, the reasonable one later.

2). The general effect of group behaviour on individual behaviour is that the identity of the individual is submerged in a group. Less single attention is given. This can be characterized as **de-individualization**. Several things can occur when shopping with a group:

a). Group members are willing to consider riskier alternatives. This is called **risk shift**.

b). As more people are involved in a decision, each individual is less accountable for the outcome. This is called a **diffusion of responsibility**.
Another explanation can be the value hypothesis where riskiness is a culturally valued characteristic.

c). A more general effect is that of decision polarization. This occurs where the group adopts an even more risky decision (or conservative) after discussion.
  1). Reluctant members are encouraged to ‘get on the bandwagon.’
  2). Some members do not participate (such as in social loafing).

****Use Key Terms de-individualization and decision polarization Here ****

Discussion Topic: Have you ever gone shopping with a group of people your own age? Do you remember buying (or encouraging others to buy) something that you probably wouldn’t have if you were alone? Did you take it back, give it away, or throw it away? Did a group ever dissuade you from buying something you wanted? Did you go back later by yourself and make the purchase?

Resistance to Influence

f). We take pride in our individualism and uniqueness or in our ability to resist the best sales efforts of salespeople and advertisers.
  1). In the study of consumer behaviour it is important to distinguish between independence and anti-conformity (where there is a defiance of the group).
  2). People have a deep-seated need to preserve freedom of choice.
    a). Reactance is a negative emotional state wherein people try to overcome a loss of freedom. For example, censorship makes us want things more.
    b). An additional consideration is the need for uniqueness. Many consumers do not want to appear to copying others.

****Use Key Term reactance Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here ****

Discussion Topic: What are some things that you own that are unique? How do you feel when people talk about this? When was the last time you reacted to censorship by buying the censored product (if at all)?

3. Word-of-Mouth Communication

a). Much information about the world is actually communicated by individuals on an informal basis. This is called word-of-mouth communication (WOM).
  1). Word-of-mouth communication is viewed as being reliable and trustworthy by most people.
  2). 80 percent of all buying decisions are influenced by someone’s direct recommendations.

****Use Key Term word-of-mouth communication (WOM) Here ****

Discussion Topic: When was the last time you gave someone advice about buying a product? Describe the situation, the information, and the outcome.

The Dominance of WOM

b). It has been found that both positive and negative WOM exists. However, negative WOM seems to be more powerful. It is especially used in later stages of evaluation and adoption.

c). Factors that encourage WOM are:
  1). The person is highly involved with the product.
  2). The person is highly knowledgeable about product.
  3). The person has a genuine concern for someone else.
  4). The person may be uncertain about the wisdom of his or her recent purchase.

****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 6 Here****
Discussion Topic: What Word-of-Mouth sources do you check (if any) when you (a) buy a car, (b) go to a film, (c) buy perfume or cologne, and (d) when you buy a CD or tape? How important (if at all) is WOM to these situations? How could the marketer use this information to construct better strategy?

d. Guerrilla Marketing refers to promotional strategies that use unconventional locations and intensive Word-of-Mouth to push products.
e. Viral Marketing refers to the strategy of getting customers to sell a product (or at least pass a positive referral) on behalf of the company that creates it. Especially e-mail messages are suitable carriers for these activities.

****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 8 Here****

Negative WOM
f. Word-of-mouth is not only rapid, it can be a double-edged sword for marketers.
   1). Negative WOM is weighted more heavily than positive WOM.
   2). Rumours are the chief form.
   3). Though most people would rather tell positive than negative information, rumours tend to reveal the underlying fears of society.
   4). Rumours often result in boycotts of products, companies, or services. These boycotts can be successful or unsuccessful depending on their popularity, duration, and strength.

****Use Figure 10.3 Here****

Discussion Topic: When was the last time you distributed negative information about something? Listened to negative information? What was the reason and result of this process?

Discussion Topic: Have you ever been involved in a boycott? What was the result? If so, what would you do differently this time?

4. Opinion Leadership
a. Although consumers get information from personal sources, they do not tend to ask just anyone for advice about purchases.

The Nature of Opinion Leadership
b. Everyone knows people who are knowledgeable about products and whose advice is taken seriously by others. These people are called opinion leaders. Reasons for opinion leaders being taken seriously as information providers includes:
   1). They are technically competent.
   2). They have pre-screened, evaluated, and synthesized (in an unbiased way) product information.
   3). They are socially active.
   4). They are similar to the consumer in values and beliefs.
   5). They are often among the first to buy new products.

****Use Key Term opinion leaders Here****

Discussion Topic: Whom do you know that you would classify as an opinion leader? In what areas is he/she a leader? Are you an opinion leader? Under what circumstances and to whom do you perform this role?

c. When marketers and social scientists initially developed the concept of the opinion leader, it was assumed that certain influential people in a community would exert an overall impact on group member’s attitudes.
1. There is question today as to whether there is such a thing as a generalized opinion leader.
2. Opinion leaders tend to be concentrated in their field of interest or expertise.
3. Some opinion leaders overlap into other fields, but not into all fields.
   a. Monomorphic – experts in a limited field.
   b. Polymorphic – experts in several fields (but usually concentrated).

4. It is thought that opinion leadership is more complex than a set static process.
   1. Opinion leaders may or may not be purchasers of products they recommend.

5. Characteristics of opinion leaders include:
   a. Innovators.
   b. Innovative communicators.
   c. Socially active.
   d. Appearance-conscious and narcissistic.
   e. Like (rock) music.
   f. Heavy magazine readers.
   g. Own more clothing and have a broader range of styles.
   h. Have limited intellectual interests
   i. Are likely to be opinion seekers

6. A consumer category called the market maven has been proposed to describe people who are actively involved in transmitting marketplace information of all types. Market mavens are closer to the conception of a general opinion leader.

7. A surrogate consumer is a person who is hired to provide input into purchase decisions. The surrogate consumer is usually compensated for this involvement.
   1. Examples would include interior decorators, stockbrokers, professional shoppers, or college consultants.

8. Marketers are interested in identifying opinion leaders. Many ads are intended to reach these consumers.
   1. Unfortunately, opinion leaders are hard to find.
   2. Methods of identifying opinion leaders include:
      a. The self-designing method – ask individual consumers whether they consider themselves to be opinion leaders.
         1). A bona fide opinion leader.
         2). A key informant.
      b. Sociometry – tracing communication patterns among group members. This is called sociometric method.
         1). Examines referral behaviour.
         2). Examines networks.
3). Examines cliques.

*****Use Key Term sociometric method Here; Use Figure 10.5 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9, 10, 11, and 12 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Is there any category of consumer products in which you think you might be considered an opinion leader?

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. Students will find this chapter to be rather straightforward and should have little difficulty in going through the material. However, the instructor should plan on spending a little extra time with a few subjects. The first of these areas is the discussion of the types of reference groups. Since most students understand what a reference group is, time is better spent explaining the variety of types of reference groups that might influence behaviour. Use illustrations and in-class discussion to emphasize the varieties of groups that are present. Have students bring in advertisements that illustrate reference group influence. This will reinforce the concepts described in the chapter.

2. The second area that requires special attention is the concept of power with respect to reference groups. The chapter does a good job of outlining these power influences or positions. However, be sure the student sees the difference between the concepts and is able to characterize each of the structures. Lastly, ask students to provide examples of each form of power. This will help to emphasize the information.

3. The last area that needs special attention is opinion leadership. While most students will agree that opinion leadership is present and a valid concept, they tend to be weak in their application to strategy. Carefully go over the examples provided by the chapter and have students think about how the marketer can use opinion leadership, identify opinion leaders, or grow their own opinion leaders. Lastly, see if the students can apply this concept to the World Wide Web. How can the marketers reach opinion leaders in this newly emerging environment? How do those opinion leaders reach their followers. Save class time for this discussion.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Have a student do an analysis of a rumour that was started about a product or company (e.g., the ‘Satanic’ connection in Procter and Gamble’s moon-and-stars logo, Pop Rocks candy will make your stomach explode, McDonald’s puts worms in its hamburgers, there are spider eggs in Bubble Yum, etc.). What effect did these rumours have on sales? How did the company handle this situation?

2. Ask a student to find one magazine advertisement for a consumer product that uses ‘the expert’ as a reference group appeal and another which features a top corporate executive. Have the student discuss the impact of each appeal on consumers.

3. Have a student think about some goods and services that he/she has purchased recently. To what extent did word-of-mouth communication influence purchases?

4. Send a student to interview three friends about a product they recently purchased for the first time. Why did they purchase it? What was the role of ‘word of mouth’ and personal influence (whether real or simulated)? You might encourage the student to make a short video tape of the interview and show it to the class.

5. Encourage a student to think of something he/she recently purchased in which advice was actively sought from others. For what reasons was advice sought. Why was the particular person selected to provide this advice?
6. Ask a student to interview someone who has attended a home party where products were sold (e.g., Amway, cookware, Tupperware, Sarah Coventry jewellery, Mary Kay, lingerie). What types of group power (such as referent, expert, reward, coercive) can be identified?

7. Have a student conduct a sociometric analysis within college or his/her neighbourhood or family. Choose five varying product/service categories (e.g., fast food, medical care, hair care, movies, music, clothes, car repair) and ask a few individuals to identify other people with whom they share information. Try to trace the avenues of communication. See if opinion leaders for various categories can be identified.

**Group Assignments**

8. Ask the class to write down the various groups to which they are members. In which of these groups are conformity pressures the greatest? Why do they think this the case? (In Class Project)

9. Ask each student to think about individual family members, friends, and acquaintances. On paper, have them identify people who act as opinion leaders, product innovators, and market mavens. Describe what each person does. Have a few students share their observations with the class.

10. Ask a student or group of students to make a list of aspirational groups that are of interest to many college students. Then ask them to bring to class a few print ads that are targeted to college students with these particular aspirations.

11. Have a student determine who the fashion leaders are at your university (or his/her church, place of employment, social group, neighbourhood). See how well they fit the profile discussed in the chapter. This can be adapted to a group activity.

12. Here is a good activity for observant students. Have them look around and identify what special language, clothes, props, and sets are characteristic of various groups present in society.

13. Social norms tend to become obvious only when they are broken. Send a few brave students out to violate one or more social norms. (Tell them to shake hands with their left hand, eat their desserts first, belch during class, wear shoes that don’t match, walk with their books on their head, make the narrow end of their ties extend a little below the wide end, sing in the elevator, or ask them to violate a social norm of their own.) Note: Remind them to make sure they are only violating norms – not a law – unless you or your university is willing to provide bail money! What do these students observe when they violate the social norm?

14. For your students who are a little more shy have them watch MTV for about 10 minutes and jot down as many violations of social norms as they can identify.

15. Ask a student or a group to collect ads which attempt to incorporate word-of-mouth communications. Have them comment on the credibility of the ads. Is the promoter used in the ad an effective influencer?

**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE**

1. Compare and contrast the five bases of power described in the text. Which are most likely to be relevant for marketing efforts?
   1. Referent Power – admired groups are copied (e.g., clothes, cars)
   2. Information Power – those who know things (e.g., editor of Vogue)
   3. Legitimate Power – power by social agreement (e.g., police, doctors)
   4. Expert Power – specific knowledge or skill (e.g., CPAs, prominent economists)
   5. Reward Power – power to provide positive reinforcement (e.g., boss gives raises)
   6. Coercive Power – short-term power (e.g., intimidating sales people)
All bases of power are relevant to marketing.

2. Why is referent power an especially potent force for marketing appeals? What are factors that help to predict whether reference groups will or will not be a powerful influence on a person’s purchase decisions?
   Referent power is a potent force in marketing strategies because consumers voluntarily change behaviours to please or to identify with people they admire. The success of the referent power, therefore, will depend on whether a person admires the qualities of a person or a group.

3. Discuss some factors that determine the amount of conformity likely to be observed among consumers.
   Conformity refers to a change in beliefs or actions as a reaction to real or imagined group pressure. Factors that determine the amount of conformity among consumers are:
   a. cultural pressures: teenagers tend ‘to follow the crowd’
   b. fear of deviance: group applies penalties to ‘rule violators’
   c. commitment: the more dedication, the more stronger the followers
   d. group unanimity, size, and expertise: ‘law of large numbers’
   e. sex differences: those who possess feminine personality traits conform more
   [Students should be encouraged to give examples of these factors in their own conformity, or lack of conformity to norms]

4. Under what conditions are we more likely to engage in social comparison with dissimilar others versus similar others? How might this dimension be used in the design of marketing appeals?
   In social comparison we look at the behaviour of others and use it as a yardstick about reality: what is the right music, art, or clothes to be in the ‘in’ group. What should I avoid so I won’t be an outcast. We also like to choose the comparison groups whom we want to be compared with – ‘level the playing field,’ ‘birds of a feather’.
   However, we are likely to engage in social comparison with dissimilar others when we are reasonably certain of our own views. Encourage students to find examples of social comparison in a wide variety of promotional messages, particularly in advertising.

5. Discuss some factors that influence whether or not membership groups will have a significant influence on a person’s behaviour.
   Students should recognize that a number of factors influence whether or not membership groups will have a significant influence on a person’s behaviour. These include whether the group is primary or secondary, positive or negative, as well as the general strength of the groups’ influence. The instructor should encourage students to categorize different membership groups in their own lives and assess their relative influence.

6. Why is word-of-mouth communication often more persuasive than advertising?
   Word-of-mouth communication is more persuasive than advertising because information obtained from those we know or talk with tends to be more reliable and trustworthy. Unlike advertising, word-of-mouth communication often is backed up by social pressure to conform to this information/recommendation.

7. Is there such a thing as a generalized opinion leader? What is likely to determine if an opinion leader will be influential with regard to a specific product category?
   There is no such thing as a generalized opinion leader but a market maven comes about as close as you can get. Very few people are capable of being expert in a number of fields and, therefore, the same individual rarely will be sought out for information for all types of purchases. Opinion leaders are viewed as valuable information sources because they:
   a. are technically competent (expertise)
   b. have pre-screened, evaluated and synthesized, unbiased product information
   c. are socially active and have a nice social position
   d. are similar to the consumer in values and beliefs
e. are often among the first to buy new products
f. like to take risks

8. What is your opinion about the techniques of guerilla marketing and viral marketing? Discuss the pros and the cons.

Student opinion will vary. For a company the techniques can be highly advantageous, provided the technique is not unmasked. In guerilla marketing the credibility of the marketing organization is likely to drop immediately if it is identified as the real source behind rumours and apparently spontaneous word-of-mouth. For consumers it can be troublesome to differentiate between ‘honest’ and ‘influenced’ opinion leaders. In viral marketing it would be interesting to discuss the attention value of an added commercial message within an environment that is almost by definition characterized by information overload.

9. The power of unspoken social norms often becomes obvious only when these norms are violated. To witness this result first hand, try one of the following: stand facing the back wall in a lift; serve dessert before the main course; offer to pay cash for dinner at a friend’s home; wear pyjamas to class; or tell someone not to have a nice day.

Students can be creative here. Encourage them to conduct these investigations and use a debriefing session in class to discuss some of their finding, reactions and attitudes.

10. Identify a set of avoidance groups for your peers. Can you identify any consumption decisions that are made with these groups in mind?

Students will think of many diverse examples. Two potential avoidance groups may be a local gang and students who fail this course. If you are against gangs, you will try to avoid using any products that are associated with gangs; if you don’t want to fail this course, you will avoid many of the behaviours that are associated with failing students. (Possible Field Project)

11. Identify fashion opinion leaders on your campus. Do they fit the profile discussed in the chapter?

The class might agree to focus on a particular group of fashion opinion leaders. After deciding on the group, they could go through the opinion leader profile found in the text under Figure 10.4 and determine whether or not the group members actually are fashion experts. (Possible Field Project)

12. Conduct a sociometric analysis within your dormitory or neighbourhood. For a product category such as music or cars, ask each individual to identify other individuals with whom they share information. Systematically trace all of these avenues of communication, and identify opinion leaders by locating individuals who are repeatedly named as providing helpful information.

Students should include a discussion of sociometry in their responses and recognize that sociometric methods allow researchers to systematically point out the interactions that take place among group members. Conducting a study of this type should highlight for students how difficult and expensive such activities can be. (Possible Field Project)
Chapter 11
European family structures and household decision making

CHAPTER SUMMARY
Many purchasing decisions are made by more than one person. Collective decision-making occurs whenever two or more people are involved in evaluating, selecting, or using a product or service. Marketers must be aware of this phenomenon if correct strategy is to be constructed.

Demographics are statistics that measure a population’s characteristics. Some of the most important of these relate to family structure, e.g. the birth rate, the marriage rate, and divorce rate. In Europe, collecting reliable and comparable data regarding the family unit has not always been a straightforward process.

A household is an occupied housing unit. The number and type of European households is changing in many ways, including delays in getting married and having children, and in the composition of family households, which increasingly are headed by single parents. New perspectives on the family life cycle, which focuses on how people’s needs change as they move through different stages in their lives, are forcing marketers to consider more seriously such consumer segments as homosexuals, divorcees, and childless couples when they develop targeting strategies.

Families must be understood in terms of their decision-making dynamics. Spouses in particular have different priorities and exert varying amounts of influence in terms of effort and power. Children are also increasingly influential during a widening range of purchase decisions.

Children undergo a process of socialization, whereby they learn how to be consumers. Some of this knowledge is instilled by parents and friends, but a lot of it comes from exposure to mass media and advertising. Since children are in some cases so easily persuaded, the ethical aspects of marketing to them are hotly debated among consumers, academics, and marketing practitioners.

CHAPTER OUTLINE
1. Introduction
   a. Purchase decisions often involve two or more people who may not have the same level of investment in the outcome, the same tastes and preferences, or the same consumption priorities. Especially children are becoming a major force in family decision making.
   b. Collective decision-making is where more than one person is involved in the purchasing process for products or services that may be used by multiple consumers.

2. The Family
   a. The typical European family is no longer one with two parents living with their children at home. However, other forms of family units have emerged in the last decade.
      1). Many marketers have a renewed interest in family life brought about by the more flexible definitions of what constitutes a family.
      2). Today, some 90% of respondents in a recent survey indicated that family life way was one of the most important things to them.

****Use Figure 11.1 Here****

Discussion Topic: Describe your family structure. Would you say that it is traditional? What impact does your family structure have on purchasing? How could an advertiser design an ad to appeal to your family? What would be in that ad?
Defining the Modern Family

b. Types of families include:
   1). The extended family was once the most common family unit. It consisted of three generations living together and often included not only the grandparents, but aunts, uncles, and cousins.
   2). The nuclear family – a mother, father, and one or more children – became the modern family. However, this is no longer the realistic view of the family.
   3). Today, a family household is defined as a shared residence and common housekeeping arrangement.

****Use Key Terms extended family, nuclear family, and family household Here****

Discussion Topic: How do you define a family? Compare the answers with the rest of the class. How does this definition match with alternative lifestyles?

c. The overall demographics of the modern family is:
   1). Overall marriage rate is falling
   2). Overall divorce rate is climbing

****Use Figure 11.2 Here; Use Figure 11.3 Here****

3). The 35-44 year old group has grown by 40% since 1980 and will soon be 50% of the total increase in the number of households.
4). The average marrying age for women is 25 and 28 for men.
5). The average family size is 2.6 people (which says something about the number of children being born).
6). The fertility rate is determined by the number of births per year per 1000 women of child-bearing age. This rate has fallen in recent years.
7). Single men and women are a steadily rising group.

****Use Key Term fertility rate Here; Use Figure 11.4 Here****

d. In many cases the nuclear family is being transformed to resemble the extended family.
   1). Middle-aged adults have been termed ‘the sandwich generation’ because they must attend to those above and below them in age.

****Use Key Term sandwich generation Here ****

Discussion Topic: How can marketers appeal to ‘the sandwich generation?’

e. There is a multitude of non-traditional family structures today.
   1). These households consists of:
      a). Stepfamilies.
      b). Singles and same-sex roommates.
      d). One-parent households

Effects of Family Structure on Consumption

f. A family’s needs and expenditures are affected by such factors as the number of people in the family, their ages, and how many adults are employed outside of the home.
   1). How a couple spends time and money depends to a great extent on whether they have children and whether both partners work.
   2). Children’s expenses and day care add significantly to a family budget.

****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 11 Here****
Discussion Topic: What additional expenses are incurred by a family if both parents work outside the home?

g. Recognizing that family needs and expenditures change over time, the concept of the family life cycle (FLC) has been widely used by marketers. The FLC combines trends in income and family composition with the changes in demands placed upon this income. (See Table 11.1 for the Family Life Cycle)

1). Four variables are important to the FLC. They are:
   a). Age.
   b). Marital status.
   c). The presence or absence of children in the home.
   d). Children’s ages (if any).

2). It is obvious by studying the FLC that marked differences occur in the consumption patterns among the various categories.

3. The Intimate Corporation: Family Decision-Making

Household Decisions
a. There are two basic types of decisions made by families:
   1). In a consensual purchase decision, the group agrees on the desired purchase, differing only in terms of how it will be achieved.
   2). In an accommodative purchase decision, group members have different preferences or priorities and cannot agree on a purchase that will satisfy the minimum expectations of all involved.

b. Conflict occurs when there is not complete correspondence in family members’ needs and preferences. While money is the most common source of conflict between marriage partners, television choices come in a close second. Factors determining the degree of family decision conflict include:
   1). Interpersonal needs.
   2). Product involvement and utility.
   3). Responsibility.
   4). Power.

Discussion Topic: Are there other areas that you believe cause conflict in family units? What do these variables depend on (such as who is involved)? How can marketers use knowledge of conflict in their marketing strategy?
Sex Roles and Decision-Making Responsibilities

c. Decisions with respect to sex roles are of two basic types:
   1. **Autocratic** decisions are made by one or the other spouse.
   2. **Syncratic** decisions are made jointly.
   3. Marketers must carefully watch which purchasing areas are governed by these two forms.

****Use Key Terms autocratic decisions and syncratic decisions Here*****

d. Researchers have paid special attention to which spouse plays the role of what has been called the family financial officer (FFO), who keeps track of the family’s bills and decides how any surplus funds will be spent. This role changes and shifts over time.

****Use Key Term family financial officer (FFO) Here*****

Discussion Topic: What might a marketing firm do to discover who the FFO is in a family? What strategies might be used to reach this person?

e. Four factors appear to determine the degree to which decisions will be made jointly or by one or the other spouse. They are:
   1. **Sex-role stereotypes** – men buy masculine products and females buy feminine products.
   2. **Spousal resources** – the spouse who contributes the most has the greater influence.
   3. **Experience** – time constraints and expertise establishes one decision-maker.
   4. **Socio-economic status** – middle class families make more joint decisions.

**** Use Table 11.2 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Demonstrate how marketers can use information about spousal decision making in their strategy. You might wish to bring ads to demonstrate your points.

f. Despite recent changes in decision-making responsibilities, women still are primarily responsible for the continuation of the family’s *kin-network system*. They perform the rituals intended to maintain ties among family members.

****Use Key Term kin-network system Here*****

g. The synoptic ideal calls for the husband and wife to take a common view and act as joint decision-makers. One common technique for simplifying the decision-making process is the use of **heuristics**. Some frequently observed decision-making patterns are:
   1. A couple ‘reaches’ rather than makes a decision.
   2. A couple agrees on a system of task specialization.
   3. Concessions based on intensity of each spouse’s preferences.

Discussion Topic: What heuristics can you name that couples use to make decisions?

4. Children As Decision Makers: Consumers-In-Training

a. Children are recognized as consumers that deserve attention.
   1. **Parental yielding** occurs when a parental decision maker is influenced by a child’s request and ‘surrenders.’ This is somewhat dependent on family dynamics.

****Use Key Term parental yielding Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here*****

Consumer Socialization

b. **Consumer socialization** is defined as the process by which young people acquire skills, knowledge, and attitudes relevant to their functioning in the marketplace.
1. Parents influence in the socialization process is both direct and indirect.
2. The process begins with infants when they accompany their parents on shopping trips.

****Use Key Term consumer socialization Here; Use Figure 11.5 Here *****

Discussion Topic: Think of all the ways we socialize the consumer (especially children) in our society.

c. Three dimensions combine to produce different segments of parental styles.
   1. Authoritarian parents – restrictive with negative view about ads.
   2. Neglecting parents – detached from kids and exercise little control.
   3. Indulgent parents – less restrictive and want children to learn about buying.

d. One of the strongest influences on children is television. It teaches children about culture’s values and myths. Television is often called the ‘electronic baby-sitter.’

****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 8 Here****

Discussion Topic: How do you plan to teach your children how to become well-informed buyers?

Sex-Role Socialization
e. Children pick up on the concept of gender identity at an earlier age than was previously believed (sometimes at age one or two).
   1. One function of child’s play is to rehearse for adulthood.
   2. Often ‘traditional’ sex roles are stressed in children’s products; the same item might be positioned and designed differently for boys and girls.

Discussion Topic: Think of products that are sex-role specific. Comment on how they are designed and positioned. Does this cause you any problems?

Cognitive Development
f. The ability of children to make mature, ‘adult’ consumer decisions obviously increases with age (not that grownups always make mature decisions).
   1. Kids can be segmented by age in terms of their stage of cognitive development, or ability to comprehend concepts of increasing complexity.
   2. According to Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, children pass through different cognitive structure stages.
      a). Limited – below six, children do not employ storage and retrieval strategies.
      b). Cued – between 6 and 12, children employ these strategies – when prompted.
      c). Strategic – 12 and older, people spontaneously employ these strategies.

****Use Key Term cognitive development Here*****

Marketing Research and Children
g. Despite the buying power, relatively little real data on children’s preferences or influences on spending patterns is available.
   1. Children are difficult subjects for research.
   2. A particularly helpful type of research with children is product testing.
   3. Since children differ in their abilities to process product-related information, many serious ethical issues are raised when advertisers try to appeal directly to children.
   4. Kids’ cognitive defences are not yet sufficiently developed to filter out commercial appeals.
      Today, Web sites are of concern to regulators.
   5. Children’s level of understanding is especially hard to assess, since pre-schoolers are not very good at verbal responses.

**** Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 (used previously) and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9 Here****
Discussion Topic: Should commercials be able to advertise to young children? Should there be any restrictions? Who should determine this? Should children’s Web sites be controlled? What about free speech?

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. The first area of concern is the general area of demographics. Students do not normally pay a great deal of attention to the information about demographics (unless the material is going to be on the examination). Marketers live by this information. One way to reinforce this material is to assign some advance research projects to the students which they may be able to accomplish over the Internet.

2. The other barrier is in the proper use of the Family Life Cycle. After the students thoroughly read the material in the text and study the information contained in Table 11.1, have them design a new updated Family Life Cycle. The process of studying the information carefully (in order to do this) will result in great reinforcement for them. Once the ‘new cycle’ has been constructed, the students should demonstrate how marketers use this information to better plan strategy. This discovery process will greatly aid their understanding of this important process.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Have a student bring in ads for two different product categories in which the family is targeted. Find another set of ads for two different brands of the same items in which the family is not targeted. Evaluate the ads as to their effectiveness. Why do you prefer one ad over another?

2. Ask a student to go to a toy store or a toy department and watch several interactions between a parent and child. Have the student make an oral report on how the children ‘made their wishes known’ and how parents reacted to their children’s ‘needs and wants.’

3. Have a student make a list of ten product/service categories (i.e. window treatments, china, appliances, lawn mower, children’s toys, cookware, cars, dental care, groceries, holidays, insurance, bedroom furniture, garden supplies). Now ask the student to interview two married couples (one in their 20’s and one in their 50’s or more). Without conferring with each other, have them indicate whether decisions to purchase products in each category are likely to be made by primarily by the wife, by the husband, or jointly. Evaluate this research process.

4. Ask a student to select a few people in a defined age category (middle school students, secondary school students, or retired seniors – not college students) to compile a list of purchases that they typically make in a week. Find out about how much they usually spend. Can you see any patterns developing?

5. Encourage one of your students to visit three local restaurants that seem to target clientele in three different family life cycle stages – e.g., young singles; young married without children, married with young children; married with youngest child over six; empty nesters with the breadwinner still in the work force; empty nesters out of the work force; sole survivors. How does each establishment attract its target market? Sometimes it is fun to run about a 2 minute video of the clientele entering and leaving each different type of restaurant.

6. Ask a student to visit a clothing store, shoe store, furniture store, appliance store, restaurant, or whatever, and interview the store manager regarding how the family life cycle concept is employed in their inventory selection, pricing, and/or advertising and sales promotion.

7. Have someone go in search of ‘mall rats’. Interview four or five consumers in their early teens. Find out what types of purchases, typical and special, they usually make. See if they will tell you about how much
they spend each week. How do they get their spending money each week – job, allowance, save lunch money, etc.? About how much do they have to spend in an average week? What conclusions can be drawn from this?

8. Have a student bring to class three advertisements that show the changing roles of men and women. Also bring in three ads that show the traditional roles of men and women. Which ads do the class like best? Which do they find more credible? Try to analyse their responses.

9. Ask a student to do some observational research on children playing. How are the children using their toys (balls, dolls, dress up, cars, guns, stuffed animals, etc.) to rehearse future social interactions. Have the student comment on how fantasy in play helps kids to ‘grow up’.

**Group Assignments**

10. Distribute a list of ten products/services, and then have the class indicate on the sheet whether the decision to purchase each product is probably made by the husband alone, the wife alone, either husband or wife alone, or jointly made by both parties. Does there seem to be a trend developing? If so, what evidence does the class have that they are probably correct?

11. Have a group bring to class four or five ads in which teenage girls are targeted. A magazine that appeals to this group can be found in a book store. How are these appeals similar and/or different from appeals to women in their twenties? You might bring in a magazine that appeals to them. Does the class think the teenage ads were designed for older children or young adults? Have them speculate.

12. Ask a student or a group of students to describe different purchase situations in which they (or another family member) plays the role of (1) initiator, (2) influencer, (3) information gatherer, (4) decision maker, (5) purchaser, or (6) user.

13. Have students bring to class some women’s magazines. Discuss how advertisements aimed at women have changed over the past 20 years. (Perhaps you could photocopy older ads from magazines in the library; therefore it might be a good idea to choose black and while ads.) Show how advertisers have adapted their copy and art work to account for the changing roles of women.

14. You or one or more of your students should select a product category such as a car, a tie, jewellery, restaurant, shoes, or an apartment. Using the life-cycle stages given in the chapter, ask the class to explain the variables that will affect a purchase decision by consumers in each stage of the cycle.

15. Hop aboard the Information Superhighway! In segmenting the market for customer telecommunication services (e.g. America On Line, Netscape, Modems, Faxes, caller ID, call return, call blocker, three-way calling, speed calling, call forwarding, and call waiting) what stage of the family life cycle, sex, age, education, or some other factor would be more important? What marketing and promotional strategies would you devise to reach the segment(s) you selected? Why?

**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE**

1. **Review a number of popular media which are published in countries in Southern Europe as well as media targeted for Northern European countries. How do the ads’ depiction of family seem to differ by region? In what sorts of consumption situations do they seem highly similar? Why?**

   Answers to this question will vary, depending on the student’s success in finding rich source materials and data. One would expect the representation of families in ads to be similar with respect to the expression of circumstances that portray family bonding/affection/emotions. Fathers with sons, mothers with daughters, consumption settings wherein family are being perhaps re-united for holidays, etc. While the expression of these ‘family moments’ will vary across countries, the underlying bonding and emotions will be highly similar. Differences would be expected between North and South depictions regarding the
composition of the family being depicted in the ads, (nuclear family, vs. extended family settings of consumption) or in terms of family size. Scandinavian family depictions may look and feel ‘more modern’, and have women in working roles, and smaller family size, and perhaps show the father in a housekeeping role. Southern European family depictions may show a more paternalistic family structure.

2. Do you think market research should be performed on children? Give the reasons for your answer.

Discussion of this issue will most likely revolve around the student’s opinions and experiences with children as consumers. As the chapter made clear, children are a large part of the economy both as consumers, and as influences on consumption. Therefore, a firm would be careless not to gather and use information on the tastes and habits of children. However, many students may object to this line of reasoning by stating that children are a particularly susceptible group and so marketing efforts aimed at them should not exist, or should be controlled. An important distinction that needs to be made in this matter is the difference between marketing research and marketing communication; while the former is done to assist the latter, the two concepts are separate. Discussion could best be focused on the suitability of market research using children and then proceed to the propriety of marketing to children as a market.

3. Marketers have been criticized for donating products and services to educational institutions in exchange for free promotion. Is this a fair exchange, in your opinion, or should corporations be prohibited from attempting to influence youngsters in school?

Here again, discussion of this question will reflect the student’s attitude towards marketing towards younger consumers, but with a twist: donating products to schools has obvious positive consequences for those students. Some students will view this as a positive exchange, as the school and the students receive educational materials they otherwise might not. On the other hand, some will see this as a cynical attempt to ensnare a captive audience. There would appear to be some truth in both positions, as the donation of products can contribute to a child’s education and it also can promote current and future purchases of those goods.

For example, Apple Computer Corporation made special efforts to provide computer equipment to schools, and they developed special promotions to sell equipment to teachers and school-age children. It would be hard to deny that such efforts contributed to Apple’s success, but the benefits to both parties also are obvious. Discussion of this topic should be aimed at setting some guidelines that both groups could benefit from, while safeguarding the practice from exploiting children’s less-developed discriminatory abilities.

4. For each of the following five product categories – groceries, cars, holidays, furniture, and appliances – describe the way in which you believe a married couple’s choices would be affected if they had children.

The question provides an excellent opportunity to exhibit the direct and indirect influence that children have on purchases. If possible, students who have children should be encouraged to contribute to the discussion by relating their experiences. Students who do not have children should be encouraged to relate their own attempts to influence their parents, purchase decisions in these and other areas. In addition, discussing the types of product categories that children are more likely to influence would be interesting. Of the product categories listed, the presence of children in the household will produce the need for more of each product – more room in the car, more groceries to consume, more variety of foods, more capacity in the appliances, etc.

However, what also will be influenced is the type of product bought under each category, and this aspect should form the basis for discussion.
groceries – baby food, snack foods, health foods
cars – two-door, four-door van or estate
holiday – if the destination has recreation facilities (pool, tennis courts, etc.) or is appropriate for children of different ages
furniture – baby furniture, special beds for younger children (e.g., bunk beds, canopy beds), new furniture for older children
appliances – microwave ovens and other convenience appliances for busy children and families
5. In identifying and targeting newly divorced couples, do you think marketers are exploiting these couples’ situations? Are there instances where you think marketers may actually be helpful to them? Support your answer with examples.

This question is much like questions 2 and 3 in that it asks the student to consider a specific target market and whether marketing to it is appropriate. In addition to examining each of these groups separately, a more general question may be: What are the limits, or the parameters, of appropriate targeting? At a broader level, the whole notion of target marketing may be re-examined as to whether it is appropriate to attempt to persuade a group to purchase a product. A discussion of this scope could quickly get so broad and unfocused that students become confused, so care must be taken to keep the discussion centred on one topic at a time. Those students who accept target marketing should be asked to describe situations where target marketing should be curbed and why. Those students who feel that target marketing is wrong should be encouraged to consider that it is a necessary tool for firms to market their products. They should be encouraged to describe their set of guidelines for properly using target marketing. The situation described here, that of a divorced couple, could be used to exemplify the use and abuse of target marketing. Students should also be able to describe the advantages and disadvantages of target marketing to this particular group and how other sensitive situations should be handled by marketers.

6. Arrange to interview two married couples, one younger and one older. Prepare a response form listing five product categories – groceries, furniture, appliances, holidays, and cars – and ask each spouse to indicate, without consulting the other, whether purchases in each category are made by joint or unilateral decisions and to indicate whether the unilateral decisions are made by the husband or the wife. Compare each couples’ responses for agreement between husbands and wives relative to who makes the decisions and compare both couples’ overall responses for differences relative to the number of joint versus unilateral decisions. Report your findings and conclusions.

Students’ discussion of this question should consider the text material on spousal influence. Married students should be encouraged to provide their insight into these issues.

7. Collect ads for three different product categories in which the family is targeted. Find another set of ads for different brands of the same items in which the family is not featured. Prepare a report on the effectiveness of the approaches.

You might encourage students to look at magazines that target different social groups to see if there is a difference. (Possible Field Project)

8. Observe the interactions between parents and children in the cereal section of a local grocery shop. Prepare a report on the number of children who expressed preferences, how they expressed their preferences, and how parents responded, including the number who purchased the child’s choice.

If a student stands near a family in the cereal aisle, he/she could note who actually picks up the cereal and puts it in the basket or otherwise chooses the brand. You might also ask that student who made the cereal choices when he/she was young. (Possible Field Project)

9. Watch three hours of children’s programming on commercial television stations and evaluate the marketing techniques used in the commercials in terms of the ethical issues raised in the final section of this chapter. Report your findings and conclusions.

This is a project for a true couch potato. Make sure the student has a pad of paper and makes good notes from the beginning. Find out how the student reaches his or her conclusions concerning the ethical issues. (Possible Field Project)

10. Select a product category, and using the life-cycle stages given in the chapter, list the variables that will affect a purchase decision for the product by consumers in each stage of the cycle.

You might encourage students to develop their own list of categories in the family life cycle, define them, and then determine the types of product people in each of those categories would probably need. (Possible Field Project)

11. Consider three important changes in modern family structure. For each, find an example of a marketer who has attempted to be conscious of this change as reflected in product communications,
retailing innovations, or other aspects of the marketing mix. If possible, also try to find examples of marketers who have failed to keep up with these developments.

If students have trouble getting information for this project, you might ask them to contact various retailers (department stores, specialty stores, discount houses, etc.) and ask the manager if he/she is aware of any product modification, promotions, or displays that have been made. (Possible Field Project)

END NOTES

Chapter 12
Income and social class

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The field of behavioural economics considers how consumers decide what to do with their money. In particular, discretionary expenditures are made only when people are able and willing to spend money on items above and beyond their basic needs. Consumer confidence – the state of mind consumers have about their own personal situation, as well as their feelings about their overall economic prospects – helps to determine whether they will purchase goods and services, take on debt, or save their money.

In this decade, consumers overall have been relatively pessimistic about their future prospects. A lower level of resources has caused a shift toward an emphasis on quality products that are reasonably priced. Consumers are less tolerant of exaggerated or vague product claims, and they are more sceptical about marketing activities. Consumers in their twenties are particularly sceptical about the economy and marketing targeted to their age group.

A consumer’s social class refers to his or her standing in society. It is determined by a number of factors, including education, occupation, and income.

Virtually all groups make distinctions among members in terms of relative superiority, power, and access to valued resources. This social stratification creates a status hierarchy, where some goods are preferred over others and are used to categorize their owners’ social class.

While income is an important indicator of social class, the relationship is far from perfect since social class is also determined by such factors as place of residence, cultural interests, and worldview.

Purchase decisions are sometimes influenced by the desire to ‘buy up’ to a higher social class or to engage in the process of conspicuous consumption, where one’s status is flaunted by the deliberate and non-constructive use of valuable resources. This spending pattern is a characteristic of the nouveaux riches, whose relatively recent acquisition of income, rather than ancestry or breeding, is responsible for their increased social mobility.

Products are used as status symbols to communicate real or desired social class. Parody display occurs when consumers seek status by deliberately avoiding fashionable products.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Consumer Spending and Economic Behaviour
   a. Products are frequently bought and displayed as markers of social class; they are valued as status symbols.

   Income Patterns
   b. Real per capita income almost doubled between 1960 and 1990. However, all groups have not shared in this wealth increase. These income shifts are linked to two key factors:
      1). Women’s role in the workplace is increasing.
      2). Women’s income lags behind that of men, though there are wide differences between European nations
      3). Increases in the attainment of an education – college graduates earn 50% more than secondary school graduates.
To Spend or Not to Spend, That is the Question

c. Consumer demand for goods and services depends both on ability to buy and willingness to buy.

1. **Discretionary income** is the money available to a household over and above that required for a comfortable standard of living.

Discussion Topic: Can you think of some item that you have the ability to buy but you don’t intend to buy the object? Why won’t you buy it? Can you think of some object you would be willing to buy but you just don’t have the means to buy it? How are you planning to resolve this?

d. Consumers tend to equate money with security and comfort. Many anxieties result.

Discussion Topic: How do you feel about money? What does it represent to you? Would you classify yourself as a saver or a spender? Do you think other people would agree with this? On a scale of one to ten priorities, where does money fall on your personal scale?

Consumer Confidence

e. The field of **behavioural economics**, or economic psychology, is concerned with the ‘human’ side of economic decisions (including biases).

1. A consumer’s beliefs about what the future holds is an indicator of **consumer confidence**, which reflects the extent to which people are optimistic or pessimistic about the future health of the economy and how they will fare down the road.

2. The Henley Centre, Eurostat and Euromonitor measure consumer confidence with periodic surveys, containing questions like:

   a. My standard of living will change for the better over the next year
   b. My quality of life will improve over the next year
   c. I will have a lack of money when I retire
   d. I spend too much of my income, and I intend to spend less next year
   e. I am concerned about the amount of free time I have

Discussion Topic: Do you think these five questions are good ones for measuring consumer confidence? Do you think people would truthfully answer all these questions? Would you? What other questions might be added to the list? Why?

f. The overall **savings rate** is influenced by individual consumer’s pessimism or optimism about their personal circumstances, world events, and cultural differences in attitudes toward saving.

1. Traditional relationships among price, value, and quality are being redefined.

Discussion Topic: How do you think each of the following groups feels about savings and the general state of our economy (and their position in it): (a) a teenager, (b) a senior in college, (c) your parents, and (d) your grandparents (or other people in this age range)?

2. **Social Class**

a. A consumer’s standing in society, or **social class**, is determined by a complex set of variables, including income, family background, and occupation.

1. The place one occupies in the social structure is an important determinant not only of how much money is spent, but it also influences how it is spent.

2. Consumers’ views towards money vary widely.
A Universal Pecking Order
b. In most animal species the most assertive or aggressive animals exert control over the others.
   1). People are no different.
   2). Stratification of one sort or another is universal.
   3). Social class affects access to resources.
      a). According to Karl Marx, the ‘haves’ control the resources and the ‘havenots’ provide the
         labour.
      b). According to Max Weber, multidimensional people are ranked by social status, power,
         wealth, and property.
   4). Social class affects taste and lifestyles. People in each group tend to socialize with each other,
      share many ideas and values, and have a similar education.

Discussion Topic: Comment on the phrase ‘Social class is as much a state of being as it is of having.’ How
important is social class to you?

Social Stratification
c. The phenomenon of social stratification refers to the creation of artificial divisions in a society. (‘those
processes in a social system by which scarce and valuable resources are distributed unequally to status
positions that become more or less permanently ranked in terms of the share of valuable resources each
receives’).
   1). Status is either earned or inherited. Therefore status is either achieved or ascribed.
   2). Most groups exhibit a structure, or status hierarchy, in which some members are somehow better
      off than others. They may have more authority or power, or they are simply better liked or
      respected.

Discussion Topic: How do advertisers use social stratification and status hierarchy in advertising? How
are authority, power, money, and respect shown in advertisements?

d. Every society around the world has some form of class structure. Some are mobile and some are not.

Social Mobility
e. Social mobility refers to the passage of individuals from one social class to another.
   This passage can be:  
      1). Horizontal mobility – movement from one position to another roughly equivalent in social status
         (a nurse to a school teacher).
      2). Downward mobility – movement from one position to one farther down the scale (losing a job
         and being placed on welfare).
      3). Upward mobility – movement from one position to one farther up the scale (the child of a blue
         collar worker becomes a physician).

Discussion Topic: Have you had any experience with social mobility? If so, describe it.

Components of Social Class
f. The most important components of social class are (in descending order):
1). **Occupational prestige** (the ‘worth’ of people). These hierarchies tend to be stable over time and similar in different societies.

2). **Income**. Wealth is not distributed evenly. Income per se is not a very good indicator of social class, however, most equate it to social class.
   a). In the U.S the top 20% of society controls about 75% of the wealth and assets.
   b). Wealth is more evenly distributed in Europe

**** Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9 Here *****

Discussion Topic: Which do you think is more important occupation or income? Give examples of prestigious occupations that do not have corresponding wealth and high paying jobs that do not have much prestige.

g. There are relationships between income and social class. A few of these are:
   1). More income does not necessarily result in increased status or changed consumption patterns.
   2). Income predicts purchase of expensive products without status (e.g., a major appliance).
   3). Social class can predict the purchase of low to moderate priced symbolic products (e.g., alcohol, cosmetics).
   4). Both social class and income are needed to predict purchase of expensive symbolic products (e.g., cars, homes).

**** Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here ****

Discussion Topic: What are some products (brands) that typical college students buy which tend to indicate their social class? How might these products be shown in advertisements?

**Measurement of Social Class**

h. Because social class is a complex concept that depends on a number of factors, not surprisingly it has proven difficult to measure.

i. Market researchers were among the first to propose that people from different social classes can be distinguished from each other in important ways. Problems include:
   1). The shift away from the traditional nuclear family structure.
   2). The inability to use the reputational method since we as a society are becoming more anonymous.
   3). Status inconsistency. Examples include:
      a). A person from a low status ethnic background has a high-status job, or someone lives in a fashionable neighbourhood but did not complete secondary school. This can be called status crystallization.
      b). A person that is under-educated in a traditional sense succeeds in position, wealth, and power.
      c). Overprivileged consumers—income at least 20-30% over median of their social class.
      e). Women and their roles.
         1]. Women have traditionally had their social status defined by the status of their husbands.
         2]. Today, more women are marrying without regard to social position of the man.
         3]. Social class still is an issue in the mating game.

**** Use Key Term status crystallization Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here; Use Figure 12.6 Here ****

Discussion Topic: Give an example of someone who suffers from status inconsistency.

Discussion Topic: Give examples of couples that come from different backgrounds (with respect to social class and occupation type) and have become romantically involved. Will this cause problems? Do you see any evidence in our entertainment shows (such as on television or in the movies)? In our advertising?
j. Marketers have failed to use social class information as effectively as they could for the following reasons:
   1). They have ignored status inconsistency.
   2). They have ignored intergenerational mobility.
   3). They have ignored subjective social class.
   4). They have ignored consumers’ aspirations to change their class standing.
   5). They have ignored the social status of working wives.

3. How Social Class Affects Purchase Decisions

a. Different products and stores are perceived by consumers to be appropriate for certain social classes.
   1). Working classes tend to evaluate products in more utilitarian terms (such as sturdiness or comfort).
   2). More affluent consumers tend to evaluate products based on appearance and body image.

Class Differences in Worldview

b. A major social class difference involves the worldview of consumers.
   1). Working classes are more concerned with immediate needs and are more dependent on relatives for emotional support, are family-orientated, and the appearance of home is a priority.
   2). Higher classes tend to focus on more long-term goals, quest for riches often results in depression and deviant behaviour.
   3). The concept of a taste culture, which differentiates people in terms of their aesthetic and intellectual preferences, is helpful in understanding the important yet subtle distinctions in consumption choices among the social classes.

Discussion Topic: Illustrate taste culture with ads from magazines. How are the magazines matched to market segments (which are matched to the ads)?

c. Another approach to social class focuses on differences in the types of codes (the ways meanings are expressed and interpreted by consumers) used within different social strata. Examples of the codes are:
   1). **Restricted codes** are dominant among the working class. These codes focus on content of objects not on the relationship among objects.
   2). **Elaborated codes** tend to be used by the middle and upper classes. These codes focus on more complex issues and have a worldwide view.

Discussion Topic: What are some physical cues that you can observe to determine whether a person is in the upper, middle, or lower socio-economic class? Do you think you can easily be misled? How are these cues used in advertising?

Targeting the Poor

d. Low income families have been largely ignored by marketers.
   1). The unemployed feel alienated by society.
   2). Some marketers are developing products and services for low-income consumers.

Discussion Topic: Think of five products that could be specifically targeted toward the poor. How would you change the existing marketing strategy to accommodate this shift toward this segment? Do you think this new approach would be successful? What would be the key variables necessary for success?

Targeting the Rich
e. Social class is more than money.
1. Many marketers target affluent, upscale markets.

2. The Robb Report separates the rich into three segments, depending on annual income:
   a). The marginally rich ($70,000-$99,999).
   b). The comfortably rich ($100,000-$249,000).
   c). The super rich ($250,000+).

3. It is a mistake to assume that everyone with a high income should be placed in the same market.

4. Luxury products are important to this group, but the highest-ranked symbol of achievement is being in charge of a cultural or educational institution and/or one’s own business.

5. The top reasons for buying a product include value, durability, and past experience.

**Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 Here**

f. Old money is linked to inherited money.
   1). The point with this segment is not how much money, but where did it come from and how is it spent.
   2). People who earned their money are not usually included in this group.
   3). This group has a history of service and philanthropy.

g. The *nouveaux riches* are not accepted by old rich. They are considered to be ‘rags to riches.’
   1). Many nouveaux riches are plagued by status anxiety (wearing the right clothes or seen in the right places).

Discussion Topic: How do spending patterns differ between the ‘old rich’ and the ‘new rich?’

h. The ‘Get-Set’ is a term used to describe those who sacrifice in some areas so they can have the best in other areas.

4. Status Symbols

a. People have a tendency to evaluate themselves, their professional accomplishments, their material well-being, and so on, relative to others.
   1). Status symbols can be thought of as badges of achievement.
   2). ‘He who dies with the most toys, wins’ is a trite but (to many) a true phrase.

**Use Key Term status symbol Here**

Discussion Topic: List ten status symbols that are important to you. How are these symbols linked to success? If a marketer knew your list, how would this affect their strategy for marketing to you?

Conspicuous Consumption

b. Thorstein Veblen felt that a major role of products was for *invidious distinction*. They were used to inspire envy in others through a display of wealth or power.
   1). Veblen coined the phrase *conspicuous consumption* to refer to people’s desire to provide prominent visible evidence of their ability to afford luxury goods.

**Use Key Terms invidious distinction and conspicuous consumption Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 (used previously) Here**

Discussion Topic: Give examples of conspicuous consumption or invidious distinction that has either affected you or been done by you. Can you think of your real reasons for participating in this behaviour?

   2). Forms of conspicuous behaviour might include:
      a). The Trophy Wife.
b). The modern Potlatch – a feast where the host gives elaborate gifts to guests and guests are expected to reciprocate, forcing poor guests into bankruptcy. (The best modern example is the large and expensive wedding.)

c). The leisure class – people for whom productive work is taboo and engage in conspicuous waste.

*****Use Key Term Potlatch Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 6 Here*****

3). There seems to be a resurgence of interest in luxury goods and status symbols.

Discussion Topic: List ten status symbols for teens and pre-teens. How are these symbols different from yours?

4). As the competition to accumulate status symbols escalates, sometimes the best tactic is to switch gears and go in reverse. One way to do this is to deliberately avoid status symbols – that is, to mock status symbols. This has been deemed to be parody display.

*****Use Key Term parody display Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 10 Here; Use the Introductory Vignette to chapter 12 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Think of an example that would illustrate ‘parody display.’ How could this be used in advertising? Or could it?

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. The primary barrier to effective learning in this chapter deals with social class. The concept is not difficult to understand, however, it is difficult to apply in practice. Students should be encouraged to study the material in the chapter carefully. Specifically, they should examine how social class affects tastes and lifestyle. To reinforce the information they have obtained, extra time should be spent examining how marketers use social class in their marketing strategy. One way to do this is to have each student bring in three of their favourite advertisements. Next have them estimate their own (or each other’s) social class. Based on the characteristics of their position, determine if the favourite ads match. Lastly, have students predict where they will be in five or ten years on the scale. Ask how many of them are already examining products that would either match or be acceptable to that future class.

2. Have students list all the variables which they believe would affect or determine social class. They can do research from secondary material or create their own. Once this list has been put together, have the students construct a ‘new’ social class scale that reflects the list of determinants they have put together. This project will help to reinforce concepts and demonstrate the change that is constantly going on with respect to social class adjustment and mobility.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Have a student compile a list of ten colleges and universities and ask a few individuals to rank each according to its prestige. Have them comment on the results. Are there any marketing implications to the results?

2. Ask a student to bring in an ad in which the brand being marketed was formerly a status symbol (e.g. Rolls Royce, Parker Pen, etc.). Have the student discuss whether the ad still attempts to create that perception. What new product, if any, has replaced the featured product as a status symbol?
3. Have a student interview small business owners, large business owners, or a couple of both for their opinions of the state of the economy. How they think an increase in Social Security Taxes would affect them? Have the student find out what major signals the owners study and watch before making their business forecasts.

4. Encourage one of your students to read the book (or reviews of the book) Generation X and tell the class about their reactions to it. Does the student think that Coupland accurately represents the feelings of the people fitting into this category?

5. Have a student visit with a representative of a local consumer protection agency (e.g. Better Business Bureau, an investigative reporter from the newspaper or television station, etc.) and ask their opinion on how lower-class and middle-class consumers differ in terms of the type of the consumer protection that they need.

6. Have a student interview one or more salesperson(s) from one of the following product categories – new or used cars, stereo equipment, clothing, insurance, or property. Ask the student to determine the social classes or status of their customers. Does the student recommend that the sales approach will vary depending on the customer’s social class?

7. Have a student visit two sections of a community – one where residents are professionals and business people and one where residents are mostly working class. Ask them to note how the homes vary in terms of colour, architecture, and the general appearance of the lawn and landscape. Have them check the paper or call an estate agent to find the general value of homes in the area. What types of shops are in the neighbourhood and how are they promoted?

8. Ask a student to bring in a collection of magazines aimed at different social classes. Have the student comment on the products advertised, the physical appearance and layout, and the editorial content of the magazines.

Group Assignments

9. Bring to class copies of the types of magazines described in the chapter that appeal to various social classes. Pass the magazines around and have students look through them. Ask the class to discuss the differences and similarities that they noted.

10. Prepare a list of 15 occupations and distribute copies to the class. Ask each student to rank the occupations according to prestige. Give the list to some students and ask them to calculate averages for each occupation. Discuss the results with the class.

11. Ask a student (or a group) to find at least two manufacturer’s ads for the same generic product (such as clothing, food product, personal care product, etc.) that they think are aimed at different social classes. Have them explain how they differ.

12. Have some students (or just one) make a list of fraudulent symbols and then construct a profile of individuals who are still using or wearing these symbols. Have them also make a list of some of the new ‘status symbols’ that have become proper.

13. Ask a group of students (or an individual) to compile a collection of ads that depict consumers of different social classes. Have them generalize about the reality of the stories told in these ads. Do the ads appear to be in the right media?

14. Students usually enjoy this project. Ask a group to classify the major retail stores (department and specialty stores) in your community according to their estimation of the social class of their target market. Have them explain how the marketing strategy is different for each of the stores profiled.
15. Ask students to make a list of slang terms that are used to disparage social classes. Why are these terms used? How do marketers disparage or make fun of social classes (which they do not target)? What is the best way to treat all classes with ethics and dignity?

**CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE**

1. **The concepts income and wealth are measured in different ways throughout Europe, in spite of the standardization of currency in 1999. Look through several recent issues of Review of Income and Wealth to get an idea of how these concepts differ across countries. For marketers, do you have any suggestions as how to segment income groups for a European-wide strategy?**

   The purpose of this question is to start a discussion, rather than to arrive at a correct answer. Each country has its own income categories, which are qualitatively comparable, such as low-low, low, modal, high, and very high. In terms of monetary income (i.e. amount earned) these are definitely NOT comparable across countries. The same applies to wealth: wealth can be measured in various ways in Europe (having land, a guest house in a Swiss ski resort, water rights, goats, money), but comparisons across countries are difficult. In countries with a low population density many people may own a lodge and some ground at a ‘private’ lakeside at a weekend resort, whereas in densely populated countries a permanent caravan at a public camp-site is the comparable standard. Marketers work with categories of income, but a pan European pricing strategy or pan Euro promotional/positioning strategy is still an art, rather than a science, even with the introduction of the Euro.

2. **What are some of the obstacles to measuring social class in today’s society? Discuss some ways to get around these obstacles.**

   Some of the obstacles in measuring social class in today’s society are changes in family structure, anonymity, and status inconsistency. Students should refer to the text discussion for suggestions on how to get around some of these obstacles.

3. **What consumption differences might you expect to observe between a family characterized as underprivileged versus one whose income is average for its social class?**

   An example of the consumption differences one might expect to observe between a family characterized as underprivileged versus one whose income is average for its social class include the brands of clothing worn, the types of cars driven, types of holidays (flying versus driving, hotels versus camping), and holiday destinations. Students likely will identify a number of factors in their own lives that distinguish them as members of the ‘middle’ class. Ask students if they have a tendency to overestimate the class they are in. Why would they do this?

4. **When is social class likely to be a better predictor of consumer behaviour than mere knowledge of a person’s income?**

   Students should recognize that social class is likely to be a better predictor of consumer behaviour than mere knowledge of a person’s income when level of income masks real differences in behaviour due to educational achievement, occupational prestige, and other factors incorporated into an overall measure of social class.

5. **How do you assign people to social classes, or do you at all? What consumption cues do you use (e.g., clothing, speech, cars, etc.) to determine social standing?**

   As discussed in the text, people are assigned to social classes by virtue of their social standing in the community. People are grouped according to their occupation, lifestyle, ideas and values, and income. Consumption cues that may be used to determine people’s social standing include their cars, homes, clothing, speech, and types of people with whom they socialize.

6. **Thorstein Veblen argued that women were often used as a vehicle to display their husbands’ wealth. Is this argument still valid today?**

   The instructor should expect students to differ in their level of agreement with Thorstein Veblen’s notion that women often are used as a vehicle to display their husbands’ wealth. They should be encouraged to
defend and support their views with examples from today’s society. Does advertising perpetuate this process? If so, how?

7. Given present environmental conditions and dwindling resources, what is the future of ‘conspicuous waste’? Can the desire to impress others with affluence ever be eliminated? If not, can it take on a less dangerous form?

   The goal of this question is to make the student think about current environmental conditions, depleting resources, and how ‘conspicuous waste’ plays a major role in this decay process. The view of conspicuous waste from both consumer and marketer perspectives should be included.

8. Some people argue that status symbols are dead. Do you agree?

   To begin the exercise, the instructor might ask students to list items that they perceive to be status symbols. Each item could then be analysed to determine its history and evolution as a status symbol, and its position today.

9. Compile a list of occupations, and ask a sample of students in a variety of subjects (both business and non-business) to rank the prestige of these jobs. Can you detect any differences in these rankings as a function of students’ subjects?

   The student should be encouraged to try this exercise with a variety of individuals, not just students in different subjects. It would be interesting to see differences in perceptions of prestige due to gender, age, current occupation, level of education, etc. (Possible Field Project)

10. Compile a collection of ads that depict consumers of different social classes. What generalizations can you make about the reality of these ads and about the media in which they appear?

    The instructor might review this exercise after students have completed it and attempt to identify the aspects of the advertisements that students used to classify consumers as members of different social classes. A discussion of how our attitudes and perceptions are influenced by stereotypical beliefs could then be used with the students’ own examples as evidence of stereotypical beliefs and their potentially negative consequences. (Possible Field Project)

11. Identify a current set of fraudulent status symbols, and construct profiles of consumers who are wearing or using these products. Are these profiles consistent with the images portrayed in each product’s promotional messages?

    Answers to this question definitely will be country and culture specific, and probably age-cohort specific as well. If there are students from different countries, or widely different parts of the country, they could be invited to compare and comment on each others examples. In Holland, it could be having a tan face after the spring-holiday, or wearing Doc Martens shoes; in Germany it will be something else. Parody display, and the death-re-birth or re-construction of status symbols will show some similarities – but probably more differences – across Europe.

12. The chapter observes that some marketers are finding ‘greener pastures’ by targeting low-income people. How ethical is it to single out consumers who cannot afford to waste their precious resources on discretionary items? Under what circumstances should this segmentation strategy be encouraged or discouraged?

    Student opinions will vary. Possible ethical issues include: Do people with low incomes need special protection? Does low income equate with low intelligence? Do you take away freedom of choice from people with low incomes? Who should decide how people use their money? Will society have to provide essential items if those with low incomes spend their money on discretionary items? The argument of what discretionary items should not be promoted to low-income people seems to be centring around ‘sin products’ (tobacco, alcohol, etc.). When a special cigarette, a special wine, and a special ale were targeted toward people who live in the inner-city, many groups spoke out saying that it was immoral to use billboards in these neighbourhoods to encourage sales. The companies involved have either dropped the product or changed their promotional strategies, but these same products with different brand names are still appearing on billboards in the inner-city. Some argue that since low-income people have the right to use tobacco
products and alcoholic beverages, manufacturers should have the right to communicate about their products to every potential consumer.
Chapter 13
Age subcultures

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Europeans have many things in common with others merely because they are about the same age or live in the same country, or same part of the country. Consumers who grew up at the same time share many cultural memories, so they may respond to marketers’ nostalgia appeals that remind them of these experiences.

Important age cohorts include teenagers, the 18-29 year olds, baby boomers, and the elderly. Teenagers are making a transition from childhood to adulthood, and their self-concepts tend to be unstable. They are receptive to products that help them to be accepted and enable them to assert their independence. Because many teenagers receive allowances, and/or earn pocket money but have few financial obligations, they are a particularly important segment for many nonessential or expressive products, ranging from chewing gum to hair gel, to clothing fashions and music. Because of changes in family structure, many also are taking more responsibility for their families’ day-to-day shopping and routine purchase decisions.

Gen-Xers, consumers age 18-29, are a difficult group to get a clear picture of for marketers. They will be a powerful force in the years to come, whose tastes and priorities will be felt in fashion, popular culture, politics and marketing.

Baby boomers are the most powerful age segment because of their size and economic clout. As this group ages, its interests have changed and marketing priorities have changed as well. The needs and desires of baby boomers have a strong influence on demands for housing, child care, cars, clothing, and so on. Only a small proportion of boomers fit into an affluent, materialistic category.

As the population ages, the needs of elderly consumers will also become increasingly influential. Many marketers traditionally ignored the elderly because of the stereotype that they are too inactive and spend too little. This stereotype is no longer accurate. Most of the elderly are healthy, vigorous, and interested in new products and experiences – and they have the income to purchase them. Marketing appeals to this age subculture should focus on consumers’ self-concepts and perceived ages, which tend to be more youthful than their chronological ages. Marketers also should emphasize concrete benefits of products, since this group tends to be sceptical of vague, image-related promotions. Personalized service is of particular importance to this segment.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Age and Consumer Identity
   a. The era in which a consumer is born creates for that person a cultural bond with the millions of others born during that same time period. As we grow older, our needs and preferences change, often in unison with others who are close to our own age.
      1). Marketers must recognize age changes and figure out how to effectively communicate with each age group.
      2). General marketing strategies often have to be modified to fit specific age groups.
   b. An age cohort consists of people of similar ages who have undergone similar experiences. They often share similar memories.
      1). Marketers often target products and services to one or more specific age cohorts.
      2). Campaigns can be developed to attract consumers of different ages, however.
Discussion Topic: Make a list of products (services, people, ideas) that have special appeal or memories to your age group. Make a similar list including the same categories for your parents or grandparents and for younger consumers (under the age of 12). How are the lists similar? How are they different? Do you find that you are beginning to have more in common with your parents than with someone under 12? Why do you think this is occurring?

The Appeal of Nostalgia
c. Adults over 30 are the most susceptible to nostalgia. Many advertising campaigns appeal to nostalgia for groups by using music from the nostalgic time period.

Discussion Topic: What is nostalgic to you? Think back to earlier school years. What products were popular? Do you still use these products (if you can find them)? What is your all-time favourite musical group? How do marketers revive markets for nostalgic products? Would the technique work with you?

2. The Teen Market: It Totally Rules
a. This can be the best of times and the worst of times. It is a time of uncertainty and development of choices in activities, friends, and looks. There are serious social consequences to almost everything.  
1). Teens use products to express their identities, to explore the world and their new-found freedoms in it, and also to rebel against the authority of their parents and other socializing agents. Marketers often do their best to assist in this process.

Discussion Topic: In a short one-page description describe yourself, your time period, and your thoughts in your teenage years. How could a marketer use this information to make appeals to you? What were your favourite expressions? Do you still use these? Do they now seem very out of place except to someone of your generation?

b. According to research done by Saatchi & Saatchi, there are four themes common to all teens:
1). Autonomy vs. belonging: want independence but need support.
2). Rebelliousness vs. conformity: rebellion against social norms but want acceptance.
3). Idealism vs. pragmatism: must reconcile how the world should be with reality.
4). Narcissism vs. intimacy: obsessed with appearance but want sincere relationships.

Discussion Topic: After examining the common themes applied to teenagers, how could marketers use this information to make adjustments to strategy? What type of ads worked best on you when you were a teenager? Do you look at these ads and the products they represented differently now?

c. Marketers find it difficult to define the values of today’s European teens. Some highlights of a recent study are:
1). Live life to the fullest. Driven by ambition and fear of failure
2). The ‘digitised’ future lacks the warmth that they seek
3). New technology will lead to increased stress
4). Phone at home is still more central than the mobile phone
5). General high level of advertising cynicism
6). Both brand aware and brand dismissive

Appealing to the Teen Market
d. This group has been raised on television, however, many believe that the advertising found on television is based on ‘lies and hype.’ They may be more ‘savvy’ than older generations when it comes to the electronic media.
1). Marketers view teens as ‘consumers-in-training.’
2). Teens exert a big influence on the purchase decisions of their parents. Many become the shoppers for the home because of working parents.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What do you think are three of the greatest problems facing a typical teenager (secondary school student) today? Can you suggest anything that marketers can do to help a teenager during this growing up period? What would you do different during your teenage years if you could do 'do-over'?

Discussion Topic: Can you think of ways you influenced your parent's buying decisions when you were a teenager? What was your 'track record'?

Researching the youth market
e. Research firms are coming up with innovative ways to research the teen market
   1). Typically these are ways to make teens record their own environment and their own subculture.
   2). Another example is asking young people to write essays, e.g. about what is 'cool'.


a. The cohort of consumers between the ages of 18 and 29 consists of 46 million Americans who will be a powerful force through the end of this decade and beyond.
   1). This generation has been labelled ‘Generation X,’ ‘slackers,’ or ‘busters.’
   2). Their sense of alienation is echoed by their choices in music, media, and in fashion.

Discussion Topic: Regardless of whether you are in ‘Generation X’ or not, what are your impressions of this cohort. Do you think it is misunderstood? What problems and opportunities will this generation face? If you were given the task of appealing to this generation, what approach or theme would you use? Why?

Marketing to Busters or Marketing Bust?
b. Although the income of this age cohort is below expectations, they still continue to be a formidable market segment – partly because so many still live at home and have more discretionary income.
   1). Because many busters have been doing the family shopping for a long time, marketers are finding that they are much more sophisticated about evaluating products.
   2). Perhaps one reason why marketers’ efforts to appeal to Xers with messages of alienation, cynicism, and despair have not succeeded is that many people in their 20s aren’t so depressed after all. This group is actually quite diverse.

3). Saatchi & Saatchi performed research that identified four key segments in this cohort group. They are:
   a). Cynical disdainers – the most pessimistic and sceptical about the world.
   b). Traditional materialists – the most like baby boomers in their 30s and 40s, these young people are upbeat, optimistic about the future, and actively striving for what they continue to view as the American Dream of material prosperity.
   c). Hippies revisited – this group tends to espouse the non-materialistic values of the Sixties. Their priorities are expressed through music, retro fashion, and a strong interest in spirituality.
   d). Fifties macho – these consumers tend to be young Republicans. They believe in stereotyped gender roles, are politically conservative, and they are the least accepting of multiculturalism.

Discussion Topic: Find ads that seem to be targeted toward these four groups. What type of adjectives would you use to identify these groups. Since many college students fall into the ‘X’ generation, which of the above four groups would you identify with (why)? What type of ads appeal to you? What type of ads that are targeted toward your generation do you really dislike?
4. Baby Boomers
   a. The baby boomers age segment is the source of many fundamental cultural and economic changes. The reason: power in numbers.

   *****Use Key Term baby boomers Here *****

The Cultural Impact of Boomers
b. The ‘Woodstock Generation’ created a revolution in style, politics, and consumer attitudes.

   *****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 Here*****

Discussion Topic: If you were to characterize the baby boomers, how would you describe them? What do you think would ‘turn them on?’ What do you admire about them? What do you dislike about them?

Economic Power: He Who Pays the Piper, Calls the Tune
c. Because of their size, the baby boomers have changed the phrase of their times (Don’t trust anyone over thirty!) to ‘We rule!’
d. Consumers aged 35 to 44 spend the most on housing, cars, and entertainment.
   1). These consumers also spend the most on food, clothing, and retirement plans.
   2). These consumers’ children were called baby boomlets.

   *****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Propose a plan for marketing to this age group. What factors would you consider? What would be the prime opportunities? What difficulties might you have to face?

5. The Grey Market
a. The old image of the elderly person as being one who is infirm, stays at home, and leads a thoroughly depressing life is rapidly changing as we enter the 21st century.

Grey Power
b. People over the age of 65 currently head over 18 million households. By 2010, one in every seven Americans will be over 65.
   1). Senior citizens have economic clout and will continue to gain in that area.
   2). They currently have 50% of all discretionary income and spend $60 billion annually.
   3). Most elderly people lead more active, multidimensional lives than we assume.
   4). Their economic health is good and getting better.
      a). 80% of senior citizens own their own home.
      b). Most seniors no longer have the economic burden of their children.

   *****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 6 Here*****

c. The key values of the elderly are:
   1). Autonomy – they want to lead active lives and to be self-sufficient.
   2). Connectedness – they want to keep bonds with friends and family.
   3). Altruism – they want to give something back to the world.
   4). Personal growth – they are very interested in trying new experiences and developing their potential.

   *****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What do you think are the key values of the elderly? How could these be incorporated into advertising to stimulate their interest in products?
Perceived Age: You’re Only as Old as You Feel

- Most elderly perceive of themselves as being ten to fifteen years younger than they actually are.
  1) Age is a state of mind.
  2) A better yardstick to categorize the elderly is perceived age, or how old a person feels.
  3) There is a ‘feel age’ and a ‘look age.’

***Use Key Term perceived age Here***

Discussion Topic: Give illustrations of ‘feel age’ versus ‘look age.’ Can you find these differences in advertisements?

Segmenting Seniors

- Four sub-segments appear:
  1) Older – aged 55-64.
  3) Aged – aged 75-84.
  4) Very old – 85+.

- Social ageing theories try to understand how society assigns people to different roles across the life span.

***Use Table 13.4 Here***

- Many new magazines have been introduced for the elderly.

Discussion Topic: Collect some senior citizen ads. Critique them as per the suggested list given in the text. Point out effective and ineffective characteristics.

Discussion Topic: What do you think about old age? How old do you think you will live to be? What do you look forward to? What do you fear? What products do you think you will always use? If you could give three pieces of advice to a five year old (based on your life experience so far) what would it be? What pieces of advice have your parents given to you that have proved to be wise statements for living life?

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

- The students will find the material in this chapter to be straightforward and relatively easy to comprehend and understand. The main thrust of the chapter is the discussion of the various age groupings (cohorts). The instructor will find that most students can understand the material about their age grouping (cohort) and are normally willing to discuss material about their age group (whether it is to agree or disagree with the material in the text). However, the primary barrier that is experienced with this material comes from the student’s inability to understand the groupings (cohorts) that lie outside their own group. Students will be able to remember phases that they have already passed through. It is the inexperience of the unknown (phases that they have yet to enter – e.g., old age) that sometimes presents a problem. Few know what it is like to be a senior citizen (and therefore have difficulty in understanding how to market effectively to them). By having students participate in the Discussion Topics suggested in the Chapter Outline and undertake the Student Projects they will at least gain some experience with these unknown life phases (and therefore gain some insight into the behaviour of these groups). If at all possible, invite one or more senior citizens to class
to discuss marketing preferences and techniques with them before the class. This is an excellent way to see something from another’s perspective. By undertaking any of the above efforts, the chapter material will take on greater meaning for the students.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Ask a student to identify the various age subcultures in his or her neighbourhood and to compile various categories of products consumed by those members. How are the lists the same and how are they different?

2. Have a student collect a series of ads for beauty products from magazines published in the 1950s and 1960s and magazines published today. (Check the library and photocopy the old ads). Now ask him or her to estimate the age of the models in the ads. Does he or she feel these idealized depictions are different today? Is more or less of an age mixture found in magazines today?

3. Ask a student to use a product example (i.e., food products, cars) to illustrate how the marketer might promote to youths in order to take advantage of the influence they exert on family-purchase decisions.

4. Have a student visit a local ‘singles’ apartment complex and determine what special promotions and physical features are used to attract this segment.

5. Have a student visit a local retirement village and observe how the complex is designed to meet the needs of the market segment it is serving. Have the student review the literature provided by the complex to see what techniques are used to market the facility to ‘seasoned citizens’.

6. Ask a student to visit two large department stores and determine how they appeal to the teen market. How does the design of the teen department differ from departments targeted at other age groups? Do salespeople differ? Does promotion seem to differ? (If the store will allow it, it is fun to have the student video tape various departments to show the class the differences. Write the nature of the assignment on college letterhead stationery and direct it to the manager.)

7. Have a student visit a regional shopping centre and try to determine how it promotes to the elderly. What special arrangements are made to meet the needs of older people? Are there other changes that could be made? Can you think of a shopping centre that probably has little appeal to the elderly?

Group Assignments

8. Ask your students to interview a married woman over 60, a married woman between 40 and 60, and a married woman between 20 and 40. Have them write down the menu that they served for the evening meal last night. Ask them about the specific brands that they used to prepare the meal (bread, beverage, entree, vegetables, fruit, dessert, etc.) What are the similarities and differences?

9. Have your students interview a working and a non-working woman who have children in primary school. Have them write down the menu that they served for the previous evening meal. Ask them about the specific brands that they used to prepare the meal (bread, beverages, entree, vegetables, fruit, dessert, etc.) Now assign someone or a team to collate this information to discover any similarities and differences.

10. Have students look through magazines targeted to a specific age group such as Seventeen, YM, Boys Life, Modern Maturity, etc. and describe the types of articles and advertisements contained in each magazine. How effective are these publications at reaching their target markets?
11. Ask a student or a group to think of a product that they believe was specifically designed for and marketed to their age group. Why do they believe this? What is their reaction when they see either younger or older consumers using the product?

12. Have students find good and bad examples of advertising targeted toward ‘seasoned citizens’. To what extent do these ads stereotype the elderly? Do you think that the elderly would like or resent the implications? Are there any elements in these ads that make them effective in reaching and persuading the elderly? Explain.

13. Have students bring to class print ads which are aimed at a particular age group and show how these ads attempt to address that group.

14. Ask a student to select two product categories that appear to have good potential for sales to older people, but that are presently not marketed very well. Design a plan for more effective marketing to take advantage of this opportunity.

15. Have students interview their parents and grandparents about their attitudes regarding appropriate activities and products for people at various ages. Have expectations about appropriate behaviour in different age groups changed during the last 50 years? Explain.

16. Have students interview elderly people and ask them what their favourite or most important possessions were at different times of their lives. Find out what products made the most difference to them throughout the years.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. As Europe moves further into the process of creating a single market and single currency, citizens’ attitudes regarding different aspects of this complex process are monitored in all countries. See the following web site for the most recent survey findings:
   What sorts of tentative conclusions can you make with respect to the influence that age has on attitudes towards a single currency, and other pan-European efforts? What are possible implications for the marketing of goods and services using a pan-European strategy?

   Students should be able to come up with marked age group differences in information level and attitudes towards the unification of the European market and currency. For example the January 1999 report on the single currency shows high concern with both the oldest and the youngest segment of the sample, and most confidence with the middle age-groups. The level of information and knowledge seems to decrease with age, however, so the reasons for concern might differ between the young and the elderly. The web-site offers plenty of material to start a lively discussion, but given the sheer amount of information and the size of the individual reports it is suggested to give this question as a group assignment.

2. Over the past few years, the Vatican has been involved in a variety of events, aimed at developing a closer and stronger relationship with Europe’s youth. At the invitation of the Pope, Bob Dylan (who is fifty-something) gave a concert in 1997. Other Vatican-sponsored projects, such as World Youth Day, have enlisted French fashion designers (see Amy Barrett, ‘John Paul II to share stage with marketers’, Wall Street Journal Europe, 19 August 1997: 4). Do a literature and web search to document the Vatican’s activities which are targeted at youth. What goals do they seem to have in mind? What are the key segments? (Think in terms of age group segments, as well as geographic and cultural segmentation variables.) How successful a ‘marketer’ is the Vatican, in your opinion?

   Opinions of students may differ, depending on the material they find, and their preconceived ideas on religion, the Vatican, and the relation between those and marketing. It is important to keep religious wars out of this discussion. Point out that it should be possible to discuss the marketing of ideas, ideologies, and religions without discussing the item being marketed.
3. Below are a number of European retail web sites. After reviewing the sites give an analysis of the target market and age segmentation strategies used by these firms.

- www.waf.it.mall (a weekend of shopping in Florence?)
- www.one4you.be (interested in beer from Belgium?)
- www.bexley.fr (trend resistant shoes – French classics)
- www.demon.co.uk/cacmall.html (desert plants, offered in a variety of languages)
- www.creor.com (high value jewellery from Italy, priced in dollars)
- www.classicengland.co.uk (Anglophile heaven – historical newspapers, teapots, etc.)

Students should be able to see the differences in the positioning of the sites. Encourage discussion on the differences in home-page presentation and the store-image conveyed on entering the web site, as well as differences in product presentation and virtual store access.

4. Why have baby boomers had such an important impact on consumer culture in the second half of this century?

As stated in the text, the baby boomer segment is the source of many fundamental cultural and economic changes in our society, largely due to its significant size, but also due to the current position of many boomers in lucrative jobs with high levels of responsibility. Because of the numbers and buying power of the boomer group over the past two decades, marketers have focused their attention on this market and popularized many of its values and lifestyle characteristics, increasing their impact on society at large.

5. How has the baby boomlet changed attitudes toward child-rearing practices and created demand for different products and services?

As described in the chapter, the baby boomer decided to have children later in life and not have as many. The new emphasis on career by boomer women also has impacted the birth rate. Since many of the boomer women have started hearing the ticking of their ‘biological clock,’ there has been a surge in birth rates. It is generally thought that these children (because of pampering) will have more attention and products directed toward them than previous generations. New trends are toward vans (for the family), services (day care facilities for working parents), and new magazines (Working Mother).

6. Is it practical to assume that people age 55 and older constitute one large consumer market? What are some approaches to further segmenting this age subculture?

Marketers have become convinced that the over 55 age segment is diverse, with a minimum of four sub-segments represented by the 55-64, 65-74, 75-84, and 85 and older categories. Clearly, with people living longer lives, there is going to be considerable differences in the health and general welfare of these individuals. Many will have more income relative to expenditures than at any other time in their lives, affording opportunities for full and rich lifestyles. Ultimately, the most influential characteristic of elderly consumers is their perceived age, or how old they feel.

7. What are some important variables to keep in mind when tailoring marketing strategies to the elderly?

As indicated in the chapter:

Some suggestions have been offered for advertising to the elderly. They include:

1. Keep language simple.
2. Use clear, bright pictures.
3. Use action to attract attention.
4. Speak clearly, and keep the word count low.
5. Use a single sales message, and emphasize brand extensions to tap consumers’ familiarity.
6. Avoid extraneous stimuli (i.e., excessive pictures and graphics can detract from the message).

In addition, it must be remembered that this is a diverse segment and they have different values (such as autonomy, connectedness, altruism, and a desire for personal growth). Students should be encouraged to build strategies based on these facts.
8. **Find good and bad examples of advertising targeted to elderly consumers. To what degree does advertising stereotype the elderly? What elements of ads or other promotions appear to determine their effectiveness in reaching and persuading this group?**

First, the instructor can use information provided in 7 above in this question. Second, consider that this question will be an interesting exercise for students and is likely to draw their attention to issues they have not carefully considered to date. Encourage them to find examples of what they view as both positive and negative treatment of the elderly in the media. They can also interview senior citizens to get their view.
Chapter 14
Culture and consumer behaviour

CHAPTER SUMMARY

A society’s culture includes its values, ethics, and the material objects produced by its people. It is the accumulation of shared meanings and traditions among members of a society. A culture can be described in terms of ecology (the way people adapt to their habitat), its social structure, and its ideology (including people’s moral and aesthetic principles). This chapter describes some aspects of culture and focuses on how cultural meanings are created and transmitted across members of a society.

Members of a culture share a system of beliefs and practices, including values. The process of learning the values of one’s culture is called enculturation. Each culture can be described by a set of core values. Values can be identified by several methods, though it is often difficult to apply the rules directly to marketing campaigns due to generality.

Myths are stories containing symbolic elements that express the shared ideals of a culture. Many myths involve some binary opposition, where values are defined in terms of what they are and what they are not (e.g., nature versus technology). Modern myths are transmitted through advertising, movies, and other media.

A ‘Ritual’ is a set of multiple, symbolic behaviours which occur in a fixed sequence and that tend to be repeated periodically. Rituals are related to many consumption activities that occur in popular culture. These include holiday observances, gift giving, and grooming.

A rite of passage is a special kind of ritual that involves the transition from one role to another. These passages typically entail the need to acquire products and services, called ritual artefacts, to facilitate the transition. Modern rites of passage include graduations, fraternity initiations, weddings, debutante balls, and funerals.

Consumer activities can be divided into sacred and profane domains. Sacred phenomena are ‘set apart’ from everyday activities or products. People, events, or objects can become sacralized. Objectification occurs when sacred qualities are ascribed to products or items owned by sacred people. Sacralization occurs when formerly sacred objects or activities become part of the everyday, as when ‘one-of-a-kind’ works of art are reproduced in large quantities. Descralization occurs when objects that previously were considered sacred become commercialized and integrated into popular culture.

Collecting is one of the most common ways of experiencing sacred consumption in daily life. It is simultaneously one of the domains where consumption and passions are most heavily intertwined.

The importance of consumption for understanding social interactions is now so big that we have begun to talk about our own societies as consumer societies, indicating that consumption might well be the single most important social activity.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Culture and Consumption

   a. Culture, a concept crucial to the understanding of consumer behaviour, may be thought of as a society’s personality. Put another way, culture is the accumulation of shared meanings, rituals, norms, and traditions among the members of an organization or society.

   1). Culture is the lens through which people view products.
   2). Principles of economy are expressions of a specific kind of culture.
3). Culture provides the meaning inherent in the signifying practices around us.
4). The importance of cultural expectations often is only discovered when they are violated.

*****Use Key Term culture and signifying practice Here; Use Figure 14.1 and Figure 14.2 Here*****

Consumer Behaviour and Culture: A Two-Way Street
b. A consumer’s culture determines the overall priorities he or she attaches to different activities and products.
   1). It also mandates the success or failure of specific products and services.
   2). Products and services resonate with the priorities of a culture at any given time.
   3). Products and services can also provide a window into the dominate cultural ideals of that period.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 1 Here*****

Discussion Topic: How have cars, microwaves, snowboards, computers, pocket pagers, the pill, leisure time, and the Internet affected the American culture? What do you think came first – the attitude or the product?

Aspects of Culture
c. Culture is not static. It is continually evolving, synthesizing old ideas with new ones. A cultural system consists of three functional ideas:
   1). Ecology: the way a system adapts to its habitat.
   2). Social structure: the way in which orderly social life is maintained.
   3). Ideology: the way in which people relate to their environment and social groups.
      a). This revolves around the belief that members of a society possess a common worldview (they share certain ideas about principles of order and fairness).
      b). They also share an ethos (a set of moral and aesthetic principles).

*****Use Key Terms worldview and ethos Here*****

d. Although every culture is different, four dimensions appear to account for much of this variability.
   1). Cultures differ in their emphasis on individualism versus collectivism.
      a). In collectivist cultures, people subordinate their personal goals to those of a stable in-group.
      b). In individualist cultures, there is more attachment and importance associated with personal goals, and people are more likely to change memberships when the demands of the group become too costly.
   2). Three other dimensions in which cultures differ are Power distance, Uncertainty avoidance, and Masculinity/femininity

*****Use Key Terms collectivist cultures and individualist cultures Here*****

Discussion Topic: How does a man prove he is masculine in our culture? How does a female prove she is feminine in our culture? How do alternative lifestyles such as homosexuality fit into our culture?

Discussion Topic: Do you think your culture puts greater emphasis on individuality or the common good? Bring in ads that demonstrate both positions (however, defend yours).

e. Ethnoconsumerism refers to understanding and analysing every consumer culture on the basis of its own premises

f. Values are very general ideas about good and bad goals.
   1). From these flow norms, or rules dictating what is right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable. Norms can be:
      a). Enacted norms – explicitly decided upon – go on the green light.
      b). Crescive norms – embedded in culture and are only discovered through interaction with other members of that culture. These include:
         1]. A custom is a norm handed down from the past that controls basic behaviours.
2. A more is a custom with a strong moral overtone.

3. Conventions are norms regarding the conduct of everyday life.

(c). Many norms are learned vicariously as we watch others perform life’s little rituals.

****Use Key Terms norms, custom, more, and conventions Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here****

Discussion Topic: Give an example of an enacted norm, a crescive norm, a custom, a more, and a convention. Can you find any advertisements that illustrate these?

Discussion Topic: Give an illustration of how we learn culture vicariously. Think of how you have learned something in this way in the past.

2. Myths and Rituals

(a). Stories and practices help us make sense of the world.

(b). Every society has its ‘good’ and ‘evil’ and its ‘good luck’ and ‘bad luck’.

Myths

c). Every society possesses a set of myths that define that culture. A myth is a story containing symbolic elements that expresses the shared emotions and ideals of a culture.

1). It often features a conflict.

2). It often sets good against evil.

3). It reduces anxiety because it provides consumers with guidelines about their world.

4). Strategies can be patterned after these myths.

****Use Key Term myths Here****

d). Myths serve four interrelated functions in culture:

1). Metaphysical – they help explain the origins of existence.

2). Cosmological – all components are part of a single picture.

3). Sociological – establish a social code to maintain order.

4). Psychological – establish models for personal conduct.

Discussion Topic: Think of myths that seem to fall into the categories (functions) mentioned in the chapter (metaphysical, cosmological, sociological, and psychological). How can these be tied (if they can) to purchasing?

e). Myths can be analysed by examining their underlying structures. It has been noted that many stories involve binary opposition, where two opposing ends of some dimension are represented. Characters or products are often characterized as to what they ‘are not’ rather than what they ‘are.’

1). Conflict is often resolved by a mediating figure (animals are often given human characteristics).

2). A myth common to many cultures is a monomyth (where a hero emerges from the everyday world and often has super powers [e.g., comic book heroes]).

3). Examples of mythic films include:

a). The Big Blue.


c). Easy Rider.

d). Jaws

****Use Key Term monomyth Here****

Discussion Topic: Have the class explain common myths from their cultures. How do these myths affect their purchase decisions or life?
Discussion Topic: Bring in an advertisement that you believe uses a myth to sell its products or services.

Discussion Topic: What movies do you think are mythical in nature and have changed our culture?

**Rituals**

f. A **ritual** is a set of multiple, symbolic behaviours that occur in a fixed sequence and that tend to be repeated periodically. Rituals can occur at a variety of levels.
   1. Turning consumption into a ritual event may be highly profitable
   2. Many businesses owe their livelihoods to their ability to supply **ritual artefacts**, or items used in the performance of rituals, to consumers.

*****Use Key Terms ritual and ritual artefacts Here; Use Table 14.1 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 5 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What is your morning ritual? What products do you need to support it? What are your primary rituals while at school? Isn’t it interesting to think how all of these rituals will change in a few years when you enter the workplace full-time (and learn new rituals)?

3. There are many grooming rituals that are dominant themes in commercials.

Discussion Topic: What ‘beauty ritual’ do you go through each day?

g. In the **gift-giving ritual**, consumers procure the perfect object (artefact), meticulously remove the price tag (symbolically changing the item from a commodity to a unique good), carefully wrap it, and deliver it to the recipient.
   1. Westerners see this ritual as a form of economic exchange.
   2. Gift giving can be symbolic.
   3. Gift giving can affect a relationship in multiple ways.
   4. Every culture prescribes certain occasions and ceremonies for giving gifts.

*****Use Key Term gift-giving ritual Here; Use Table 14.2 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What differences are there when you purchase something for someone else versus when you purchase something for yourself?

Discussion Topic: How do marketers use gift giving to stimulate purchasing? What new occasions have recently been invented for doing this?

h. The gift-giving ritual can be broken down into three distinct stages:
   1. **Gestation** – the giver is motivated by an event to buy a gift.
      a). Structural – prescribed by culture (e.g., Christmas present).
      b). Emergent – decision is more personal (e.g., husband brings a love gift for his wife).
   2. **Presentation** – recipient responds to gift and donor evaluates the response.
   3. **Reformation** – bonds between parties are adjusted (looser or tighter).

Discussion Topic: Did you ever receive a present that you did not think was good enough? ...too good? How did you respond? Have you ever given a gift where the recipient’s response made you wish you had not bought the gift? How did this affect your purchases in the future?

i. One can also give a gift to themselves.

*****Use Figure 14.4 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3, 4, and 6 Here*****
Discussion Topic: What was the last self-gift you gave yourself? What was different or memorable about the purchase process? Did you feel guilty? How can the marketer deal with this potential guilt as being a reason not to purchase?

j. Holidays are filled with rituals. Common holidays (for gifts) are:
   1). Christmas
   2). Valentine’s Day.
   Furthermore different European countries have their own celebrations linked to a real or imaginary character.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 9 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What gifts could be associated with the different holidays that are celebrated in your country?

Discussion Topic: How do you think Halloween should be celebrated in your country (if at all)? What does this say about your culture and your view toward contemporary culture and values?

k. **Rites of passage** can be construed as being special times marked by a change in social status. Every society sets aside times when these passages occur.
   1). Marketers attempt to reach consumers during these passage times.
   2). Stages include:
      a). **Separation** – detaching from the original group.
      b). **Liminality** – person is literally in-between statuses.
      c). **Aggregation** – person re-enters society after rite-of-passage.

*****Use Key Term rites of passage Here*****

Discussion Topic: How did your family react when you went off to college for your first year? When did you first go back home? When did you get back together with your secondary school friends? What happened when you came back to college this year? If you did not leave home to go to college, how was this process different?

l. The final rite of passage is death. This ritual is tightly scripted in most societies.

*****Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 8 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Think about marketing death. Not very pleasant is it? However, it is a huge industry. List the rituals associated with death. How can these be marketed tastefully (to those who do not want to think about the subject)?

3. Sacred and Profane Consumption

   a. **Sacred consumption** involves objects and events that are ‘set apart’ from normal activities, and are treated with some degree of respect or awe.
   b. **Profane consumption** involves consumer objects and events that are ordinary, everyday objects and events that do not share the ‘specialness’ of sacred ones.

*****Use Key Terms sacred consumption and profane consumption Here*****

   **Domains of Sacred Consumption**

   c. This is ordinary consumption that is not ‘ordinary’.
      1). Sacred places are set apart by a society because they have religious or mystical significance or because they commemorate some aspect of a country’s heritage.
      2). Other places are created from the profane world and given special sacred qualities.
3). In many cultures, home is a particularly sacred place. This is the consumer’s ‘inner space.’

Discussion Topic: How do you attempt to make you home special, homey, and even sacred? How can marketers use this desire to market to you?

d. People themselves can also be sacred.
   1). Memorabilia can take on special meaning (from baseball cards to clothing the special person has touched or worn).

Discussion Topic: Think of celebrities that have become sacred. Can you think of any of these people who were actually created by marketing people? For a fascinating treatment of the subject refer students to Irvin J. Rein, Philip Kotler, and Martin R. Stoller’s High Visibility: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1987.

e. Many consumer activities (events) have also taken on a special status.
   1). Examples would include the Olympics, the World Cup, Woodstock, and sometimes even a family vacation.
   2). Fine arts and classical music, and tourism are also examples of sacred experience
   3). Personal momentos from sacred events can include:
      a). Local products.
      b). Pictorial images.
      c). ‘A piece of the event’ such as a rock or seashells.
      d). Symbolic shorthand such as a small symbol that depicts the event.
      e). A collector marker like a lapel pen.

Discussion Topic: Tell us about an event that has become sacred to you. Have you ever seen this event used in a marketing effort? What will you tell your children about this event? Will it become part of their memory as well?

f. Sacred things become profane and profane things become sacred.
   1). Desacralization occurs when a sacred item or symbol is removed from its special place or is duplicated in mass quantities, becoming profane as a result. Religion to some extent has become desacralized.
   2). Sacralization occurs when ordinary objects, events, or even people, take on sacred meaning to a culture or to specific groups within a culture.
      a). Objectification occurs when sacred qualities are attributed to mundane items.
      b). This process can occur through contamination.
      c). Objects can be set apart in collections. Collecting refers to the systematic acquisition of a particular object or set of objects, and this widespread activity can be distinguished from hoarding, which is merely unsystematic collecting.

Discussion Topic: Give an example of a person, event, or object that you have sacralized. Give an example of a person, event, or object that you have desacralized. Explain why this occurred. Has it had any impact on your purchasing patterns?

g. Consumer society refers to the current social organization of our world.
   1). Consumption culture is characterized by consumption based identities
   2). Consumer addiction is a physiological and/or psychological dependency on products and services

Discussion Topic: Give an example of a person, event, or object that you have sacralized. Give an example of a person, event, or object that you have desacralized. Explain why this occurred. Has it had any impact on your purchasing patterns?

Consumer society refers to the current social organization of our world.
BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. The material found in this chapter presents a clear picture to students and usually poses no problem with their understanding or comprehension. The only area that might be explored to make sure that complete understanding is present deals with the section that describes myths. On the surface no barrier exists, however, (even though almost all students have had mythology of some form) students sometimes have difficulty in seeing modern myths (even though they can normally identify historical or ancient myths). If they have difficulty picking out the contemporary myths, then they will have difficulty is seeing how these myths are applied daily to modern marketing practice and promotional efforts. Save time to discuss this in class. Use the Discussion Topic questions and the Student Project activities to solidify their understanding in this area. If you have time, have them list modern myths and bring in illustrations of the usage of the myths in promotion. Do these myths change depending on the ethnic or religious background of the consumer? The answer would be ‘it depends.’ Spend some time with this subject. It will prove to be beneficial and interesting to discuss the myths used by different age and gender groups. Lastly, this is a good way to review concepts from the last few chapters.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Ask a student to compare and contrast two products – one a local or national product and one a foreign product. Does the student think that the marketing concept is present or absent in the design or promotion of each product design?

2. Ask a student to interview a person from a different culture or foreign culture. During the interview have the student observe any non-verbal communication that is taking place, ask then what similarities and differences he or she has noticed between the non-verbal language of his or her own culture and the foreign culture. Have the student report on these similarities and differences.

3. Have a student interview two people from two different foreign cultures. Have the student ask what major differences they see between the cultural values in their own country and those in the foreign culture. Ask the student to explain these to the class.

4. Ask a student to identify a national custom, more, and convention and then determine several products that are needed because of these cresive norms.

Group Assignments

5. Ask the class to prepare a list of products that people tend to buy more for what the products mean than for what the products do. Are there other products that could satisfy the same need and even perhaps sell for less? What makes these products have lesser status?

6. Ask the class to compare a list of rituals that will probably be performed (or that were performed) at their wedding ceremony and reception. What are the marketing implications of these rituals? (It is interesting to point out the different rituals based on a religious, ethnic or racial subcultures.) An added question might be: How are wedding plans affected when people from different subcultures get married?

7. Invite a person from a foreign culture to come to your class to discuss products commonly used in the guest’s country that are seldom used in this country. In preparation, have the students develop a list of products commonly used in your own country. Ask the guest how available these products are in the guest’s country, where they can be purchased, and the frequency of use.
8. Ask a group of students to invite someone from the funeral industry to come to talk to the class on marketing practices in the industry. Collect literature from various funeral homes to study prior to the guest speaker. Have students formulate questions prior to the class.

9. Have a student briefly summarize an episode of a weekly television series which he or she watched recently. Have the class describe how the programme transmitted cultural beliefs, values and customs. (In class activity)

10. Have an individual or class members interview a football player, an actress or actor, a student preparing for exams, a trial lawyer, or others you might choose, to see if they have a certain ritual or superstition that they tend to follow in preparing for and performing their activity. Do they remember when they first started performing this ritual?

11. Have a student or the class interview a primary school or secondary school student (and, if possible, that person’s closest friend). Find out what new words their group is using this year. What do they mean? What new products are they using to prove that they are ‘in’? How can they spot persons that obviously do not belong to their groups? What words or products are now ‘out’?

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. Culture can be thought of as a society’s personality. If your culture were a person, could you describe its personality traits?

   The description of their country focuses the student’s attention on those elements they consider distinctive and reflective of their unique (or stereotypical) characteristics. Instructors may be alerted to students’ tendencies to describe the own culture as positive and other cultures are negative, in which case a discussion of ethnocentrism may be beneficial.

   Core values that may be discussed are freedom; youthfulness; achievement; materialism; activity; conformity; individuality; mastery over the environment; efficiency; equality; humanitarianism; religious orientation, etc.

2. What is the difference between an enacted norm and a crescive norm? Identify the set of crescive norms operating when a man and woman in your culture go out for dinner on a first date. What products and services are affected by these norms?

   Students should draw on the definitions and discussion provided in the text. Norms, by definition, are rules dictating what is right or wrong, acceptable or unacceptable.

   Enacted norms are explicitly decided upon, such as the rule that a green traffic light means ‘go’ and a red one means ‘stop.’ Crescive norms, however, are more subtle. They are embedded in a culture and are only discovered through interaction with other members of that culture. The crescive norms include customs, mores, and conventions.

   In the situation of a man and a woman going out for dinner on a first date, the set of crescive norms operating might include the man driving the woman in his car, opening the car door for her, selecting a nice restaurant (rather than fast food or using a coupon) or a casual rather than romantic spot (because it is a first date), and paying for the meal. More and more, these conventions are being called into question due to both the women’s and the men’s movements of recent years.

3. How do the consumer decisions involved in gift giving differ from other purchase decisions?

   In responding to this question, students should consider the general discussion of gift giving in the text as well as the specific outline of the gift-giving process:

   • gift-giving rituals involve obtaining the ‘perfect gift’ and removing the price tag to make it unique
   • the giver transfers a gift to a receiver who in turn is obligated to reciprocate (exchange gifts)
   • the gift-giving process
     • gestation: the giver is motivated by an event to buy a gift
     • structural: prescribed by culture (e.g. Christmas present)
• emergent: decision is more personal (e.g. husband brings home flowers)
• presentation: recipient responds to gift and donor evaluates the response
• reformulation: bonds between parties are adjusted (looser or tighter)
(Students should recognize the ‘ritualistic’ aspects of gift-giving, and symbolism inherent in the gift exchange.)

4. The chapter argues that not all gift giving is positive. In what ways can this ritual be unpleasant or negative?

The text clearly states that negativity can arise if the recipient feels the gift is inappropriate or of inferior quality. The giver/donor may feel the response to the gift was inadequate, insincere, or a violation of the reciprocity norm, which obliges people to return the gesture of a gift with one of equal value. Both participants may feel resentful for being forced to participate in the gift-giving ritual.

5. Construct a ritual script for a wedding in your culture. How many artefacts can you list that are contained in this script?

Students will probably be able to generate a fairly complete ritual script for a wedding quite readily. A large number of ritual artefacts might be included ranging from those attached to the engagement (pre-wedding ritual), the rehearsal dinner, the wedding ceremony, the reception, and the honeymoon. Examples include wedding rings, gowns, suits, flowers, photographs, music, unity candles, wedding cakes, etc.

6. What are some of the major motivations for the purchase of self-gifts? Discuss some marketing implications of these.

As stated in the text, people commonly find reasons to give themselves gifts. Many people are motivated to purchase self-gifts as personal rewards, a way of consoling themselves over disappointments, or as an incentive to accomplish some goal. The instructor might ask students to find examples of advertisements that reflect various motivations for self-gifts, in addition to considering the more general marketing implications.

7. Describe the three stages of the rite of passage associated with graduating from university.

Rites of passage include three phases:
• separation: detached from original group (e.g. student leaves home)
• liminality: person is literally in-between statuses (e.g. student during orientation)
• aggregation: person re-enters society after rite-of-passage (e.g. goes home for Christmas as a ‘university veteran’)

For the university graduation example:
• students should recognize the graduate’s separation involves detachment from his or her university friends, roommates, professors, etc.
• during the liminality phase, the graduate is in between stages – college and career – and experiences a period of adjustment to the new environment
• aggregation occurs when the graduate comes part of the professional society, identifying with his or her career, rather than university

8. Identify the ritualized aspects of various kinds of sports that are employed in advertising.

Students should be able to generate a long list of ritualized behaviours associated with school, college, and professional sports. These include wearing school/team colours, pre-game activities, singing school/team songs, cheers, the ‘wave’ at soccer, half-time entertainment, etc. Any and all of the rituals can be employed in advertising.

9. Some people have raised objections to the commercial exploitation of cultural figures. For example, in the U.S. many deplored the profits the filmmakers and businesspeople have made from films such as Malcolm X (e.g. by selling a Malcolm X air freshener). Others argued that this commercialization merely helps to educate consumers about what such people stood for, and is inevitable in our society. What do you think?
Opinions of students may differ, and this question may trigger a discussion on the pro’s and con’s of commercialization of society, and the role of marketing in the evolution of popular culture.

10. *Interview two or three of your fellow students about collecting, talking about either their own collections or a collection of somebody they know of. Use concepts about the sacred to analyse the responses.*

For some students it might be uncomfortable to think of their or other people’s collection in terms of sacrality – profanity. Concepts to be used in the discussion are:

- The collected items being *set apart* from normal activities
- The *special bond* with the collection
- The *objectification* of the collectors’ items
- The *contamination* of related items, events or people
- The *significance* of the collection and the collected items to the person

You can also ask the collectors under what circumstances they would be willing to trade (part of) their collection for money. This exercise will help students to broaden their view of consumer behaviour and to accommodate non-economic and non-utilitarian viewpoints in their conception of consumer behaviour.
Chapter 15
Cultural change processes

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The styles prevalent in a culture at any point in time often reflect underlying political and social conditions. The set of agents responsible for creating stylistic alternatives is termed a culture production system. Factors such as the types of people involved in this system and the amount of competition by alternative product forms influence the choices that eventually make their way to the marketplace for consideration by consumers.

Culture is often described in terms of high (or elite) forms and low (or popular) forms. Products of popular culture tend to follow a cultural formula and contain predictable components. On the other hand, these distinctions are blurring in modern society as imagery from ‘high art’ is increasingly being incorporated into marketing efforts and marketed products (or even marketing products like advertisements) are treated and evaluated as high art.

The diffusion of innovations refers to the process whereby a new product, service or idea spreads through a population. A consumer’s decision to adopt a new item depends on his or her personal characteristics (i.e. if he or she is inclined to try new things) and on the characteristics of the item. Products sometimes stand a better chance of being adopted if they demand relatively little change in behaviour from consumers and are compatible with the current practices. They are also more likely to diffuse, if their use is visible to others, and, most importantly, if they provide a relative advantage vis-à-vis existing products.

The fashion system includes everyone involved in the creation and transference of symbolic meanings. Meanings that express common cultural categories (e.g. gender distinctions) are conveyed by many different products. New styles tend to be adopted by many people simultaneously in a process known as collective selection. Perspectives on motivations for adopting new styles include psychological, economic and sociological models of fashion.

Fashions tend to follow cycles that resemble the product life cycle. The two extremes of fashion adoption, classics and fads, can be distinguished in terms of the length of this cycle.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Cultural Change

Cultural Selection

a. We inhabit a world brimming with different styles and possibilities. Consumers may at times feel overwhelmed by the sheer number of choices in the marketplace.
   1). The selection of certain alternatives over others (such as a car) is the culmination of a complex filtration process resembling a funnel.
   2). Many possibilities initially compete for adoption, and these are steadily winnowed down as they make their way down the path from conception to consumption in a process of cultural selection.

Discussion Topic: What new styles have you seen appear in the last six months? How many of these have begun to appear on television (either in the ads or on the shows)? How long do you think the style will last?

3). Styles are not formed in a vacuum.
Culture Production Systems
b. The set of individuals and organizations responsible for creating and marketing a cultural product is a culture production system (CPS).
  1. The nature of these systems helps to determine the types of products that eventually emerge from them.
  2. Factors such as the number and diversity of competing systems and the amount of innovation versus conformity that is encouraged are important.
  3. The different members of a culture production system may not necessarily be aware of or appreciate the roles played by the other members.

****Use Key Term culture production system (CPS) Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here****

c. A culture production system has three major subsystems:
  1. Creative subsystem – responsible for generating new symbols and/or products.
  2. Managerial subsystem – responsible for selecting, making tangible, mass producing, and managing the distribution of new symbols and/or products.
  3. Communications subsystem responsible for giving meaning to the new product and providing it with a symbolic set of attributes that are communicated to consumers.

****Use Table 15.2 Here****

Discussion Topic: Think of an example of a culture production system and identify the members of the system for a popular custom or trend that impacts college students.

d. Many judges or ‘tastemakers’ influence the products that are eventually offered to consumers. These cultural gatekeepers are responsible for filtering the overflow of information and materials intended for consumers (collectively, this is known as the through-put sector).

****Use Key Term cultural gatekeeper Here****

Discussion Topic: Who do you know that might be classified as a cultural gatekeeper? Explain.

High Culture and Popular Culture
e. Culture production systems create many diverse kinds of products, but some basic distinctions can be offered regarding their characteristics.
  1. Arts versus crafts.
    a. An art product is viewed primarily as an object of aesthetic contemplation without any functional value.
    b. A craft product is admired because of the beauty with which it performs some function (such as a ceramic ashtray)

****Use Key Terms art product and craft product Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here****

  2. High art versus low art.
  3. Mass culture churns out products specifically for a mass market. Many of these products follow a cultural formula (where certain roles and props often occur consistently – as in a pulp detective story or a romance novel).
  4. Reliance on this formula also leads to recycling of images

****Use Key Term cultural formula Here; Use Table 15.3 Here****

Discussion Topic: Think of an illustration where a cultural formula might be used in marketing a product.
5). Aesthetic marketing research.
   a). Creators of aesthetic products are increasingly adapting conventional marketing methods to fine 
      tune their mass-market offerings.
   b). Marketing research is used to measure audience reactions to concepts.
   c). The creative product itself (e.g. movie) can be adapted to the findings of consumer research.

Reality Engineering
f. **Reality engineering** occurs as elements of popular culture are appropriated by marketers and converted to 
   vehicles for promotional strategies.
   1). These elements include sensory and spatial aspects of everyday existence.
   2). Marketing many times has a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ on popular culture.
   3). Reality engineering is accelerating due to the current popularity of product placements by marketers.

4). **Product placement** refers to the insertion of specific products and/or use of brand names in movie and 
   television scripts.
5). Some critics argue that product placement has got out of hand.
6). Media images appear to significantly influence consumers’ perceptions of reality, affecting viewers’ 
   notions about such issues as dating behaviour, racial stereotypes, and occupational status.
7). Studies of the **cultivation hypothesis**, which refers to media’s ability to distort consumers’ perceptions 
   of reality, have shown that heavy television viewers tend to overestimate the degree of affluence in the 
   country, and these effects also extend to such areas as perceptions of the amount of violence in one’s 
   culture.

*****Use Key Terms reality engineering, product placement, and cultivation hypothesis Here; Use 
Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 Here*****

Discussion Topic: The next time you watch a television movie or rent a movie count the number of products 
that have been placed in the movie. How many were there? What effect (if any) did these product 
placements have on you? What do you think of product placement in children’s movies?

2. **Diffusion of innovations**

a. An **innovation** is any product or service that is perceived to be new by consumers (even if it has been 
   used by others in other places).

b. The **diffusion of innovations** refers to the process whereby a new product, service or idea spreads 
   through a population.

*****Use Key Terms innovation and diffusion of innovations Here*****

Discussion Topic: What product have you recently purchased that you would classify as an innovation? 
Where did you hear about it? What thought process did you go through before you made the purchase?

Adopting Innovations

c. A consumer’s decision to adopt a new item depends on his or her personal characteristics (i.e. if he or she 
   is inclined to try new things), on the characteristics of the item, and on cultural differences.

d. Within the same culture not all people adopt new products at the same rate. Depending on their rate of 
   adoption people can be placed in one of five categories:
   1). **Innovators**
   2). **Early adopters**
   3). **Early majority**
   4). **Late majority**
   5). **Laggards**
e. Early adopters share the same characteristics as innovators, but are more concerned about social acceptance. Considering involvement as well as adoption rate leads to the identification of three groups:
   1). Innovators
   2). More-involved adaptors
   3). Less-involved adaptors

f. Innovations can take involve some functional change containing a technological development of the product, or be intangible and communicating a new social meaning. Both are symbols of progress.

g. Innovations are categorized in terms of the changes in behaviour they demand from adopters.
   1). Continuous innovation—a modification of an existing product, requiring little change.
   2). Dynamically continuous innovation—a pronounced change in an existing product, requiring modest change, but sometimes triggering a whole new range of subsequent innovations.
   3). Discontinuous innovation—a new product satisfying an existing need in a different way, or satisfying a previously unacknowledged need, and creating major changes in the way of life.

h. Several factors are desirable for a new product to succeed.
   1). Compatibility with existing lifestyles
   2). Trialability as a means to risk reduction
   3). Complexity should be low
   4). Observability increases awareness of the innovation
   5). Relative advantage to the consumer that it will provide a benefit that another product can not offer

i. The social context of innovations is linked to the visibility of the innovations and the influence of the reference group that is related to the new product.
3. The Fashion System
a. The fashion system is an integral part of symbolic innovation. It consists of all those people and organizations involved in creating symbolic meanings and transferring these meanings to cultural goods.
   1). Fashion can be thought of as a code or language.
      a). It is context-dependent.
      b). Fashion products are often undercoded.
   2). Fashion is the process of social diffusion by which a new style is adopted by some group(s) of consumers.

*****Use Key Term fashion Here*****

Cultural Categories
b. The meaning that does get imparted to products reflects underlying cultural categories, which correspond to the basic ways we characterize the world.
   1). These cultural categories affect many different products and styles.
   2). Costumes worn by celebrities can affect the world of fashion.

*****Use Key Term cultural categories Here*****

Discussion Topic: What are some fashions (fads) that have been started by popular movies?

Cultural Selection
c. The process by which certain symbolic alternatives are chosen over others has been termed collective selection. As with the creative subsystem, members of the managerial and communications subsystems also seem to develop a common frame of mind.

*****Use Key Term collective selection Here*****

Behavioural Science Perspective on Fashion
d. Fashion is a very complex process and operates on many levels.
   1). Many psychological factors help to explain why people are motivated to be in fashion. These include:
      a). Conformity.
      c). Personal creativity.
      d). Sexual attraction.
   2). An early theory of fashion proposed that ‘shifting erogenous zones’ (sexually arousing areas of the body) accounted for fashion changes, and that different zones become the object of interest because they reflect societal trends.
   3). Economists approach fashion in terms of the model of supply and demand.
   4). Veblen’s notion of conspicuous consumption also applies.

*****Use Key Term erogenous zones Here*****

e. The collective selection model is an example of a sociological approach to fashion.
   1). Trickle-down theory has been one of the most influential approaches to understanding fashion. Two conflicting forces drive fashion:
      a). Subordinate groups try to adopt the status symbols of the groups above them as they attempt to climb up the ladder of social mobility.
      b). Those people in the superordinate groups are constantly looking below them on the ladder to ensure that they are not imitated, and adopt ever newer fashions.
   2). Other theories include the trickle-across and trickle-up theories.

*****Use Key Term trickle-down theory Here*****
Discussion Topic: Can you think of items people buy that seem to display their wealth? How do you know that these people have these items? Can you provide illustrations of the trickle-across and trickle-up theories?

Cycles of Fashion Adoption
f. Although the longevity of a particular style can range from a month to a century, fashions tend to flow in a predictable sequence. The fashion life cycle is quite similar to the more familiar product life cycle.

****Use Key Term fashion life cycle Here; Use Figure 15.3 Here*****

g. Consider how the fashion acceptance cycle works:
1). There is an introduction stage.
2). An acceptance stage.
3). A regression stage.
4). Events that might happen during these stages include:
   a). The item becomes a classic where it has an extremely long life cycle.
   b). The item is a fad where it is very short-lived.
      1]. The fad is non-utilitarian.
      2]. The fad is adopted on impulse.
      3]. The fad diffuses rapidly.

5). There is a difference between a fad and a trend (the trend lasts for some time).

6). Questions to ask to determine if a trend is occurring include:
   a). Does it fit with basic lifestyle changes?
   b). What are the benefits?
   c). Can it be personalized?
   d). Is it a trend or a side effect?
   e). What other changes have occurred in the market (consider carryover effects)?
   f). Who adopted the change?

****Use Key Terms fashion acceptance cycle, classic, and fad Here; Use Figure 15.4 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 3 and 8 Here*****

Discussion Topic: What do you think are ‘classics’ and ‘fads’? What are your reactions to these products? What are ‘classics’ from your parent’s generation? How do you know they are classics?

A ‘medical’ model of fashion
h. Meme theory uses a medical metaphor to explain sudden bursts in diffusion
   1). A meme is an idea or product that enters the consciousness of people over time
   2). It spreads in geometric progression until it reaches a critical mass
   3). Then it progresses exponentially like a virus infection

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

The text finishes the appraisal of consumer behaviour and consumer decision-making with a summary of effects on the consumer behaviour process from the broad area of culture. Most of the material found in this chapter presents no particular difficulty for the students (especially since the material on the diffusion of innovation and fashion are often found in Principles of Marketing). The examples supplied by the author do a good job of taking the extensive vocabulary found in this chapter and relating the concepts to the real world environment.
STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Think about how styles in fashion and in our economy have impacted political and social conditions. Which came first, the style or the conditions?

2. Go to a contemporary magazine and find illustrations of high and low culture. Indicate what type of consumers might be attracted to these different messages.

3. Find a product and designate how you might be able to perform reality engineering on the product. What would be the purpose of this effort? Find a product for which you think this has been done.

4. Find a product and describe how it was first introduced and how it has become diffused into our economy. Does it seem to fit the stages described in the text?

5. What fashion trends do you think influence the purchasing patterns of teenagers, college students, middle-aged business people, and senior citizens?

Group Assignments

6. Find a series of ads that display fashion used in association of some other product. Meet together and discuss the ramifications of this and present your findings to the class.

7. Meet together and discuss how fashion, trends, and fads impact the computer and computer software industry. What trends do you see for the future?

8. Take a product that is an illustration of a fashion cycle and map its progress. Next, map its progress on the product life cycle. Present this comparison to the class.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. Construct a biography of a product, tracing its progress from the time it was introduced. How long did it take to diffuse to the mass market? Do the same consumers use the product now as did those who first adopted it? What are the future prospects – is it destined for obsolescence? Would you characterize the product as either a classic or a fad?

   This question may be used to link the concepts of fashion life cycle from the current chapter to diffusion of innovations, discussed in chapter 10. Students will find it fun to collect as much data on their product as possible, and by comparing products, differences and similarities in product life cycles may become visible.

2. Some consumers complain that they are ‘at the mercy’ of designers: They are forced to buy whatever styles are in fashion, because nothing else is available. Do you agree that there is such a thing as a ‘designer conspiracy’?

   Students will have different views on this issue. It might be interesting for the instructor to discuss the issue in class by soliciting opinions from a diverse set of students – different ethnic backgrounds, social status, gender, religion, age, size, etc. Furthermore the lecturer may refer to the observation of Scitovsky (1976) that due to the economies of scale involved in mass-marketing, individual divergence of common taste is bought at increasingly higher prices.

3. What is the basic difference between a fad, a fashion, and a classic? Provide examples of each.

   Definitions:
   • fashion (or style): a particular combination of attributes
   • classic: a fashion with an extremely long acceptance cycle
• fad: a very short-lived fashion. (While the text includes good examples of each of these types of products, students should be encouraged to think of additional examples.)

4. What is the difference between an art and a craft? Where would you characterize advertising within this framework?
• art: primarily an object of aesthetic contemplation without any functional value. A piece of art is original, subtle, and valuable and is often associated with the elite of society.
• craft: is admired because it is both beautiful and functional. A craft tends to follow a formula that can permit rapid production.

After reviewing these definitions with students, select various types of advertisement (TV, billboard, magazine, point-of-purchase, etc.) and ask students to express their views of advertising within this framework.

5. Think about some innovative products that you can remember, but which disappeared. Try to reflect on the reasons why these innovations failed.

The text mentions five characteristics that account for the success or failure of innovations. As it is rather easy to predict the failure of an innovation after it disappeared, it should be not too difficult to mention some shortcomings that may fit in one or more of the following categories
• Compatibility with existing lifestyles
• Trialability as a means to risk reduction
• Complexity should be low
• Observability increases awareness of the innovation
• Relative advantage to the consumer that it will provide a benefit that other products can not offer

If the example that was chosen would be acceptable according to the aforementioned criteria, then apparently it must have been the case of the wrong product at the wrong place or time. Either the introduction was at a moment ‘market was not ready for it’ (maybe because it coincided with a period of economic stagnation), or the product was not yet ready to be introduced (it needed some more developing), or it was positioned to the wrong target market or with the wrong marketing strategy. Still it will be difficult to explain the failure of e.g. Philips Video 2000® without thorough inside information of both the company and the market. (In this case the lack of company sponsored pre-played video cassettes, and more specifically the unwillingness of the company to sponsor and distribute pornography tapes. An interesting case of ethical behaviour that backfires).

6. Then try to remember some successful innovations. What characteristics made them successful? Do the successes and failures fit with the criteria mentioned in this chapter?

Referring back to the previous question also the success of an innovation is comparatively easily explained afterwards. Most successful innovations should have characteristics that fit in on or more of the categories mentioned. Really thorough students might come up with innovations that turned into a success against all odds. Here as well it pays to check the marketing strategy and entrepreneurship behind the innovation.

7. The chapter mentions some instances where market research findings influenced artistic decisions, as when a film ending was reshot to accommodate consumers’ preferences. Many people would most likely oppose this use of consumer research, claiming that books, films, records, or other artistic endeavours should not be designed to merely conform to what people want to read, see, or hear. What do you think?

The instructor should encourage students to review the relevant discussion in the text concerning aesthetic marketing research and then express their thoughts and feeling regarding the use of consumer research for these purposes. Considering this practices in light of the marketing concept should generate an interesting discussion.

8. Many are claiming a more individualistic style of fashion these years. Discuss whether individualism in style and fashion has actually increased or whether we are being conformist in new ways.
The mass-individualization that is claimed seems a paradox at first sight. As long as fashion is a way to communicate, any style of fashion should fit into the grammar and semantics of fashion in order to be recognized as a style, if only a deviant style. Consumers are increasingly freely combining styles and items of fashion to create a personal style, and this may well account for the observed individuality in fashion style. It was mentioned in the text that the fashion magazines have responded to this ‘slang of fashion’ by actively recommending eclecticism in fashion. And so the ‘style’ has followed the practice.
Chapter 16
Lifestyles and European cultures

CHAPTER SUMMARY

A consumer’s lifestyle refers to the ways he or she chooses to spend time and money and how his or her values and tastes are reflected by consumption choices. Lifestyle research is useful to track societal consumption preferences and also to position specific products and services to different segments.

Marketers segment by lifestyle differences, often by grouping consumers in terms of their AIO’s (activities, interests, and opinions).

Psychographic techniques attempt to classify consumers in terms of psychological, subjective variables in addition to observable characteristics (demographics). A variety of systems, such as RISC, have been developed to identify consumer ‘types’ and to differentiate them in terms of their brand or product preferences, media usage, leisure time activities, and attitudes toward such broad issues as politics and religion.

Interrelated sets of products and activities are associated with social roles to form consumption constellations. People often purchase a product or service because it is associated with a constellation that, in turn, is linked to a lifestyle they find desirable.

Where one comes from often is a significant determinant of lifestyle. Many marketers recognize national or regional differences in product preferences, and develop different versions of their products for different markets.

Because a consumer’s culture exerts such a big influence on his or her lifestyle choices, marketers must learn as much as possible about differences in cultural norms and preferences when marketing in more than one country. One important issue is the extent to which marketing strategies must be tailored to each culture, versus standardization across cultures.

Consumers identify with many groups that share common characteristics and identities. These large groups that exist within a society are subcultures, and membership in them often gives marketers a clue about individuals’ consumption decisions. A large component of a person’s identity is often determined by his or her ethnic origins, racial identity, and religious background. The growing numbers of people who claim multi-ethnic backgrounds are beginning to blur the traditional distinctions drawn among these subcultures.

Recently, several minority groups have caught the attention of marketers as their economic power has grown. Segmenting consumers by their ethnicity can be effective, but care must be taken not to rely on inaccurate (and sometimes offensive) ethnic stereotypes.

Because a consumer’s culture exerts such a big influence on his or her lifestyle choices, marketers must learn as much as possible about differences in cultural norms and preferences when marketing in more than one country.

Given that we, as consumers, must take in many activities that reflect our local cultures, Euro-consumers as an overall segment do not exist. The existence of a Euro-consumer is at best limited to certain segments of the population, the young and the (international) managerial class, and to certain situations.
CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Lifestyles and Consumption Choices

Lifestyle: Who We Are, What We Do

a. Lifestyle refers to a pattern of consumption reflecting a person’s choices of how he or she spends time and money. It is (in an economic sense) how one elects to allocate income.

1). Lifestyles can be thought of as group identities. It is more than economics and income disposal choices.
   a). Lifestyle is a statement of who one is and who one is not.
   b). Other terms used to describe lifestyle are:
      1]. Public taste.
      2]. Consumer group.
      3]. Symbolic community.
      4]. Status culture.
   c). Lifestyles are not set in stone.

*****Use Key Term lifestyle Here*****

Discussion Topic: What are some different lifestyles that people about your age (those attending and not attending college) tend to follow? What are the differences between your lifestyle and someone who is a returning student? (or a normal undergraduate if you are a returning student) A graduate student?

Discussion Topic: People who join fraternities and sororities are alike in many ways. What makes a fraternity (or sororities) different from one another? If you met and talked with someone for a few minutes could you accurately guess to which fraternity or sorority the person belonged? What clues might the person give you?

2. Lifestyle Marketing

a. A lifestyle marketing perspective recognizes that people sort themselves into groups on the basis of the things they like to do, how they like to spend their leisure time, and how they choose to spend their disposable income.

1). The above choices create marketing opportunities.
2). Products are the building blocks of lifestyles. Many choices are made on this basis.
3). Because a goal of lifestyle marketing is to allow consumers to pursue their chosen ways to enjoy their lives and express their social identities, a key aspect of this strategy is to focus on product usage in desirable social settings.

*****Use Figure 16.1 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 4 Here*****

Discussion Topic: Make a list of 10 items you think you must have in order to attain the good life. Why do you suppose you selected these items?

b. The adoption of a lifestyle marketing perspective implies that we must look at patterns of behaviour to understand consumers.

1). Product complementarity occurs when the symbolic meanings of different products are related to each other.
2). These products, termed consumption constellations, are used by consumers to define, communicate, and perform social roles.

*****Use Key Terms product complementarity and consumption constellations Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 6 Here*****
Discussion Topic: How was the ‘yuppie’ of the 1980s defined in a product sense? (Rolex watch, BMW, Gucci briefcase, white wine, et cetera) How is the Generation X Grunge rocker of the 1990s defined in a product or lifestyle sense? (Doc Marten combat boots, smoker, chains, earrings, tattoos, et cetera)

Discussion Topic: What are some products that seem to ‘go together?’ What are some products that you do not expect to be together?

Psychographics

Psychographics involves the use of psychological, sociological, and anthropological factors to determine how the market is segmented by the propensity of groups within the market (and their reasons) to make a particular decision about a product, person, ideology, or otherwise hold an attitude or use a medium.

1. Psychographics can help a marketer fine-tune its offerings to meet the needs of different segments.
2. The roots of psychographics were in:
   a. Motivational research which involves intensive one-to-one interviews and projective tests (yields a lot of information on a few people).
   b. Quantitative survey research (at the other extreme) uses large-scale demographic research techniques.
3. Psychographics is often used interchangeably with lifestyle.
5. Psychographic analysis can take several forms (such as a lifestyle profile).

****Use Key Term psychographics Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 2 Here****

d. Most contemporary psychographic research attempts to group consumers according to some combination of three categories of variables – Activities, Interests, and Opinions – which are known as AIOs.
   1. To group consumers into common AIO categories, respondents are given a long list of statements and are asked to indicate how much they agree with each one. Lifestyle is ‘boiled down.’
   2. Which lifestyle segments produce the bulk of consumers?
   3. After ‘heavy users’ are identified and understood, the brand’s relationship to them is considered.

****Use Key Term AIOs Here****

Discussion Topic: Why would AIOs be important to marketers? How could marketers use this information to promote their products?

e. Uses of psychographic segmentation include:
   1. To define the target market.
   2. To create a new view of the market.
   3. To position the product.
   4. To better communicate product attributes.
   5. To develop overall strategy.
   6. To market social and political issues.

Discussion Topic: Can you think of a company that uses psychographic segmentation to position its product in the marketplace? Do you think it is effective? Why or why not?

f. Many research companies and advertising agencies have developed segmentation typologies that divide people into segments. However, since these are largely proprietary, they are hard to get.

g. The Research Institute on Social Change (RISC) has conducted measurements of socio-cultural change in most European countries. Lifestyle segments are positioned on three axes: Exploration/Stability; Social/Individual; Global/Local. Eventually ten groups are distinguished, referring to the position in this virtual space.

h. CCA divides the European population into 16 lifestyles regrouped into 6 ‘mentalities’.
Discussion Topic: In which of the ten RISC categories do you think a researcher would place you? Where do you think your parents would be placed? How might a marketer use this information to appeal to you (or in the second case, to your parents)?

i. A lifestyle concept which is closely linked to social class was proposed by Bourdieu, and further developed by SocioConsult. The basic idea is that people’s tastes and lifestyles are dependent on ‘habitus’, or the ‘common sense’ way in which people organize their world, which is adopted from our socialization process. This segmentation results in nine social milieux, differing in social class and value orientation.

j. The combination of Bourdieu’s notions of economic capital and cultural capital combined with Mary Douglas’ grid-group theory proposes four fundamental consumer types.

k. In America the most well-known and widely used segmentation system is VALS (Values and Lifestyles), developed at what is now SRI International in California. Nine lifestyle clusters have been identified. VALS2 extends this concept and uses eight groups that are determined by psychological characteristics (i.e. principle orientation, status orientation, and action orientation) and ‘resources’ (such as income, education, energy levels, and eagerness to buy). The groups include:
   1). Actualizers: successful with many resources open to change.
   2C). Experiencers: impulsive, young, offbeat, love risk.
   3A). Believers: strong principles, favour proven brands.
   3B). Strivers: like achievers, but with fewer resources, need approval.

l. Non-Western cultures are unlikely to fit in the aforementioned lifestyle typologies, and Japan or Eastern Europe typically require other segmentation criteria.

m. Cross-country psychographic segmentation projects result in exciting overall views of markets and trends, but one should acknowledge their fundamental weaknesses. It is not proven that these general segments are connected to homogeneous patterns of consumption. Furthermore both the theoretical foundation and the statistical reliability and validity of the segmentations are generally weak (or absent).

3. Geographic Influences on Lifestyle

Regional Consumption Differences: Macro level
a. Consumption patterns are shaped by climate, cultural influences and resources, creating differences across regions and countries. In some cases, however, it makes sense to distinguish between large regions comprising several countries, like Scandinavia, Benelux, Iberian Peninsula, central Europe.
   1). Three general food-styles are suggested for European countries: ‘express-train’, ‘party’, and ‘candle-lit’.
   2). Another study identifies twelve food cultures across fifteen European countries
   3). Whether one focuses on grand traits of differences between for example Teutonic, Gallic, and Anglo-Saxon styles of communication, or on national differences or regional differences within a nation is a matter of scope and purpose.
b. National differences and similarities can be found in four different market sectors:

1. Food preferences.
   Western European households typically spend between 14 and 17 percent of their income on foods (with the exception of the United Kingdom 10% and the Netherlands 11%). Distribution of this budget across food products varies greatly across countries. A Danish study identified eight food related lifestyles within north-western Europe, but there large national differences in the size, and even the occurrence, of segments. A British study found four food cultures: global, expatriate, nostalgia, and creolization.

2. Drink
   Drinking cultures in Europe differ widely in terms of what is drunk, and how and when it is drunk. The most obvious difference is between Beer cultures and Wine cultures. It has been suggested that two drinking traditions should be distinguished in Europe: Multidimensional drinking (moderate continuous drinking interwoven with other social activities), and Unidimensional drinking (occasional excessive drinking). Furthermore drinking of alcoholic beverages is influenced by national differences in price level and taxation. Drinking patterns across Europe are becoming more similar.

3. Cars
   National differences in type and number of cars owned by households depend on various factors, like infrastructure, local production facilities, taxation or tradition. A segmentation across countries implies that all car consumers should be found in one of three basic categories: pleasure seekers, image seekers, and functionality seekers. BMW breaks purchase criteria down into three levels: criteria that are important to all consumers in all countries, criteria that are important to all consumers in one country, and criteria that are important to some consumers in all countries. Combining these levels seven segments are identified (unpretentious car fan; prestige oriented sporty driver; hedonist; utilitarian; traditionalist; prestige-oriented achiever; understatement buyer). However, the size of the segments varies across countries, and different car models appeal to different segments in different countries.

4. Advertising preferences
   Consumers in different countries are accustomed to different forms of advertising. Advertising content may be controlled by national and European legislation. In an increasing number of countries tobacco advertising is banned, in Germany pricing is controlled and special sales are highly restricted. Unlike the Anglo-Saxon advertising culture, comparative advertising is banned in most Latin and Germanic countries, and in Germany it is illegal to mention the names of competitors in advertising. Differences in message may be linked to the distinction between low-context and high-context cultures. The former tend to favour more explicit communication than the latter. Furthermore across Europe there are national differences in attitudes toward advertising, and differences in preferences for media. Cultural differences may influence the actual comprehension of a certain advertisement.

Regional consumption differences: Micro level

1. Geodemography
   Geodemography refers to analytical techniques that combine data on consumer expenditures and other socioeconomic factors with geographic information about the areas in which people live in order to identify consumers who share common consumption patterns. ‘Birds of a feather flock together.’
2). **Single-source data** is where a person’s actual purchasing history is combined with geodemographic data.

*****Use Key Terms geodemography and single-source data Here *****

4. Ethnic and Religious Subcultures

a. Consumers’ lifestyles are affected by group memberships within the society-at-large. These groups are known as **subcultures**, whose members share beliefs and common experiences that set them apart from others.

*****Use Key Term subcultures Here *****

Discussion Topic: What subcultures can you identify? Which of these match up with those in the text? Which go beyond the text?

Ethnic and Racial Subcultures

b. Ethnic and religious identity often is a significant component of a consumer’s self-concept. An **ethnic or racial subculture** consists of a self-perpetuating group of consumers who are held together by common cultural and/or genetic ties, and is identified both by its members and by others as being a distinguishable category.

c. One of the primary relationships between ethnicity and marketing strategies is that membership in an ethnic group shapes needs and wants.

1). High-context cultures – group members are tight-knit, symbols and gestures carry much weight, and they are sensitive to nuances in ads. Many minority cultures fall in this category.

2). Low-context culture – group members are less sensitive to their ethnicity. Most majority cultures are in this group.

*****Use Key Term ethnic or racial subculture Here*****

****Repeat Key Terms Low-context culture and High-context culture Here*****

Discussion Topic: What are some of the ways that members of ethnic and racial minorities identify with and support each other? What implications does this have for marketers?

d. One important way to distinguish among members of a subculture is to consider the extent to which they retain a sense of identification with their country of origin versus the host country. **Acculturation** refers to the process of movement and adaptation to one country’s cultural environment by a person from another country. **Acculturation agents** – people and institutions that teach the ways of a culture, are crucial to success in the new environment. Processes that must be watched are:

1). Physical movement.
2). Translation.
3). Adaptation
4). Assimilation.
5). Maintenance
6). Resistance.
7). Segregation

*****Use Key Terms acculturation and acculturation agents Here; Use Figure 16.11 Here *****

5. **Euro-consumers: do they exist?**

a. A number of trends seem to be valid for all western European markets

1). A tendency to more unevenly distributed income
2). An increasing number of older people
3). A decrease of household size
4). A growing proportion of immigrants
5). Increase in environmental concern and consumption of ‘green’ products
6). Increasing proportion of consumption of services compared to durable goods
b. Some market segments, like business people, or younger people could be more prone to standardized, pan-European marketing
c. Nevertheless the existence of the Euro-consumer is not confirmed, not even for those segments

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING

1. Lifestyles are not difficult to understand. They can be difficult to define, pinpoint, or accurately characterize. The first major barrier found in the chapter relates to this. The instructor should be sure to build a strong bridge (as suggested in the text) between the consumer’s lifestyle and the products they choose. These patterns of behaviour are very important in the establishment of effective marketing strategy.
2. The second barrier is in understanding the concept of psychographics. The text does a very effective job in laying out the history and current state of psychographics. However, since most students have never been exposed to the subject before (especially in a business sense), care should be taken to explain and demonstrate. AIOs and lifestyle segmentation are very popular devices by which to conduct effective communication. If the instructor will use the numerous exhibits in the chapter and bring in some outside pictures or illustrations, the students will understand the concept more completely. Try using the Discussion Topics (see Chapter Outline). Try to save time to adequately cover RISC. Be sure students understand the various categories as shown in the chapter.

STUDENT PROJECTS

Individual Projects

1. Ask a student to think of a specific lifestyle (their own, their parent’s, their aspirations, etc.) and then to make a list of products and services that are linked in the consumer’s mind to that specific lifestyle. (Hint: You might ask them to decorate their living room, design a wardrobe, buy options for a car, etc.)

2. Have a student bring in three ads for the same basic type of product (e.g., pens, clothes, cars, watches, restaurants, etc.) which use ‘lifestyle’ segmentation in their advertising to differentiate each product. How do the companies achieve differentiation? Are the products really different?

3. Ask your students to construct a consumption constellation for the social role of a college student (or a young married couple, parents, an elderly couple, a solitary survivor.) What set of products, activities, and interests tend to be directed toward the group they selected? What factors might be operating that could distort the students’ concept of reality with reference to this group?

4. Have students assume that the owners of a fast-food chain have asked your class to prepare a psychographic profile of families living in the communities surrounding a new location they are considering. (Select any area that the students would mostly likely know.) Ask students to construct a 10-question psychographic inventory appropriate for segmenting families in terms of their dining-out preferences.

5. Ask a student to interview a member of a subculture other than his or her own to discover what types of products or services are purchased because of membership in this particular group. What are some marketing implications?

6. Have a student interview a member of an ethnic or religious subculture to see if the person can identify additional subcultures within the subculture! What are the subtle differences and are any of these significant to marketers?
7. Have a student visit two local supermarkets to find out if either has segmented their market on the basis of the subculture or ethnic background of their customers. How many subcultures are recognized by each supermarket? Talk to the store manager if possible.

8. Have a student visit a toy shop to observe the various types of toys that are for sale to ethnic subcultures. Have them give a report on the range of toys available and specify the intended ethnic markets.

9. Ask a student to visit an account executive from an advertising agency and ask this person about marketing to ethnic subcultures.

Group Assignments

10. Bring in some magazines targeted toward specific regional or local groups and ask the students to look through the magazine and describe the types of articles and advertisements contained in each magazine. How effective are they in reaching their target market?

11. Ask your students to compile a selection of recent ads that attempt to link consumption of a product with a specific lifestyle. How is this goal usually accomplished?

12. Have your students find three advertisements in popular magazines that they believe are targeted toward a particular psychographic segment. See if they think the ads are achieving their goal. What criteria did they use in their evaluation? Discuss this in your group. Did your opinion change after hearing the views of others?

13. Bring to class (or have your students do so) several ethnic publications and discuss the differences in articles, advertisements, and layout from general audience media.

14. So that students can better understand the power of ethnic stereotypes, have them conduct a poll. For a set of ethnic groups, have students ask people to anonymously provide attributes (including personality traits and product purchases) most likely to characterize each group. Was much agreement obtained? Now have them compare the information they received for each ethnic group with actual members of that group. Any differences?

15. Ask each member of the class to identify one of the ethnic or religious groups that they belong to and have them design a list of products or services that are purchased or used because of their membership.

16. Have the students bring to class print ads aimed at a particular subculture and show how the ads attempt to address the group. Do the students think they are effective?

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. Compare and contrast the concepts of lifestyle and social class.

   Social class is determined more in terms of how people earn their income and lifestyle in terms of how they like to spend it. Thus social class is based on socio-economic parameters like occupational status and income, whereas lifestyle is based on psychographic parameters like attitudes, interests, and opinions.

2. In what situations is demographic information likely to be more useful than psychographic data, and vice-versa?

   Demographic information is likely to be more useful than psychographic data when simple, objective criteria are sufficient in defining and distinguishing potential consumers. Demographic data are more clearly defined and directly measurable than psychographics and, therefore, make segmentation on these bases more straightforward. In contrast, psychographics are used to understand consumers’ motivations for purchasing and using products. These data reflect people’s tendencies to sort themselves into groups on the
basis of the things they like to do, how they like to spend their leisure time, and how they choose to spend their money. Many of these characteristics are more complex and less overt than demographics, but often address the underlying motivations for individuals’ behaviours.

3. Discuss some concrete situations in which international similarities may be more relevant than national cultural differences for market segmentation and for the understanding of consumer behaviour.

Students may come up with specific lifestyle products that could be marketed similarly over Europe, because the underlying appeal is based on the international similarities, though the potential market shares may differ across countries. From a managerial point of view it also may be more attractive to choose one pan-European positioning, and accepting some loss due to cultural differences, than finding a host of country specific brand positionings, and accepting different brands or different brand identities across Europe. International brand management in Europe is as much an art as a science, and requires compromises between overall and national brand identity. The increasing mobility of consumers (week-end trips, and holidays) implies that consumers will come across the same products and brands in different countries, which in turn requires a recognizable pan-European brand identity.

4. Compile a set of recent ads that attempt to link consumption of a product with a specific lifestyle. How is this goal usually accomplished?

Students should be able to find a variety of advertisements to represent the link of product consumption with a specific lifestyle. Examples include luxury cars, cruises, and golf linked to an affluent lifestyle; used cars and furniture, small apartments, stereos and books linked to the ‘university student’ lifestyle; Miller beer linked to the young, single, sports fanatic male lifestyle. (Possible Field Project)

5. The chapter mentions that psychographic analyses can be used to market politicians. Conduct research on the marketing strategies used in a recent, major election. How were voters segmented in terms of values? Can you find evidence that communications strategies were guided by this information?

Students should recognize the power of psychographic analyses in defining target consumers and positioning political candidates for office. They should search for campaign literature that is designed for different targets and which might even contradict each other, looking for obvious and subtle differences. This type of polling data is difficult to get because it is closely guarded by the candidates and their pollsters, but often just by viewing the ads one can identify the target audience. The students might also like to comment on recent political scandals that have been rampant in Washington. What do these scandals (and the ability to retain public confidence during or after the scandal) tell us about values? (Possible Field Project)

6. Using media targeted to the group, construct a consumption constellation for the social role of university students. What set of products, activities, and interests tend to appear in advertisements depicting ‘typical’ university students? How realistic is this constellation?

Students should enjoy developing a consumption constellation for their role segment. The instructor might point out how the students serve as ‘experts’ with respect to this segment, and how their constellation might differ from that constructed by their professors, parents, or business executives. (Possible Field Project)

7. If you were segmenting European consumers in terms of their relative level of materialism, how might your advertising and promotional strategy take this difference into account? Construct two versions of an ad for a suntan lotion, one to appeal to a high materialism country and one to appeal to a low materialism country (under the untenable assumption of all other things being equal).

The main difference to take into account is consumption as an end in itself and consumption as a means to attain well-being.

8. There are of course people of most lifestyle types in all European countries, but their numbers vary. Try to determine which lifestyles are the most common in some European countries that you know.

Without referring to any factual data on lifestyle segments this exercise may give rise to a lively discussion, that may uncover deeply rooted national stereotypes.
9. If you have access to foreign TV channels, try to compare the advertising in the ones from your own country with the foreign ones. Are the styles different? Are the predominant products different? Is the use of a certain style of advertisement for a certain type of product similar or dissimilar.

Students should be able to notice differences in style and setting of the advertisements and in products being advertised, even if they can not understand the foreign language. If they understand the language of the broadcast, and if they come across the same product in different countries, they also may notice the differences in product benefits and suggested usage.

Note: If students do not have access to foreign TV channels, they might compare the product information for different countries that is printed on product packaging of many products.

(Possible Field Project)

10. Locate one or more consumers (perhaps family members) who have emigrated from their country of origin. Interview them about how they adapted to their host culture. In particular, what changes did they make in their consumption practices over time?

Note: You might want to ask the class if anyone personally knows someone who has immigrated to your country or if they personally know a foreign student at your university before making this assignment. The class will be able to discuss this question in more depth if someone who personally knows an immigrant conducts this interview. (Possible Field Project Idea)
Chapter 17
New times, new consumers

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The green movement is a common denominator in the trend towards increased attention to the environmental impact of human activities. In terms of consumption, this has broadened the scope of environmental judgement from recycling of scarce resources to attention to the whole production and distribution process.

The green movement may be an indication of an even broader trend towards more conscious reflection on the ethical aspects of consumption. The political consumer ‘votes with his/her shopping basket’ in an attempt to influence companies to care for the natural as well as the human environment, adding issues such as human rights to the set of dimensions that influence purchases.

Followers of an etic perspective believe that the same universal messages will be appreciated by people in many cultures. Believers in an emic perspective argue that individual cultures are too unique to permit such standardization; marketers instead must adapt their approaches to be consistent with local values and practices. Attempts at global marketing have met with mixed success; in many cases this approach is more likely to work if the messages appeal to basic values and/or if the target markets consist of consumers who are more internationally rather than locally oriented.

The Western world is a net exporter of popular culture. Consumers around the world have eagerly adopted Western products, especially entertainment, vehicles and items that are linked symbolically to a uniquely Western lifestyle (e.g., Marlboro, Levi’s, BMW, Nestlé). Despite or because of the continuing ‘Americanization’ or ‘Westernization’ of cultures in the world, some consumers are alarmed by this influence, and are instead emphasizing a return to local products and customs.

Postmodernism involves processes of social change in an era, where the ‘grand truths’ of modernism, such as scientific knowledge or the progressiveness of economic growth are no longer taken for granted. Postmodernism includes social processes such as fragmentation, de-differentiation, hyperreality, chronology, pastiche and anti-foundationalism.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

1. Environmentalism: saving the planet with a shopping basket

   a. The environmental issue has gained a lot of momentum in later years

   b. Recycling marks the growing impact of concern for the environment and the green consumer on the market. Throughout Europe the impact of green consumers differs among countries.

   c. Starting with recycling environmentalism, concern for the environment, covers all aspects of the production and consumption process.

   *****Use Key Terms recycling and environmentalism Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 1, 3, and 4 Here*****

   d. Issues like the use of growth hormones in the production of milk and beef and BSE in cattle lead to increased consumer concerns with respect to food safety

      1). It has been suggested that we live in a risk society

      2). As in the case of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) the consumer has to handle unknown risks in his or her decision making
The political consumer

e. The political consumer uses his or her purchase behaviour as a vote for or against companies, based on their (alleged) societal responsibility and ethical behaviour.
   1). Culture jamming is peaceful rebellion against companies’ control over our minds and imagination.
   2). Companies like The Body Shop take side with the political consumer by being concerned with a broad array of social values

Consumer boycotts

f. Negative experiences can trigger an organized response
   1) Boycotts of products, companies, or services can be aimed at countries or companies.
   2). These boycotts can be successful or unsuccessful depending on their popularity, duration, and strength.
   3). Lately much resistance to the behaviour of companies and marketers has been related to the processes of globalization.

Discussion Topic: Have you ever been involved in a boycott? What was the result? If so, what would you do differently this time?

2. Global Marketing and Culture

a. Learning other cultures is essential to a company that wishes to become part of the global marketplace.

Think Globally, Act Locally

b. As corporations increasingly find themselves competing in many markets around the world, the debate has intensified regarding the necessity of developing separate marketing plans for each culture. Two views exist:
   1). Adopting a standardized strategy – this viewpoint represents an etic perspective, which focuses upon commonalities across cultures (it is objective and analytical).
   2). On the other hand, many marketers endorse a localized strategy (emic perspective), which focuses on variations within a culture (it is subjective and experiential).
   3). According to the emic perspective each country has a national character

Discussion Topic: If you were in charge of international markets for a major food company, would you focus primarily on the etic or emic perspectives? Would your answer change if you worked for a car manufacturer? Explain.

c. Marketers must appreciate cultural norms regarding taboos and sexuality

Discussion Topic: What are some taboos that you are aware of in other countries? In your own country? What effect might these taboos have on marketers and advertising?

Does Global Marketing Work?

d. Often global marketing seems better in theory than in practice. Employing local entities to help with the marketing and advertising effort often pays off.
1). To maximise the chances of success for multicultural efforts marketers must locate consumers in
different countries who share a common worldview.

2). Candidates for pan-European marketing are
   a]. affluent ‘global’ citizens, who are exposed to ideas from around the world
   b]. young people whose tastes are strongly influenced by international pop culture

The Coca-Cola invasion: exporting Western Lifestyles
e. The allure of Western consumption is spreading with people from other countries falling under the spell
   of advertising, contact with tourists and American soaps and quizzes on local television.
   1). Formerly isolated cultures are now reachable through tourism, mass media and modern technology.
   2). The West is a net exporter of popular culture.

f. The newest market to open to Western goods and services is the Asian market.
g. Eastern Europeans are rapidly adopting Western standards. These transitional economies struggle with
economic systems and governments that are highly centralized and incompatible with a free market
system
   1). Converting to a Western form of business and consumption is not without its problems.
   2). These problems include a loss of confidence and pride in the local culture, as well as alienation,
      frustration, and an increase in stress as leisure time is sacrificed to work ever harder to buy consumer
      goods.
   3). Despite the proliferation of Western culture around the world, there are signs that this invasion is
      slowing.

Discussion Topic: Do you believe that ‘Creeping Westernization’ is an ethical issue? Why? Do you think
that it is a political problem? Why? Do you think it is a marketing problem? Why?

Globalization: not a one way street
g. Globalization refers to the mingling of local and foreign products and practices
   1). The global product culture indicates the willingness to purchase into a foreign context or to join a
      wave of globally uniform consumption patterns.
   2). Expatriate products refer to the search for authentic products from other cultures
   3). Nostalgia products represent a search for local authenticity
   4). The process of creolization occurs when foreign influences are absorbed and integrated with local
      meanings.

3. Postmodernism

   a. Postmodernism is among the most widely discussed and disputed terms in consumer behaviour research
      in the past five years.
   b. Postmodernism argues that the dominant beliefs in modernism and industrialization are fading
      1). Modern values include the benefits of economic growth and industrial production and the infallibility
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   2). Expatriate products refer to the search for authentic products from other cultures
   3). Nostalgia products represent a search for local authenticity
   4). The process of creolization occurs when foreign influences are absorbed and integrated with local
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3. Postmodernism

   a. Postmodernism is among the most widely discussed and disputed terms in consumer behaviour research
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   b. Postmodernism argues that the dominant beliefs in modernism and industrialization are fading
      1). Modern values include the benefits of economic growth and industrial production and the infallibility
      of science

Discussion Topic: Do you believe that ‘Creeping Westernization’ is an ethical issue? Why? Do you think
that it is a political problem? Why? Do you think it is a marketing problem? Why?

Globalization: not a one way street
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that it is a political problem? Why? Do you think it is a marketing problem? Why?
4). **Hyperreality** - the replacement of real and authentic environments and products with engineered environments and products that simulate reality.

5) **Chronology** - consumers’ search for authenticity and stability in the past (as we ‘used to know it’).

6). **Pastiche** - playful and ironic mixing of existing categories and styles

7). **Anti-foundationalism** - rejection of existing standards of marketing instruments and products

d. Postmodernism has also been linked to increased consumer skill, greater appreciation for aesthetic and non-material values, critical consumption.

e. Postmodernism has also been linked to passivity and political degeneration of societies, and nihilism

****Use Key Terms pluralism, fragmentation, de-differentiation, hyperreality, chronology, pastiche, and anti-foundationalism Here; Use Table 17.1 Here; Use Consumer Behaviour Challenge 7 and Consumer Behaviour Challenge 8 Here*****

**Discussion Topic:** A leading postmodernist consumer behaviour theorist started his lecture with the quip ‘the difference between postmodern marketing and the mafia is that postmodern marketing makes you an offer you can’t understand’. Why is this an example of anti-foundationalism? Could you find comparable examples in branding and advertising in your country?

**Discussion Topic:** What do you think of the statement ‘postmodernism is just for high-brow intellectuals?’ Find arguments for and against this statement.

**BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING**

1. The structure of the text is that by starting with recycling, the discussion is carried through environmentalism and political consumption to global marketing.

2. The instructor might spend extra time talking about the ‘Westernization of the global marketplace.’ The text presents some outstanding thoughts on this subject and most student groups enjoy discussing the issue.

3. The discussion of postmodernism might pose some difficulties for students. The instructor should take some time to explain the key elements of postmodernism. If possible some examples of postmodern marketing in your own country should be used to elucidate this subject.

**STUDENT PROJECTS**

**Individual Projects**

1. Find a scale for measuring environmental concern that is used in your country, and have your students (and yourself) self-administer it. Are they environmentally concerned? Are you? Discuss the results.

2. Now ask your students to administer this scale to fellow students from other faculties. How do the results differ?

3. Ask your students to talk to consumers who are observed to purchase ecological products. Why do these consumers purchase these products? What are their motives?

4. Ask your students to collect examples of globalization in advertising or product display. Discuss the results.

5. Find some examples of postmodern marketing or advertising. What are the distinctive elements? What is the appeal of the product or the message?
Group assignments

6. Once again a popular word in society is ‘conservation.’ Many consumers have become more interested in conserving than in ‘throwing away.’ See what ideas the class has for creative recycling. Can they figure out a way to profitably market these ideas to the public?

7. Divide the class into teams. Have one group take the perspective that the correct way to market is to take the etic perspective. Have one group take the perspective that the correct way to market is to take the emic perspective. Debate the issue.

8. Divide the class into teams. Have one group take the perspective that the ‘Westernization’ of foreign cultures and media is a proper path to take. Have one group take the perspective that the ‘Westernization’ of foreign cultures and media is wrong and will eventually cause conflict. Debate the issue.

9. ‘The main difference between postmodern marketing and the American mafia is that postmodern marketing makes you an offer you cannot understand’. Start a discussion around this statement.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

1. In your opinion, in which areas have environmental issues had the biggest impact on consumer behaviour? Why do you think that is the case?

   The impact of environmental issues is felt in the rise of organic produce, of energy saving appliances, and in the packaging industry. Also the banning of CFC’s as aerosol-propellants may be mentioned. Furthermore there is European legislation – either already effective, or being negotiated upon – affecting the production and waste treatment of an increasing number of products. The impending ratification of the Kyoto protocol will have an impact on carbon-dioxide emissions which in turn will affect production and waste treatment. The issues that are most important may differ among countries, and students may discuss their perceptions of differences in environmental issues between countries.

2. Is the ‘political consumer’ a fad or a new and growing challenge for marketers and producers? Discuss.

   Growing consumer welfare leads to a lasting concern for ethical and political issues. Apparently political correctness is a luxury good for consumers. However, political consumption and consumer boycotts have been regular phenomena in the market since the early 1960s, but economic crisis and reduced consumer budgets usually lead to a curtailment of political interest by the consumer.

3. Go to your local supermarket to check the selection of ecological products. How are they presented in the store? What does that say about the way these products are regarded?

   Both the kind of products that are adopted in the supermarket and the positioning of ecological products relative to ‘regular’ products give information on the supermarket’s attitude towards green products. Eye-catching display and a broad assortment suggest green commitment and confidence in green marketing. Other supermarkets may play lip-service to the green movement by hiding a limited number of ecological products on bottom shelves or behind pillars. However, since the first edition appeared the number and visibility of ecological products is likely to have increased across all supermarkets.

4. Try to provide an estimate about how often environmental issues are mentioned in advertising. Are these messages credible? Why or why not?

   Students should come up with some instances of highly incredible overstatements of environmental soundness of advertised products, as well as some more realistic claims. Discuss environmentally overstated advertisements in relation to the more generally accepted tradition of superlative language and product performance overstatement.
6. What role does the globalization process play in your personal consumption profile? After reflecting on that, take a walk in your nearest shopping area and look for signs of the global and the local. What is from ‘somewhere else’? What is distinctively local? Are there mixtures, or are these two domains separate?

The instructor should encourage students to go through some critical self-appraisal. Actually it might be difficult to draw clear distinctions between the global and the local, as some global products are incorporated in local consumption styles, and some distinctively local products may by now be ‘made in Taiwan’, or wherever. If the discussion heads into the direction of this blurred boundary between global and local products, it might be linked to the next two challenges through the concept of hyperreality.

7. Try to collect advertisements that reflect the postmodern features of fragmentation, de-differentiation, hyperreality, chronology, pastiche and anti-foundationalism.

After explaining the key concepts of postmodernism the students should be encouraged to discuss the occurrence of those elements in current advertising.

8. Reflect on your and your friends’ consumption patterns in the same light. What do you see?

Answers to this question will obviously differ, but should start a discussion on postmodern influences in consumer behaviour.
Case Study Solutions
Case Study 1
Attention to and perception of cinema commercials

Christian Alsted

Question 1. For which kind of product would you think that the transfer of meaning from the film-viewing event to the advertised product is especially successful?

Answer
Products whose consumption represents pleasure, outings, events and high status of quality in general.

Question 2. The focus of attention was found to be crucial in this study. Focus on the advertisements is high in the cinema situation and low in the TV situation. Which other concept from psychological theory is reminiscent of this?

Answer
One concept that comes to mind is perceptual selectivity. Remember that we are more prone to look for information about something we can relate to (like the sound of our name) or any problem we might want to solve (for example, paying more attention to advertisements when we are searching for a new car). The process by which the cinema event captures the imagination of the consumer and potentially brings his/her full attention to the stimuli provided by the screen can be seen in contrast to perceptual cues from the TV screen, which may be subject to a greater likelihood of having to compete with clutter from other sources of stimuli.

Question 3. Which factors of attraction and distraction may be decisive for the experience of the cinema-going event?

Answer
The reception situation in the cinema is characterized by a low distracter and a high attractor value while the opposite is true of the TV medium. The attractor value helps focus attention, whilst the distractor value dissipates attention. The most important attractor values constituting the focused attention are:

- the black screen of the theatre
- the high quality of sound, hi-fi surround
- the darkness of the room
- the set rules of behaviour
  - Social context
    - Impossibility to do other things
- the news value of the movie
- the powerful positive expectation for and dramatic absorption of the movie

These provide the commercial with a high potential to gain attention and arouse interest, resulting in a positive attitude towards the commercials presented thus providing the product or brand with a positive added value.

The most important distractor values (de-focusing attention) being:

- others in the audience talking
- standing up to let others in the audience get to their seats
- others in the audience rustling sweet wrappings.

Question 4. Which general conclusions could be drawn from this case, concerning ‘consumption’ of advertisements?
Answer

(a) Consumers find themselves in an open modus of reception in the cinema, as opposed to the closed modus of reception towards the TV medium. The cinema is thus characterized as a very positive media environment.

In the cinema, a number of features crucial to attaining higher attention and retention are present, especially the escalation of atmosphere, the build-up of expectations for quality products, a positive mood, high attention during exposure, and an unbroken flow with a beginning and an end.

These factors indicate that the following types of commercial or message will gain from cinema exposure:

- image related messages for products with high awareness
- emotional messages
- messages as to core values of a brand
- messages to the audiences of tomorrow.

And point to the following opportunities for the marketer:

- commercials that are dominated by action and excitement, and which tell a story
- commercials with a strongly romantic setting
- commercials with a flashy international atmosphere
- commercials that underscore the enjoyment of using brands
- complex messages
- commercials that use humour as a key element.

(b) The strategic implications are for the brand marketer to not only focus on frequency and quantitative measures when working out the media plan, but also use his knowledge of cinema reception situations to enable him to plan the brand’s strategy in relation to the reception circumstances of the medium.

Thus, there is a greater difference in exposure situations than previously asserted, and the qualitative aspect of media planning becomes obvious.

The key question to arise is, how does the individual in the target group use the medium? And how is his/her reception modus?

This provides the brand marketer with the following opportunities and potential of cinema as a medium:

- increasing understanding of the product via higher attention and retention
- the cinema commercials increase involvement and brand interest
- in the cinema the brand is perceived more positively and thus gains a higher position in the pattern of preferences (top of mind)
- positioning a brand saturated market, where the most crucial brand preference is determined by image
- enabling the maintenance of core values of a brand through a drip strategy, e.g. Bounty
- the cinema catches trend-setters and outgoing persons in the youth target group
- the cinema commercial reinforces the positive added value of brands toward the (cinema) target group
- the cinema may be simultaneously used with television for introductions as the cinema enables a high social processing.
Case Study 2
Quorn – neither fish, flesh nor fowl

Anders Bengtsson and Jacob Östberg

Question 1. Give examples of some alternative strategies of introducing Quorn in the Swedish market.

Answer
a) Quorn could have been introduced as a vegetarian product more directly catering towards the vegetarian segment of the market. This is a niche market where there seems to be limited competition and good growth potential.
b) The novelty of Quorn could have been focused upon; it is very rare with radical innovations in the food sector. Most new products seem to be product extensions such as new sizes, packages, et cetera.
c) Quorn could have been introduced on its own without co-operation with a retailer.

Question 2. Give some reasons for and against choosing the alternative strategies proposed in question one as well as the strategy chosen by KF.

Answer
a) By introducing Quorn as a vegetarian product the non-vegetarian segment of the market might be foreseen. The sometimes radical stances taken by vegetarians and vegans have potentially given vegetarian products connotations of radical political stances. On the other hand there is a trend towards eating less meat and there might be a great market potential foreseen in choosing this perhaps more modest introductory mode.
b) The food market is somewhat conservative and consumers could shy away from products that seem too different from what they are used to. Myco protein grown in 60-meter tall silos might seem too superficial and high-tech for a large segment of the market. By not stressing the novelty of the product, Quorn is likely to appeal to a larger segment of consumers and thus to reach the early and late majority groups faster rather than just appealing to a small group of innovators or early adopters. On the contrary there might be a potential in stressing the difference since consumers apparently are moving away from the traditional meat-based diet. This does not have to be an either-or choice but rather something in between.
c) The strategy chosen by KF, to not focus on the novelty or the vegetarian aspects perhaps made the product less of a success than it turned out to be since many attractive and growing market segments were not focused on. But, a heavy focus on these market segments might have given the product a too narrow focus, confer answer a and b.

Question 3. Discuss the way in which KF designed the packages.

Answer
The design of the products clearly makes reference to conventional ready-made meals. By choosing this design, parallels are drawn to the similarities with traditional meat-based diets rather than the potential of difference in this new product. A quick glance at the photos on the package probably makes the consumers think of traditional meat-based dishes rather than vegetarian alternatives. This is further reinforced by the choice of names for the products, such as Quorn Stroganoff, that also resemble conventional meat-based dishes. KF provide very limited information about Quorn on the package but features the Quorn-logo in a co-branding fashion as though it was just another ingredient.

Question 4. Discuss the possibility that consumers may interpret Quorn as a generic term referring to a product rather than a brand name. Discuss also the potential drawbacks for Marlow Foods if consumers use Quorn similarly to how they use the terms fish, flesh or fowl.

Answer
Consumers are likely to think of Quorn as a product rather than a brand name. Quorn is indeed a brand name but it is used by Marlow Foods also to describe the product. Quorn is simply Quorn and there is no other easy way to refer to the product. There is no major risk for Marlow Foods to lose the ownership of the brand as long as no other manufacturer starts producing Quorn and claims the right to use Quorn as a product term. However, Marlow Foods can lose the exclusive right to use Quorn as a brand if the brand becomes a common part of the language referring to a product in general than a product manufactured by a specific company. Consumers have transformed brand names to generic product names before. Aspirin, cellophane, and nylon were all famous brand names once upon a time. The way in which Marlow Foods use the Quorn brand has the potential risk of transforming the brand to a generic product term.
Case Study 3
The medium is the message … or are you what you drink?

Margaret K. Hogg and Alastair J. Cox
Solution to questions supplied by Ynte K. van Dam

Question 1. What are the factors which influence product/brand evaluation and choice in this case study?

Answer
Taking the text of the case as the basis for this answer, influential factors are image, taste, self-expression (or self-image enhancement), media manipulation, fashion trends, situational context, social context (or reference group influence), conformity, utilitarian or instrumental motives, quality, mood or feeling, antecedent state, and social pressure.

Grouping these factors may reduce the set to personal intrinsic factors (taste, instrumentality, quality), personal extrinsic factors (self-expression, conformity, social pressure), situation factors (reference group, context, mood), and social factors (image, media manipulation, fashion trends).

Question 2. Assess the importance of self-image and product image in product/brand evaluation and choice.

Answer
In general it could be stated that self-image and product-image are closely interconnected in product or brand evaluation and choice. It is, however, not always clear which way the causality flows. Consumers may prefer some products and brands over others because images of these products/brands appeal to them. This could be understood as the self-image (or value-orientation) influencing preference for product/brand image. Self-perception and attribution theory assume the converse causality and predict that consumers will assess their self-image based on the products and brands that they use and apparently like. Whatever the initial direction of causality, over time a closed loop will evolve in which product and brand images and self-image and personal values mutually shape and reinforce each other.

Within this case it is mentioned several times that at least to some of our friends, products and brands are distinct cues in social comparison. Therefore, the products and brands that are adopted for consumption will shape the preconceptions and biases with which other people interact with the consumer. For some this means that their preference formation takes into account the expected reactions of other people, whereas for other this is internalized into feeling good about some product or brand rather than another.

It may be noted that Chloe, while defending her drinking behaviour of the previous night, neatly dissociates herself from the image of the alcopop as worded by Robert: from the start to the end she sticks to intrinsic motives (starting with taste and ending with a non-offensive acceptance of a free drink).

Question 3. To what extent can the self-image congruence models discussed in Chapter 7 help us to understand the interaction between consumers and products/brands in this study?

Answer
Self-image congruence models assume a process of cognitive matching of product/brand attributes to aspects of the (ideal) self. This would apply to the introductory remark by Robert, who reveals a cognitive consideration to dissociate himself from the image that is conveyed by the fizzy-sissy-alcopops. Given the consideration that the fit of a pair of jeans should match the shape of thighs and buttocks, this model could be applied to Vicky’s criteria for preferring her 501s, but this in truth is a far too literal application.

The remainder of the discussion centres around social and situational context and the resulting contextual influences. This seems far less cognitively intentional. These arguments might be better understood in terms of ‘evolutionary choice models’ in which behaviour is gradually shaped by social and behavioural learning.
Question 4. Discuss the different levels of self-monitoring displayed by Katherine, Vicky, Chloe, Daniel and Robert

Answer
Self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974: 526-527) is briefly summarized as self-observation and self-control guided by situational cues to social appropriateness. The goals of self-monitoring may be (a) to communicate one’s true emotional state by means of an intensified expressive presentation; (b) to communicate an arbitrary emotional state which may not be congruent with the actual emotional experience; (c) to conceal adaptively an inappropriate emotional state and to appear to be unresponsive and inexpressive; (d) to conceal adaptively an inappropriate emotional state and to appear to be experiencing an appropriate one, (e) to appear to be experiencing some emotion when none is experienced but non-response is inappropriate.

The theoretical focus on an emotional hide-and-seek might be a rather limited application of the construct of self-monitoring, and it may be that use of the term ‘impression management’ would allow for a broader meaning in discussing this case.

For some members of the cast the information seems rather limited, so there is sufficient room for ‘hininterpretieren’ as the Germans call it. Katherine, Robert and Daniel seem quite conscious of their social appearances whereas Vicky and especially Chloe seem less self-conscious. The final remark by Chloe, however, reveals a strong ego-defensive attribution, and shows the previous discussions to be shaped to a large extent by dissonance reduction due to self-monitoring. Having found herself drinking the alcopop, Chloe had no choice but to defend her overt behaviour. As the product image offers little help in this defence she resorts to functional and intrinsic motives, like taste. So Chloe’s contribution to the discussion shows actual self-monitoring as she starts out by hiding her personal embarrassment with drinking the alcopop.

Question 5. How far can the products and brands in this case study be seen as social stimuli and/or responses?

Answer
Solomon (1983) distinguishes between products as responses and products as stimuli by stressing the different relations between products and consumers.

(1) ‘Products as responses’ assumes that self-image is antecedent. Motivated by need arousal the consumer chooses a product that offers need satisfaction, resulting in purchase and impression management.

(2) ‘Products as stimuli’ assumes that product symbolism is antecedent. Motivated by role definition the consumer chooses a product that offers role performance resulting in self-attribution and a situational self-image.

Robert, Katherine and Daniel appear to fit the former models, ending up with impression management (acting out of place, feeling a complete idiot, looking rather odd). Chloe finds herself caught in the second model though her choice for the alcopop was not really motivated by the role performance based on the product’s symbolism. Vicky’s vehement rejection of the impression management of the eighties suggests that she would be better described by the second model, though her final ‘it depends…’ casts some doubt on that.

Focusing on the products rather than the people, both the products as stimuli and the products as responses approach are present. Some strong elements of product symbolism are mentioned (mostly in connection to role performance and situational self-imagery) but also elements of antecedent self-image and the related ‘impression management by product choice.’

Question 6. Why is symbolic consumption so central to our understanding of consumer behaviour?

Answer
A human being is a social and cultural animal. Individual behaviour is meaningful behaviour because of the social context in which it takes place. The limitations and affordances that social institutions and other people impose, shape the possible and feasible courses of action that are open to the individual. The
relationship between individual behaviour and the natural and physical environment is mediated by the cultural meaning and significance that is attached to various aspects of the environment and the products with which we interact. Apart from (and in affluent societies more important than) basic needs satisfaction, consumer preference and choice of products or brands is a symbolic process of acting upon the social and cultural world. Consumer preference among a virtually limitless supply of functionally equivalent goods and services may only partially be understood if this symbolic consumption is ignored. For many products and services the symbolic value is more important that the material consequences of consumption, and image is more important than taste.

**TEACHING NOTES**

**Summary**

The central themes of this case study revolve around symbolic consumption and the self concept, and the particular focus of the case scenario is on the role of self-consciousness and self-monitoring in influencing consumers’ interpretation of their own and others’ product and brand choices. The case illustrates the importance of both internal and external influences on consumer/brand evaluation and choice and how these influences are interpreted differently by various consumers. The medium in this context is the product consumer – whether it is the brand of alcopops, the product category of alcoholic drinks, the container, the brand of jeans, the leisure activity such as the pub or club they choose or the music they listen to. All these product and service choices provide a number of clues about which groups consumers see themselves as belonging (and not belonging) to. The case also illustrates which stereotypes they associated with which products and brands; and how some consumers evaluate product and brands for their symbolic – as much as for their functional or utilitarian – qualities of attributes.

This case study is linked to Chapter 7: The Self, and incorporates a number of subsidiary themes such as symbolic interactionism, multiple selves and role identities.

**Aim**

The purpose of this case study is to demonstrate the impact of self-monitoring and self-consciousness on consumers’ understanding and interpretation of their own and others’ consumption choices. The case study uses the context of the UK market for alcopops to illustrate symbolic consumption and to examine the impact of self–monitoring and situational influences on consumers’ evaluation and choice of products and brands.

**Briefing notes**

Product symbolism and symbolic consumption

In some of the earliest work on symbolic consumption Levy (1959) argued that ‘behaviour is significantly affected by symbols encountered in the identification of goods in the marketplace’. Sirgy (1982: 289-90) proposed that consumers will be motivated towards positively valued products to maintain a positive self-image; and will purchase image congruent products to promote self consistency and self-esteem. However, products must fulfil certain conditions to communicate symbolic meaning: conspicuousness/visibility (in usage and/or purchase); personalisability (the product or brand must carry a stereotypic of the generalized user); and variability (which allows the inferences to be drawn about individuals on the basis of product use) (Holman 1981).

Solomon (1983) argued that products function either as responses or stimuli within the context of symbolic consumption. Where products are used as strategic or communication tools they function as responses and the emphasis is on the economic, psychological and sociological variables which drive product choice rather than on the impact of products on consumer experience. However, when products are used for impression management of self-definition then they often act as stimuli, conveying information about an individual’s social roles (Solomon 1983).
Bi-directional relationship between products and consumers

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<tr>
<th>Antecedent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Products as responses</td>
<td>Self-image</td>
<td>Need arousal</td>
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<td>Products as symbolism</td>
<td>Product stimuli</td>
<td>Role definition</td>
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**Figure 1: Image congruency hypothesis**

The image congruency hypothesis (Grubb and Grathwohl 1967) acknowledged firstly the role of the intrinsic and extrinsic values of goods and services in consumer choice; and secondly the relevance of the audience for individual’s consumption choices. In order for a symbol to convey meaning it must be identified by a group to which an individual belongs, i.e. the symbol must be socially recognized (Grubb and Grathwohl 1967:24) ‘Because the self-concept is of value and of central importance to the individual, he will direct his behaviour to maintain and enhance the self-concept. The self-concept is formed in the interaction process between the individual and others …the interaction process will be affected by … consumer goods, serving as symbolic communication devices. By carefully using goods as symbols, the individual communicates meaning about himself to his references …’ (Grubb and Grathwohl 1967: 26-7).

**Figure 2: The relationship between symbolic consumption and self-concept**

These ‘references’ or ‘social others’ are seen as important interpreters of the meanings of consumption choices. The basic propositions of Grubb and Grathwohl’s model (1967) are: (1) that as the self-concept is of value to an individual, then behaviour is directed towards its protection and enhancement; (2) that the purchase, display and use of goods communicates symbolic meaning to the individual and to others; and (3) that the consumer behaviour of individuals is directed toward enhancing self-concept through the consumption of goods as symbols (Sirgy 1982: 289).
Discussants should consider two sets of factors in consumers’ search for congruency between self-image and brand image: external factors, notably social and situational influences (Belk 1975); and internal factors, notably individuals’ dispositions towards self-monitoring (Snyder 1974).

Self-concept
Self-concept has been defined as: ‘the totality of an individual’s thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object’ (Rosenberg 1979:7) and involves a series of formation principles including: reflected appraisal (‘the self is formed around others’ perceptions of ourselves’; self-attribution (‘self-concepts are inferred from our own behaviour’); and psychological centrality (‘hierarchical organization of differing self-concepts’) (Rosenberg 1979; Sirgy 1982). The self-concept is central to the image of congruence hypothesis. However, there is considerable debate about the number and centrality of different views of the self which operate within the self-concept. Schouten (1991:422) argues that the elaboration of possible selves will be dependent upon situational and individual factors and self-schemas will be evaluated on the basis of their desirability and attainability.

Self-monitoring
Self-monitoring recognizes that individuals differ ‘in the extent to which they can and do observe and control their expressive behaviour and self-preservation’ (Snyder and Gangestad 1986:125). Snyder (1974) categorized consumers into ‘high’ and ‘low’ self-monitors according to their tendency to respond to social cues. A series of later studies (e.g. Lennox and Wolfe 1984) have called for a modification of the self-monitoring scale; and have suggested an alternative interpretation using a ‘polar-extremes approach’ which would discount individuals with scores in the middle of the self-monitoring scale (Wolfe, Lennox and Hudiberg 1983; Celuch and Slama 1995; Hogg, Cox and Keeling 1997; Auty and Elliott 1998). In a recent study (Hogg, Cox and Keeling 1997) the respondents’ scores on the self-monitoring scales were divided into three groups: low self-monitoring group with scores between 1 and 8; medium self-monitoring group with score between 9 and 16; and high self-monitoring group with scores between 17 and 24.

Situational factors
Belk argued that ‘situational variance may account for considerably more variance than actor-related variables’ (Belk 1975:157) and defined consumption situations as consisting of: physical surroundings, social surroundings, temporal perspective, task definition (buyer or user roles; the goal of an activity) and antecedent states (Belk 1975:159).

Teaching guidelines
This material can be used to explore a series of topics, either as a formal case study or as a series of class-based exercises. It is recommended that students should have read at least Part B of Consumer Behaviour: A European Perspective before undertaking the case study (in particular Chapter 7).

References


Case Study 4
From *Mille lire* to *Mille et Une Nuits*: inventing disposable books

Benoît Heilbrunn

**Question 1.** What are the main factors of success for this particular product?

And

**Question 2.** What would be the life-cycle of such a product? Do you think this product is going to last or is it doomed to have a very short life span similar to a fad product?

**Answer**

To answer these questions it might be interesting to look at other disposable products which have proved successful over time. Examples include: pens, lighters, tissues, cameras, etc.

**This case study raises the issue of whether any product could become a disposable product. It is thus important to envisage the main characteristics of successful disposable products:**

- They are cheap (a few pounds maximum) but provide good value for money;
- They rely on a critical approach to consumption linked to a ‘good value for money’ approach. This is based on a purchase criterion which is ‘optimization’ (see the semiotic square on consumption values developed in the Alessi case study for further explanation);
- They are products for ‘nomad’ consumers;
- They have a high purchase frequency;
- They are often related to an impulse purchase;
- They have quite high loyalty rates;
- They are widely available (many retailing outlets);
- They have striking visual codes so they can be recognized easily. These codes include colours (often vivid shades), shapes, materials used (mainly plastic);
- They have usually become ‘branduit’. A branduit is a brand name which has become the generic name for its product category (examples include: Coca-Cola, Post-it, Kleenex, Bic). For instance, when Procter & Gamble launched a new tissue brand called Tempo, they tried to establish it as a branduit as opposed to Kleenex. This branding aspect is very important because a branduit is a psychological reference in its product category. It is the name by which consumers will refer to the entire product range. A study conducted in the United States and quoted in Assael (1995) shows that 56 per cent of respondents call tissues ‘Kleenex’, 52 per cent call adhesive paper ‘Scotch’, and 49 per cent call photocopying machines ‘Xerox’.

It is necessary to say that not any product may become ‘disposable’. A good example is the unsuccessful launch of Bic perfumes in France. Bic tried to impose a new way of selling perfume with a range of four different flavours, sold at £3 to £4 at tobacconists with no packaging at all. This desacralization of perfume was not accepted by consumers, because they expect a perfume to convey imaginary values (dreams, exoticism, etc). The same problem might apply to books because many people consider these cheap books to be a desacralization of the book object. Factors that convey such an impression mainly relate to the kind of retail outlets in which they are sold as well as to the cover design. This factor is important because it means that the disposable aspect of the product does not stem from the price only, but from all elements that give this object a definite position (distribution strategy, cover design, topics covered in the book range, etc).

It is also important to look at the factors which might explain the rising importance of disposable books:

- the decrease of newspaper and magazine reading rates; this decrease is due to many factors even though the level of newspaper reading is strongly correlated to the average price of newspapers. For example, the average price of a newspaper in France is more than twice that of a newspaper in England (Le Monde costs 7.5FF (80 pence) whereas The Times costs 20 pence) but the price is not the only factor explaining the reading of newspapers. An example of this is the unsuccessful attempt to launch a cheap
newspaper (Informatin was sold at 3,8FF, that is 40 pence) in France in 1995. This newspaper tried to break the visual codes of the market (short articles and cheap price, smaller format, etc) but could never break even. This shows that there might be some cultural resistance to the reading of magazines and books which are not only linked to the price. Price should therefore only be considered as ‘one’ explaining variable;

- the increasing price of books in many European countries (especially in Latin countries);
- the development of ‘nomad’ consumption practices and the rise of situational factors on what, where, and how people buy products. The main question here is whether these books should be positioned as reference books sold in book stores or whether they should be sold only in transit places (airports, bus and train stations, tobacconists) for nomad consumers.

**Question 2. Do you think it is possible to build a brand loyalty for the publisher? Or loyalty for the product category of cheap books? Why or why not?**

**Answer**

This question raises the differences between ‘brand building’ and ‘category building’.

Brand building means that the publisher will attempt to build a brand image and to increase its market share. It means its advertising strategy will need to focus on its product range only. This might be problematic for two reasons, firstly advertising is forbidden for books on TV in most European countries. Secondly, the cost for a national advertising campaign in other media like magazines would be too great for a small publisher like Mille et Une Nuits.

Therefore students should think of an alternative way of advertising disposable books, for example, collective or co-operative advertising. This could involve different publishers who could work together to promote the concept and therefore the demand for the entire product category. This could also mean a publisher and bookstore chain working together to promote the concept. This is called category building.

It is important to develop promotional tools to increase loyalty. Most of the tools that are used for most consumer goods could be used:

- price reduction: ‘5 books for the price of…’, or ‘get a free book once you have bought 4 in the series’;
- promotional devices such as posters, postcards, etc. could be developed to promote sales in bookstores; the publishers could organize games and competitions based on a series of questions which could be included at the back of each book. They could thus create a database of involved consumers through the customers’ replies, and use this database in a relational approach for future direct market operations.

**Question 3. Is this product transferable to any country in Europe? What factors would be critical success factors in your country? Why? How do you think those factors might differ for other European countries?**

**Answer**

To answer this question, it is important to look at the following factors regarding any country in which the launch of such books would be envisaged:

- the importance of books in cultural life as opposed to alternative forms of cultural diffusion (magazines, TV programmes, internet, etc);
- the reading of books and magazines;
- the price of books;
- the retail outlets in which books are (and could) be sold;
- the structure of book distribution.

These factors should be rated for the considered country and be organized in a matrix to point out the opportunities to launch such a concept.
The factors to be considered in order to develop a successful launch strategy are the following:

- creation of a brand name versus declension of an existing brand name: in England these books are published by already-known publishers and they mainly include reprints of existing books, whereas in Italy and France these books were first introduced through new brand names in order to create brand labels;
- use of existing distribution structures (book shops) versus use of alternative modes of distribution (hypermarkets, tobacconists, vending machines);
- content of the book: these books should not consist of reprints of existing classical books. They should innovate in order to create loyalty patterns and to stimulate consumer’s continual interest in the product category.
Case study 5
Viral marketing and ‘Norman’

Suzanne Beckmann

Question 1. Viral marketing is often targeted at opinion leaders. Starting from the characteristics of opinion leaders identify a set of arguments why this is the preferred approach in a branding strategy.

Answer
To answer this question, two central aspects could be looked at: (1) characteristics of opinion leaders, and (2) the social context of consumption.

The case study raises the issue why opinion leaders might be the right target group for a branding strategy of an existing product whose features are seemingly not known well-enough, and why viral marketing is an appropriate communication strategy in such circumstances.

Consider, for example, that one of the central characteristics of opinion leadership is product knowledge – the product’s technical features, performance, or attributes that distinguishes it both positively and negatively from other products in the same category, and so forth. This in-depth product knowledge can have a considerable influence on a brand’s popularity. A concept worth looking into in this regard is the one of the so-called market mavens, i.e., people who make a difference because they are actively involved in transmitting marketplace information to their network.

Exactly what is this network is another crucial aspect. Opinion leaders are who they are, among other things, because they are socially connected with a lot of other people – and quite often with different groups of people. They provide the ‘tipping point’ because of their networking qualities, combined with a deep interest in and profound knowledge of the product category in question.

A branding strategy aims at increasing awareness, curiosity, and interest for the brand. Targeting opinion leaders means talking to the people who matter – and making the brand a ‘talk of the town,’ thus spreading the message, the features of the product and hence increasing the probability of purchase intention and, ultimately, purchase.

Again, this relates to the social context of consumption. Certain products are more prone to be consumed or used in a social setting than others. Opinion leaders are socially connected people and they are willing to share their consumption experiences with others, especially when asked about advice. This is one of the main reasons why they are a target group for branding strategies.

Question 2. Elaborate on the differences between VM and WOM. Then identify examples for both strategies and indicate which one is to prefer for a given product/brand.

Answer
Take as a starting point that viral marketing is an internet-based strategy while word-of-mouth is a non-web strategy. Any viral marketing strategy will, of course, ultimately entail WOM aspects since people/consumers not only spread the message electronically.

The table in the case lists a number of dimensions to be considered when comparing VM and WOM. Below is a more detailed description to facilitate answering the question.

Speed
Of the differences between WOM communication and VM, speed is perhaps the most significant. Hypermedia environments dispense with both volume and spatial considerations for message transmission. E-mail allows interpersonal influence to occur without face-to-face contact, while also permitting
communication with a large number of receivers without additional effort. Hence, VM messages can be exposed to a larger number of people in shorter periods of time. This difference is particularly salient for businesses competing in turbulent market environments and compressed product life cycles.

**Nature of Copy**
Almost by definition WOM influence is predominantly verbal or face-to-face, relying less on visual communication of a product’s value. VM, by contrast, largely relies upon visual stimuli – including both text and imagery – in propagating a message. Rarely is a message or endorsement communicated verbally in hypermedia environments. Previous research has demonstrated that WOM (i.e. verbal) communication leads to more favourable brand attitudes than when identical communication is presented in printed form. Face-to-face claims can be made with greater veracity and enthusiasm than text messages. Verbal communication, considered more *vivid*, is more accessible from memory and is weighed more heavily in judgements made about a product.

**Control over Copy and Execution**
VM and WOM communication also differ according to the ability to control message copy and execution. The effectiveness of WOM advertising is moderated by the interpretive and communication abilities of the sender. First, the nature and content of the message will depend upon the sender’s interpretation of his or her brand-related experiences. Messages broadcasted by VM, by contrast, are developed and constructed by the originating organization. Second, WOM messages can vary according to the sender’s ability to communicate with others. This may result in a relatively poor representation of the brand. Moreover the homogeneity of the message over time may be compromised (e.g., the exaggeration inherent in the Nordstroms ‘snow tire’ case).

**Social and Situational Influence**
A key difference between WOM and VM derives from the nature of the communication situation. Relating product experiences and attitudes by WOM entails two-way, dyadic communication. Experiences are recounted in two-way communication with the receiver. There is limited potential with viral communication for receiver feedback. One particular benefit of two-way communication is the ability to modify the message during the interaction, similar to a personal selling experience where messages can be adjusted to suit the receiver.

Moreover, face-to-face communication will increase the likelihood that the receiver will attend to the entire message. Norms governing face-to-face interactions make terminating a message far more difficult than in situations where communication is separated by time and space (as with propagation of a message via e-mail). Also, face-to-face communication leads to a greater sense of community, leaving stronger residual trails of cooperative behaviour (Frohlich et al. 1998).

**Domain of application**
Unlike WOM communication, most applications of VM are Internet dependent. Accordingly, the reach of a VM campaign is constrained by the number of Internet users within a target market. Also, many Internet users are still loath to transact over the web, further limiting the potential uptake of VM offers. A recent survey in Denmark, which is one of the leading ‘wired’ societies, estimates that about 40% of all private Internet access connections are never used.

In other words, a crucial criterion in comparing VM and WOM is the target group of the product – think of it in terms of socio-demographic characteristics such as age, availability of Internet access, and nature of social relationships.

**Question 3.** Which characteristics of the youth segment and the consumer culture they live in make viral marketing a persuasive advertising strategy?

**Answer**
To understand the youth segment and its characteristics we need to turn to findings from psychology and sociology.
The search for one’s identity, the development of a self-concept – who am I, who do I want to be and how do I want others to perceive me? These questions have an individual and a social dimension, which are intertwined. The psychological make-up of young people striving to find their place in life and society is influenced by the need for fulfilling various values, some of them being in conflict with each other. For example, the need for self-realization is an individualistic value, while the need for acceptance and close relationships with others is targeted at a community one wants to belong to and identify with. Here enters the concept of actual versus ideal self, i.e., where and who am I versus who do I want to be and who do I want to show to others?

In a consumer culture, symbolic meanings of goods are far more important than functional product attributes. Especially when searching to develop one’s identity, the symbolic meanings of products override any functional features, since they help to define that identity and to position oneself with regard to a given community.

A viral marketing strategy, carefully designed, takes a segment characterized by insecurity (although it would never admit to it) and identity search seriously, appeals to their expert knowledge, asks their opinion and appreciates their social network by inviting them to share their experiences.

**Question 4.** The viral marketing strategy for the Sony MiniDisc used a fictitious anti-hero to influence the attitude towards the product. Argue with regard to the ELM-model, whether this strategy targets the central or peripheral route.

**Answer**
First consider the differences between the central and peripheral route such as high versus low involvement and the ensuing effects on persuasiveness.

The way the Sony MiniDisc and ‘Norman’ are presented indicate that actually both routes are targeted. The functional attributes of the product demonstrated on the website will appeal to opinion leaders and consumers highly involved with music and corresponding equipment. On the other hand, ‘Norman’ is prominently displayed in all aspects of the website, thus focusing on nonproduct aspects of market communication and thereby appealing to the peripheral route. Hence, both high- and low-involvement consumers might be attracted by this website.
Case Study 6
Triumph of femininity

Per Østergaard

**Question 1. Discuss the self-concept expressed in the ads.**

**Answer**
The ads are examples of multiple selves, showing how underwear is part of constructing a specific identity, also in situations where only the woman knows what kind of underwear she is wearing.

The photos and the texts give the opportunity of discussing how certain types of underwear suit certain situations and moods. This discussion is always bound to the very culture in which it is conducted.

Further, the ads are examples of self-esteem advertising, talking to the emancipated woman now beyond feminism’s perception of luxury underwear as something enjoyed by the man. This whole discussion of feminism’s influence on the consumption of underwear is to a very high degree culturally specific. In Northern Europe, feminism to a large extent has influenced the consumption of underwear. The feministic approach meant the consumption of piquant underwear was viewed with scepticism from circa 1968 to 1980. In Southern Europe, the tendency was not so.

**Question 2. Explain the female gender roles expressed in the ads.**

**Answer**
The ads display the woman as strong and a person in charge, able to make decisions. It is the woman herself who chooses how to dress. This viewpoint is in opposition to traditional feminism that regards the woman as subjugated by the man’s expectations of her.

So to what extent is the woman still subjugated to the man’s expectations in her choice of underwear? Here could be included male students and their expectations of women’s consumption of underwear in different situations.

**Question 3. What kind of body image and ideals of beauty are expressed in the ads?**

**Answer**
A slim body is displayed as the ideal of beauty, the woman is proud of her body and the expressions the body can get through consumption of the right underwear. What also lies in these ads is that what is feminine is something which can be constructed through consumption.

The discussion of body image and ideals of beauty should include questions about whether it is natural to use underwear to create an illusion about the way the body looks. It might be to make the breasts look larger or smaller than they really are, to create a flat belly or firmer buttocks. Depending on the students’ cultural background this question can bring to light many different viewpoints. Here it could be useful to start with whether the ideal of beauty should be the natural body or a constructed and thereby artificial body. In this connection it can be discussed whether changes of the body’s look by the help of underwear is more acceptable than changes made by plastic surgery.
Question 4. Discuss how consumption of underwear can be part of grooming rituals.

Answer
In both ads we see that underwear is used in situations of grooming rituals. Women usually see a direct connection between taking a bath, doing their nails, putting on make up and then putting on piquant underwear.

The basis for a discussion could be whether different kinds of grooming rituals (before a party, an everyday morning before attending lectures in consumer behaviour, after doing a sport) mean that one will use different kinds of underwear. Here other product categories can be included such as shampoo, perfume, body lotion, cosmetics, and it can be discussed how the consumption of specific brands within these products is connected to the consumption of certain types of underwear.

Question 5. Discuss to what extend you can give underwear as a gift.

Answer
Gift-giving is always embedded in a cultural context, and there will be large differences from one culture to another. There will, therefore, be large differences in what you can give also among the readers of this book. Underwear is a gift that requires some degree of intimacy between giver and receiver. It could be a mother giving her daughter underwear. In this situation there will be limitations to how provocative the underwear can be. It could also be between female friends, and here the limit will be lower for how piquant the underwear can be. It can also be a man giving his wife underwear. Here the limit for what can be given depends on the wife’s taste and style. Underwear that is too piquant will be a hint about dissatisfaction and a wish about change. There are very clear limits for where underwear can be used as gift. Think, for example, of a man giving his best friend’s wife some very piquant underwear. Supposedly, this will end the friendship. In interviews women have also expressed that they may use underwear as a self-gift. A certain type of underwear, for example, as a self-gift after a slimming treatment.
Case Study 7
Jolly Cola: Jack the Dullard marketing against the global powers

Søren Askegaard and Fabian F. Csaba

Question 1: Which developments in the marketing environment contributed to the decline of Jolly Cola?

Answer
First, the growing pro-American attitudes took position in the minds of the consumers. Whereas previously the nationalistic inbuilt ‘hook’ secured a strong link between the product and the positive, associational chains it had, new signifiers were now attached to this chain of signification. Perhaps Jolly failed to keep up with the market’s changing concept of nationalism and how it was communicated (and in which ways, with whom, etc.).

Second, the TV market was liberalized and consequently commercial interests took a stronger foothold. This enabled the big-time movers to impose new forms and structures of marketing communication. Jolly Cola probably did not have the knowledge and skills to confront the sophisticated marketing technologies and capacities that Coke had. That is, it was taken perhaps by surprise by the big boys who had both the skills and finances to play the new game.

Third, the competitive situation had changed remarkably in relation to the situation in the 1970s. Now, two big competitors needed to be fought plus a long list of generic cola producers. Jolly failed to recognize these new realities.

Fourth, Jolly failed to distinguish between the narratives that promote a ‘practical no-nonsense’ strategy from the narratives that promote ‘global, cosmopolitan youth’ strategy. Whereas the former are today becoming less appealing, the latter, together with other ‘rich narratives,’ are essentially on the rise.

Fifth, Jolly failed to position its product in existing and obviously dominant food discourses. Whereas Coke and Pepsi attached their products to the syntagmatic axis of particular food paradigms, yuppie life style, cafe culture, etc., embedded in particular social contexts, Jolly was playing decontextualized, ‘alone’. That is, Jolly failed to connect its product to new cultural orders of consumption.

Finally, the positive connotations of the Jolly name had waned. Previously, it connected to the post-war generations’ notion of ‘tommies’, but later this positive and rhythmic association decayed.

Question 2: Explain the communication strategy of Jolly. How did the Numskull Jack approach try to appeal to the Danish customer?

Answer
Jolly places the whole story in Denmark. The strategy places the point of gravity into Denmark, making the case of Jolly a particularly Danish phenomenon.

It contrasts the US versus Denmark, whilst imposing a hierarchical order on the relation. The brothers had been to the US, but returned to Denmark to live their real lives. It fights against the ‘other’ whilst demarcating ‘us’. Hence, the strategy builds on a very clear social context of opposition. Finally, the strategy then creates and plays with the Danish key value of egalitarianism expressed through the luck of the lesser gifted in terms of socially accepted riches, but more gifted in terms of bricolage, i.e., getting by with whatever is at hand. The ad, thereby, becomes an attack on the American Marketing myth of efficiency, know how, and scientific management. In this (Danish) imagination, the ability to outwit the powerful marketers of multinational companies is nothing less than an example of marketing paradise.
Question 3: Why did it become increasingly difficult for Jolly to position itself against Coca-Cola and Pepsi?

Answer
The basis of Jolly’s previous marketing strategy had lost its social ground. The emergence and growth of pro-American attitudes formed a context where they found it incompatible to attach the category of Jolly into existing cultural order. The local rival had lost the basis upon which it had built upon for a long time and this basis was moving further away from the constellation of semiotic categories that once made it possible for Jolly to fight on, fighting against the dominator. The idea of a Danish cola became increasingly untenable.

Rather than challenging the basis upon which the competitors legitimacy was created it chose marketing strategies that explicitly legitimized P and C, building on them rather than aside from them. It reproduced the relation that had prevailed in the market and tried to desperately use humor to challenge this order. In this sense it reproduced a same structure of competition it was determined to fight, making its position a dominated one.

Finally, Jolly failed to position itself within prevailing food consumption patterns and structures. A long time ago the competitors had created extensive contracts with fast-food chains that were strongly rooted in the new consumption patterns. It failed to provide what could be said to be at least a structured alternative to these orders. It continued to be regarded as a down-market ‘hotdog-stand cola’, as also alluded to in an ironical way in the described advertisement.

Question 4: Assess the proposed ‘backyard puma’ marketing strategy. Would it work?

Answer
Arguments for negative answer: One should not overestimate the nostalgia for the Jolly brand. If Jolly was be about to challenge its competitors it would certainly need to create a strong constellation of activities that together promote a stronger foothold in the market. In this light, it is beside the point to discuss whether its segments are right or wrong, as in any case it has to be recognized that the segments are located in a system of tastes and consumers who collectively determine the successes and failures of particular products and categories. In short, Jolly’s problems are deeper than can be solved through a selection of other segments.

Arguments for positive answer: Many of Jolly’s advertisements have created positive feelings (attitudes towards the ad), but failed to generate increasing market share. This demonstrates a fundamental basis of sympathy for the brand. By altering the target market from the classic heavy consumers of cola (the ‘lost generation’) to a parental generation with nostalgic feelings for the brand and their children with yet unshaped brand preferences, the desired market share of 10–15 % would be within reach. The proposed character for Jolly would appeal to the 5–10 year old, too young to be caught in by the teen-oriented marketing strategy of the international players.
Case study 8
KILROY Travels International

Suzanne Beckmann

**Question 1.** Is the country-of-origin relevant in relation to companies in the travel industry? In what way could the new agency relate to the demand for an international communication platform?

**Answer**
To answer the question, the following aspects need to be considered: the type of product/service offered, the target group, the countries the company is based in, and the lingua franca of travelling.

The product/service offered relates to travelling, an activity that by definition means moving beyond boundaries both physically and mentally. The target group is young people, and mainly students. In other words a target group that is characterized, among other things, by curiosity, intelligence, language abilities, education, mobility and flexibility. KILROY is based in the Nordic countries plus Germany, Holland and Spain, i.e., countries (probably with the exception of Spain) where English is the first foreign language learned in school. Travelling means visiting other places and means communicating in different cultures – the lingua franca at most places commonly visited is English. And add to this, the internet is a common medium to gather information, also about travelling, and that the language here again is often English.

Hence, the new campaign can easily be communicated in one single language, namely English. And country-of-origin seems irrelevant, given the above arguments, for a product/service such as travelling.

**Question 2.** Brand differentiation (stress a unique feature/attribute) – Which attributes/consequences ought the communication to the target group focus on and what effects should it give?

**Answer**
Consider the specific features of the KILROY offer – the flexibility of the ticket and the age limit for purchasing this flexibility. The most obvious point of differentiation is thus the age of the target group. A clear communication of the uniqueness possessed by being part of that target group thus gives an effect of distinction: Under 33 I can travel as I wish, beyond 33 I am old and no longer part of this community.

**Question 3.** Dual component model – Traditional communication in the travel industry takes its point of departure in the combination of blue water, palms and beaches with a special price attached. Consider how KILROY can use the interplay between verbal and visual elements in endeavours to achieve a positively loaded differentiation.

**Answer**
Given that traditional travel industry communication focuses on the destination, it is an obvious point of differentiation to focus on the point of departure and, more specifically, on the person the communication addresses. Instead of showing beaches, one could for example explain why one should travel now, i.e., under the age of 33.

**Question 4.** Fear-appeals are chiefly used in social/health oriented campaigns (speed limit, cancer, AIDS, etc.). Could a fear-appeal be used in the communication for KILROY? Has a fear-appeal any relevance in relation to the product or the target group (social context)?

**Answer**
This question can be answered considering the brand differentiation issues addressed above. If belonging to a specific age group is the unique feature of the product/service, then a fear appeal could very well be used,
preferably with an ironic twist to take out the edge. Something along the lines of ‘age racism,’ i.e., if you do not travel before you are 33, you’ll never experience the world since you will then be restricted by job and family demands.

**Question 5. Argue in relation to the ELM-model whether the strategy for the new campaign should aim toward change of attitude through the central or peripheral route.**

**Answer**
Consider the characteristics of the two routes according to the ELM-model. And then think about the previous arguments for the type of campaign to be developed. If a traditional destination-oriented communication is chosen then product-related features are presented, thus appealing to the central route. But if the focus is on other than destination-related aspects then non-product related features will be emphasized, thus targeting the peripheral route.
Case Study 9  
Commodification, Appropriation & Singularization  
The Imaginary Case of ‘A 1985 Château Léoville Las-Cases.’

Per Østergaard, James Fitchett and Christian Jantzen

**Question 1.** *What types of mass produced commodities can be appropriated and de-commodified. Are some product categories more easily appropriated, and if so why?*

**Answer**

The purpose of this question is to highlight the fact that the capacity to appropriate and singularize commodities is not dependent on the type, class or material character of products but on the intentions, strategies and motivations of consumers. Commodities that are most easily appropriated and singularized are therefore those that are highly significant and rich in symbolic potential. Exactly which products have these qualities depends on consumers’ own desires and actions, and will vary depending on cultural factors and social norms. An exercise to address this question could involve getting groups of students to list products that they have themselves appropriated, as well as those products they feel that they would rarely or never appropriate. This could be used to then develop a typology of factors that are important in the appropriation process. Some categories that might be introduced are:

- **High and low involvement**

  High involvement consumer experiences might be more likely to involve products that can be easily appropriated due to the amount of financial and emotional investment necessary. However, some consumers may appropriate products classed as low involvement.

- **Social and personal significance**

  Products are used in social rituals, significant events and given as gifts might be commonly appropriated. The symbolic value of the context in which products are exchanged in these instances means that products take on personal and individual meaning. Products bought for, or given by family members, friends and colleagues might be understood in this context.

**Question 2.** *Should commodification be thought of as a linear process or a cyclical process? Can de-commodified objects be ‘re-commodified’ and if so how might this be applied to the example given above?*

**Answer**

This discussion question can be used to illustrate the dynamic aspects of commodity relations in consumer culture. Many products are not produced, distributed and destroyed but have a extended ‘social life’ (Appadurai, 1986) in which they are distributed, appropriated, redistributed, re-appropriated and so on. For example, a new car might have certain symbolic values for the first owner (taste, fashion, power, status) and eventually be appropriated by coming to take on personal significance. Once the car is re-sold to a second owner the product takes on different market values (economy, low-mileage, good maintenance etc) and the new owner might thus come to appropriate the vehicle in quite a different way to the first owner. Some products (like cars, property, furniture) go through successive stages of commodification, appropriation, re-commodification and re-appropriation.

**Question 3.** *How could the concepts de-commodification, appropriation and singularization be used to help us understand and explain consumption behaviour relating to second hand clothing? How might this contrast and compare with appropriation and singularization behaviours associated with mobile phones, or computer game consoles?*
Answer
In many European cultures, second hand clothing carries negative symbolic values for many people. The second hand clothing market is associated with poverty, non-fashion and even a mild sense of disgust (second hand underwear for example). This shows us that in these cultural contexts clothing is not easily recommodified or re-appropriated. When we buy second hand clothing we might feel that some of the spirit of the former owner remains with the product. It might be interesting to discuss what types of second hand clothing are acceptable and unacceptable. Clothing that is worn close to the body or tends to retain physical signs of the previous owner might be considered less easily appropriated than items worn as outer garments. Other dimensions may also emerge particularly in light of cross cultural differences. The discussion could be enhanced by comparing this example of second hand clothing with other products (such as mobile phones and computer game consoles).

Question 4. How might these issues support and relate to the concept of the ‘Extended Self’?

Answer
This case relates directly with the chapters of the text looking at symbolic aspects of consumption and the extended self. The important point to note here is that consumers do not simply represent aspects of the self through consumer goods but invest symbolic value in goods so that they represent aspects of the individual consumer. Furthermore, it is important to see the extended self as an on-going project that evolves and changes over time. One of the ways in which this dynamic is enacted is through the appropriation and recommodification of products and services.
Case Study 10
Alessi: Italian design and the re-enchantment of everyday objects

Benoît Heilbrunn

Question 1. How would you explain the fact that despite their focus on intangible and aesthetic product features, Alessi’s objects are successful in nearly all European countries? Can you identify key target markets based on gender, age, income or lifestyle?

and

Question 3: Do you think that consumers from each European country would be willing to pay a price premium to get a product from one of Alessi’s collections? Why or why not?

Answer
This case study may be a good way to show students the application of a semiotic methodology. Alessi represents a good illustration of the fact that traditional segmentation criteria solely based on the supply system (price, quality, size) or on consumer’s characteristics (age, income, geographic location, cultural belonging, etc) might be insufficient. An alternative approach to segmentation may be used based on the interaction between a consumer and a given object. This segmentation is in fact not very far from the benefit segmentation approach. It assumes that the value does not lie in the object per se (value is not a substantial quality of goods) but rather in the (expected) relationship existing between the individual and the object. Value derives from a valorization process which largely depends on the type of expectations consumers derive from goods. It is therefore proposed to replace the value criterion by a valorization approach. It is then necessary to propose a possible segmentation of consumers based on the types of values potentially ascribed to an object.

Consumers, when asked about their relations to products, express a diversity of experiences and behaviour patterns. Typical expectations might include ‘find a quality product’, ‘possess an original object I will be proud to show my friends’, or ‘get the cheapest product’. There are basically two kinds of values associated with objects: utilitarian values and existential values. Objects are seen as essentially utilitarian when they are perceived by the user as mainly serving particular functions. The effectiveness with which they fulfil these functions plays a large part in their evaluation, and much consumer behaviour is directed at searching for information about such effectiveness. Nevertheless, some consumers may develop affective relationships with daily objects which go far beyond their functional aspects. They might therefore invest products and brands with personal and emotional values. In other words, products may have existential connotations in the sense that how they are perceived and evaluated by consumers largely goes beyond their functional purpose. Existential values might include such values as social values (the object indicates that the user belongs to a given social category), emotional values (the object arouses feelings and affective states), or epistemic values (the ability of the product to arouse curiosity and to provide novelty). The latter refers to the necessity for consumers to live new experiences through the use of products. In other words, a brand may be endowed with practical values (reliability, functionality, perceived quality, value for money, etc) or on the contrary, with fundamental ‘life values’ (friendliness, modernity, etc). Any object might thus be considered by consumers to have either ‘mythical’ meaning or a ‘practical’ meaning. This dichotomy between ‘mythical’ or ‘life values’ and ‘practical’ or ‘utilitarian’ values, which has been developed by Greimas and Floch, can be enriched and developed by the use of a semiotic square.

This semiotic square can be considered as the visual representation of the relations which exist between the distinctive features constituting a semantic category. The construction of a semiotic square can be illustrated using the opposition of ‘practical’ and ‘existential’ values mentioned above and will help us to categorize and visualize the relations which exist between the different values expressed by consumers. The pair of words ‘existential’ and ‘practical’ can be regarded as a semantic axis in which either term presupposed the other: these terms are said to be in a relation of contrariety. Following Saussure’s assertion, the basic principle of structural semiotics is that there is no meaning without difference. In other words any system of signification is above all a system of relations. Each of these terms may, through an operation of negation
contract a relation of contradiction: ‘non-existential’ is the contradiction of ‘existential’, and ‘non-practical’ is the contradiction of practical. A third type of relation emerges from this typology, that is, a relation of similarity of complementarity (to speak in semiotic terms) between ‘practical’ values and ‘non-existential’ values on the one hand and between ‘existential’ and ‘non-practical’ on the other hand. Figure 1 features the semiotic square with illustrates the example mentioned above.

![Semiotic square](image)

**Figure 1: The semiotic square (an example)**

This famous semiotic square has been largely developed by Floch to account for the different types of values expressed by consumers towards cars and types of values consumers potentially ascribed to a hypermarket. It helps to organize coherently our conceptual universe and therefore it allows us to anticipate the way meaning may follow. Returning to the category of ‘practical’ versus ‘existential’ which governed the construction of the semiotic square, the projection of this category onto the diagram points out four types of values consumers might potentially invest in and familiar products and brands can be seen in Figure 2.

![Values diagram](image)

**Figure 2: The major values ascribed to objects or brands.**
Customer Type | Guided by              | Typical expectations                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
---              |                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
1. The functionalist | Practical values     | ‘Never mind the utensils I use to cook; I am not fond of cooking utensils. They all look the same to me.’                                                                                                                      |
2. The sentimentalist | Existential values   | ‘I like my Alessi boiler. The little bird reminds me of a real bird we used to have when I have a child.’                                                                                                               |
3. The hedonist   | Non-utilitarian values | ‘I like this orange squeezer. It is not practical at all because the juice goes all over the floor, but still… I do not care. It is a decorative object in my kitchen and that’s what counts for me.’ |
4. The pragmatist | Non-existential values | ‘These Alessi things are outrageously expensive. I do not want to pay such a premium for a kettle. This is just a kettle after all…’                                                                                                    |

Figure 3: A typology of consumers depending on values ascribed to daily objects (and to their attitude towards Alessi products)

Figure 3 shows a typology of consumers which provides a fruitful tool in terms of strategic segmentation, brand positioning and brand advertising by showing the four main types of valorizations which can be ascribed to a given object. Moreover, this semiotic typology clearly shows that more than one segment might be attracted by the same brand for different reasons. The question is whether a brand should be only targeted at one of these groups, or should be positioned so as to appeal to as many segments as possible.

This case study shows quite clearly that Alessi focuses on two main segments: hedonist and sentimentalists. Both these segments exist in any country. The task is to identify what proportion of the market they indeed represent in each country.

Students may thus be strongly encouraged to do some interviews, or end conduct focus groups in order to assess the relative weight of each segment in the considered country. They could also show these consumers some photos of the Alessi range in order to get their impression and to be able to ascribe them to one of the four categories mentioned in Figure 3.

It could then be argued that cultural factors affect the relative strength of any particular segment in a given country. For instance, German consumers are said to be pragmatists whereas Italian consumers would rather be hedonists. But these broad categorizations should be discussed in class based on the fieldwork students will have done before class.

Question 2. To what extent would you agree with the idea that objects represent communication devices?

Answer

This question provides a good opportunity to explain to students that design can primarily be understood as a negotiation and a tension between the shape of an object and its expected function(s). The design of objects evolves over time and space because the relationships which exist between the shape of an object and its function varies in both a temporal and spatial dimension. Semiotically an object may be decoded as the articulation of two plans: a functional plan which corresponds to the utilitarian aspect of the object and an aesthetic plan which corresponds to the imaginary universe in which a society or a designer projects the object. People expect a priori shapes from the object. An object always more or less belongs to an assigned category which has developed its visual codes over time. The visual codes are identifying codes which help people to recognize that an object belongs to a given category.
An object may therefore be decoded in a semiotic perspective as a sign that is articulation of a signifier (the shape) and the signified (the function). To design an object in a certain manner also means to indicate to the potential users that the object will serve such a purpose and not some others. There is thus a necessary articulation between form and function which might sometimes lead to a real tension; the tension occurs either when the form is neglected so as to show the function only (minimalist approach to design) or when the form overlaps the function (artistic approach to design); the latter is more and more the case because of the infusion of the design and artistic world (artists become designers and designers define themselves as artists). Alessi is a good illustration of this phenomenon.

Once again, a semiotic square might be used to illustrate four different approaches to design depending on whether design represents versus constructs the value of the object (see Figure 4).

![Semiotic Square: Four Approaches to Design](image)

**Figure 4: Four approaches to design**

Students could be asked to select a few brands and to try to position them on the square. It would then be obvious that Alessi’s product range mainly refers to mythical design for which there is a disconnection between the object’s shape and its function (as illustrated very well by the orange squeezer and the kettle). This approach should also be applied to a brand like Braun, which illustrated a referential approach to design.

It is then possible to propose a semiotic approach to the object to show that the communicative functions of the object do not solely relate to surface elements such as the shape, the materials or the colours used in the production process. An object is integrated in a product range which is branded; the object takes place in a branding system which articulates into three levels (as shown in Figure 5):

- the deep values level which refers to know-how, the competencies and the aesthetic values promoted by the designer and the company. For instance, Alessi promotes a mythical design which derives from a specific aesthetic vision; the company’s attempts at producing objects which make homes more habitable and that infuse poetry in daily life;
- the narrative articulation level which refers to the way these deep values are transformed into themes of communication, ranges of products, tones of communication. For example, irony is a key theme of Alessi;
- the figurative elements level which refers to more superficial elements such as the shape of products, the materials used, the colours representative of the brand, etc.

This trichotomy helps in understanding that design is not only a superficial aspect linked to the shape of the object; it relates to a more fundamental project which is embodied in a designer or a brand’s key values. This
is consistent with the etymology of design which is related to both *dessein* (project, invention of a plan of action, constructive forethought) and *dessin* (drawing).

Figure 5: The object in a semiotic perspective

**Question 4.** Alessi’s objects are said to be very postmodern. To what extent would you agree with this assertion?

**Answer**
Students might list the various criteria, which defines postmodernity and analyse to what extent Alessi’s objects correspond to them. These criteria might include:
- an ethic of aesthetics (very representative of Alessi’s approach to design)
- a break in traditional codes of representation (representative of mythical and lateral design)
- the importance of self-irony
- the search for ‘linking values’ at the expense of ‘use values’ (which the semiotic square of valorizations illustrates through the opposition between practical and existential values)
- paradoxical juxtapositions
- confusion of object and subject (very visible in the anthropomorphic objects designed by Alessi)
- the rise of tribalism (is there, for instance, a tribe of Alessi consumers?)
Case study 11
Tatlýses Lahmacun

Toygun Ozden
Solutions to questions supplied by Ynte K van Dam

Question 1. Discuss various options Tatlýses Lahmacun has in order to develop a positive image among Europe’s fast-food consumers?

Answer
The image of Tatlýses Lahmacun among Europe’s fast-food consumers will probably vary among and within European countries.

At one extreme we can expect countries like Greece and some Balkan states to be vehemently negative towards Turkish food and Turkish food shops. This is due to reminiscences that date back to the 1920 Balkan wars, and even the late-medieval conquering of the Byzantine empire, and would greatly hinder acceptance of Tatlýses Lahmacun restaurants.

However, some Western European urban centres already have an established ethnic food culture and an overload of Egyptian, Jewish, Indian and Italian fast-food outlets alongside the US burger and chicken giants. In these countries Tatlýses restaurants could fit in neatly as yet another ethnic fast food outlet. Furthermore, countries like Germany, with a sizeable Turkish minority, offer yet other opportunities as Tatlýses restaurants could fulfil a latent need for authentic fast food for the Turkish immigrants and their second and third generation offspring.

The combined trends towards ethnic food/Creolization and increased convenience/fast food should offer sufficient opportunities for positive image building. It should be kept in mind that these trends are strongest in urban areas, whereas the more rural parts of various European countries typically lay behind, and maybe will never catch up with the cosmopolitan towns and cities.

Options could cover focusing on ethnicity with added fast-food benefits, or focusing on fast food with added ethnic benefits. Another option could be to start a head-on competition with the US burger and chicken chains, by maintaining a modern (formica) fast-food décor, while offering lahmacun rather than Big Whoppers and fried chicken.

Question 2. On which cultural foundations could such an image be constructed?

Answer
Cultural foundations should emphasize the Turkish origin. The popularity of Turkey as a holiday destination offers sufficient opportunities to create some cultural atmosphere. For most European consumers it will pass unnoticed that the roots of Tatlýses Lahmacun is in south-east Turkey, while the popular cultural elements are from the west and south-west coastal regions. Clinging to the authentic south-eastern cultural roots of Tatlýses may alienate some European customers, as this could represent a hitherto unknown side of Turkey.

Stressing the exotic nature of the Turkish motherland could conquer the ‘developing country’ image, though prices should be kept reasonably low because of this.

Question 3. How is consumer culture, notably myths and rituals, relevant for Tatlýses Lahmacun?

Answer
Myths and rituals have various implications for the Europeanization of the Tatlýses Lahmacun chain.
The myth of Tatlýses probably has little meaning outside Turkey, and could safely be set aside. Instead, the restaurants will be facing various national myths concerning Turkey and the Turks. Previously it has been noted that some of these may date back to the fall of Byzantium and the Eastern Roman empire at the end of the middle ages (the Turks once stood at the gates of Vienna!) Western European myths of contemporary Turkey have been fed for decades by poor and unskilled immigrant labour desperately clinging to their roots and religion in what they perceive to be a highly amoral Western and Christian society. The common perception of heavily moustached elderly men in long burnooses, and bent old women in grey and black shapeless skirts and jackets, is vastly remote from the way most Turkish youth perceive themselves and their families and peers. Nevertheless, other aspects of the myth include belly-dancing houris, fat pashas, and wicked grand-viziers and these should be taken into account.

Rituals govern the diverse national customs of eating out and eating fast food. A creative mixture of national and Turkish customs could increase the overall appeal of the lahmacun as long as the well-known and exotic are kept in careful balance (these could included outside seating facilities, inside waiting facilities, music, the presence or absence of journals or magazines).

**Question 4.** According to which of the following criteria should countries be selected for the expansion: geographic proximity? Buying power of segments? Pre-established fast-food culture? Food culture in general?

**Answer**
Selection criteria for European countries in which to expand could include the presence and size of a Turkish minority, established fast-food culture, established ethnic food culture, the general image of Turkey, Turkish products and Turks. Regional proximity is not necessarily to be taken into account, as some highly proximate countries are engaged in continuing border disputes and may even have some unsettled accounts from the past that are yet to be resolved. Spending power could be a derived criterion, but is less important than (fast-) food culture, especially as the lahmacun is not expected to be placed in the premium price segment. It could be doubted whether Tatlýses is suited for catering to the European youth fast food market that is currently being thoroughly spoiled with French fries, Whoppers and fried chicken. This segment is for the time being the domain of the burger bars and similar outlets. Target markets could be young and higher-educated ‘Double-Income-No-Kids’ couples and their single counterparts. If sufficient brand loyalty is built, they might eventually bring in their children at a later stage of their family life-cycle.

**Question 5.** Should the menu be adapted to local conditions or kept ‘Turkish’?

**Answer**
The choice of menu – as well as interior design – depends upon (or dictates) the general strategic positioning of Tatlýses Lahmacun. Positioning as an ethnic food chain allows for (or requires) a distinctively Turkish menu. Positioning as a modern fast food chain probably requires more adaptations to local conditions.

Parallels can be drawn with other ethnic restaurants in Europe. For example, Norwegian Pakistani and Indian ‘curry’ restaurants only offer the mildest of dishes, featuring salmon in almost all of them, and even these are considered too spicy and exotic for most Norwegians. Sticking to authentic dishes will not get you anywhere in those places.

On the contrary, in Soho or down-town Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, Madrid or Such-A-Place people will expect distinct and recognizable Turkish dishes and Turkish design in an ethnic fast-food restaurant.
Question 6. Should the interior design be kept global or ‘Turkeyfied’ in order to convey the message of exoticism?

Answer
Considering the answer to Question 5, it will probably be difficult to distinguish the Tatlıses’ from the common kebab or shoarma restaurant if too many Turkish elements are maintained, but conversely it will be equally difficult to offer a strong product-plus if these Turkish elements are abolished.
Case Study 12
When a fashion victim customer becomes a fashion designer

Patrick Hetzel

Question 1: How would you describe the psychological profile of Isabelle?

Answer
First of all, Isabelle seems to have strong self-esteem as well as a strong public self-consciousness (which usually indicates a strong leaning to buy clothing and fashion products). Second, she seems to be a strong buyer (even if in her case, shopping does not seem compulsive), she spends a lot of time buying and collecting Miyake products. This is a kind of ritualization of consumption.

Question 2: How would you describe a ‘fashion tribe’?

Answer
A tribe, in our modern societies, is a group of people with the same kind of value system, a shared ‘vision of the world’ (it is very close to a ‘reference group’). Therefore, a fashion tribe is a group of people with the same kind of wearing behaviours, buying practices and/or aesthetic judgments. Belonging to a same fashion tribe means using a very specific aesthetic code that can, in many cases, only be understood by those within the tribe. In some cases, the aesthetic codification can be so specific that one, not belonging to the tribe and thereby not having the specific knowledge, will be unable to understand and interpret the signs of meaning that are used by the members of the ‘tribe’.

Question 3: To what extent would you agree with the idea that clothes represent communication devices?

Answer
The fashion system consists of all people and organizations involved in creating meanings and transferring these meanings to cultural goods. Therefore, fashion can be thought of as a code, or language, that enables people to communicate specific meanings. However, fashion is very context-dependent and the same item can be interpreted differently by different consumers and in different situations.

Question 4: What makes the difference between Issey Miyake customers and purchasers of more ‘conventional’ fashion brands?

Answer
At least with consumers like Isabelle, it is obvious that the brand loyalty to Issey Miyake seems very strong. Issey Miyake customers are actively and passionately involved with the brand: there is a strong emotional bond between them and the brand.

Question 5: Why do you think that fashion consumption is so central in Isabelle’s life?

Answer
‘Involvement’ refers to the level of perceived personal importance and/or interest evoked by a stimulus within a specific situation. At the high end of involvement, we can expect to find the type of passionate intensity reserved for people and objects that carry great meaning to the individual. Isabelle is motivated by fashion because it is an ‘extension of her self’. She likes the Miyake products so much because, to a certain extent, she wants to accumulate Miyake products and clothes because they have a very specific meaning to her. There is a kind of identification process going on here. She thinks that, by buying and wearing Miyake products, the values of the brand and the fashion designer are transferred to her own identity.
Question 6: Do you agree with Isabelle when she says: ‘(...) it allows me to escape from the massification of our contemporary consumption.’?

Answer
The Miyake brand is a brand for fashion innovators. Nevertheless, it is a brand with a strong global and worldwide diffusion within these circles of fashion innovators. It can be perceived as a very exclusive brand. Part of this is due to the price strategy: with high prices, only a few people are able to buy the products. This is what all luxury brands are doing. It remains a very fundamental mechanism in our societies: ‘distinction’.

Question 7: What is so unique in the ‘A-POC’ concept?

Answer
The creation process is conjoint between the fashion designer and the customer. The products are ‘standard’ created and produced goods and the customer has the opportunity to take part in the ‘finishing’ and ‘individualization’ process of the product. It is so called ‘co-creation’.

Question 8: ‘A-POC’ clothes are said to be very postmodern. To what extent would you agree with this assertion?

Answer
Postmodernity is characterized by pluralism and fragmentation, indicating the coexistence of various truths, styles and fashions. A fashion designer like Issey Miyake is developing pluralism and fragmentation within its own fashion creations by having several brands with specific brand identities.