

Episodic memories are those that relate to events that are personally relevant, such as Mario's.³¹ As a result, a person's motivation to retain these memories will be strong. Couples often have 'their song' that reminds them of their first date or wedding. The memories that might be triggered upon hearing this song would be quite different and unique for them.

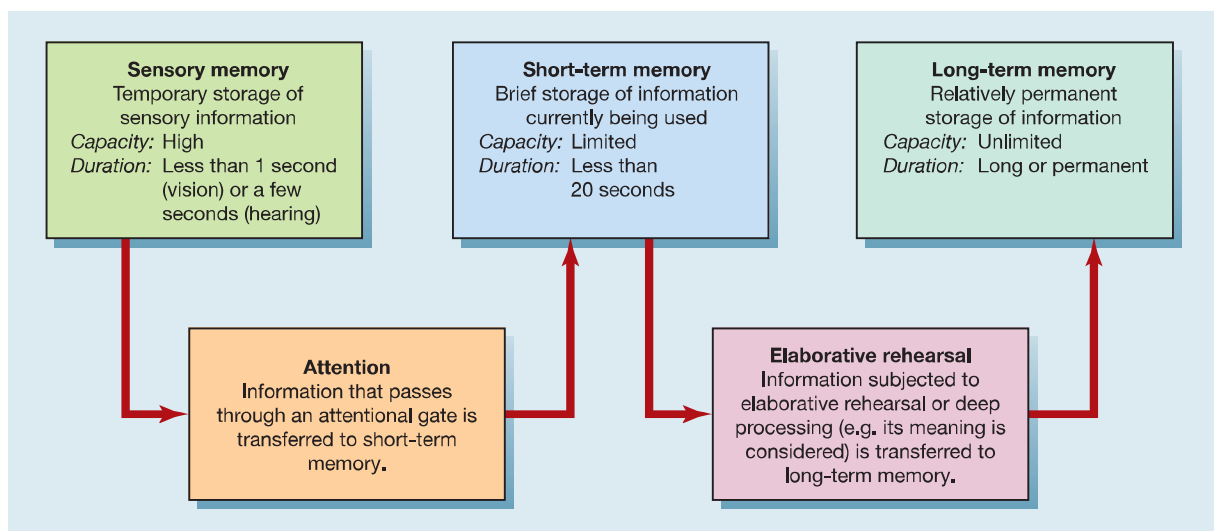
Commercials sometimes attempt to activate episodic memories by focusing on experiences shared by many people. Recall of the past may have an effect on future behaviour. A university fund-raising campaign can get higher donations by evoking pleasant memories. Some especially vivid associations are called *flashbulb* memories. These are usually related to some highly significant event. One method of conveying product information is through a *narrative* or a story. Much of the social information that an individual acquires is represented in memory this way. Therefore, utilizing this method in product advertising can be an effective marketing technique. Narratives persuade people to construct a mental representation of the information they are viewing. Pictures aid in this construction and allow for a more developed and detailed mental representation.³²

Memory systems

According to the information-processing perspective, there are three distinct memory systems: sensory memory, short-term memory (STM) and long-term memory (LTM). Each plays a role in processing brand-related information. The interrelationships of these memory systems are summarized in Figure 3.5.

- **Sensory memory** permits storage of the information we receive from our senses. This storage is very temporary: it lasts a couple of seconds at most. For example, a person might be walking past a bakery and get a brief, but enticing, whiff of bread baking inside. While this sensation would only last for a few seconds, it would be sufficient to allow the person to determine if he or she should investigate further. If the information is retained for further processing, it passes through an attentional gate and is transferred to short-term memory.
- **Short-term memory** also stores information for a limited period of time, and its capacity is limited. Similar to a computer, this system can be regarded as working memory: it holds the information we are currently processing. Verbal input may be stored acoustically (in terms of how it sounds) or semantically (in terms of its meaning).³³

Figure 3.5 Relationships among memory systems



The information is stored by combining small pieces into larger ones in a process known as ‘chunking’. A chunk is a configuration that is familiar to the person and can be manipulated as a unit. For example, a brand name can be a chunk that summarizes a great deal of detailed information about the brand.

Initially, it was believed that STM was capable of processing 5–9 chunks of information at a time, and for this reason phone numbers were designed to have seven digits.³⁴ It now appears that 3–4 chunks is the optimum size for efficient retrieval (seven-digit phone numbers can be remembered because the individual digits are chunked, so we may remember a three-digit exchange as one piece of information).³⁵

- ▶ **Long-term memory** is the system that allows us to retain information for a long period of time. In order for information to enter into long-term memory from short-term memory, elaborative rehearsal is required. This process involves thinking about the meaning of a stimulus and relating it to other information already in memory. Marketers sometimes assist in the process by devising catchy slogans or jingles that consumers repeat on their own.

Storing of information in memory

Relationships among the types of memory are a source of some controversy. The traditional perspective, known as multiple-store, assumes that STM and LTM are separate systems. More recent research has moved away from the distinction between the two types of memory, instead emphasizing the interdependence of the systems. This work argues that, depending upon the nature of the processing task, different levels of processing occur that activate some aspects of memory rather than others. These approaches are called **activation models of memory**.³⁶ The more effort it takes to process information (so-called deep processing), the more likely it is that information will be placed in long-term memory.

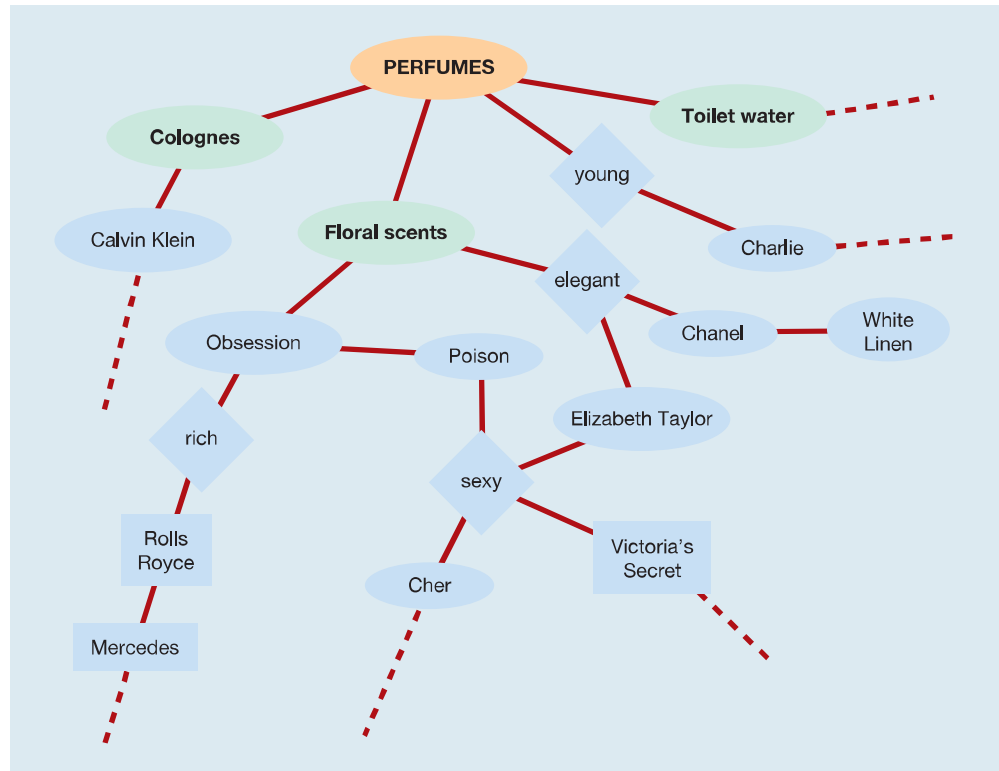
- ▶ Activation models propose that an incoming piece of information is stored in an associative network containing many bits of related information organized according to some set of relationships. The consumer has organized systems of concepts relating to brands, stores, and so on.

Knowledge structures

- ▶ These storage units, known as **knowledge structures**, can be thought of as complex spiders’ webs filled with pieces of data. This information is placed into nodes, which are connected by associative links within these structures. Pieces of information that are seen as similar in some way are chunked together under some more abstract category. New, incoming information is interpreted to be consistent with the structure already in place.³⁷ 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. If processing at one level fails to evoke the next level, processing of the ad is terminated, and capacity is allocated to other tasks.³⁸

Links form between nodes as an associative network is developed. For example, a consumer might have a network for ‘perfumes’. Each node represents a concept related to the category. This node can be an attribute, a specific brand, a celebrity identified with a perfume, or even a related product. A network for perfumes might include concepts like the names Chanel, Obsession and Charlie, as well as attributes like sexy and elegant.

- ▶ When asked to list perfumes, the consumer would recall only those brands contained in the appropriate category. This group constitutes that person’s **evoked set**. The task of a new entrant that wants to position itself as a category member (e.g. a new luxury perfume) is to provide cues that facilitate its placement in the appropriate category. A sample network for perfumes is shown in Figure 3.6.

Figure 3.6 An associative network for perfumes**Spreading activation**

A meaning can be activated indirectly: energy spreads across nodes at varying levels of abstraction. As one node is activated, other nodes associated with it also begin to be triggered. Meaning thus spreads across the network, bringing up concepts including competing brands and relevant attributes that are used to form attitudes towards the brand.

This process of spreading activation allows consumers to shift back and forth between levels of meaning. The way a piece of information is stored in memory depends upon the type of meaning assigned to it. This meaning type will, in turn, determine how and when the meaning is activated. For example, the memory trace for an ad could be stored in one or more of the following ways:

- *Brand-specific* – in terms of claims made for the brand.
- *Ad-specific* – in terms of the medium or content of the ad itself.
- *Brand identification* – in terms of the brand name.
- *Product category* – in terms of how the product works, where it should be used, or experiences with the product.
- *Evaluative reactions* – in terms of whether ‘that looks like fun’.³⁹

Levels of knowledge

Knowledge is coded at different levels of abstraction and complexity. Meaning concepts are individual nodes (e.g. elegant). These may be combined into a larger unit, called a *proposition* (also known as a belief). A proposition links two nodes together to form a more complex meaning, which can serve as a single chunk of information. For example, a proposition might be that ‘Chanel is a perfume for elegant women’.

- Propositions are, in turn, integrated to produce a complex unit known as a **schema**. As was noted at the beginning of the chapter, a schema is a cognitive framework that is developed through experience. Information that is consistent with an existing schema is encoded more readily.⁴⁰ The ability to move up and down between levels of abstraction greatly increases processing flexibility and efficiency. For this reason, young children, who do not yet have well-developed schemas, are not able to make efficient use of purchase information compared with older children.⁴¹

One type of schema that is relevant to consumer behaviour is a script, a sequence of procedures that is expected by an individual. For example, consumers learn service scripts that guide expectations and purchasing behaviour in business settings. Consumers learn to expect a certain sequence of events, and they may become uncomfortable if the service departs from the script. A service script for your visit to the dentist might include such events as (1) driving to the dentist, (2) reading old magazines in the waiting room, (3) hearing your name called and sitting in the dentist's chair, (4) having the dentist probe your teeth, (5) having the dentist scale and polish your teeth, and so on. This desire to follow a script helps to explain why such service innovations as automatic bank machines and self-service petrol stations have met with resistance by some consumers, who have trouble adapting to a new sequence of events.⁴²

Retrieving of information for purchase decisions

Retrieval is the process whereby information is accessed from long-term memory. As evidenced by the popularity of the board game Trivial Pursuit, or the television programme *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*, people have a vast quantity of information stored in their heads that is not necessarily available on demand. Although most of the information entered in long-term memory does not go away, it may be difficult or impossible to retrieve unless the appropriate cues are present.

Factors influencing retrieval

Some differences in retrieval ability are physiological. Older adults consistently display inferior recall ability for current items, such as prescription information, though events that happened to them when they were younger may be recalled with great clarity.⁴³

Other factors are situational, relating to the environment in which the message is delivered. Not surprisingly, recall is enhanced when the consumer pays more attention to the message in the first place. Some evidence indicates that information about a pioneering brand (the first brand to enter a market) is more easily retrieved from memory than follower brands because the product's introduction is likely to be distinctive and, in the short term, no competitors divert the consumer's attention.⁴⁴ In addition, descriptive brand names are more likely to be recalled than are those that do not provide adequate cues as to what the product is.⁴⁵

The viewing environment of a marketing message can also affect recall. For example, commercials shown during baseball games yield the lowest recall scores among sports programmes because the activity is stop-and-go rather than continuous. Unlike football or basketball, the pacing of baseball gives many opportunities for attention to wander even during play. Similarly, General Electric found that its commercials do better in television programmes with continuous activity, such as stories or dramas, compared with variety or talk shows, which are punctuated by a series of acts.⁴⁶ Finally, a large-scale analysis of TV commercials found that commercials shown first in a series of ads are recalled better than those shown last.⁴⁷

State-dependent retrieval In a process termed state-dependent retrieval, people are better able to access information if their internal state is the same at the time of recall as it was when the information was learned.

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. A consumer is more likely to recall an ad, for example, if his or her mood or level of arousal at the time of exposure is similar to that in the purchase environment. By recreating the cues that were present when the information was first presented, recall can be enhanced.⁴⁸

Familiarity and recall As a general rule, prior familiarity with an item enhances its recall. Indeed, this is one of the basic goals of marketers who are trying to create and maintain awareness of their products. The more experience a consumer has with a product, the better use that person is able to make of product information.⁴⁹

However, there is a possible fly in the ointment: as noted earlier in the chapter, some evidence indicates that overfamiliarity can result in inferior learning and/or recall. When consumers are highly familiar with a brand or an advertisement, they may attend to fewer attributes because they do not believe that any additional effort will yield a gain in knowledge.⁵⁰ For example, when consumers are exposed to the technique of radio replay, where the audio track from a television ad is replayed on the radio, they do very little critical, evaluative processing and instead mentally replay the video portion of the ad.⁵¹

Salience and recall The salience of a brand refers to its prominence or level of activation in memory. As noted in Chapter 2, stimuli that stand out in contrast to their environment are more likely to command attention, which, in turn, increases the likelihood that they will be recalled. Almost any technique that increases the novelty of a stimulus also improves recall (a result known as the von Restorff effect).⁵² This effect explains why unusual advertising or distinctive packaging tends to facilitate brand recall.⁵³

As we saw in Chapter 2, introducing a surprise element in an ad can be particularly effective. This strategy aids recall even if the stimulus is not relevant to the factual information being presented.⁵⁴ In addition, so-called mystery ads, where the brand is not identified until the end, are more effective at building associations in memory between the product category and that brand – especially in the case of novel brands.⁵⁵

Pictorial vs. verbal cues There is some evidence for the superiority of visual memory over verbal memory, but this advantage is unclear because it is more difficult to measure recall of pictures.⁵⁶ However, the available data indicate that information presented in pictorial form is more likely to be recognized later.⁵⁷ Certainly, visual aspects of an ad are more likely to grab a consumer's attention. In fact, eye-movement studies indicate that about 90 per cent of viewers look at the dominant picture in an ad before they bother to view the copy.⁵⁸

While pictorial ads may enhance recall, however, they do not necessarily improve comprehension. One study found that television news items presented with illustrations (still pictures) as a backdrop result in improved recall for details of the news story, even though understanding of the story's content does not improve.⁵⁹ Visual imagery can be especially effective when it includes verbal cues that relate to the consumer's existing knowledge.

Factors influencing forgetting

Marketers obviously hope that consumers will not forget their products. However, in a poll of more than 13,000 adults, over half were unable to remember any specific ad they had seen, heard or read in the previous 30 days.⁶⁰ Forgetting is obviously a problem for marketers.

Early memory theorists assumed that memories fade due to the simple passage of time. In a process of decay, the structural changes in the brain produced by learning

- simply go away. Forgetting also occurs due to **interference**: as additional information is learned, it displaces the earlier information.

Stimulus–response associations will be forgotten if the consumers subsequently learn new responses to the same or similar stimuli in a process known as *retroactive interference*. Or prior learning can interfere with new learning, a process termed *proactive interference*. Since pieces of information are stored in memory as nodes that are connected to one another by links, a meaning concept that is connected by a larger number of links is more likely to be retrieved. But, as new responses are learned, a stimulus loses its effectiveness in retrieving the old response.⁶¹

These interference effects help to explain problems in remembering brand information. Consumers tend to organize attribute information by brand.⁶² Additional attribute information regarding a brand or similar brands may limit the person's ability to recall old brand information. Recall may also be inhibited if the brand name is composed of frequently used words. These words cue competing associations and result in less retention of brand information.⁶³

In one study, brand evaluations deteriorated more rapidly when ads for the brand appeared with messages for 12 other brands in the same category than when the ad was shown with ads for 12 dissimilar products.⁶⁴ By increasing the salience of a brand, the recall of other brands can be impaired.⁶⁵ On the other hand, calling a competitor by name can result in poorer recall for one's own brand.⁶⁶

Finally, a phenomenon known as the *part-list cueing effect* allows marketers to utilize the interference process strategically. When only a portion of the items in a category are presented to consumers, the omitted items are not as easily recalled. For example, comparative advertising that mentions only a subset of competitors (preferably those that the marketer is not very worried about) may inhibit recall of the unmentioned brands with which the product does not compare favourably.⁶⁷

Products as memory markers

Products and ads can themselves serve as powerful retrieval cues. Indeed, the three types of possessions most valued by consumers are furniture, visual art and photos. The most common explanation for this attachment is the ability of these things to summon memories of the past.⁶⁸ Products are particularly important as markers when our sense of past is threatened, as when a consumer's current identity is challenged due to some change in role caused by divorce, moving, graduation, and so on.⁶⁹ Products have mnemonic qualities that serve as a form of external memory by prompting consumers to retrieve episodic memories. For example, family photography allows consumers to create their own retrieval cues, with the 11 billion amateur photos taken annually forming a kind of external memory bank for our culture.

Researchers are just beginning to probe the effects of autobiographical memories on buying behaviour. These memories appear to be one way that advertisements create emotional responses: ads that succeed in getting us to think about our own past also appear to get us to like these ads more – especially if the linkage between the nostalgia experience and the brand is strong.⁷⁰

The power of nostalgia

- **Nostalgia** has been described as a bitter-sweet emotion, where the past is viewed with both sadness and longing. References to 'the good old days' are increasingly common, as advertisers call up memories of distant youth – feelings they hope will translate to what they're selling today. A stimulus is at times able to evoke a weakened response much later, an effect known as spontaneous recovery, and this re-established connection may explain consumers' powerful nostalgic reactions to songs or pictures they have not been exposed to in many years.



multicultural dimensions

Classic American TV shows are popular around the world, but few are as admired as *Dallas* is in Romania. In that eastern European country, the show's star, J.R. Ewing, is revered. Although many US viewers saw J.R. as a greedy, unprincipled villain they 'loved to hate', in Romania J.R. has become the symbol of American enterprise and a role model for the new capitalists who are trying to transform the country's economy. So, it's only fitting that J.R. was selected to endorse Lukoil, a brand of Russian motor oil. Advertisements in the Romanian market claim that the oil is 'the choice of a true Texan!'⁷¹ (Does Texan George W. Bush know where Romania is on the map?)

Many European companies are making use of nostalgic appeals, some of which are not based on the too distant past! Berlin's Humboldt University and City Museum have staged a fashion show of the 1960s, displaying clothes, appliances and posters from the communist era. The show, entitled *Ostalgie*, which is a play on words for 'East Nostalgia' in the German language, gave a nostalgic view of a time when goods might have been shoddy but when there was no unemployment or homelessness. There's growing interest in the Trabant (the joke used to be that you could double the value of a Trabant by filling it with sand) which has resulted in the Son of Trabant, built in the same factory where they used to build the original. Likewise, western European multinationals are relaunching local brands of east European origin in response to a backlash against the incursion of foreign products. From cigarettes to yogurt, multinationals are trying to lure consumers by combining yesteryear's product names with today's quality. Local brands like Nestlé's Chokito or Unilever's Flora margarine brands are now among the companies' best-selling products in eastern European markets.

Considerable care goes into the production values of campaigns which are intended to evoke nostalgia. Mulino Bianco, the Italian producer of cakes, biscuits and cereals, carefully developed a campaign depicting the quiet aspects of rural life to increase sales of cakes, which are typically served only on special occasions. The campaign showed a white farmhouse on a green hill, next to a watermill. Parents, children and friends are shown in a slow, relaxed, informal atmosphere, far from the hectic urban commitments of work. The object was to evoke a relationship between 'the good old days' and cakes, and to present cakes as genuine food to be eaten every day during normal meals. In Italy, where the tension to escape from the hectic urban life is high, the campaign was quite successful. In France, where eating habits are different, and the appeal to rural life is weaker, the same campaign was not successful.⁷²



marketing opportunity

The rebirth of the Beetle

Hoping to win back former buyers - and to lure new ones - Volkswagen has in the past few years unveiled an updated version of the small, round-shouldered car that became a generational icon in the US in the 1960s and 1970s. Back in those days, the 'Bug' was cramped and noisy, but it was a hit because it was relatively cheap, fuel-efficient, and had symbolic value as a protest against Detroit's 'big boats'. In contrast to the Bug of old, the new one caters to consumers craving for space, with more headroom and legroom in front. Jens Neumann, the VW executive in charge of North America, feels 'The Beetle is the core of the VW soul. If we put it back in people's minds, they will think of our other products more.' The revised Beetle's resemblance to the old one is literally skin deep. Unlike the original, which had an air-cooled engine in the rear, the new Beetle is packed with the latest German technology, including an optional fuel-efficient turbo-diesel direct-injection motor. Otherwise the car is essentially a Golf with a number of Beetle-type characteristics to evoke nostalgia: curvy body panels; round dashboard dials and controls; circular sideview mirrors; side running

boards; and indented door handles you grip to open. In the US, VW has deliberately priced the Bug above cars that appeal to most first-time buyers because it intends to attract far more than the college-age market. 'It is a classless car, and the Beetle will target a broad swathe of people who simply *love* the car, and aren't just looking for a utilitarian commuting box.' So far, the car boasts the youngest demographics in the US automobile industry. However, while the reintroduction of the Beetle has been successful in the US, its nostalgic appeal has not extended to Europe, where VW's Golf model is far more popular.⁷³

Memory and aesthetic preferences

In addition to liking ads and products that remind us of our past, our prior experiences also help to determine what we like now. Some recent research indicates that people's tastes in such products as films and clothing are influenced by what was popular during certain critical periods of their youth. For example, liking for specific songs appears to be related to how old a person was when those songs were popular: on average, songs that were popular when an individual was 23–24-years-old are the most likely to be favoured.⁷⁴ In the United States, the Nickelodeon cable network programmes its *Nick at Nite* segment, which features repeats, by selecting the shows that were highly rated when its major audience was 12 years old.⁷⁵ Similar programming strategies are followed by several satellite stations throughout Europe. In addition, it seems that men form preferences for women's clothing styles that were in vogue when these men were in their early twenties.⁷⁶



The Gillette brand has always positioned itself as innovative. This 'innovative' brand association is learned, and reinforced, over their customers' lifetime.

The Advertising Archives

More generally, many marketers understand that life-long brand loyalties are formed at a fairly early age: they view the battle for the hearts (and wallets) of students and young adults as a long-term investment. These age-related preferences will be further addressed in Chapter 13.

Measuring memory for advertising

Because advertisers pay so much money to place their messages in front of consumers, they are naturally concerned that people will actually remember these messages at a later point. It seems that they have good reason to be concerned. In one study, less than 40 per cent of television viewers made positive links between commercial messages and the corresponding products; only 65 per cent noticed the brand name in a commercial; and only 38 per cent recognized a connection to an important point.⁷⁷

More worryingly, only 7 per cent of television viewers can recall the product or company featured in the most recent television commercial they watched. This figure represents less than half the recall rate recorded in 1965 and may be attributed to such factors as the increase of 30- and 15-second commercials and the practice of airing television commercials in clusters rather than in connection with single-sponsor programmes.⁷⁸

Recognition vs. recall

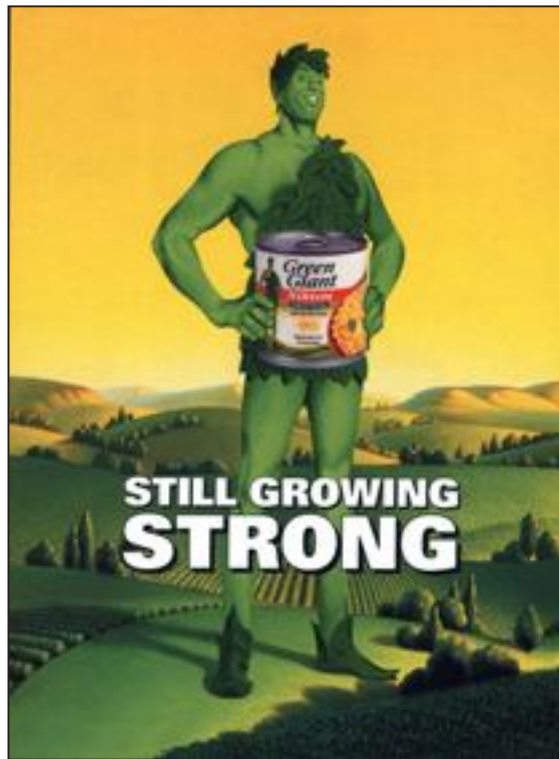
One indicator of good advertising is, of course, the impression it makes on consumers. But how can this impact be defined and measured? Two basic measures of impact are recognition and recall. In the typical recognition test, subjects are shown ads one at a time and asked if they have seen them before. In contrast, free recall tests ask consumers to produce independently previously acquired information and then perform a recognition test on it.

Under some conditions, these two memory measures tend to yield the same results, especially when the researchers try to keep the viewers' interest in the ads constant.⁷⁹ Generally, though, recognition scores tend to be more reliable and do not decay over time in the way recall scores do.⁸⁰ Recognition scores are almost always better than recall scores because recognition is a simpler process and more retrieval cues are available to the consumer.

Both types of retrieval play important roles in purchase decisions. Recall tends to be more important in situations where consumers do not have product data at their disposal, and so they must rely upon memory to generate this information.⁸¹ On the other hand, recognition is more likely to be an important factor in a store, where consumers are confronted with thousands of product options and information (i.e. where external memory is abundantly available) and where the task may simply be to recognize a familiar package. Unfortunately, package recognition and familiarity can have a negative consequence in that warning labels may be ignored, since their existence is taken for granted and not really noticed.⁸²

The Starch Test

A widely used commercial measure of advertising recall for magazines is called the Starch Test, a syndicated service founded in 1932. This service provides scores on a number of aspects of consumers' familiarity with an ad, including such categories as 'noted', 'associated' and 'read most'. It also scores the impact of the component parts of an overall ad, giving such information as 'seen' for major illustrations and 'read some' for a major block of copy.⁸³ Such factors as the size of the ad, whether it appears towards the front or the back of the magazine, if it is on the right or left page, and the size of illustrations play an important role in affecting the amount of attention given to an ad as determined by Starch scores.



A picture is worth a thousand words. Product icons - like the Jolly Green Giant who has appeared in ads and on packaging for more than 30 years - are a significant factor in product recognition.

The Advertising Archives

Problems with memory measures

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

► **Response biases** 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. This form of contamination is called a **response bias**. For example, people tend to give 'yes' responses to questions regardless of what is asked. In addition, consumers are often eager to be 'good subjects' by pleasing the experimenter. They will try to give the responses they think he or she is looking for. In some studies, the claimed recognition of bogus ads (ads that have not been seen before) is almost as high as the recognition rate of real ads.⁸⁴

Memory lapses People are also prone to forgetting information unintentionally. Typical problems include omitting (the leaving out of facts), averaging (the tendency to 'normalize' things and not report extreme cases), and telescoping (the inaccurate recall of time).⁸⁵ These distortions call into question the accuracy of various product usage databases that rely upon consumers to recall their purchase and consumption of food and household items. In one study, for example, people were asked to describe what portion of various foods - small, medium or large - they ate in a normal meal; however, different definitions of 'medium' were used (e.g. 185 ml vs. 375 ml). Regardless of the measurement specified, about the same number of people claimed they normally ate medium portions.⁸⁶

Memory for facts vs. feelings Although techniques are being developed to increase the accuracy of memory scores, these improvements do not address the more fundamental issue of whether recall is necessary for advertising to have an effect. In particular, some critics argue that these measures do not adequately tap the impact of 'feeling' ads where

the objective is to arouse strong emotions rather than to convey concrete product benefits. Many ad campaigns, including those for Hallmark cards, Chevrolet and Pepsi, use this approach.⁸⁷ An effective strategy relies on a long-term build-up of feeling rather than on a one-shot attempt to convince consumers to buy the product.

Also, it is not clear that recall translates into preference. We may recall the benefits touted in an ad but not believe them. Or the ad may be memorable because it is so obnoxious, and the product becomes one we 'love to hate'. The bottom line is that while recall is important, especially for creating brand awareness, it is not necessarily sufficient to alter consumer preferences. To accomplish this, marketers need more sophisticated attitude-change strategies. These issues will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6.

■ 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, in which 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 occurs when reinforcement is delivered following a response to a stimulus. Reinforcement is positive if a 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. The memory systems 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 related 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 through either 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.

► KEY TERMS

Activation models of memory (p. 74)	Negative reinforcement (p. 64)
Behavioural learning theories (p. 62)	Nostalgia (p. 78)
Brand equity (p. 67)	Observational learning (p. 66)
Classical conditioning (p. 63)	Operant conditioning (p. 64)
Cognitive learning (p. 66)	Positive reinforcement (p. 64)
Encoding (p. 72)	Punishment (p. 64)
Evoked set (p. 74)	Response bias (p. 82)
Extinction (p. 63)	Retrieval (p. 72)
Frequency marketing (p. 70)	Schema (p. 76)
Interference (p. 78)	Sensory memory (p. 73)
Knowledge structures (p. 74)	Short-term memory (p. 73)
Learning (p. 62)	Stimulus discrimination (p. 64)
Long-term memory (p. 74)	Stimulus generalization (p. 63)
Memory (p. 72)	Storage (p. 72)



CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

- 1 Identify three patterns of reinforcement and provide an example of how each is used in a marketing context.
- 2 Describe the functions of short-term and long-term memory. What is the apparent relationship between the two?
- 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.
- 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 be unlikely to be accepted by consumers.
- 5 Collect some pictures of 'classic' products that have high nostalgia value. Show these pictures to consumers and allow them to make free associations. Analyse the types of memories that are evoked, and think about how these associations might be employed in a product's promotional strategy.

■ NOTES

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MOTIVATION, VALUES AND INVOLVEMENT

4



Jez looks at the menu in the trendy Edinburgh health food restaurant that Tessel (his Dutch girlfriend of six months' standing) has dragged him to for her birthday celebration. Tessel is really surprised by how much less emphasis Jez and his friends put on birthdays, compared with the Netherlands where birthday celebrations are really important - regardless of how old you are. Jez, meanwhile, is reflecting on what a man will give up for love. Now that Tessel has converted to vegetarianism, she's slowly but surely persuading him to give up burgers and pizzas for healthier, preferably organic, fare. He can't even hide from tofu and other vegan

delights in the Edinburgh University Refectory; and the café in the student union has just started offering 'veggie' alternatives to its usual full Scottish breakfast (a calorie-laden fry-up of eggs, bacon, sausages, tomatoes, mushrooms, black pudding, haggis and potatoes).

Tessel is totally into vegetarianism (she had not become a total vegan yet, as she still loves pickled herring and smoked eel, real Dutch delicacies); she claims that eating this way not only cuts out unwanted fat, but is also good for the environment. Just his luck to fall head-over-heels for a Green, organic-food-eating environmentalist. As Jez gamely tries to decide between the stuffed artichokes with red pepper vinaigrette and the grilled marinated zucchini, fantasies of a tuna steak shimmer before his eyes - he wonders if that would be allowed, maybe for his birthday celebration next month?

■ INTRODUCTION

As a vegetarian, Tessel certainly is not alone in believing that eating organic foods is good for the body, the soul and the planet.¹ It is estimated that 7 per cent of the general population is vegetarian, and women and younger people are even more likely to adopt a meatless diet. An additional 10–20 per cent of consumers are interested in vegetarian options in addition to their normal fare of dead animals. In a 2003 survey of 12–19-year-olds, 20 per cent of respondents (and close to one in three of the females) said vegetarianism is ‘in’. There has been a lively debate in Europe about genetically modified foods as well, although genetic modification for medical purposes has not met with such widespread hostility in Europe. Consumers see ‘functional foods as placed midway on the combined “naturalness–healthiness continuum” from organically processed to genetically modified’² but tend to remain unconvinced that genetically modified foods can offer any significant health benefits.³ However, concerns about adult, and more especially childhood, obesity means that diet has become a burning issue for many European governments.⁴ It’s obvious our menu choices have deep-seated consequences.

The forces that drive people to buy and use products are generally straightforward, as when a person chooses what to have for lunch. As hard-core vegans demonstrate, however, even the consumption of basic food products may also be related to wide-ranging beliefs regarding what is appropriate or desirable. Among the more general population there are strong beliefs about genetically modified foods, which have proved difficult to alter via information campaigns.⁵ In some cases, these emotional responses create a deep commitment to the product. Sometimes people are not even fully aware of the forces that drive them towards some products and away from others. Often a person’s *values* – his or her priorities and beliefs about the world – influence these choices.

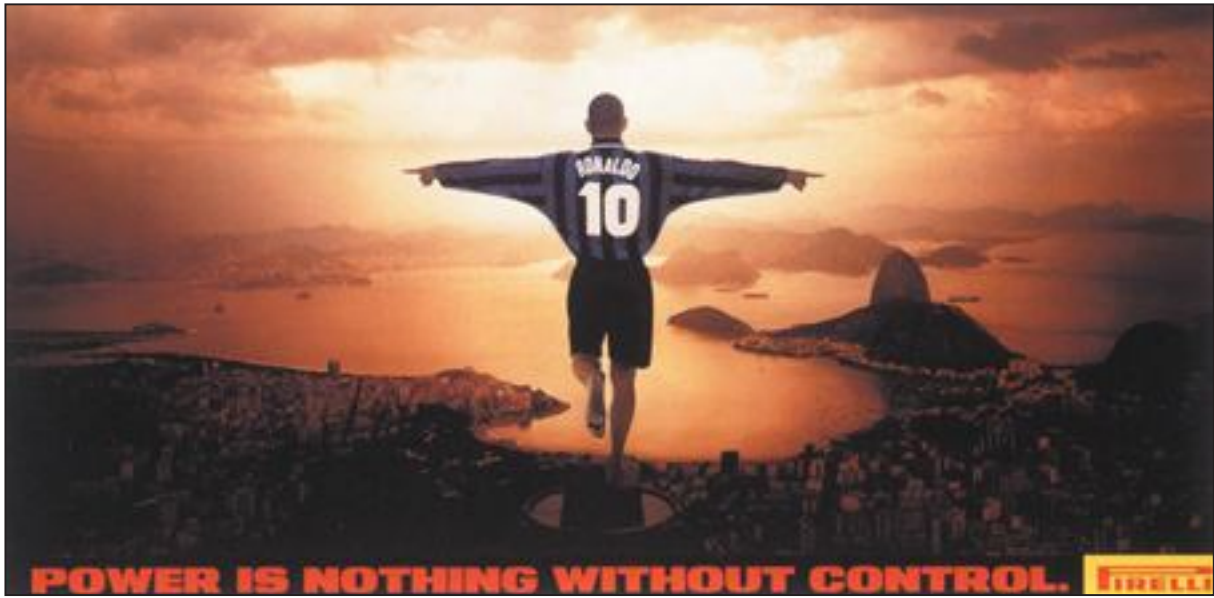
To understand motivation is to understand *why* consumers do what they do. Why do some people choose to bungee jump off a bridge or go white-water rafting, whereas others spend their leisure time playing chess or gardening?⁶ Whether to quench a thirst, kill boredom, or to attain some deep spiritual experience, we do everything for a reason, even if we can’t articulate what that reason is. Marketing students are taught from Day One that the goal of marketing is to satisfy consumers’ needs. However, this insight is useless unless we can discover *what* those needs are and *why* they exist.

■ THE MOTIVATION PROCESS: A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

- ▶ **Motivation** refers to the processes that cause people to behave as they do. From a *psychological perspective* motivation occurs when a **need** is aroused that the consumer wishes to satisfy. Once a need has been activated, a state of tension exists that drives the consumer to attempt to reduce or eliminate the need. This need may be *utilitarian* (a desire to achieve some functional or practical benefit, as when a person eats green vegetables for nutritional reasons) or it may be *hedonic* (an experiential need, involving emotional responses or fantasies, as when Jez thinks longingly about a juicy steak). The distinction between the two is, however, a matter of degree. The desired 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.

Whether the need is utilitarian or hedonic, a discrepancy exists between the consumer’s present state and some ideal state. This gulf creates a state of tension. The magnitude of this tension determines the urgency the consumer feels to reduce the tension.

- ▶ This degree of arousal is called a **drive**. A basic need can be satisfied in any number of ways, and the specific path a person chooses is influenced both by his or her unique set of experiences and by the values instilled by cultural, religious, ethnic or national background.



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- ▶ These personal and cultural factors combine to create a **want**, which is one manifestation of a need. For example, hunger is a basic need that must be satisfied by all; the lack of food creates a tension state that can be reduced by the intake of such products as paella, pizzas, spaghetti, chocolate biscuits, raw fish or bean sprouts. The specific route to drive reduction is culturally and individually determined. Once the goal is attained, tension is reduced and the motivation recedes (for the time being). Motivation can be described in terms of its *strength*, or the pull it exerts on the consumer, and its *direction*, or the particular way the consumer attempts to reduce motivational tension.

■ MOTIVATIONAL STRENGTH

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. Many theories have been advanced to explain why people behave the way they do. Most share the basic idea that people have some finite amount of energy that must be directed towards certain goals.

Biological vs. learned needs

Early work on motivation ascribed behaviour to *instinct*, the innate patterns of behaviour that are universal in a species. This view is now largely discredited. For one thing, the existence of an instinct is difficult to prove or disprove. The instinct is inferred from the behaviour it is supposed to explain (this type of circular explanation is called a *tautology*).⁷ It is like saying that a consumer buys products that are status symbols because he or she is motivated to attain status, which is hardly a satisfying explanation.

Drive theory

- ▶ **Drive theory** focuses on biological needs that produce unpleasant states of arousal (e.g. your stomach grumbles during the first lecture of the day – you missed breakfast). We are motivated to reduce the tension caused by this arousal. Tension reduction has been proposed as a basic mechanism governing human behaviour.

In a marketing context, tension refers to the unpleasant state that exists if a person's consumption needs are not fulfilled. A person may be grumpy or unable to concentrate very well if she hasn't eaten, or someone may be dejected or angry if he cannot afford that new car he wants. This state activates goal-oriented behaviour, which attempts to reduce or eliminate this unpleasant state and return to a balanced one called

- ▶ **homeostasis.**

Those behaviours that are successful in reducing the drive by satisfying the underlying need are strengthened and tend to be repeated. (This aspect of the learning process was discussed in Chapter 3.) Your motivation to leave class early to grab a snack would be greater if you hadn't eaten in 24 hours than if you had eaten breakfast only two hours earlier. If you did sneak out and got indigestion after, say, wolfing down a packet of crisps, you would be less likely to repeat this behaviour the next time you wanted a snack. One's degree of motivation, then, depends on the distance between one's present state and the goal.

Drive theory, however, runs into difficulties when it tries to explain some facets of human behaviour that run counter to its predictions. People often do things that *increase* a drive state rather than decrease it. For example, people may delay gratification. If you know you are going out for a five-course dinner, you might decide to forgo a snack earlier in the day even though you are hungry at that time. And, as we shall see in the discussion of desire, the most rewarding thing may often be the tension of the drive state itself rather than its satisfaction. It's not the kill, it's the thrill of the chase.

Expectancy theory

- Most current explanations of motivation focus on cognitive factors rather than biological ones to understand what drives behaviour. **Expectancy theory** suggests that behaviour is largely pulled by expectations of achieving desirable outcomes – *positive incentives* – rather than pushed from within. We choose one product over another because we expect this choice to have more positive consequences for us. Thus the term *drive* is used here more loosely to refer to both physical and cognitive, i.e. learned, processes.

■ MOTIVATIONAL DIRECTION

Motives have direction as well as strength. They are goal oriented in that they drive us to satisfy a specific need. Most goals can be reached by a number of routes, and the objective of a company is to convince consumers that the alternative it offers provides the best chance to attain the goal. For example, a consumer who decides that she needs a pair of jeans to help her reach her goal of being accepted by others can choose among Levi's, Wranglers, Diesel, Calvin Klein and many other alternatives, each of which promises to deliver certain benefits.

There's how to make life more exciting for the man

WHERE EVER HE IS.

In years, they him a GAME BOY.

The portable video games player from Nintendo. Then when it's bath

SEND HIM SOME WHERE ELSE.

Time for instance, he can play 'The Hunt for Red October' and be in charge of a runaway nuclear sub fighting off Americans & Russians. Or at least he'll think he is.

GAME BOY games are that realistic. There are over 60 interchangeable cartridges ranging from SPORT and ADVENTURE to puzzles. And at around £60.00 for the complete ready to play pack including the power game TETRIS, batteries and stereo earphones. GAME BOY makes an ideal Xmas gift. Whenever he decides to play with it.

GAME BOY

A technical product can satisfy hedonic desires.

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Needs vs. wants

The specific way a need is satisfied depends on the individual's unique history, learning experiences and his or her cultural environment. The particular form of consumption used to satisfy a need is termed a want. For example, two classmates may feel their stomachs rumbling during a lunchtime lecture. If neither person has eaten since the night before, the strength of their respective needs (hunger) would be about the same. However, the way each person goes about satisfying this need might be quite different. The first person may be a vegetarian like Tessel who fantasizes about gulping down a big bowl of salad, whereas the second person like Jez might be equally aroused by the prospect of a large plateful of bacon and eggs.

Types of needs

A start to the discussion of needs and wants can best be illustrated by considering two basic types of need. People are born with a need for certain elements necessary to maintain life, such as food, water, air and shelter. These are called *biogenic needs*. People have many other needs, however, that are not innate. We acquire *psychogenic needs* as we become members of a specific culture. These include the need for status, power, affiliation, and so on. Psychogenic needs reflect the priorities of a culture, and their effect on behaviour will vary in different environments. For example, an Italian consumer may be driven to devote a good chunk of his income to products that permit him to display his individuality, whereas his Scandinavian counterpart may work equally hard to ensure that he does not stand out from his group. These cultural differences in the expression of consumer values will be discussed more fully in Chapter 16.

This distinction is revealing because it shows how difficult it is to distinguish needs from wants. How can we tell what part of the motivation is a psychogenic need and what part is a want? Both are profoundly formed by culture, so the distinction is problematic at best. As for the biogenic needs, we know from anthropology that satisfaction of these needs leads to some of the most symbolically rich and culturally based activities of humankind. The ways we want to eat, dress, drink and provide shelter are far more interesting to marketers than our need to do so. And, in fact, human beings need very little in the strict sense of the word. Charles Darwin was astonished to see the native Americans of Tierra del Fuego sleep naked in the snow. Hence, the idea of satisfaction of biogenic needs is more or less a given thing for marketing and consumer research because it is on the most basic level nothing more than a simple prerequisite for us to be here. Beyond that level, and of much greater interest (and challenge!) to marketers, is a concept embedded in culture such as wants.⁸

As we have seen, another traditional distinction is between the motivation to satisfy either utilitarian or hedonic needs. The satisfaction of *utilitarian needs* implies that consumers will emphasize the objective, tangible attributes of products, such as fuel economy in a car; the amount of fat, calories, and protein in a cheeseburger; and the durability of a pair of blue jeans. *Hedonic needs* are subjective and experiential. Here, consumers might rely on a product to meet their needs for excitement, self-confidence, fantasy, and so on. Of course, consumers can be motivated to purchase a product because it provides *both* types of benefits. For example, a mink coat might be bought because it feels soft against the skin, because it keeps one warm through the long cold winters of Northern Europe, and because it has a luxurious image. But again the distinction tends to hide more than it reveals, because functionality can bring great pleasure to people and is an important value in the modern world.⁹



We expect today's technical products to satisfy our needs - instantly.

The Advertising Archives

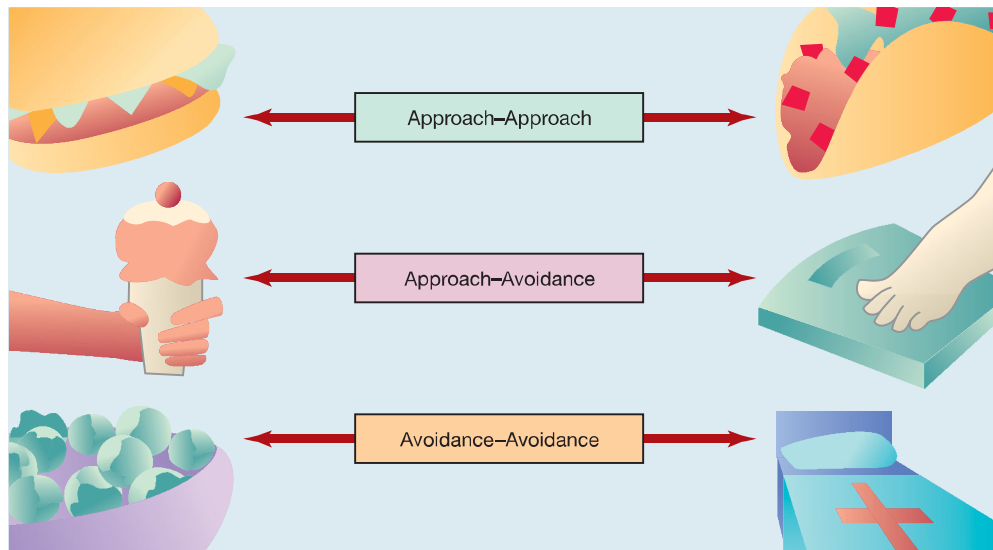
■ MOTIVATIONAL CONFLICTS

A goal has *valence*, which means that it can be positive or negative. A positively valued goal is one towards which consumers direct their behaviour; they are motivated to *approach* the goal and will seek out products that will help them to reach it. However, not all behaviour is motivated by the desire to approach a goal. As we saw in the previous chapter's discussion of negative reinforcement, consumers may instead be motivated to *avoid* a negative outcome.¹⁰ They will structure their purchases or consumption activities to reduce the chances of attaining this end result. For example, many consumers work hard to avoid rejection, a negative goal. They will stay away from products that they associate with social disapproval. Products such as deodorants and mouthwash frequently rely on consumers' negative motivation by depicting the onerous social consequences of underarm odour or bad breath.

Because a purchase decision can involve more than one source of motivation, consumers often find themselves in situations where different motives, both positive and negative, conflict with one another. Because marketers are attempting to satisfy consumers' needs, they can also be helpful by providing possible solutions to these dilemmas. As shown in Figure 4.1, three general types of conflicts can occur: approach–approach; approach–avoidance and avoidance–avoidance.

Approach–approach conflict

- ▶ In an **approach–approach conflict**, a person must choose between two desirable alternatives. A student might be torn between going home for the holidays or going on a skiing trip with friends. Or, she might have to choose between two CDs.
- ▶ 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. The conflict that arises when choosing between two alternatives may be resolved through a process of *cognitive dissonance reduction*, where people are motivated to reduce this inconsistency (or dissonance) and thus eliminate unpleasant tension.¹¹

Figure 4.1 Three types of motivational conflict

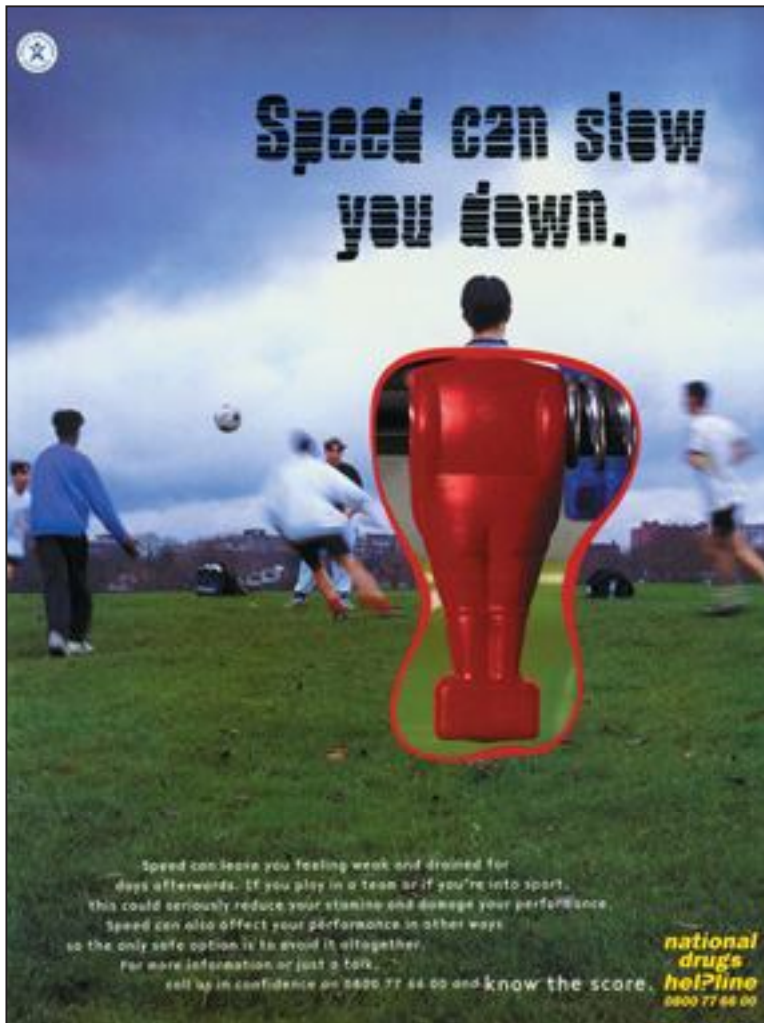
A state of dissonance occurs when there is a psychological inconsistency between two or more beliefs or behaviours. It often occurs when a consumer must make a choice between two products, where both alternatives usually possess both good and bad qualities. By choosing one product and not the other, the person gets the bad qualities of the chosen product and loses out on the good qualities of the one not chosen.

This loss creates an unpleasant, dissonant state that the person is motivated to reduce. People tend to convince themselves, after the fact, that the choice they made was the right one by finding additional reasons to support the alternative they chose, or perhaps by 'discovering' flaws with the option they did not choose. A marketer can resolve an approach-approach conflict by bundling several benefits together. For example, many low calorie products claim that they have 'all the taste' *and* 'half the calories', allowing the consumer to avoid having to choose between better taste and fewer calories.

Approach-avoidance conflict

Many of the products and services we desire have negative consequences attached to them as well. We may feel guilty or ostentatious when buying a status-laden product such as a fur coat, or we might feel like a glutton when contemplating a box of chocolates.

- When we desire a goal but wish to avoid it at the same time, an **approach-avoidance conflict** exists. Some solutions to these conflicts include the proliferation of fake furs, which eliminate guilt about harming animals to make a fashion statement, and the success of low calorie and diet foods, such as those produced by Weight Watchers, that promise good food without the calories (weight-watchers.com). Some marketers counter consumer resistance to overconsumption and spending by promising more (benefits) from less, as in an Audi advertisement (in 2000), whereas other marketers try to overcome guilt by convincing consumers that they deserve luxuries (such as when the model for L'Oréal cosmetics claims 'Because I'm worth it!'). Sometimes consumers go outside the conventional marketplace to satisfy their needs, wants and desires, for instance drag-racing in Moscow where young Russian car fanatics fulfil their drive for thrill-seeking outside the law.¹²



The Partnership for a Drug-Free America points out the negative consequences of drug addiction for those who are tempted to start.

The Advertising Archives

Avoidance-avoidance conflict

Sometimes consumers find themselves 'caught between a rock and a hard place'. They may face a choice with two undesirable alternatives, for instance the option of either throwing more money into an old car or buying a new one. Marketers frequently address

- ▶ an **avoidance-avoidance conflict** with messages that stress the unforeseen benefits of choosing one option (e.g. by emphasizing special credit plans to ease the pain of new car payments).

■ CLASSIFYING CONSUMER NEEDS

Much research has been done on classifying human needs. On the one hand, some psychologists have tried to define a universal inventory of needs that could be traced systematically to explain virtually all behaviour. One such effort, developed by Henry Murray, delineates a set of 20 psychogenic needs that (sometimes in combination) result in specific behaviours. These needs include such dimensions as *autonomy* (being independent), *defendance* (defending the self against criticism), and even *play* (engaging in pleasurable activities).¹³

Murray's needs structure serves as the basis for a number of widely used personality tests such as the Thematic Apperception Technique (TAT) and the Edwards' Personal Preference Schedule (EPPS). In the TAT, test subjects are shown four to six ambiguous pictures and are asked to write answers to four questions about the pictures. These questions are: (1) What is happening? (2) What has led up to this situation? (3) What is being thought? (4) What will happen? Each answer is then analysed for references to certain needs and scored whenever that need is mentioned. The theory behind the test is that people will freely project their own subconscious needs to the stimulus. By getting their responses to the picture, you are really getting at the person's true needs for achievement or affiliation or whatever other need may be dominant. Murray believed that everyone has the same basic set of needs, but that individuals differ in their priority ranking of these needs.¹⁴

Specific needs and buying behaviour

Other motivational approaches have focused on specific needs and their ramifications for behaviour. For example, individuals with a high *need for achievement* strongly value personal accomplishment.¹⁵ They place a premium on products and services that signify success because these consumption items provide feedback about the realization of their goals. These consumers are good prospects for products that provide evidence of their achievement. One study of working women found that those who were high in achievement motivation were more likely to choose clothing they considered businesslike, and less likely to be interested in apparel that accentuated their femininity.¹⁶ Some other important needs that are relevant to consumer behaviour include the following:

Need for affiliation (to be in the company of other people):¹⁷ This need is relevant to products and services that are 'consumed' in groups and alleviate loneliness, such as team sports, bars and shopping centres.

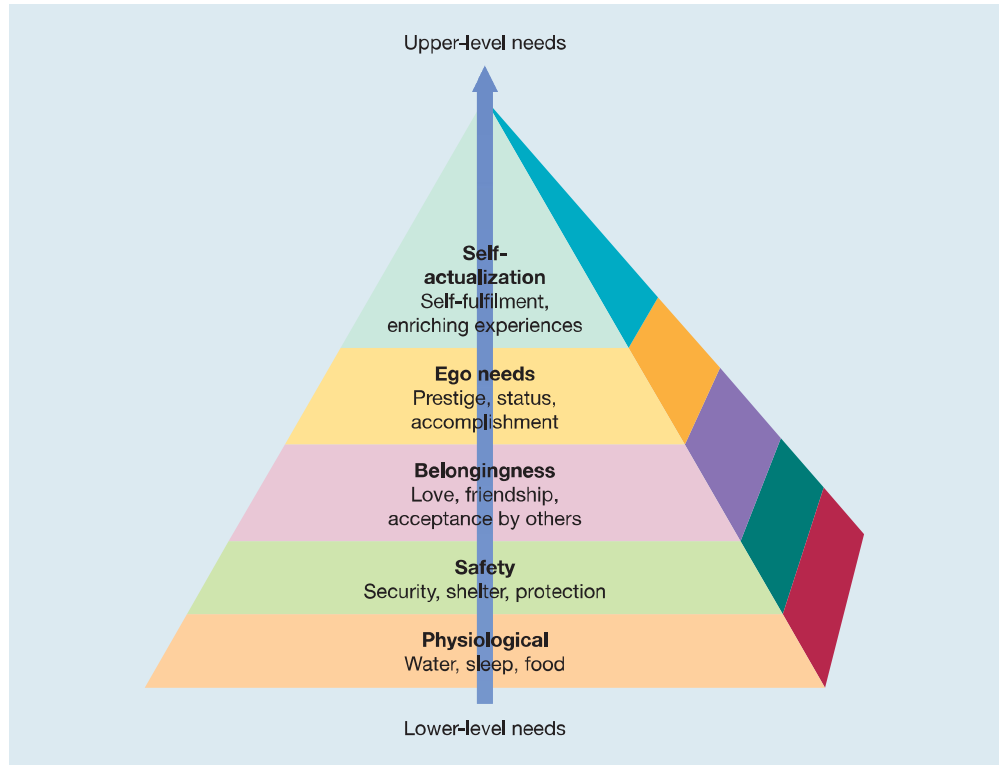
Need for power (to control one's environment):¹⁸ Many products and services allow consumers to feel that they have mastery over their surroundings, ranging from cars with 'souped up' engines and loud sound systems that impose the driver's musical tastes on others to luxury resorts that promise to respond to every whim of their pampered guests.

Need for uniqueness (to assert one's individual identity):¹⁹ Products can satisfy this need by pledging to accentuate a consumer's distinctive qualities. For example, Cachet perfume claims to be 'as individual as you are'.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

One influential approach to motivation was proposed by the psychologist Abraham Maslow. Maslow's approach is a general one, originally developed to understand personal growth and the attainment of 'peak experiences'.²⁰ Maslow formulated a hierarchy of biogenic and psychogenic needs, in which certain levels of motives are specified. This *hierarchical* approach implies that the order of development is fixed – that is, a certain level must be attained before the next, higher one is activated. Marketers have embraced this perspective because it (indirectly) specifies certain types of product benefits people might be looking for, depending on the different stages in their development and/or their environmental conditions.²¹ However, as we shall see it contains many problems, and we shall devote space to it here because it is a 'standard' in marketing knowledge rather than because we believe in its theoretical and practical value.

Maslow's levels are summarized in Figure 4.2. At each level, different priorities exist in terms of the product benefits a consumer is looking for. Ideally, an individual progresses up the hierarchy until his or her dominant motivation is a focus on 'ultimate' goals, such as justice and beauty. Unfortunately, this state is difficult to achieve (at least on a regular basis); most of us have to be satisfied with occasional glimpses, or *peak experiences*.

Figure 4.2 Levels of need in the Maslow hierarchy

The implication of Maslow's hierarchy is that one must first satisfy basic needs before progressing up the ladder (i.e. a starving man is not interested in status symbols, friendship or self-fulfilment).²² This suggests that consumers value different product attributes depending upon what is currently available to them. For example, consumers in the emerging economies of the former Eastern bloc are now bombarded with images of luxury goods, yet may still have trouble obtaining basic necessities.²³ In one study, Romanian students named the products they hoped to acquire. Their wish lists included not only the expected items such as sports cars and the latest model televisions, but also staples like water, soap, furniture and food.²⁴

The application of this hierarchy by marketers has been somewhat simplistic, especially as the same product or activity can satisfy a number of different needs. Sex, for example, is characterized as a basic biological drive. While this observation is true throughout most of the animal kingdom, it is obviously a more complicated phenomenon for humans. Indeed, this activity could conceivably fit into every level of Maslow's hierarchy. A sociobiologist, who approaches human behaviour in terms of its biological origins, might argue that reproductive behaviour provides security because it ensures continuation of a person's gene pool and the provision of children to care for the person in old age. Sex can also express love and affiliation at the belongingness level. In addition, sex is often used as a vehicle to attain status, domination over another and to satisfy ego needs; it can be a significant determinant of self-respect. Finally, a sexual experience can be self-actualizing in that it may provide an ecstatic, transcendental experience. The same thing could be said for almost any kind of consumer experience. While eating certainly is necessary for our survival, it also is very much a social act (belongingness), a status act as in the consumption of champagne or other expensive wines, and an act through which the gourmet or the caring, cooking mother or father can obtain self-actualization. The house gives us shelter, but is also a security device, a home for the family, a status object and a field for actualizing our personal aspirations.

Another example would be gardening that has been found to satisfy needs at every level of the hierarchy:²⁵

- *Physiological*: 'I like to work in the soil.'
- *Safety*: 'I feel safe in the garden.'
- *Social*: 'I can share my produce with others.'
- *Esteem*: 'I can create something of beauty.'
- *Self-actualization*: 'My garden gives me a sense of peace.'

Another problem with taking Maslow's hierarchy too literally is that it is culture-bound. The assumptions of the hierarchy may be restricted to a highly rational, materialistic and individualistic Western culture. People in other cultures may question the order of the levels as specified. A religious person who has taken a vow of celibacy would not necessarily agree that physiological needs must be satisfied before self-fulfilment can occur. Neither do all people in Western cultures seem to live according to Maslow's hierarchy. In fact, research based on visual rather than verbal data has indicated that spiritual survival is a stronger motivator than physical survival, as can be seen from patriots or freedom fighters giving their life for the idea of nation, political or religious fanatics for their beliefs, or suicidal people drawing the consequence of a 'spiritual death' by ending their physical lives.²⁶

Similarly, many Asian cultures value the welfare of the group (belongingness needs) more highly than needs of the individual (esteem needs). The point is that this hierarchy, while widely applied in marketing, is only helpful to marketers in so far as it reminds us that consumers may have different need priorities in different consumption situations and at different stages in their lives – not because it exactly specifies a consumer's progression up the ladder of needs. It also does not take account of the cultural formation of needs. It provides a picture of a jungle law society, an economy of survival, where the culture-(re)producing and self-actualizing aspects of human activities are not taken into account.

■ HIDDEN MOTIVES: THE PSYCHOANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

A motive is an underlying reason for behaviour and not something researchers can see or easily measure. Furthermore, the same behaviour can be caused by a configuration of different motives. To compound the problem of identifying motives, the consumer may be unaware of the actual need/want he or she is attempting to satisfy, or alternatively he or she may not be willing to admit that this need exists. Because of these difficulties, motives must often be *inferred* by the analyst. Although some consumer needs undoubtedly are utilitarian and fairly straightforward, some researchers feel that a great many purchase decisions are not the result of deliberate, logical decisions. On the contrary, people may do things to satisfy motives of which they are not even aware.

Sigmund Freud had a profound, if controversial, impact on many basic assumptions about human behaviour. His work changed the way we view such topics as adult sexuality, dreams and psychological adjustment. **Freudian theory** developed the idea that much of human behaviour 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. This struggle is carried out in the mind among three systems. (Note that these systems do not refer to physical parts of the brain.)

The *id* is entirely oriented towards immediate gratification – it is the 'party animal' of the mind. It operates according to the pleasure principle: behaviour is guided by the primary desire to maximize pleasure and avoid pain. The *id* is selfish and illogical. It directs a person's psychic energy towards pleasurable acts without regard for the consequences.

The *superego* is the counterweight to the id. This system is essentially the person's conscience. It internalizes society's rules (especially as communicated by parents) and works to prevent the id from seeking selfish gratification.

Finally, the *ego* is the system that mediates between the id and the superego. It is in a way a referee in the fight between temptation and virtue. The ego tries to balance these two opposing forces according to the reality principle. It finds ways to gratify the id that will be acceptable to the outside world. These conflicts occur on an unconscious level, so the person is not necessarily aware of the underlying reasons for his or her behaviour.

Some of Freud's ideas have also been adapted by consumer researchers. In particular, his work highlights the potential importance of unconscious motives underlying purchases. The implication is that consumers cannot necessarily tell us their true motivation for choosing a product, even if we can devise a sensitive way to ask them directly.

Motivational research

► The first attempts to apply Freudian ideas to understand the deeper meanings of products and advertisements were made in the 1950s as a perspective known as **motivational research** was developed. This approach was largely based on psychoanalytic (Freudian) interpretations, with a heavy emphasis on unconscious motives. A basic assumption is that socially unacceptable needs are channelled into acceptable outlets. Product use or avoidance is motivated by unconscious forces which are often determined in childhood.

This form of research relies on *depth interviews* probing deeply into each person's purchase motivations. These can be derived only after questioning and interpretation on the part of a carefully trained interviewer. This work was pioneered by Ernest Dichter, a psychoanalyst who was trained in Vienna in the early part of the twentieth century. Dichter conducted in-depth interview studies on over 230 different products, and many of his findings have been incorporated into marketing campaigns.²⁷ For example, Esso (or Exxon) for many years reminded consumers to 'Put a Tiger in Your Tank' after Dichter found that people responded well to powerful animal symbolism containing vaguely suggestive overtones.

Criticisms of motivational research

Motivational research has been attacked for two quite different reasons. Some feel it does not work, while others feel it works *too* well. On the one hand, social critics attacked this school of thought for giving advertisers the power to manipulate consumers.²⁸ On the other hand, many consumer researchers felt the research lacked sufficient rigour and validity, since interpretations were subjective and indirect.²⁹ Because conclusions are based on the analyst's own judgement and are derived from discussions with a small number of people, some researchers are doubtful about the degree to which these results can be generalized to a large market. In addition, because the original motivational researchers were heavily influenced by orthodox Freudian theory, their interpretations usually carried strong sexual overtones. This emphasis tends to overlook other plausible causes for behaviour. It is worth noting that it has been argued that such over-interpretations and disregard of the more mundane and obvious were more common in the American market than in the British leading, for example, to a greater discrediting in the USA than in Europe of qualitative research in general and motivational research in particular.³⁰

The positive side of motivational research

Motivational research had great appeal at least to some marketers for several reasons, some of which are detailed here. Motivational research tends to be less expensive than

large-scale, quantitative survey data because interviewing and data processing costs are relatively small.

The knowledge derived from motivational research may help in the development of marketing communications that appeal to deep-seated needs and thus provide a more powerful hook to relate a product to consumers. Even if they are not necessarily valid for all consumers in a target market, these insights can be valuable when used in an exploratory way. For example, the rich imagery that may be associated with a product can be used creatively when developing advertising copy.

Some of the findings seem intuitively plausible after the fact. For example, motivational studies concluded that coffee is associated with companionship, that people avoid prunes because they remind them of old age, and that men fondly equate the first car they owned as a young man with the onset of their sexual freedom.

Table 4.1 Major motives for consumption as identified by Ernest Dichter

Motive	
Power - masculinity-virility	Power: Sugary products and large breakfasts (to charge oneself up), bowling, electric trains, hot rods, power tools Masculinity-virility: Coffee, red meat, heavy shoes, toy guns, buying fur coats for women, shaving with a razor
Security	Ice cream (to feel like a loved child again), full drawer of neatly ironed shirts, real plaster walls (to feel sheltered), home baking, hospital care
Eroticism	Sweets (to lick), gloves (to be removed by woman as a form of undressing), a man lighting a woman's cigarette (to create a tension-filled moment culminating in pressure, then relaxation)
Moral purity - cleanliness	White bread, cotton fabrics (to connote chastity), harsh household cleaning chemicals (to make housewives feel moral after using), bathing (to be equated with Pontius Pilate, who washed blood from his hands), oatmeal (sacrifice, virtue)
Social acceptance	Companionship: Ice cream (to share fun), coffee Love and affection: Toys (to express love for children), sugar and honey (to express terms of affection) Acceptance: Soap, beauty products
Individuality	Gourmet foods, foreign cars, cigarette holders, vodka, perfume, fountain pens
Status	Scotch, ulcers, heart attacks, indigestion (to show one has a high-stress, important job!); carpets (to show one does not live on bare earth like peasants)
Femininity	Cakes and cookies, dolls, silk, tea, household curios
Reward	Cigarettes, candy, alcohol, ice cream, cookies
Mastery over environment	Kitchen appliances, boats, sporting goods, cigarette lighters
Disalienation (a desire to feel connectedness to things)	Home decorating, skiing, morning radio broadcasts (to feel 'in touch' with the world)
Magic - mystery	Soups (having healing powers), paints (change the mood of a room), carbonated drinks (magical effervescent property), vodka (romantic history), unwrapping of gifts

Source: Adapted from Jeffrey F. Dudgee, 'Interpreting Dichter's Interpretations: An Analysis of Consumption Symbolism in *The Handbook of Consumer Motivation*', *Marketing and Semiotics: Selected Papers from the Copenhagen Symposium*, ed. Hanne Hartvig-Larsen, David Glen Mick and Christian Alsted (Copenhagen: Handelshøjskolens forlag, 1991).

Other interpretations were harder for some people to accept, such as the observation that a woman baking a cake symbolizes giving birth, or that men are reluctant to give blood because they feel that their vital fluids are being drained. On the other hand, some people do refer to a pregnant woman as 'having a bun in the oven'.³¹ Motivational research for the Red Cross did find that men (but not women) tend to overestimate drastically the amount of blood that is taken during a donation. This group counteracted the fear of loss of virility by symbolically equating the act of giving blood with fertilization: 'Give the gift of life.' Despite its drawbacks, motivational research continues to be employed as a useful diagnostic tool. Its validity is enhanced, however, when it is used in conjunction with other research techniques available to the consumer researcher.

■ CONSUMER DESIRE

- More recently, researchers have begun to discuss the importance of the concept of **desire** for understanding consumer behaviour. Desire as a motivational construct is quite revolutionary, since it turns the attention away from satisfaction and over to the thrills of the process of desiring.³² This potentially opens up a better understanding of consumer insatiability than can be provided by needs and wants. Desire, furthermore, better captures the seductive spirit of the positioning of many contemporary brands and the



An example of a collage used to explore consumer desire.

deep feelings involved in consumer goods' contribution to the formation of consumers' self-images. Because emotions, unruly passions and bodily cravings and pleasures are so central to the experience of desiring, desire reintroduces the bodily aspect of motivation without reducing it to biogenic needs.³³ On the contrary, the concept of desire also emphasizes that, even though desires, needs and wants are felt psychologically, the concept of society (often called 'the Other' in the literature on desire) is very central to the understanding of desire. Thus, desire would refer to the *sociogenic* nature of needs.³⁴

One study of consumer desires in Denmark, Turkey and the United States concluded that desires were much more profound than wants, that desire is cyclical and basically insatiable, and that what is desired is more often various kinds of social relationship mediated by consumption experiences than consumption in itself. Finally, desire has an interesting relationship with control. On the one hand, control kills desire, as expressed in many consumers' antonyms to desire being an overly routinized lifestyle with the same repetitive patterns day in and day out – what the French call 'metro – boulot – dodo' (the cycle of metro – work – sleep). On the other hand, it is potentially harmful because it contains an important element of excess and lack of control over oneself.³⁵ The study used collages among other techniques to explore consumer desire, and the collage on p. 103 illustrates some of the featured findings: that desire is positive but potentially harmful if out of control (the balance, the fight with one's own shadow) and can lead to impossible dreams (the ugly man and the model) or to excess and violation of norms (Hugh Grant and the prostitute).

Desire is one way of dealing with very passionate consumers, stressing the very emotional and sometimes irrational side of consumer behaviour. If consumer desire is investigated from a more rationalizing and cognitive psychological perspective, it tends to be dealt with under the term consumer *involvement*.



multicultural dimensions

Paradise: satisfying needs?

Presumably, a person who has had all of his or her needs satisfied lives in 'paradise'. Conceptualizations of paradise have implications for the marketing and consumption of any products, such as vacation travel, that seek to invoke an ideal state. However, the definition of just what constitutes paradise appears to differ across cultures. To pursue this idea further, the concept of paradise was compared between groups of American and Dutch college students. Informants in both cultures constructed a collage of images to illustrate their overall concept of paradise, and they wrote an essay to accompany and explain this collage. Some similarities were evident in the two societies: both Americans and Dutch emphasized the personal, experiential aspects of paradise, saying 'paradise is different for everyone ... a feeling ... a state of being'. In addition, individuals in both societies said that paradise must include family, friends and significant others.

However, the Dutch and Americans differed in important and interesting ways. The Americans consistently emphasized hedonism, materialism, individuality, creativity, and issues of time and space consistent with a society in which time is segmented and viewed almost as a commodity (more on this in Chapter 10). Conversely, the Dutch respondents showed a concern for social and environmental responsibility, collective societal order and equality, and a balance between work and play as part of paradise. For instance, one Dutch student said that 'Respect for animals, flowers, and plants ... regenerating energy sources, such as wind, water, and sun' are all important parts of paradise. Marketers should expect that, because concepts of paradise differ somewhat, different images and behaviours may be evoked when Americans and Dutch are confronted with marketing messages such as 'Hawaii is Paradise', or 'you can experience paradise when you drive this car'.³⁶



A Dutch respondent's collage emphasises this person's conception of paradise as a place where there is interpersonal harmony and concern for the environment.

■ CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT

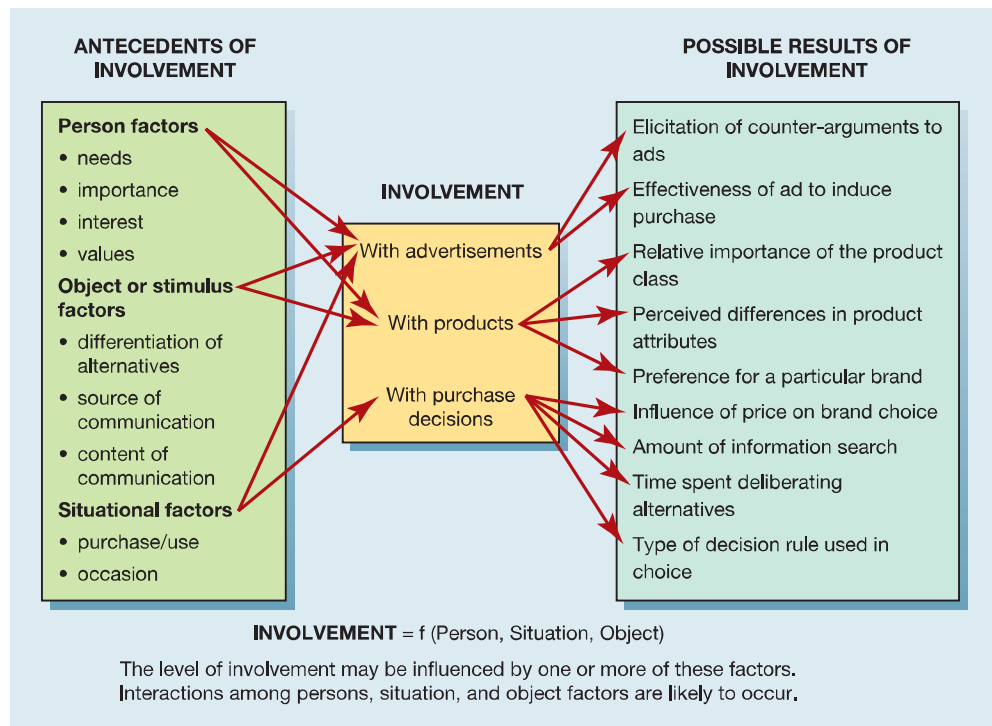
Do consumers form strong relationships with products and services? If you don't believe so, consider these recent events:

- A consumer in Brighton, England loves a local restaurant called the All In One so much, he had its name and phone number tattooed on his forehead. The owner remarked, '... whenever he comes in, he'll go straight to the front of the queue'.³⁷
- *Lucky* is a magazine devoted to shopping for shoes and other fashion accessories. The centrefold of the first issue featured rows of make-up sponges. The editor observes, 'It's the same way that you might look at a golf magazine and see a spread of nine irons. *Lucky* is addressing one interest in women's lives, in a really obsessive, specific way'.³⁸

These examples illustrate that people can get pretty attached to products. As we have seen, a consumer's motivation to attain a goal increases his or her desire to expend the effort necessary to acquire the products or services he or she believes will be instrumental in satisfying that goal. However, not everyone is motivated to the same extent – one person might be convinced he or she can't live without the latest style or modern convenience, whereas another is not interested in this item at all.

- **Involvement** is defined as 'a person's perceived relevance of the object based on their inherent needs, values, and interests'.³⁹ The word *object* is used in the generic sense and refers to a product (or a brand), an advertisement, or a purchase situation. Consumers can find involvement in all these *objects*. Figure 4.3 shows that because involvement is a motivational construct, different antecedents can trigger it. These factors can be something about the person, something about the object, or something about the situation, which can combine to determine the consumer's motivation to process product-related information at a given point in time. When consumers are intent on doing what they can to satisfy a need, they will be motivated to pay attention and process any information felt to be relevant to achieving their goals.

On the other hand, a person may not bother to pay any attention to the same information if it is not seen as relevant to satisfying some need. Tessel, for instance, who prides herself on her knowledge of the environment and green issues, may read everything she can find about the subject, while another person may skip over this information without giving it a second thought.

Figure 4.3 Conceptualizing components of involvement

Involvement can be viewed as the motivation to process information.⁴⁰ To the degree that there is a perceived linkage between a consumer's needs, goals or values and product knowledge, the consumer will be motivated to pay attention to product information. When relevant knowledge is activated in memory, a motivational state is created that drives behaviour (e.g. shopping). As felt involvement with a product increases, the consumer devotes more attention to ads related to the product, exerts more cognitive effort to understand these ads, and focuses more attention on the product-related information in them.⁴¹ However, this kind of 'rational' involvement may be the exception rather than the rule, even for such products as stereos, TVs and VCRs, as a company executive from Philips once argued.⁴²

Levels of involvement: from inertia to passion

The type of information processing that will occur thus depends on the consumer's level of involvement. It can range from *simple processing*, where only the basic features of a message are considered, all the way to *elaboration*, where the incoming information is linked to one's pre-existing knowledge system.⁴³

Inertia

- We can think of a person's degree of involvement as a continuum, ranging from absolute lack of interest in a marketing stimulus at one end to obsession at the other. Consumption
- at the low end of involvement is characterized by **inertia**, where decisions are made out of habit because the consumer lacks the motivation to consider alternatives. 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 for the individual. Celebrity worship is evident in activities ranging from autograph collections to the sky-high prices fetched at auctions by possessions that used to belong to stars such as John Lennon, Elton



The Swiss Potato Board is trying to increase involvement with its product. The ad reads, 'Recipes against boredom'.

Swisspatat

John or Jimi Hendrix. For the most part, however, a consumer's involvement level with products falls somewhere in the middle, and the marketing strategist must determine the relative level of importance to understand how much elaboration of product information will occur.

- When consumers are truly involved with a product, an ad or a website, they enter what has been called a **flow state**. This state is the Holy Grail of web designers who want to create sites that are so entrancing that the surfer loses all track of time as he or she becomes engrossed in the site's contents (and hopefully buys things in the process!). Flow is an optimal experience characterized by:

- a sense of playfulness;
- a feeling of being in control;
- concentration and highly focused attention;
- mental enjoyment of the activity for its own sake;
- a distorted sense of time;
- a match between the challenge at hand and one's skills.⁴⁴

Cult products

- **Cult products** command fierce consumer loyalty, devotion – and maybe even worship by consumers who are very highly involved with a brand. These items take many forms, from Apple computers and Harley-Davidson motorcycles to Barbie dolls and Manchester United football strips. What else explains a willingness to pay up to \$3,400 for a pair of shoes designed by Manolo Blahnik?



Loyal users can log in and hang out at the Jones Soda Web site.

<http://www.jonessoda.com/index.html>
Courtesy of Jones Soda Co.



Anyone who can create a cult brand goes straight to marketing heaven, but this is very difficult to do from scratch. One entrepreneur is well on his way. In 1996 Peter van Stolk was barely getting shelf space for his Jones Soda brand. He started putting his colourful drinks in unconventional places like record stores, hair salons, tattoo parlors, even sex shops. After a buzz started around Jones, van Stolk stoked it by asking fans to send him their photographs, which he plastered on his labels. The company's website (www.jonessoda.com) has become a forum for Jones fans to chat about school, life or soda.⁴⁵

The many faces of involvement

As previously defined, involvement can take many forms. It can be cognitive, as when a 'webhead' is motivated to learn all she can about the latest spec of a new multimedia PC, or emotional, as when the thought of a new Armani suit gives a clotheshorse goose pimples.⁴⁶ Further, the very act of buying the Armani may be very involving for people who are passionately devoted to shopping. To complicate matters further, advertisements, such as those produced for Nike or Adidas, may themselves be involving for some reason (for example, because they make us laugh, cry, or inspire us to work harder). It seems that involvement is a fuzzy concept, because it overlaps with other things and means different things to different people. Indeed, the consensus is that there are actually several broad types of involvement related to the product, the message, or the perceiver.⁴⁷

Product involvement is related to a consumer's level of interest in a particular product. Many sales promotions are designed to increase this type of involvement.

Message-response involvement (also known as *advertising involvement*), refers to the consumer's interest in processing marketing communications.⁴⁸ Television is considered a low-involvement medium because it requires a passive viewer who exerts relatively little control (remote control 'zapping' notwithstanding) over content. In contrast, print is often seen as a high-involvement medium. The reader is actively involved in processing the information and is able to pause and reflect on what he or she has read before moving on.⁴⁹ We'll discuss the role of message characteristics in changing attitudes in Chapter 6.



Many marketing messages, such as this ad for a cosmetics company in Taiwan, focus on emotions rather than cognitions.

Pao&Paws Ad Agency



marketing opportunity

Quick Burger, France's second largest fast-food chain, discovered a route to increasing customers' involvement. The company became a partner in a marketing programme called Multipoints, an interactive service which allowed consumers to collect points that could then be redeemed for discounts and prizes. More than 70,000 French consumers signed up for the service. Using a device that resembled a calculator, participants entered codes they found in print ads and advertising hoardings or heard on radio programmes. They could even hold the device against their TV screens during programming that was specially encoded to dispense credits. People could win points for playing along with certain game shows and answering questions correctly. They could then redeem their points for merchandise at Quick Burger restaurants and other locations (including selected travel agencies and news-stands) by plugging their device into a computer terminal. The hamburger chain awarded consumers 500 free points per week just for visiting, which gave them additional motivation to patronize Quick Burger instead of its arch-rival, McDonald's.⁵⁰

Purchase situation involvement refers to differences that may occur when buying the same object for different contexts. Here the person may perceive a great deal of social risk or none at all. For example, when you want to impress someone you may try to buy a brand or a product with a certain image that you think reflects good taste. When you have to buy a gift for someone in an obligatory situation, like a wedding gift for a cousin you do not really like, you may not care what image the gift portrays. Or you may actually pick something cheap that reflects your desire to distance yourself from that cousin.

Ego involvement (sometimes described as *enduring involvement*) refers to the importance of a product to a consumer's self-concept. This concept implies a high level of social risk: the prospect of the product not performing its desired function may result in embarrassment or damage to the consumer's self-concept (Chapter 7 is devoted to the importance

Table 4.2 A scale to measure product involvement

To me (object to be judged) is		
1	Important	Unimportant*
2	Boring	Interesting
3	Relevant	Irrelevant*
4	Exciting	Unexciting*
5	Means nothing	Means a lot to me
6	Appealing	Unappealing*
7	Fascinating	Mundane*
8	Worthless	Valuable
9	Involving	Uninvolving*
10	Not needed	Needed

Note: Totalling the ten items gives a score from a low of 10 to a high of 70.
 *Indicates item is reverse scored. For example, a score of 7 for item no. 1 (important/unimportant) would actually be scored as 1.

Source: Judith Lynne Zaichkowsky, 'The Personal Involvement Inventory: Reduction, revision, and application to advertising', *Journal of Advertising* 23(4) (December 1994): 59-70.

of the self-concept for consumer behaviour issues). For example, Tessel's vegetarianism and interest in green issues are clearly an important part of her self-identity (her choice of organic foods are said to have high sign value). This type of involvement is independent of particular purchase situations. It is an ongoing concern related to the self and often hedonic or experiential experiences (the emotions felt as a result of using products).⁵¹

Measuring involvement

The measurement of involvement is important for many marketing applications. For example, research evidence indicates that a viewer who is more involved with a television show will also respond more positively to commercials contained in that show, and that these spots will have a greater chance of influencing his or her purchase intentions.⁵² The many conceptualizations of involvement have led to some confusion about the best way to measure the concept. One of the most widely used measures of the state of involvement is the scale shown in Table 4.2.

Teasing out the dimensions of involvement

Two French researchers devised a scale to measure the antecedents of product involvement, arguing that no single component of involvement is predominant. Recognizing that consumers can be involved with a product because it is a risky purchase and/or its use reflects on or affects the self, they advocate the development of an *involvement profile* containing five components:⁵³

- 1 The personal interest a consumer has in a product category, its personal meaning or importance.
- 2 The perceived importance of the potential negative consequences associated with a poor choice of product (risk importance).
- 3 The probability of making a bad purchase.
- 4 The pleasure value of the product category.
- 5 The sign value of the product category (how closely it's related to the self).

Table 4.3 Involvement profiles for a set of French consumer products

	Importance of negative consequences	Subjective probability of mispurchase	Pleasure value	Sign value
Dresses	121	112	147	181
Bras	117	115	106	130
Washing machines	118	109	106	111
TV sets	112	100	122	95
Vacuum cleaners	110	112	70	78
Irons	103	95	72	76
Champagne	109	120	125	125
Oil	89	97	65	92
Yogurt	86	83	106	78
Chocolate	80	89	123	75
Shampoo	96	103	90	81
Toothpaste	95	95	94	105
Toilet soap	82	90	114	118
Detergents	79	82	56	63

Average product score = 100.

Source: Gilles Laurent and Jean-Noël Kapferer, 'Measuring consumer involvement profiles', *Journal of Marketing Research* 22 (February 1985): 45, Table 3.

These researchers asked a sample of homemakers to rate a set of 14 product categories on each of the facets of involvement. The results are shown in Table 4.3. These data indicate that no single component captures consumer involvement. For example, the purchase of a durable product such as a vacuum cleaner is seen as risky, because one is stuck with a bad choice for many years. However, the vacuum cleaner does not provide pleasure (hedonic value), nor is it high in sign value (i.e. its use is not related to the person's self-concept).⁵⁴ In contrast, chocolate is high in pleasure value but is not seen as risky or closely related to the self. Dresses and bras, on the other hand, appear to be involving for a combination of reasons.

Segmenting by involvement levels

A measurement approach of this nature allows consumer researchers to capture the diversity of the involvement construct, and it also provides the potential to use involvement as a basis for market segmentation. For example, a yogurt manufacturer might find that even though its product is low in sign value for one group of consumers, it might be highly related to the self-concept of another market segment, such as health food enthusiasts or avid dieters. The company could adapt its strategy to account for the motivation of different segments to process information about the product. These variations are discussed in Chapter 6. Note also that involvement with a product class may vary across cultures. While this sample of French consumers rated champagne high in both sign value and personal value, the ability of champagne to provide pleasure or be central to self-definition might not transfer to other countries. For example, whereas a typical French family would find champagne an absolutely essential part of the celebration of a marriage, a Danish family, especially from a rural area, might find consumption of champagne an excessive luxury and perhaps also to some extent a sign of decadence.⁵⁵

Strategies to increase involvement

Although consumers differ in their level of involvement with respect to a product message, marketers do not just have to sit back and hope for the best. By being aware

of some basic factors that increase or decrease attention, they can take steps to increase the likelihood that product information will get through. A marketer can boost consumers' motivations to process relevant information by using one or more of the following techniques:⁵⁶

- *Appeal to the consumers' hedonic needs.* For example, ads using sensory appeals generate higher levels of attention.⁵⁷
- *Use novel stimuli, such as unusual cinematography, sudden silences, or unexpected movements in commercials.* When a British firm called Egg Banking introduced a credit card to the French market in 2002, its advertising agency created unusual commercials to make people question their assumptions. One ad stated 'Cats always land on their paws', and then two researchers in white lab coats dropped a kitten off a rooftop – never to see it again (animal rights activists were not amused).⁵⁸
- *Use prominent stimuli, such as loud music and fast action, to capture attention in commercials.* In print formats, larger ads increase attention. Also, viewers look longer at coloured pictures as opposed to black and white.
- *Include celebrity endorsers to generate higher interest in commercials.* (We'll discuss this strategy in Chapter 6.)
- *Build a bond with consumers by maintaining an ongoing relationship with them.* The routes to cultivating brand loyalty will be discussed further in Chapter 8.
- *The internet has provided companies with new possibilities for creating loyalty bonds with customers.* For example, girls can customize their own doll at Mattel's My Design website, located at www.b Barbie.com/mydesign. They can specify her skin tone, hair and eye colour and outfits. They can also name the doll, and she comes with a personality profile they can tailor from choices on the website.⁵⁹



net profit

It's human nature to be more involved with a product that's directly relevant to your individual wants and needs. One of the exciting advantages of the internet is the ability to *personalize* content, so that a website offers unique information or products tailored to each web surfer. Consider these different approaches to personalization that build the different kinds of involvement we've been discussing:

- *Product involvement:* A recent survey found that 75 per cent of American adults want more customized products and – more importantly – 70 per cent are willing to pay extra for them. This desire is even more acute among young people; 85 per cent of 18–24-year-olds want more customized products, particularly in such domains as clothing, shoes, electronics and travel services.⁶⁰ **Venturoma.com** lets the shopper create her own blend of massage oils, skin creams or body washes, while **Customatix.com** lets you design your own sports and casual shoes. In Asia, Coca-Cola is testing its 'Style-A-Coke' shrink-wrap system that lets consumers customize their Coke bottles with different sleeve designs.⁶¹
- *Message-response involvement:* An advertising campaign in the Netherlands directs teens to a Web-design site where they can create their own Coca-Cola commercials. At the end of the month, about 10 to 15 finalists will appear on a website, where people can view them and vote for their favourite.⁶² In a more powerful application of this idea, a British ad for a homeless charity lets viewers create their own message by selecting different story lines. The ad traces the story of Paul, a teenager from a troubled family. Viewers can click to make different choices for Paul as his fortunes decline, such as whether to report his bullying stepfather to the police, or whether to prostitute himself ('To have sex for money press Green now').⁶³ Or, how about film posters that talk back to you? ThinkPix Smart Displays are part of a new wave of posters that will enable a celebrity on the wall to wink

at you as you pass by. And, to personalize the process, film-goers will insert a card indicating their tastes in order to see posters that show trailers featuring stars they like.⁶⁴

- *Purchase situation involvement:* To a denizen of the online world, a *skin* is a graphical interface that acts as both the face and the control panel of a computer program. Rather than settling for the boring skins that come with most programs, many people prefer to make and trade their own unique ones. According to the product manager for RealPlayer, 'This kind of customization is a huge factor in driving product use . . . We're getting into a world where one size doesn't fit all, and one of the great benefits of technology is having the experience tailored to you'. In addition to the more than 15 million skins that have been created for RealPlayer, many other games, including The Sims and the multiplayer Unreal Tournament have websites devoted to user-created skins. Players swap skins of the Incredible Hulk or Rambo or even playable skins of themselves. Film companies and record labels now routinely commission artists to create promotional skins for films like *Blow* and *Frequency* and for music artists like U2, Britney Spears and 'N Sync.⁶⁵

■ VALUES

- Generally speaking, a **value** can be defined as a belief about some desirable end-state that transcends specific situations and guides selection of behaviour.⁶⁶ Thus, values are general and different from attitudes in that they do not apply to specific situations only. A person's set of values plays a very important role in his or her consumption activities, since many products and services are purchased because (it is believed) they will help us to attain a value-related goal. Two people can believe in the same behaviours (for example, vegetarianism) but their underlying belief systems may be quite different (animal activism vs. health concerns). The extent to which people share a belief system is a function of individual, social and cultural forces. Advocates of a belief system often seek out others with similar beliefs, so that social networks overlap and as a result believers tend to be exposed to information that supports their beliefs (e.g. environmentalists rarely socialize with factory farmers).⁶⁷

As we'll see in Chapters 16 and 17, the specific values that motivate people vary across cultures, yet within each culture there is usually a set of underlying goals that most members of that culture agree are important. One comparison of management practices concerning industrial buying behaviour in Europe and North America concluded that, in Europe, development of relationships is seen as more important, whereas in North America, rigour and competitiveness are the key issues.⁶⁸ Such differences may be interpreted as pointing to fundamental differences in values in the business worlds of the two continents. But large differences can also be detected within Europe, for example between the Anglo-Saxon approach, which is closer to the American model described above, and the Germanic-Alpine (including Scandinavia) model, which is more oriented towards the relationship approach.⁶⁹

Core values

- Every culture has a set of **core values** that it imparts to its members.⁷⁰ For example, people in one culture might feel that being a unique individual is preferable to subordinating one's identity to the group, while another group may emphasize the virtues of group membership. In many cases, values are universal. Who does not desire health, wisdom or world peace? But on the other hand, values do change over time. In Japan young people are working hard to adopt Western values and behaviours – which explains why the current fashion for young people is bleached, blond hair, chalky make-up and a deep

tan. Government policies have encouraged this type of consumer spending. However, changing patterns of consumption have increased feelings of personal liberation among the younger generation. They are now challenging many of the values of the past as shown, for instance, by the increasing school drop-out rate, which has grown by 20 per cent.⁷¹ Similar concerns about the consequences of what is often called a value crisis are also discussed in European societies. Likewise, one may wonder what happened to the traditional Scandinavian modesty – in both Denmark and Sweden people are now showing more willingness to share their private lives with thousands of others in either talk shows or docu-soaps of the *Big Brother* variety.

Sometimes, one must be careful of interpreting social events in terms of values. For example, a hugely successful advertisement in Japan promoted breast cancer awareness by showing an attractive woman in a sundress drawing stares from men on the street as a voice-over said, 'If only women paid as much attention to their breasts as men do'. The same ad flopped in France – according to the *Wall Street Journal* because the use of humour to talk about a serious disease offended the French.⁷² Does this seem like a plausible explanation to you?

Value systems

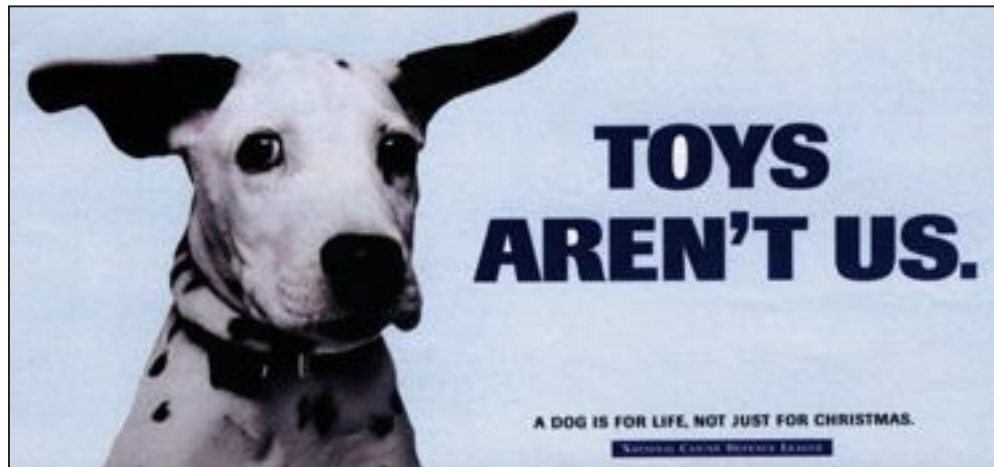
One perspective on the study of values stresses that what sets cultures apart is the *relative importance*, or ranking, of these universal values. This set of rankings constitutes a culture's **value system**.⁷³ To illustrate the difference in value systems, consider the results of a comparison between the adherence to a set of values in a variety of countries (see Table 4.4).⁷⁴ What can one draw from such a table? In one of the studies that constituted this table, Norway, Germany and the USA were compared.⁷⁵ The value of sense of belonging is very important in Germany and Norway, but much less so in the United States, which is consistent with many other studies underlining the individualistic character of the American culture. Likewise, the value of security is very important in Germany and the United States but much less so in Norway. The results seem to indicate that the value of security in the United States is understood in terms of social security, whereas in Germany it is understood more in terms of social relationships. In Norway it is interpreted much as in the United States but it does not represent the same importance due to the elaborate social security of the Norwegian welfare state: they are simply inclined to take security for granted. Thus, it is obvious that unless one understands the context, one may draw very erroneous conclusions from this kind of research, for instance that security is not very important.

Table 4.4 Distribution of LOV (List of Values) values in different countries (% rating as most important value)

	Germany	USA	Norway	France	Denmark	USSR	Japan
Self-fulfilment	4.8	9.6	7.7	30.9	7.1	8.8	36.7
Sense of belonging	28.6	7.9	33.4	1.7	13.0	23.9	2.3
Security	24.1	20.6	10.0	6.3	6.3	5.7	10.9
Self-respect	12.9	21.1	16.6	7.4	29.7	10.1	4.7
Warm relationships with others	7.9	16.2	13.4	17.7	11.3	23.3	27.6
Fun and enjoyment in life/Excitement*	10.1	4.5	3.6	16.6	16.8	9.7	7.5
Being well respected	6.1	8.8	8.4	4.0	5.0	8.5	2.1
Sense of accomplishment	5.4	11.4	6.8	15.4	10.9	10.1	8.3

*The value 'excitement' was collapsed into 'fun and enjoyment' because just a negligible percentage in certain samples selected this as the most important value.

Source: Reprinted from Lynn Kahle, Sharon Beatty and John Mager, 'Implications of Social Values for Consumer Communications: The Case of the European Community', in B. Englis, ed., *Global and Multinational Advertising* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Ass.): 47–64.



Many advertisements appeal to people's values to persuade them to change or modify their behaviours. This ad, sponsored by the city of Paris, says to dog owners: 'you are quite right not to clean up after your dog. After all, he'll take care of that for you'.

The Advertising Archives

- Every culture is characterized by its members' endorsement of a value system. These end-states may not be equally endorsed by everyone, and in some cases values may even seem to contradict one another (e.g. westerners in general appear to value both conformity and individuality and seek to find some accommodation between the two). Nonetheless, it is usually possible to identify a general set of *core values* which uniquely define a culture. These beliefs are taught to us by *socialization agents*, including parents, friends and teachers. The process of learning the beliefs and behaviours endorsed by one's own culture is termed **enculturation**. In contrast, the process of learning the value system and behaviours of another culture (often a priority for those who wish to understand consumers and markets in foreign countries) is called **acculturation**.⁷⁶

As we saw in the example above, such core values must be understood in the local context – that is, the meaning of the values changes when the cultural context shifts. 'Security' is *not* the same for English, Scandinavian, German and Italian consumers. This is a serious challenge to the idea that it is possible to compare value systems by studying the rankings of universal sets of values across countries.

Applications of values to consumer behaviour

Despite their importance, values have not been as widely applied to direct examinations of consumer behaviour as might be expected. One reason is that broad-based concepts such as freedom, security, or inner harmony are more likely to affect general purchasing patterns than to differentiate between brands within a product category. For this reason, some researchers have found it convenient to make distinctions among broad-based *cultural values* such as security or happiness, *consumption-specific values* such as convenient shopping or prompt service, and *product-specific values* such as ease of use or durability, that affect the relative importance people in different cultures place on possessions.⁷⁷ However, such a distinction may border on abusing the value concept, since it is normally taken to represent the most general and profound level in the social psychological hierarchy.

While some aspects of brand image such as sophistication tend to be common across cultures, others are more likely to be relevant in specific places. The characteristic of peacefulness is valued to a larger extent in Japan, while the same holds true for passion in Spain and ruggedness in the USA.⁷⁸ Because values drive much of consumer behaviour (at least in a very general sense), we might say that virtually all consumer research ultimately is related to the identification and measurement of values. This



Cleanliness is a core value in many cultures.

DiMassimo, Inc.

process can take many forms, ranging from qualitative research techniques such as ethnography to quantitative techniques such as laboratory experiments and large-scale surveys. This section will describe some specific attempts by researchers to measure cultural values and apply this knowledge to marketing strategy.

A number of companies track changes in values through large-scale surveys. For instance, one Young and Rubicam study tracked the new segment of single, professional career women without any ambitions of creating a family. They are among the highest consuming segments and are characterized by central values such as freedom and independence.⁷⁹ Some of these services are discussed in Chapter 15. Many companies use value inventories in order to adapt their strategies. SAS, the airline, which for a long time addressed 'hard values' of their key segment, business travellers, realized that this segment had started to express more informal and 'softer' values, and they changed their communication profile accordingly.⁸⁰

Such ideas are reflected in a recent theory of consumer value. According to this theory, value for a consumer is the consumer's evaluation of a consumer object in terms of which general benefit the consumer might get from consuming it.⁸¹ As such, the value at stake in consumption is tied much more to the consumption experience than to general existential values of the person. Thus, it is suggested that the consumer experience may generate eight distinct types of consumer value:

- *Efficiency* – referring to all products aimed at providing various kinds of convenience for the consumer.

- *Excellence* – addressing situations where the experience of quality is the prime motivation.
- *Status* – when the consumer pursues success and engages in impression management and conspicuous consumption.
- *(Self-)Esteem* – situations where the satisfaction of possessing is in focus, as is the case with materialism.
- *Play* – the value of having fun in consuming.
- *Aesthetics* – searching for beauty in one's consumption of, e.g., designer products, fashion or art.
- *Ethics* – referring to motivations behind, e.g., morally or politically correct consumption choices.
- *Spirituality* – experiencing magical transformations or sacredness in the consumption, as known from devoted collectors.⁸²



marketing pitfall

Sometimes companies may overestimate the change in values. This could be the case for the discussion about the 'rudest poster advertisement of the summer' in 2000, an ad for Organics Colour Active Shampoo featuring a young woman on the beach peering down her own bikini bottoms juxtaposed with the declaration 'keeps hair colour so long, you'll forget your natural one'. However, maybe the provocation was deliberate – at least, no plans were announced to withdraw the campaign voluntarily.⁸³



marketing opportunity

The values treasured by a culture create opportunities for new products that might seem strange or a bit excessive to foreigners. Consider the 'toilet wars' now under way in Japan, as companies vie with each other to produce the most sophisticated and luxurious bathroom fixture.

Why the commotion over commodes? As one marketing executive explains, in a Japanese house 'the only place you can be alone and sit quietly is likely to be the toilet'. Take cramped living conditions, and then factor in a love of new technology. Now, add a strong cultural emphasis on cleanliness: Many Japanese wear gloves to protect themselves from strangers' germs and some ATM machines dispense cash that's been sanitized (yes, banks literally 'launder' their money!). Nearly half of Japanese homes already have toilets with a water jet spray used to wash and massage the buttocks. Let the games begin:

- It all started when Matsushita unveiled a toilet seat equipped with electrodes that send a mild electric charge through the user's buttocks, yielding a digital measurement of body-fat ratio.
- Engineers from Inax counterattacked with a toilet that glows in the dark. When in use, the toilet plays any of six soundtracks, including chirping birds, rushing water, tinkling wind chimes, or the strumming of a traditional Japanese harp.
- Matsushita retaliated with a \$3,000 throne that greets a user by flipping its lid, and by blasting its twin air nozzles that provide air-conditioning in the summer and heat in the winter.
- Toto weighed in with the WellyouII model that automatically measures the user's urine sugar levels by making a collection with a little spoon held by a retractable, mechanical arm.
- What's next? Matsushita is working on devices to measure weight, heartbeat, blood pressure and other health indicators; the toilet will send results to a doctor via a built in Internet-capable cell phone. Also in the works are talking toilets equipped with microchips that will greet each user with a personalized message such as words of encouragement from Mom, and soon people will be able to give their toilets simple verbal commands.⁸⁴

Table 4.5 Two types of values in the Rokeach Value Survey

Instrumental values	Terminal values
Ambitious	A comfortable life
Broadminded	An exciting life
Capable	A sense of accomplishment
Cheerful	A world at peace
Clean	A world of beauty
Courageous	Equality
Forgiving	Family security
Helpful	Freedom
Honest	Happiness
Imaginative	Inner harmony
Independent	Mature love
Intellectual	National security
Logical	Pleasure
Loving	Salvation
Obedient	Self-respect
Polite	Social recognition
Responsible	True friendship
Self-controlled	Wisdom

Source: Richard W. Pollay, 'Measuring the cultural values manifest in advertising', *Current Issues and Research in Advertising* (1983): 71–92.

The Rokeach Value Survey

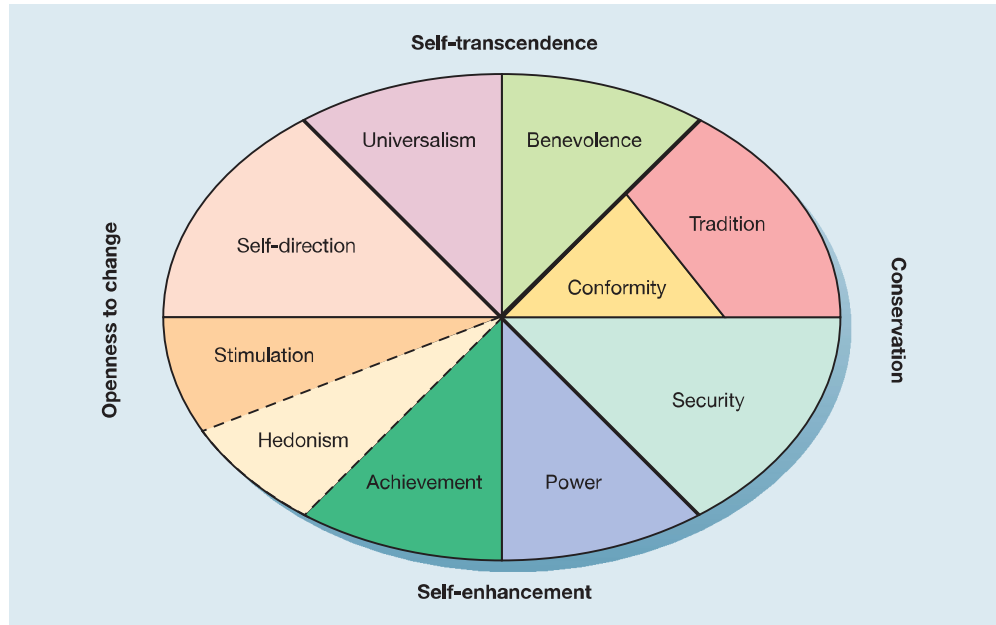
- The psychologist Milton Rokeach identified a set of **terminal values**, or desired end-states, that apply (to various degrees) to many different cultures. The *Rokeach Value Survey*, a scale used to measure these values, also includes a set of **instrumental values**, which are composed of actions needed to achieve these terminal values.⁸⁵ Table 4.5 lists these two sets of values. These sets of values have been used in many studies, for example to investigate the changes in the value system of post-Soviet Russia.⁸⁶

The List of Values (LOV)

Although some evidence indicates that differences in these global values do translate into product-specific preferences and differences in media usage, the Rokeach Value Survey has not been widely applied to consumer behaviour issues.⁸⁷ One reason is that many societies are evolving into smaller and smaller sets of *consumption microcultures* within the larger culture, each with its own set of core values. As an alternative, the *List of Values (LOV) scale* was developed to isolate values with more direct marketing applications.⁸⁸

This instrument identifies nine consumer values which can be related to differences in consumption behaviours. It includes the following values: sense of belonging, fun and enjoyment in life, excitement, warm relationships with others, self-fulfilment, being well respected, sense of accomplishment, self-respect and security. This was the instrument used in the studies summarized in Table 4.4 on page 114. Likewise, in a comparative study of French and German consumers, the values of sense of belonging and self-respect were much more popular in Germany, whereas the values of fun and enjoyment in life, self-fulfilment and self-accomplishment were chosen as the most important values in France significantly more often.⁸⁹

However, it should be noted that the cross-cultural validity of such value instruments is, at best, difficult to obtain since, as we have already said, the meaning of values may differ significantly in different cultural contexts.⁹⁰ For example, the LOV did not do very well in a test of its cross-cultural validity.^{91,92}

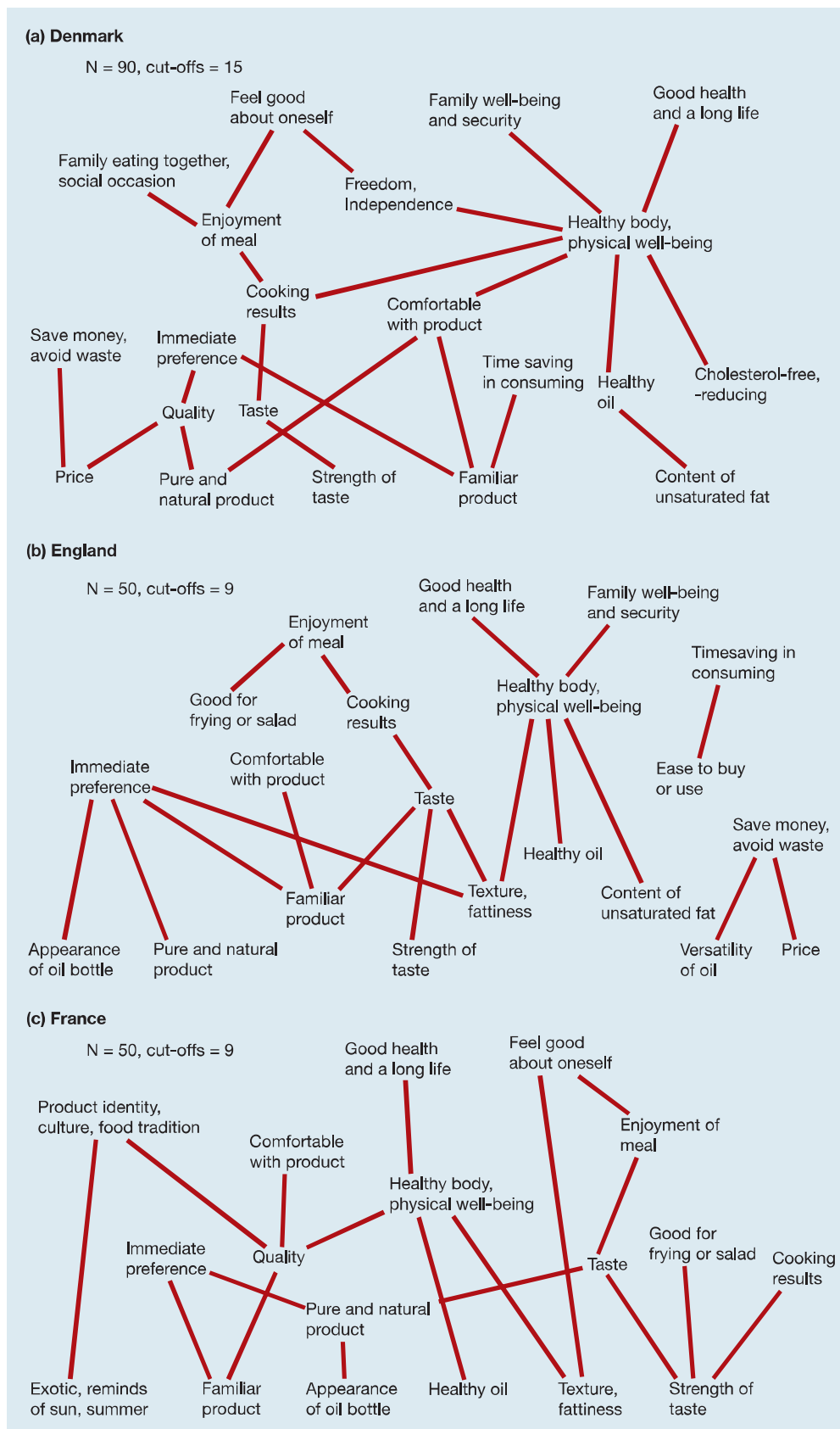
Figure 4.4 The motivational domains of Schwartz value survey**Schwartz value survey**

This very elaborate set of values, containing 56 different values organized in ten so-called motivational domains, has been demonstrated to be among the more cross-culturally valid instruments.⁹³ The structuring of values in interrelated motivational domains provides a theoretical framework for this approach to values which many researchers find satisfactory compared to other value inventories. More specifically, it has been demonstrated to distinguish between cultures⁹⁴ and types of media consumption behaviour⁹⁵ better than the traditional dichotomy of individualism and collectivism. The values are located in a space demarcated by the poles 'openness to change' vs. 'conservation' and 'self-transcendence' vs. 'self-enhancement'. These dimensions seem relatively universal for a lot of syndicated lifestyle and value surveys (see also Chapter 16). A mapping of the motivational domains can be seen in Figure 4.4. The Schwartz value survey was used to profile Danish consumers with environmentally friendly attitudes and behaviour, where it turned out that such values as 'protecting the environment' and 'unity with nature' but also 'mature love', 'broadminded' and 'social justice' characterized the 'green' segment, whereas values such as 'authority', 'social power', 'national security' and 'politeness' were the most characteristic of the non-green segment.⁹⁶ (See also Chapter 9.)

■ THE MEANS-END CHAIN MODEL

- ▶ Another research approach that incorporates values is termed a **means-end chain model**. This approach assumes that very specific product attributes are linked at levels of increasing abstraction to terminal values. The person has valued end-states, and he or she chooses among alternative means to attain these goals. Products are thus valued as the means to an end. Through a technique called **laddering**, consumers' associations between specific attributes and general consequences are uncovered. Consumers are helped to climb up the 'ladder' of abstraction that connects functional product attributes with desired end-states.⁹⁷ Based upon consumer feedback, researchers create *hierarchical value maps* that show how specific product attributes get linked to end-states (see Figure 4.5).

Figure 4.5
Hierarchical
value maps for
vegetable oil in
three countries



Source: N.A. Nielsen, T. Bech-Larsen and K.G. Grunert, 'Consumer purchase motives and product perceptions: a laddering study on vegetable oil in three countries', *Food Quality and Preference* 9(6) (1998): 455-66.

To understand how laddering works, consider somebody who expresses a liking for a light beer. Probing might reveal that this attribute is linked to the consequence of not getting drunk. A consequence of not getting drunk is that he or she will be able to enjoy more interesting conversations, which in turn means that he or she will be more sociable. Finally, better sociability results in better friendship, a terminal value for this person.⁹⁸

Laddering is not without problems, however, since the laddering technique might generate invalid answers if the respondent is pushed up the ladder by too strong an emphasis on the sequence in the means–end chain. Consumers should be allowed to jump back and forth, to make loops and forks and take blind alleys, which requires more skill of the interviewer but is also a more accurate representation of the respondent's thought processes.⁹⁹ Furthermore, it has been argued that in researching the demand for status goods, using laddering techniques can be problematic since motivations for conspicuous consumption are difficult for consumers to express or reveal.¹⁰⁰

MECCAs

► The notion that products are consumed because they are instrumental in attaining more abstract values is central to one application of this technique, called the Means–End Conceptualization of the Components of Advertising Strategy (**MECCAs**). In this approach, researchers first generate a map depicting relationships between functional product or service attributes and terminal values. This information is then used to develop advertising strategy by identifying elements such as the following:¹⁰¹

- *Message elements*: the specific attributes or product features to be depicted.
- *Consumer benefit*: the positive consequences of using the product or service.
- *Executional framework*: the overall style and tone of the advertisement.
- *Leverage point*: the way the message will activate the terminal value by linking it with specific product features.
- *Driving force*: the end value on which the advertising will focus.

This technique was used to develop an advertising strategy for the Danish fish trade organization.¹⁰² In spite of the country's huge fishing industry and ample supply of fresh fish, the Danish consumption of fish per capita was considerably lower than in several other European countries. Researchers used a means–end approach to investigate Danish consumers' attitudes to eating fish. They concluded that some of the main problems were found in the lack of ideas for preparation and variation of fished-based meals among Danish housewives. This was in sharp contrast to the traditional driving force used by the organization, stressing that fish is healthy.¹⁰³

Based on these results, an advertising campaign was created. Instead of its usual emphasis on fish as a healthy food, this time message elements emphasized convenience and good taste. The consumer benefit was quick and easy preparation, which made dinner or lunch an easy task to accomplish. The executional framework was a humorous one. Two middle-aged, traditional-looking people are portrayed in various situations, where the male is sceptical about the idea of eating fish for lunch or dinner. In one of the TV spots, the wife is talking to somebody else over the telephone. Her remarks lead the TV viewers (and the husband listening in the background) to think that they are talking about the other family's sex life ('You do it TWICE a week!' 'It takes FIFTEEN minutes!!!' 'So HE likes that?'). In fact, a friend is telling the wife how she prepares fish for dinner. The leverage point is that these recipes allow the wife to prepare delicious meals very quickly, which in turn provides for a happy family life, the driving force (terminal value). Almost immediately after the campaign, the trade organization registered an increase in the consumption of fresh fish.

Figure 4.5 shows three different hierarchical value maps, or sets of ladders, from a study of consumers' perceptions and motivations with regard to cooking oils. The three

ladders demonstrate some important differences between the three markets. Health is the central concept most often referred to for the Danes and is linked to several personal values. The British also focus on health but the links to personal values are fewer and less differentiated, indicating a lower product involvement. Saving money and avoiding waste is more important to the British than to the other samples. The French focus a lot on previous knowledge of the product, indicating more routine with buying oils. There is also the only culture that links oil (especially olive oil) with cultural identity and fundamental food culture.¹⁰⁴ These ladders illustrate the central importance of cultural and contextual differences for consumers' motivation structures.

Syndicated surveys

A number of companies who track changes in values through large-scale surveys sell the results of these studies to marketers, who often also pay a fee to receive regular updates on changes and trends. This approach originated in the mid-1960s. As we'll see in later chapters, it's often useful to go beyond simple demographics like a person's age to understand the values and preferences a group of people might have in common. This philosophy applies to understanding the youth market – as much as adults would like to lump all young people together, in fact there are important differences among them in terms of what they value and these priorities may mean that they have more in common with a young person halfway around the globe than with the person next door.

The *New World Teen Study* surveyed over 27,000 teenagers in 44 countries and identified six values segments that characterize young people from Cairo to Caracas. Companies like Coca-Cola and Royal Philips Electronics have used the results of this massive segmentation exercise to develop ads that appeal to youth around the world. Table 4.6 summarizes some of the findings from this study.



marketing pitfall

Strongly held values can make life very difficult for marketers who sell personal-care products. This is the case with tampons; 70 per cent of American women use them, but only 100 million out of a potential market of 1.7 billion eligible women around the world do. Resistance to using this product posed a major problem for Tambrands. This company makes only one product, so it needs to sell tampons in as many countries as possible to continue growing. But, Tambrands has trouble selling its feminine hygiene products in some cultures such as Brazil, where many young women fear they will lose their virginity if they use a tampon. A commercial developed for this market included an actress who says in a reassuring voice, 'Of course, you're not going to lose your virginity'.

Prior to launching a new global advertising campaign for Tampax in 26 countries, the firm's advertising agency conducted research and divided the world into three clusters based on residents' resistance to using tampons. Resistance was so intense in Muslim countries that the agency didn't even try to sell there.

In Cluster One (including the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia), women felt comfortable with the idea and offered little resistance. A teaser ad was developed to encourage more frequency of use: 'Should I sleep with it, or not?'

In Cluster Two (including France, Israel, and South Africa), about 50 per cent of women use the product, but some concerns about the loss of virginity remain. To counteract these objections, the marketing strategy focused on obtaining the endorsements of gynaecologists within each country.

In Cluster Three (including Brazil, China, and Russia), Tambrands encountered the greatest resistance. To try to make inroads in these countries, the researchers found that the first priority is simply to explain how to use the product without making women feel squeamish – a challenge they still are trying to puzzle out. If they do – and that's a big if – Tambrands will have changed the consumer behaviour of millions of women and added huge new markets to its customer base in the process.¹⁰⁵

Table 4.6 New World Teen Study

Segment	Key countries	Driving principles	Overview	Marketing approach
Thrills and Chills	Germany, England, Lithuania, Greece, Netherlands, South Africa, United States, Belgium, Canada, Turkey, France, Poland, Japan, Italy, Denmark, Argentina, and Norway	Fun, friends, irreverence, and sensation	Stereotype of the devil-may-care, trying-to-become-independent hedonist. For the most part, they come from affluent or middle-class parents, live mainly in developed countries, and have allowance money to spend.	Respond to sensory stimulation. Tend to get bored easily so stale advertising messages will escape their notice. They want action ads with bells and whistles, humour, novelty, colour, and sound. Edgier than their peers. Constantly seek out the new. First ones to hear of the newest technology or the hippest Web site. Experimenting is second nature. Wear all sorts of body rings and wear their hair in different shades.
Resigned	Denmark, Sweden, Korea, Japan, Norway, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Argentina, Canada, Turkey, England, Spain, France, and Taiwan	Friends, fun, family, and low expectations	Resemble the thrills-and-chills teens, often decorating their bodies with rings and dye. However, they are alienated from society and very pessimistic about their chances for economic success. The punk rockers of the world, who sometimes take drugs and drink to excess. Respond to heavy metal and grunge music that emphasizes the negative and angry side of society.	Do not have as much discretionary income to spend as teens in other segments. Infrequent consumers save for some fast-food, low-ticket clothes items, tobacco, and alcohol. They are drawn to irony and to ads that make fun of the pomposity of society.
World Savers	Hungary, Philippines, Venezuela, Brazil, Spain, Colombia, Belgium, Argentina, Russia, Singapore, France, Poland, Ukraine, Italy, South Africa, Mexico, and England	Environment, humanism, fun, and friends	A long list of do-good global and local causes that spark their interest. The intelligentsia in most countries who do well in school. They are the class and club leaders who join many organizations. They attend the same parties as the thrills-and-chills kids. But, they are more into romance, relationships, and strong friendships. Eagerly attend concerts, operas, and plays. They exhibit a <i>joie de vivre</i> about life and enjoy dancing or drinking at bars and cafés with friends. They love the outdoors as well, including camping, hiking, and other sports activities.	Attracted by honest and sincere messages that tell the truth. Offended by any ad that puts people down or makes fun of another group. Piggyback a promotion with a worthwhile cause.
Quiet Achievers	Thailand, China, Hong Kong, Ukraine, Korea, Lithuania, Russia, and Peru	Success, anonymity, anti-individualism, and social optimism	Value anonymity and prefer to rest in the shadows. They are the least rebellious of all the groups, avoid the limelight and do not ever want to stand out in the crowd. These are the bookish and straight kids who study long hours, are fiercely ambitious and highly goal-directed. Their top priority is to make good grades in school and use higher education to further their career advancement. Most of the quiet achievers live in Asia, especially	Love to purchase stuff. Part of the reward for working diligently is being able to buy products. Their parents will defer to their children's needs when it comes to computers and other technological products that will aid in homework. This group is also keen on music; they are inner directed and adept at creating their own good times. Prefer ads that address the benefits

Table 4.6 (cont'd)

Segment	Key countries	Driving principles	Overview	Marketing approach
			Thailand and China. But these somewhat stereotypical studious types also exist in the United States, where they are sometimes regarded as being techies or nerds.	of a product. They are embarrassed by ads that display rampant sexuality. And they do not respond to the sarcastic or the irreverent.
Bootstrappers	Nigeria, Mexico, United States, India, Chile, Puerto Rico, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, and South Africa	Achievement, individualism, optimism, determination, and power	Most dreamy and childlike of the six segments. They live sheltered and ordered lives that seem bereft of many forms of typical teen fun and wild adult-emulating teen behavior. Spend a lot of time at home, doing homework and helping around the house. Eager for power; they are the politicians in every high school who covet the class offices. They view the use of authority as a means for securing rewards, and they are constantly seeking out recognition. Geographically many of these teens come from emerging nations such as Nigeria and India. In the United States, bootstrappers represent one in every four teens. Moreover, they represent 40% of young African Americans. A major error of U.S. marketers is to misread the size and purchasing power of this ambitious African American segment.	Young yuppies in training. They want premium brands and luxury goods. Bootstrappers are also on the lookout for goods and services that will help them get ahead. They want to dress for success, have access to technology and software, and stay plugged into the world of media and culture to give them a competitive edge. They are attracted by messages that portray aspirations and possibilities for products and their users.
Upholders	Vietnam, Indonesia, Taiwan, China, Italy, Peru, Venezuela, Puerto Rico, India, Philippines, and Singapore	Family, custom, tradition, and respect for individuals	Traditions act as a rigid guideline, and these teens would be hard-pressed to rebel or confront authority. They are content to rest comfortably in the mainstream of life, remaining unnoticed. The girls seek mostly to get married and have families. The boys perceive that they are fated to have jobs similar to their fathers'. Predominate in Asian countries, such as Indonesia and Vietnam that value old traditions and extended family relationships. Teens in these countries are helpful around the home and protective of their siblings. Moreover, many upholders are in Catholic countries where the Church and tradition guide schooling, attitudes, and values.	Advertisers and marketers have had success selling to upholders using youthful, almost childlike communication and fun messages. These are teens that still watch cartoons and are avid media consumers. They are highly involved in both watching and playing sports, particularly basketball and soccer. More than any other group, they plan to live in their country of birth throughout adulthood. Essentially upholders are homebodies. They are deeply rooted in family and community and they like to make purchase decisions that are safe and conform to their parents' values. Brands that take a leadership stance will attract upholders for their risk-free quality value and reliability.

Source: Adapted from 'The six value segments of global youth', *Bandweek* 11, no. 21 (May 22, 2000), 38, based on data initially presented in *The \$100 Billion Allowance: How to Get Your Share of the Global Teen Market* by Elissa Moses (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2000).

■ MATERIALISM: THE ULTIMATE 'WHY' OF CONSUMPTION?

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

Consumption as a goal

Members of 'cargo cults' in the South Pacific literally worshipped cargo that was salvaged from crashed aircraft or washed ashore from ships. These people believed that the ships and planes passing near their islands were piloted by their ancestors, and they tried to attract them to their villages. During the Second World War, they went so far as to construct fake planes from straw in the hope of luring real ones.¹⁰⁶

- ▶ While not everyone literally worships material goods in this way, things do play a central role in many people's lives. **Materialism** refers to the importance people attach to worldly possessions. Westerners in general (and Americans in particular) are often stereotyped as being members of a highly materialistic society where people often gauge their worth and that of others in terms of how much they own. Materialists are more likely to value possessions for their status and appearance-related meanings, whereas those who do not emphasize this value tend to prize products that connect them to other people or that provide them with pleasure in using them.¹⁰⁷ As a result, products valued by high materialists are more likely to be publicly consumed and to be more expensive. A study that compared specific items valued by both types of people found that products associated with high materialists include jewellery, china, or a holiday home, whereas those linked to low materialists included a mother's wedding gown, picture albums, a rocking chair from childhood, or a garden.¹⁰⁸ The priorities of materialism tend to emphasize the well-being of the individual versus the group, which may conflict with family or religious values. That conflict may help to explain why people with highly material values tend to be less happy.¹⁰⁹

In Europe, we often take the existence of an abundance of products and services for granted, until we remember how recent many of these developments are. The commonness of ownership of cars, freezers, telephones and televisions is all a post-1950s' phenomenon. In fact, one way to think about marketing is as a system that provides a certain standard of living to consumers. To some extent, then, our lifestyles are influenced by the standard of living we have come to expect and desire. However, there is evidence that how much money we have does not relate directly to happiness: 'as long as people are not battling poverty, they tend to rate their happiness in the range of 6 or 7, or higher, on a 10-point scale'.¹¹⁰

The living standard of consumers in many countries, particularly in Asia, has also increased considerably in recent years. And new products are steadily becoming 'necessities'. A Gallup study of 22,500 adults in 17 European countries found that ownership of such items as microwave ovens, VCRs and mobile phones has 'exploded' in recent years.¹¹¹ The mobile phone has become the symbol of the mass market in China where average income remains about \$1,000 per annum. 'China is now the world's largest market for cellphone subscriptions, but is not the largest for handsets because frugal Chinese buyers hold on to them for an average of 29 months, longer than in many other markets'.¹¹² Advertising encourages this emphasis on consumption and increasingly portrays consumption as an end in itself, rather than as a means to attain well-being.¹¹³

Of course, not everyone stresses the value of materialism to the same degree. Individual differences have been found among consumers in terms of this emphasis. One approach partitions the value of materialism into three categories: success, centrality and happiness.¹¹⁴ The scale items used to measure these categories are shown in Table 4.7.

Cross-cultural differences have also been analysed. One study of 12 countries resulted in the following ranking in degree of materialism from highest to lowest: Romania,

Table 4.7 A scale to measure categories of materialism

Category	Scale items
Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'I admire people who own expensive homes, cars and clothes.' • 'Some of the most important achievements in life include acquiring material possessions.' • 'I don't put much emphasis on the amount of material objects people own as a sign of success.'* • 'The things I own say a lot about how well I'm doing in life.' • 'I like to own things that impress people.' • 'I don't pay much attention to the material objects other people own.'* • 'I usually buy only the things I need.'*
Centrality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'I try to keep my life simple, as far as possessions are concerned.'* • 'The things I own aren't all that important to me.'* • 'I enjoy spending money on things that aren't practical.' • 'Buying things gives me a lot of pleasure.' • 'I like a lot of luxury in my life.' • 'I put less emphasis on material things than most people I know.'* • 'I have all the things I really need to enjoy life.'*
Happiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'My life would be better if I owned certain things I don't have.' • 'I wouldn't be any happier if I owned nicer things.'* • 'I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things.' • 'It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I can't afford to buy all the things I'd like.'

Note: Respondents indicate whether they agree or disagree with each item on a five-point scale.
 *Items with an asterisk are reverse scored.

Source: Adapted from Marsha L. Richins and Scott Dawson, 'A consumer values orientation for materialism and its measurement: Scale development and validation', *Journal of Consumer Research* 20 (December 1992), Table 3. Reprinted with permission of The University of Chicago Press.

USA, New Zealand, Ukraine, Germany, Turkey, Israel, Thailand, India, UK, France and Sweden.¹¹⁵ From these results, several conclusions can be drawn. First of all, materialism is not directly linked to affluence, as has often been proposed. On the contrary, some of the most materialistic cultures are the ones where most consumers (feel that they) lack a lot of things. But this obviously is not the only explanation, since the United States, New Zealand and Germany score relatively high as well, and India scores low. Since neither wealth, 'Westernness', nor any other single variable can explain these differences, it must be concluded that materialism is a consequence of several factors, including such things as social stability, access to information, reference models, as well as historical developments and cultural values.

This study was followed up by another based on qualitative depth interviews, adding more insight into consumers' different ways of coping with their own materialism, which was generally perceived as something negative. Basically, two ways of dealing with materialism were found: either you condemn materialism and provide an explanation why your personal materialism is a particularly good one, or you admit to being a 'bad' materialist but provide an excuse for being so. The different kinds of attitudes towards materialism are listed below:

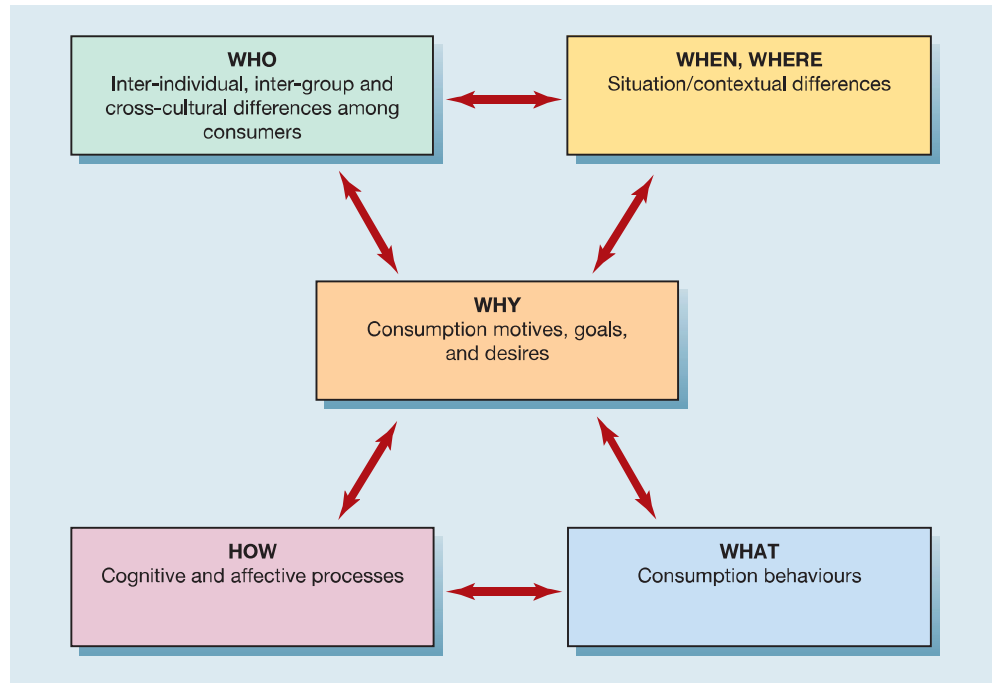
- *Justifying materialism (my materialism is a good materialism)*
 - 'I am a passionate connoisseur, not a vulgar materialist – I have passion for and knowledge about the things I collect, it is not just a matter of having as much as possible.'
 - 'Terminal materialism is bad, but instrumental materialism is good, for instance to provide security for my family.'
 - 'I spend my money so that I can share my goods with others and give them pleasure'.
- *Excusing (materialism is bad, but . . .)*
 - 'Society (or the media, or the environment) made me do it.'
 - 'It's just the way of the modern world – everybody is like that.'
 - 'I deserve it since I have been deprived of opportunities for so long' (e.g. people in newly marketized economies).¹¹⁶

The disenchantment among some people with a culture dominated by big corporations shows up in events that promote uniqueness and anti-corporate statements. Probably the most prominent movement in the USA is the annual Burning Man project. This is a week-long annual anti-market event, where thousands of people gather at Black Rock Desert in Nevada to express themselves and proclaim their emancipation from Corporate America. The highlight of the festival involves the burning of a huge figure of a man made out of wood that symbolizes the freedom from market domination. Ironically, some critics point out that even this high-profile anti-market event is being commercialized as it becomes more popular each year.¹¹⁷



Participants at the anti-corporate Burning Man Festival find novel ways to express their individuality.

Courtesy of Professor Robert Kozinets

Figure 4.6 Contextualizing the 'why' of consumption

Source: Adapted from S. Ratneshwar, D. G. Mick and C. Huffman, 'Introduction', in S. Ratneshwar, D. G. Mick and C. Huffman, eds, *The Why of Consumption* (London: Routledge, 2000): 1-8.

The 'why' of consumption

As we have seen in this chapter, there are many reasons why we want to engage in consumption activities. One of the main lessons to retain is probably that the 'why' question cannot stand alone, but must be asked with reference to a number of other questions such as 'who?', indicating personal, group and cultural differences; 'when?' and 'where?', indicating situational and contextual differences; 'how?', pointing to the reflexive and emotional processes involved; and finally 'what?' kind of consumption items and consumer behaviour are we talking about. These dimensions, which are all to some extent addressed later in this book, are illustrated in Figure 4.6.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Marketers have claimed that they try to satisfy consumer needs, but the reasons why 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 key role in many purchase decisions. Hence there has been a shift away from talking about needs and towards talking about goals, wants and desires.
- As demonstrated by Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the same product can satisfy different needs (as well as different goals, wants and desires), depending on the consumer's state

at the time. In addition to his or her objective situation (have basic physiological needs already been satisfied?), the consumer's degree of involvement with the product must be considered.

- Product involvement can range from very low where purchase decisions are made via inertia to very high where consumers form very strong bonds with what they buy. In addition to considering the degree to which consumers are involved with a product, marketing strategists also need to assess the extent of their involvement with marketing messages and with the purchase situation.
- Since consumers are not necessarily able or willing to communicate their underlying desires to marketers, various techniques such as projective tests can be employed to assess desires indirectly.
- 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 sets them 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.
- *Materialism* refers to the importance people attach to worldly possessions. Materialism may be considered a more general value underlying other consumer values, thus reassuring us that an obvious way of realizing one's values is through consumption.

► KEY TERMS

Acculturation (p. 115)

Approach-approach conflict (p. 95)

Approach-avoidance conflict (p. 96)

Avoidance-avoidance conflict (p. 97)

Core values (p. 113)

Cult products (p. 107)

Desire (p. 103)

Drive (p. 90)

Drive theory (p. 92)

Enculturation (p. 115)

Expectancy theory (p. 93)

Flow state (p. 107)

Freudian theory (p. 100)

Goal (p. 90)

Homeostasis (p. 92)

Inertia (p. 106)

Instrumental values (p. 118)

Involvement (p. 105)

Laddering (p. 119)

Materialism (p. 125)

Means-end chain (p. 119)

MECCAs (p. 121)

Motivation (p. 90)

Motivational research (p. 101)

Need (p. 90)

Terminal values (p. 118)

Theory of cognitive dissonance (p. 95)

Value (p. 113)

Value system (p. 114)

Want (p. 92)



CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

- 1** Describe three types of motivational conflicts, citing an example of each from current marketing campaigns.
- 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?
- 3** What is the difference between a want and a desire? Think about your own feelings and try to describe the differences.
- 4** Devise separate promotional strategies for an article of clothing, each of which stresses one of the levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
- 5** Collect a sample of ads that appeals to consumers' values. What value is being communicated in each ad, and how is this done? Is this an effective approach to designing a marketing communication?
- 6** What is your conception of paradise? Construct a collage consisting of images you personally associate with paradise, and compare the results with those of your classmates. Do you detect any common themes?
- 7** 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?
- 8** 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?
- 9** Interview members of a celebrity fan club. Describe their level of involvement with the 'product' and devise some marketing opportunities to reach this group.
- 10** 'High involvement is just a fancy term for expensive.' Do you agree?
- 11** 'University students' concerns about ethics, the environment and vegetarianism are just a passing fad; a way to look "cool".' Do you agree?
- 12** 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?
- 13** 'Although more money delivers big increases in happiness when you are poor, each extra dollar makes less difference once your basic needs have been met.'¹¹⁸ Debate this viewpoint in class.
- 14** Some market analysts see a shift in values among young people. They claim that this generation has not had a lot of stability in their lives. They are fed up with superficial relationships, and are yearning for a return to tradition. This change is reflected in attitudes toward marriage and family. One survey of 22-24-year-old women found that 82 per cent thought motherhood was the most important job in

the world. *Brides* magazine reports a swing towards traditional weddings – 80 per cent of brides today are tossing their garters. Daddy walks 78 per cent of them down the aisle.¹¹⁹ So, what do you think about this? Are young people indeed returning to the values of their parents (or even their grandparents)? How have these changes influenced your perspective on marriage and family?

NOTES

1. See Susan Baker, Keith E. Thompson and Julia Engelken, 'Mapping the values driving organic food choice: Germany vs the UK', *European Journal of Marketing* 38 (2004): 995ff. Their study showed that although there were similarities between German and UK consumers of organic products in terms of values related to health, well-being and enjoyment, there were differences in terms of product attributes linked to achieving these values. A major difference was that UK consumers did not necessarily link organic food with the environment.
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6. Paul Hower, 'Consuming Gardens: Representations of Paradise, Nostalgia and Postmodernism', in Darach Turley and Stephen Brown, eds, *European Advances in Consumer Research* 6 (Valdosta, GA: Association for Consumer Research, 2003): 327–31.
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8. Jean Baudrillard, 'La genèse idéologique des besoins', *Cahiers internationaux de sociologie* 47 (1969): 45–68.
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15. See David C. McClelland, *Studies in Motivation* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1955).
16. Mary Kay Ericksen and M. Joseph Sirgy, 'Achievement Motivation and Clothing Preferences of White-Collar Working Women', in Michael R. Solomon, ed., *The Psychology of Fashion* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1985): 357–69.
17. See Stanley Schachter, *The Psychology of Affiliation* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1959).
18. Eugene M. Fodor and Terry Smith, 'The power motive as an influence on group decision making', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 42 (1982): 178–85.
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ATTITUDES

5

chapter



It's a lazy Wednesday night, and Leah, Lynn and Nicki are hanging out at Nicki's flat in Manchester doing some channel-surfing. Leah clicks to the sports cable and the three friends see there's a women's soccer game on, being televised from America. Leah has been a fan for as long as she can remember - perhaps as a result of having three older brothers and growing up in a house which had Manchester United souvenirs in every room. She loves the subtle intensity of the game - the traps, the moves, the way players make it look easy to move a ball around a huge field as if it were a small patch of grass. Further, she's proud of Manchester United's rich history as a club, and its success as a business operation. But don't ask her opinion of having her beloved team's ownership taken over by some American businessman who doesn't even understand the game!¹ Nicki's a glutton for thrills and chills: she converted to soccer after seeing Mick Jagger singing along with the British crowd in the stadium as the English team battled the Argentinians in an exciting, dramatic match in the 1998 World Cup. Lynn, on the other hand, doesn't know a corner kick from a penalty kick. For her, the most interesting part of the match was the footage being shown over and over of the US player Brandi Chastain's celebrating her successful penalty kick which won the match by taking her shirt off to reveal her sports bra. Lynn even bought one a few weeks later. Still, soccer doesn't really ring her chimes - but as long as she gets to hang out with her girlfriends she doesn't really care if they watch non-contact sports like soccer or contact sports like *The Jerry Springer Show* or *Big Brother*!

■ THE POWER OF ATTITUDES

Leah is just the kind of fan sponsoring companies like Nike, Gatorade and Adidas hope will turn women's soccer into an ongoing source of sports fanaticism. In America, attitudes towards the game have changed dramatically since the US women's team lost in the 1996 semi-finals in Sweden before a crowd of less than 3,000. The 1999 World Cup was won before an audience of over 90,000 screaming fans, many of whom were soccer mums who saw the players as important role models for their young daughters. In 1998 a record 7.5 million women and girls enrolled for soccer teams in the United States. There, women now represent just under half of all soccer player registrations.² These kinds of growth figures are not to be found in Europe. Soccer has a much richer, longer tradition here, and has been a sport dominated by male patronage at the stadiums and male viewership on the television. While amateur soccer clubs for women can be found in the UK and on the Continent, they are not nearly as popular as in the United States, and have to compete with other sports which attract female participants, such as field hockey.

On the other hand, following Chastain's exuberant show of skin there has been much written in the United States over the so-called 'babe factor' as some critics wonder whether women's athletics will ever be taken seriously by male fans. Others feel that attitudes towards the game are more complex than that; they argue that sex appeal does not have to be sacrificed for professionalism. The big question is whether these positive feelings will endure. The goal of the Women's World Cup is to establish a women's professional league over the next few years. Time will tell if this ambitious project will score big or be red-carded and left to dwindle on the sidelines in the United States.³ To score big in professional sports in the United States, or in Europe, is all a question of attitudes, and the dominant attitude among European fans is that women's soccer just isn't that important, at least so far. As you'll see throughout this book, attitudes can vary significantly along gender lines, and from one culture to another.

- ▶ The term **attitude** is widely used in popular culture. You might be asked, 'What is your attitude towards abortion?' A parent might scold, 'Young man, I don't like your attitude.' Some bars even euphemistically refer to Happy Hour as 'an attitude adjustment period'. For our purposes, though, an attitude is a lasting, general evaluation of people (including oneself), objects, advertisements or issues.⁴ Anything towards which one has an attitude is called an **attitude object (A_o)**.

This chapter will consider the contents of an attitude, how attitudes are formed, how they can be measured, and review some of the surprisingly complex relationships between attitudes and behaviour. Both as a theoretical concept, and as a tool to be used in the marketplace, the notion and dynamics of attitudes remain one of the most studied and applied of all behavioural constructs.⁵ In the next chapter, we'll take a closer look at how attitudes can be changed – certainly an issue of prime importance to marketers.

■ THE CONTENT OF ATTITUDES

An attitude is *lasting* because it tends to endure over time. It is *general* because it applies to more than a momentary event, like hearing a loud noise (though over time you might develop a negative attitude towards all loud noises). Consumers have attitudes towards very product-specific behaviours (such as using Mentodent rather than Colgate toothpaste), as well as towards more general consumption-related behaviours (for example, how often you should brush your teeth). Attitudes help to determine who a person goes out with, what music he or she listens to, whether he or she will recycle or discard cans, or whether he or she chooses to become a consumer researcher for a living.

The functions of attitudes

- The **functional theory of attitudes** was initially developed by the psychologist Daniel Katz to explain how attitudes facilitate social behaviour.⁶ According to this pragmatic approach, attitudes exist because they serve a function for the person. That is, they are determined by a person's motives. Consumers who expect that they will need to deal with similar information at a future time will be more likely to start forming attitudes in anticipation of this event.⁷

Two people can each have the same attitude towards an object for very different reasons. As a result, it can be helpful for a marketer to know why an attitude is held before attempting to change it. The following are attitude functions as identified by Katz:

- *Utilitarian function.* The utilitarian function is related to the basic principles of reward and punishment. We develop some of our attitudes towards products simply on the basis of whether these products provide pleasure or pain. If a person likes the taste of a cheeseburger, that person will develop a positive attitude towards cheeseburgers. Ads that stress straightforward product benefits (e.g. you should drink Diet Coke 'just for the taste of it') appeal to the utilitarian function.
- *Value-expressive function.* Attitudes that perform a value-expressive function express the consumer's central values or self-concept. A person forms a product attitude not because of its objective benefits, but because of what the product says about him or her as a person (e.g. 'What sort of woman reads *Elle*?'). Value-expressive attitudes are highly relevant to lifestyle analyses, where consumers cultivate a cluster of activities, interests and opinions to express a particular social identity.
- *Ego-defensive function.* Attitudes that are formed to protect the person, from either external threats or internal feelings, perform an ego-defensive function. An early marketing study indicated that housewives in the 1950s resisted the use of instant coffee because it threatened their conception of themselves as capable homemakers.⁸ Products that promise to help a man project a 'macho' image (e.g. Marlboro cigarettes) may be appealing to his insecurities about his masculinity. Another example of this function is deodorant campaigns that stress the dire, embarrassing consequences of underarm odour.
- *Knowledge function.* Some attitudes are formed as the result of a need for order, structure or meaning. This need is often present when a person is in an ambiguous situation or is confronted with a new product (e.g. 'Bayer wants you to know about pain relievers').

An attitude can serve more than one function, but in many cases a particular one will be dominant. By identifying the dominant function a product serves for consumers (i.e. what benefits it provides), marketers can emphasize these benefits in their communications and packaging. Ads relevant to the function prompt more favourable thoughts about what is being marketed and can result in a heightened preference for both the ad and the product.

One American study determined that for most people coffee serves more of a utilitarian function than a value-expressive function. As a consequence, subjects responded more positively to copy for a fictitious brand of coffee that read, 'The delicious, hearty flavour and aroma of Sterling Blend coffee comes from a blend of the freshest coffee beans' (i.e. a utilitarian appeal) than they did to copy that read, 'The coffee you drink says something about the type of person you are. It can reveal your rare, discriminating taste' (i.e. the value-expressive function). In European countries with a strong 'coffee culture', such as Germany, the Benelux and Scandinavian countries, ads are more likely to stress the value-expressive function, in which the more social and ritualistic aspects of coffee consumption are expressed.⁹

As we saw in the experiences of the three Manchester women watching a soccer game, the importance of an attitude object may differ quite a bit for different people. Understanding the attitude's centrality to an individual and to others who share similar characteristics can be useful to marketers who are trying to devise strategies that will appeal to different customer segments. A study of football game attendance illustrates that varying levels of commitment result in different fan 'profiles'.¹⁰ The study identified three distinct clusters of fans:¹¹

- One cluster consisted of the real diehard fans like Leah who were highly committed to their team and who displayed an enduring love of the game. To reach these fans, the researchers recommended that sports marketers should focus on providing them with greater sports knowledge and relate their attendance to their personal goals and values.
- A second cluster was like Nicki – their attitudes were based on the unique, self-expressive experience provided by the game. They enjoyed the stimulation of cheering for a team and the drama of the competition itself. These people are more likely to be 'brand switchers', fair-weather fans who shift allegiances when the home team no longer provides the thrills they need. This segment can be appealed to by publicizing aspects of the visiting teams, such as advertising the appearance of stars who are likely to give the fans a game they will remember.
- A third cluster was like Lynn – they were looking for camaraderie above all. These consumers attend games primarily to take part in small-group activities such as a pre- or post-game party which may accompany the event. Marketers could appeal to this cluster by providing improved peripheral benefits, such as making it easier for groups to meet at the stadium, improving parking, and offering multiple-unit pricing.

The ABC model of attitudes and hierarchies of effects

Most researchers agree that an attitude has three components: affect, behaviour and cognition.

- ▶ **Affect** refers to the way a consumer feels about an attitude object. **Behaviour** involves the person's intentions to do something with regard to an attitude object (but, as will be discussed later, an intention does not always result in an actual behaviour).
- ▶ **Cognition** refers to the beliefs a consumer has about an attitude object. These three components of an attitude can be remembered as the ABC model of attitudes.

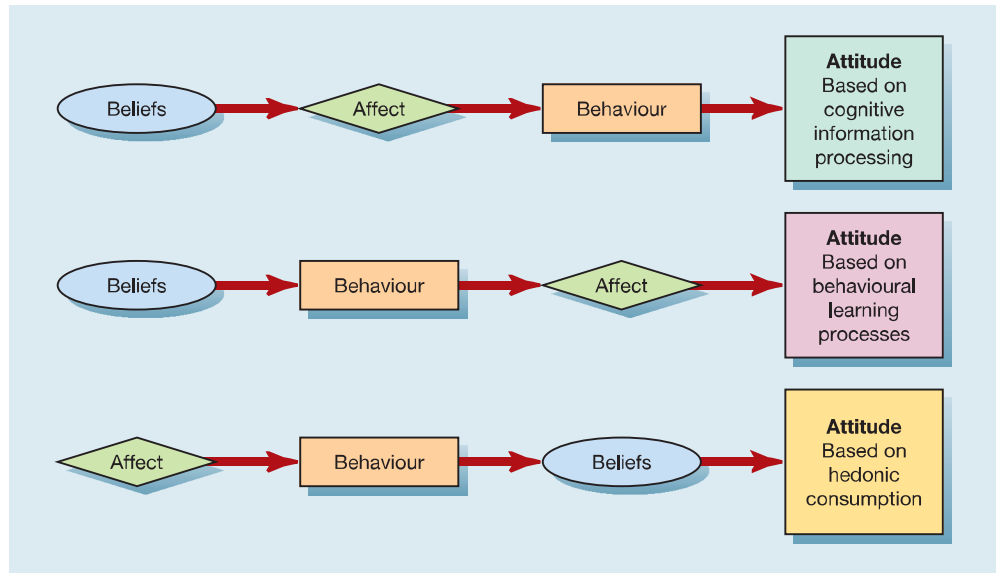
This model emphasizes the interrelationships between knowing, feeling and doing. Consumers' attitudes towards a product cannot be determined simply by identifying their beliefs about it. For example, a researcher may find that shoppers 'know' a particular digital camera has a 10X optical zoom lens, auto-focus and can also shoot *QuickTime Movies*, but such findings do not indicate whether they feel these attributes are good, bad or irrelevant, or whether they would actually buy the camera.

While all three components of an attitude are important, their relative importance will vary depending upon a consumer's level of motivation with regard to the attitude object.

- ▶ Attitude researchers have developed the concept of a **hierarchy of effects** to explain the relative impact of the three components. Each hierarchy specifies that a fixed sequence of steps occurs en route to an attitude. Three different hierarchies are summarized in Figure 5.1.

The standard learning hierarchy

Leah's positive attitude towards soccer closely resembles the process by which most attitudes have been assumed to be constructed. A consumer approaches a product decision as a problem-solving process. First, he or she forms beliefs about a product by accumulating knowledge (beliefs) regarding relevant attributes. Next, the consumer evaluates these beliefs and forms a feeling about the product (affect).¹² Over time, Leah assembled

Figure 5.1 Three hierarchies of effects

information about the sport, began to recognize the players, and learned which teams were superior to others. Finally, based on this evaluation, the consumer engages in a relevant behaviour, such as buying the product or supporting a particular team by wearing its shirt. This careful choice process often results in the type of loyalty displayed by Leah: the consumer ‘bonds’ with the product over time and is not easily persuaded to experiment with other brands. The standard learning hierarchy assumes that a consumer is highly involved in making a purchase decision.¹³ The person is motivated to seek out a lot of information, carefully weigh alternatives, and come to a thoughtful decision. As we saw in Chapter 4, this process is likely to occur if the decision is important to the consumer or in some way central to the consumer’s self-concept. If you understand the level of fan support for Manchester United, then you’ll appreciate just how central Leah’s attitudes about soccer (or, in this case, Manchester United) are for her.

While attitudes that Leah holds towards Manchester United may be well understood to be positive, it is not always an easy and straightforward task to assume that any related product purchases she makes will be consistent with her positive attitudes towards the team. Imagine that Leah is considering the purchase of some Nike soccer shoes for herself, and as part of gathering information about the shoes, she comes across an article on globalization, and Nike’s use of outsourcing the labour for making soccer shoes to factories in low labour cost countries such as Vietnam. Leah’s attitudes towards globalization, coupled with her own cognitive beliefs about the labour conditions in these factors may in fact lead her to have a negative affect towards the Nike shoes. At the same time, Leah’s attitude towards buying a well-made soccer shoe at a very competitive price might be quite positive!

The low-involvement hierarchy

In contrast to Leah, Nicki’s interest in the attitude object (soccer) is at best lukewarm. She is not particularly knowledgeable about the sport, and she may have an emotional response to an exciting game but not to a specific team. Nicki is typical of a consumer who forms an attitude via the *low-involvement hierarchy of effects*. In this sequence, the consumer does not initially have a strong preference for one brand over another, but instead



While Leah may have very positive attitudes towards soccer, and for the soccer boot made by one of her favourite brands, Nike, she still needs to sort out her conflicting attitudes towards globalization, and labour practices, which Nike and other shoe manufacturers use.

Photo: Gary Bamossy

acts on the basis of limited knowledge and then forms an evaluation only after the product has been purchased or used.¹⁴ The attitude is likely to come about through behavioural learning, in which the consumer's choice is reinforced by good or bad experiences with the product after purchase. Nicki will probably be more likely to tune in to future games if they continue to have the same level of drama and excitement as the England–Argentina match.

The possibility that consumers simply don't care enough about many decisions to assemble a set of product beliefs carefully and then evaluate them is important, because it implies that all of the concern about influencing beliefs and carefully communicating information about product attributes may be largely wasted. Consumers aren't necessarily going to pay attention anyway; they are more likely to respond to simple stimulus–response connections when making purchase decisions. For example, a consumer choosing between paper towels might remember that 'Brand X absorbs more quickly than Brand Y', rather than bothering to compare systematically all of the brands on the shelf.

The notion of low involvement on the part of consumers is a bitter pill for some marketers to swallow. Who wants to admit that what they market is not very important or involving? A brand manager for, say, a brand of chewing gum or cat food may find it hard to believe that consumers don't put that much thought into purchasing her product because she herself spends many of her waking (and perhaps sleeping) hours thinking about it.

For marketers, the ironic silver lining to this low-involvement cloud is that, under these conditions, consumers are not motivated to process a lot of complex brand-related information. Instead, they will be swayed by principles of behavioural learning, such as the simple responses caused by conditioned brand names, point-of-purchase displays, and so on. This results in what we might call the *involvement paradox*: the less important the product is to consumers, the more important are many of the marketing stimuli (e.g. packages, jingles) that must be devised to sell it.

The experiential hierarchy

In recent years researchers have begun to stress the significance of emotional response as a central aspect of an attitude. According to the experiential hierarchy of effects,



'Smokers are more sociable than others . . . while it lasts.' This Norwegian ad represents the many anti-smoking campaigns running in European markets.

John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

consumers act on the basis of their emotional reactions (just as Lynn enjoys watching TV with her friends, regardless of what is on). Although the factors of beliefs and behaviour are recognized as playing a part, a consumer's overall evaluation of an attitude object is considered by many to be the core of an attitude.

This perspective highlights the idea that attitudes can be strongly influenced by intangible product attributes such as package design, and by consumers' reactions to accompanying stimuli such as advertising and even the brand name. As discussed in Chapter 4, resulting attitudes will be affected by consumers' hedonic motivations, such as how the product makes them feel or the fun its use will provide. Numerous studies indicate that the mood a person is in when exposed to a marketing message influences how the ad is processed, the likelihood that the information presented will be remembered, and how the person will feel about the advertised item and related products in the future.¹⁵

One important debate about the experiential hierarchy concerns the independence of cognition and affect. On the one hand, the *cognitive-affective model* argues that an affective judgement is the last step in a series of cognitive processes. Earlier steps include the sensory registration of stimuli and the retrieval of meaningful information from memory to categorize these stimuli.¹⁶

On the other hand, the *independence hypothesis* takes the position that affect and cognition involve two separate, partially independent systems; affective responses do not always require prior cognitions.¹⁷ The number one song in the 'Top Ten' hit parade may possess the same attributes as many other songs (dominant bass guitar, raspy vocals, persistent downbeat), but beliefs about these attributes cannot explain why one song becomes a classic while another sharing the same characteristics ends up in the bargain bin at the local record shop. The independence hypothesis does not eliminate the role of cognition in experience. It simply balances this traditional, rational emphasis on calculated decision-making by paying more attention to the impact of aesthetic, subjective experience. This type of holistic processing is more likely to occur when the product is perceived as primarily expressive or delivers sensory pleasure rather than utilitarian benefits.¹⁸

There's more to marketing than product attitudes

Marketers who are concerned with understanding consumers' attitudes have to contend with an even more complex issue: in decision-making situations, people form attitudes

towards objects other than the product itself that can influence their ultimate selections. One additional factor to consider is attitudes towards the act of buying in general. As we'll see later in the chapter, sometimes people are reluctant, embarrassed or just too lazy to expend the effort to obtain a desired product or service.

In addition, consumers' reactions to a product, over and above their feelings about the product itself, are influenced by their evaluations of its advertising. Our evaluation of a product can be determined solely by our appraisal of how it is depicted in marketing communications – that is, we don't hesitate to form attitudes about products we've never even seen personally, much less used.

- ▶ The **attitude towards the advertisement (A_{ad})** is defined as a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion. Determinants of A_{ad} include the viewer's attitude towards the advertiser, evaluations of the ad execution itself, the mood evoked by the ad and the degree to which the ad affects viewers' arousal levels.¹⁹ A viewer's feelings about the context in which an ad appears can also influence brand attitudes. For example, attitudes about an ad and the brand depicted will be influenced if the consumer sees the ad while watching a favourite TV programme.²⁰ The effects demonstrated by A_{ad} emphasize the importance of an ad's entertainment value in the purchase process.²¹

The feelings generated by advertising can have a direct impact on brand attitudes. Commercials can evoke a wide range of emotional responses, from disgust to happiness. Further, there is evidence that emotional responses will vary from one group of consumers to another. In an empirical study of students and housewives in Belgium and Holland, the results showed that the Belgians were more positive towards the hedonic and sociocultural aspects of advertising than their Dutch counterparts. In the UK, Ford's ad campaign research on the Ford Ka, which is targeting an image-oriented market, showed it annoyed 41 per cent of 55–64-year-olds, compared with only 18 per cent of 25–34-year-olds. These feelings can be influenced both by the way the ad is done (i.e. the specific advertising execution) and by the consumer's reactions to the advertiser's motives. For example, many advertisers who are trying to craft messages for adolescents and young adults are encountering problems because this age group, having grown up in a 'marketing society', tends to be sceptical about attempts to persuade them to buy things.²² These reactions can, in turn, influence memory for advertising content.²³ At least three emotional dimensions have been identified in commercials: pleasure, arousal and intimidation.²⁴ Specific types of feelings that can be generated by an ad include the following:²⁵

- *Upbeat feelings* – amused, delighted, playful.
- *Warm feelings* – affectionate, contemplative, hopeful.
- *Negative feelings* – critical, defiant, offended.



**marketing
pitfall**

Is there a European attitude towards humour in advertising?

'One of the reasons the use of humour is so widespread is that it is such a versatile tool. 'It has a surprisingly broad range of applications. It can act as a razor-sharp discriminator, allowing advertisers to address very tightly defined demographic and attitudinal segments, but because humour is universal it can also act as a catch-all, a way of appealing to everyone,' says advertising psychologist David Lewis.

Humour may be universal, but few nations use it to the extent it is used in the UK. Research carried out three years ago by the University of Luton into the devices used in beer advertising found that 88 per cent of British beer ads used humour, compared with a third of Dutch beer ads and only 10 per cent of German beer commercials. Brits' reliance on humour

reflects historic and cultural factors peculiar to this country, say commentators. A major ingredient is our antipathy to 'the sell', argues writer and communications consultant Paul Twivy, who has written comedy scripts for television and run a major advertising agency. 'It's a feature of the British malaise. We are embarrassed about the hard sell. Germany for instance has a tradition of revering engineering, so they are quite happy to talk unironically about product quality. We on the other hand still look down on commerce and value amateurism and effortless success in a way that can be traced back to the nineteenth century. So humour which entertains is a way of selling, while not being seen to sell.' Others say that it reflects a narrow range of emotional responses and attitudes within the national culture. 'Other countries are much more open about expressing a wide range of attitudes. We tend to be repressed and self-deprecating and consider it rude to wear our emotions on our sleeve. So we use humour as a way of not expressing what we really feel,' says Andy Nairn, joint planning director at advertising agency Miles Calcraft Briginshaw Duffy. The upshot is that American advertising, for instance, has a much wider emotional repertoire than British, using joy, love, ambition and desire in a way that would simply make British audiences gag.²⁶ How do you respond to humorous ads from different countries in Europe? Do they all strike you as 'funny', and does the approach improve your attitude towards the advertiser's sponsor?

■ FORMING ATTITUDES

We all have lots of attitudes, and we don't usually question how we got them. No one is born with the conviction that, say, Pepsi is better than Coke or that heavy metal music liberates the soul. Where do these attitudes come from?

An attitude can form in several different ways, depending on the particular hierarchy of effects in operation. It can occur because of classical conditioning, in which an attitude object, such as the name Pepsi, is repeatedly paired with a catchy jingle ('You're in the Pepsi Generation . . .'). Or it can be formed through instrumental conditioning, in which consumption of the attitude object is reinforced (Pepsi quenches the thirst). Alternatively, the learning of an attitude can be the outcome of a very complex cognitive process. For example, a teenager may come to model the behaviour of friends and media figures who drink Pepsi because she believes that this act will enable her to fit in with the desirable images of the Pepsi Generation.

It is thus important to distinguish between types of attitudes, since not all are formed the same way.²⁷ A highly brand-loyal consumer like Leah, the Manchester United fan, has an enduring, deeply held positive attitude towards an attitude object, and this involvement will be difficult to weaken. On the other hand, another consumer like Nicki, who likes the drama and excitement more than the subtle aspects of soccer, may have a mildly positive attitude towards a product but be quite willing to abandon it when something better comes along. This section will consider the differences between strongly and weakly held attitudes and briefly review some of the major theoretical perspectives that have been developed to explain how attitudes form and relate to one another in the minds of consumers.

Levels of commitment to an attitude

Consumers vary in their commitment to an attitude, and the degree of commitment is related to their level of involvement with the attitude object, as follows:²⁸

- *Compliance.* At the lowest level of involvement, compliance, an attitude is formed because it helps in gaining rewards or avoiding punishments from others. This

attitude is very superficial: it is likely to change when the person's behaviour is no longer monitored by others or when another option becomes available. A person may drink Pepsi because that is the brand the café sells and it is too much trouble to go elsewhere for a Coca-Cola.

- *Identification.* A process of identification occurs when attitudes are formed in order for the consumer to be similar to another person or group. Advertising that depicts the social consequences of choosing some products over others is relying on the tendency of consumers to imitate the behaviour of desirable models.
- *Internalization.* At a high level of involvement, deep-seated attitudes are internalized and become part of the person's value system. These attitudes are very difficult to change because they are so important to the individual. For example, many consumers had strong attitudes towards Coca-Cola and reacted quite negatively when the company attempted to switch to the New Coke formula. This allegiance to Coke was obviously more than a minor preference for these people: the brand had become intertwined with their social identities, taking on patriotic and nostalgic properties.

The consistency principle

Have you ever heard someone say, 'Pepsi is my favourite soft drink. It tastes terrible', or 'I love my husband. He's the biggest idiot I've ever met'? Perhaps not very often, because these beliefs or evaluations are not consistent with one another. 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. This desire means that, if necessary, consumers will change their thoughts, feelings or behaviours to make them consistent with their other experiences. The consistency principle is an important reminder that attitudes are not formed in a vacuum. A significant determinant of the way an attitude object will be evaluated is how it fits with other, related attitudes already held by the consumer.



marketing
pitfall

World falls out of love with US brands?

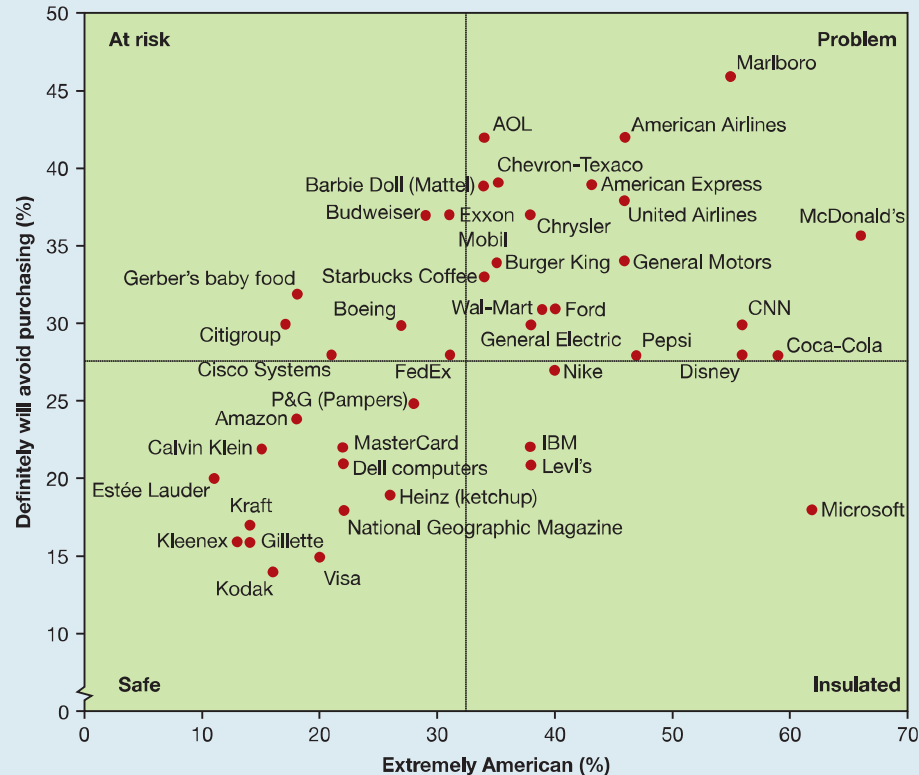
'It is no accident that 64 of the most valuable 100 global brands, as measured by Interbrand, are owned by US companies. For more than half a century, the US and its products have stood for progress, glamour and freedom in the minds of consumers around the world. Yet there seems to be a growing challenge for US companies in the attitudes of people such as John McNally, a Scottish management consultant living in Brussels, whose boycott of US products goes as far as asking that his four-year-old son not be given Coca-Cola at birthday parties. 'I used to have a lot of respect for America; now there is mostly fear,' says Mr McNally. 'You feel pretty powerless, but the one thing you can do is stop buying American products.'

There is little doubt that there are more Mr McNallys in the world today than there were before Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay became household names. Poll after poll has shown that allegations of human rights abuses and the failure to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq have tarnished the international reputation of the US.

Yet geopolitics seems to be easily left behind when shoppers get to the till. Those activists who express their anger at the US through conscious boycotts of its companies remain a small minority. The bigger question worrying the business world is whether the opinion poll data point to a more subtle tarnishing of US brands in the minds of millions of ordinary consumers. If the American dream played such an important role in the growth of iconic US brands, what happens if significant numbers of consumers begin to think of the US as a bit of a nightmare?'²⁹

GMI poll of international consumers' attitudes towards US brands

Impact on buying intentions and brand perceptions of consumers who said there had been a negative change in their willingness to purchase American goods as a result of US foreign policy and military action*



* GMI poll of 8,000 international consumers conducted one week after US elections, Nov 2004.

Source: Interbrand, and Dan Roberts, 'Is the world falling out of love with US brands?', *Financial Times*, 30 December 2004.

Cognitive dissonance theory revisited

In the last chapter, we discussed the role played by cognitive dissonance when consumers are trying to choose between two desired products. Cognitive dissonance theory has other important ramifications for attitudes, since people are often confronted with situations in which there is some conflict between their attitudes and behaviours.³⁰

The theory proposes that, much like hunger or thirst, people are motivated to reduce this negative state by making things fit with one another. The theory focuses on situations where two cognitive elements are inconsistent with one another.

A cognitive element can be something a person believes about himself, a behaviour he performs or an observation about his surroundings. For example, the two cognitive elements 'I know smoking cigarettes causes cancer' and 'I smoke cigarettes' are dissonant. This psychological inconsistency creates a feeling of discomfort that the smoker is motivated to reduce. The magnitude of dissonance depends upon both the importance and the number of dissonant elements.³¹ In other words, the pressure to reduce dissonance is more likely to be observed in high-involvement situations in which the elements are more important to the individual.

Dissonance reduction can occur by either eliminating, adding or changing elements. For example, the person could stop smoking (eliminating) or remember Great-Aunt



This public service advertisement hopes to form young people's attitudes towards drinking. Of course, individuals will vary in their level of commitment to drinking. Does this ad strike you primarily at a cognitive, or an emotional, level? What is your attitude towards the ad?

Sophia, who smoked until the day she died at age 90 (adding). Alternatively, he might question the research that links cancer and smoking (changing), perhaps by believing industry-sponsored studies that try to refute this connection.

Dissonance theory can help to explain why evaluations of a product tend to increase after it has been purchased, i.e. post-purchase dissonance. The cognitive element 'I made a stupid decision' is dissonant with the element 'I am not a stupid person', so people tend to find even more reasons to like something after buying it.

A field study performed at a horse race demonstrates post-purchase dissonance. Gamblers evaluated their chosen horses more highly and were more confident of their success after they had placed a bet than before. Since the gambler is financially committed to the choice, he or she reduces dissonance by increasing the attractiveness of the chosen alternative relative to the unchosen ones.³² One implication of this phenomenon is that consumers actively seek support for their purchase decisions, so marketers should supply them with additional reinforcement to build positive brand attitudes.

While the consistency principle works well in explaining our desire for harmony among thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and subsequently in helping marketers understand their target markets, it isn't a perfect predictor of the way in which we hold seemingly *related* attitudes, as we saw in the case of Leah's attitudes towards soccer, Nike and labour practices in our globalized economy.

Self-perception theory

- Do attitudes necessarily change following behaviour because people are motivated to feel good about their decisions? **Self-perception theory** provides an alternative explanation of dissonance effects.³³ It assumes that people use observations of their own behaviour to determine what their attitudes are, just as we assume that we know the attitudes of others by watching what they do. The theory states that we maintain consistency by inferring that we must have a positive attitude towards an object if we have bought or consumed it (assuming that we freely made this choice).

Self-perception theory is relevant to the low-involvement hierarchy, since it involves situations in which behaviours are initially performed in the absence of a strong internal attitude. After the fact, the cognitive and affective components of attitude fall into line. Thus, buying a product out of habit may result in a positive attitude towards it after the fact – namely, why would I buy it if I didn't like it?

- Self-perception theory helps to explain the effectiveness of a sales strategy called the **foot-in-the-door technique**, which is based on the observation that a consumer is more likely to comply with a request if he or she has first agreed to comply with a smaller request.³⁴ The name of this technique comes from the practice of door-to-door selling, when the salesperson was taught to plant his or her foot in a door so the prospect could not slam it shut. A good salesperson knows that he or she is more likely to get an order if the customer can be persuaded to open the door and talk. By agreeing to do so, the customer has established that he or she is willing to listen. Placing an order is consistent with this self-perception. This technique is especially useful for inducing consumers to answer surveys or to donate money to charity. Such factors as the time lag between the first and second requests, the similarity between the two requests, and whether the same person makes both requests have been found to influence their effectiveness.³⁵

Social judgement theory

- **Social judgement theory** assumes that people assimilate new information about attitude objects in the light of what they already know or feel.³⁶ The initial attitude acts as a frame of reference, and new information is categorized in terms of this existing standard. Just as our decision that a box is heavy depends in part on other boxes we have lifted, so we develop a subjective standard when making judgements about attitude objects.

- One important aspect of the theory is the notion that people differ in terms of the information they will find acceptable or unacceptable. They form **latitudes of acceptance and rejection** around an attitude standard. Ideas that fall within a latitude will be favourably received, while those falling outside this zone will not. There are plenty of examples of how latitudes of acceptance and rejection are influencing marketing practices and consumers' behaviour in Europe: Recently, childhood obesity has become an alarming European issue, prompting the Belgian parliament's ban of Coca-Cola machines in Belgium's elementary schools.³⁷ Likewise, European attitudes towards smoking have clearly evolved towards a latitude of rejection – providing GlaxoSmithKline with the opportunity to launch new anti-smoking products such as nicotine replacement gums and patches, and giving many pubs and bars the opportunity to reposition themselves as non-smoking venues.³⁸

Messages that fall within the latitude of acceptance tend to be seen as more consistent with one's position than they actually are. This process is called an *assimilation effect*. On the other hand, messages falling in the latitude of rejection tend to be seen as even further from one's position than they actually are, resulting in a *contrast effect*.³⁹

As a person becomes more involved with an attitude object, his or her latitude of acceptance shrinks. In other words, the consumer accepts fewer ideas that are removed from his or her own position and tends to oppose even mildly divergent positions. This tendency is evident in ads that appeal to discriminating buyers, which claim that knowledgeable people will reject anything but the very best, for example, 'Choosy mothers choose Jif' (Jif is Unilever's brand of peanut butter in many countries, and is known as Cif in many other countries). On the other hand, relatively uninvolved consumers will consider a wider range of alternatives. They are less likely to be brand-loyal and will be more likely to be brand-switchers.⁴⁰

Balance theory

- **Balance theory** considers relations among elements a person might perceive as belonging together.⁴¹ This perspective involves relations (always from the perceiver's subjective

point of view) among three elements, so the resulting attitude structures are called *triads*. Each triad contains (1) a person and his or her perceptions of (2) an attitude object and (3) some other person or object.

These perceptions can be positive or negative. More importantly, people *alter* these perceptions in order to make relations among them consistent. The theory specifies that people desire relations among elements in a triad to be harmonious, or balanced. If they are not, a state of tension will result until perceptions are changed and balance is restored.

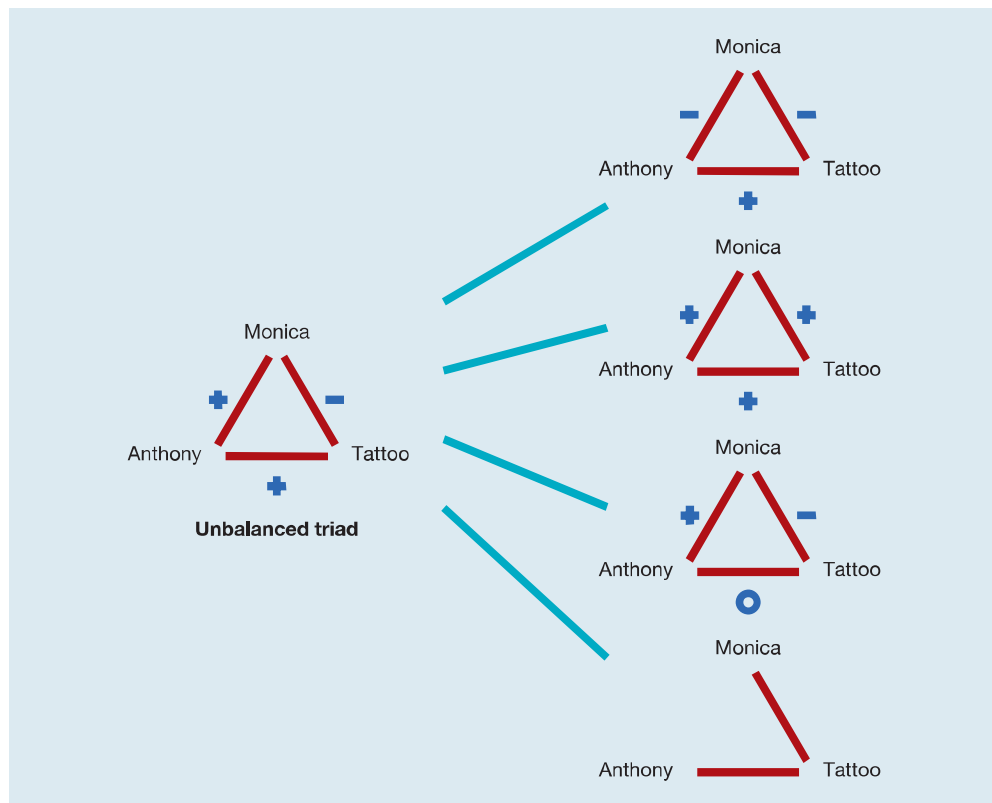
Elements can be perceived as going together in one of two ways. They can have a *unit relation*, where one element is seen as belonging to or being a part of the other (something like a belief), or a *sentiment relation*, where the two elements are linked because one has expressed a preference (or dislike) for the other. A couple might be seen as having a positive sentiment relation. If they marry, they will have a positive unit relation. The process of divorce is an attempt to sever a unit relation.

To see how balance theory might work, consider the following scenario:

- Monica would like to go out with Anthony, who is in her consumer behaviour class. In balance theory terms, Monica has a positive sentiment relation with Anthony.
- One day, Anthony attends class wearing clothing that allows his fellow students to see his tattoo. Anthony has a positive unit relation with the tattoo. It belongs to him and is literally a part of him.
- Monica does not like tattooed men. She has a negative sentiment relation with tattoos.

According to balance theory, Monica faces an unbalanced triad, and she will experience pressure to restore balance by altering some aspect of the triad, as shown in Figure 5.2. She could, for example, decide that she does not like Anthony after all. Or her liking for Anthony could prompt a change in her attitude towards tattoos. Finally, she could

Figure 5.2 Alternative routes to restoring balance in a triad



choose to 'leave the field' by thinking no more about Anthony and his controversial tattoo. Note that while the theory does not specify which of these routes will be taken, it does predict that one or more of Monica's perceptions will have to change in order to achieve balance. While this distortion is an oversimplified representation of most attitude processes, it helps to explain a number of consumer behaviour phenomena.

Balance theory reminds us that when perceptions are balanced, attitudes are likely to be stable. On the other hand, when inconsistencies are observed we are more likely to observe changes in attitudes. Balance theory also helps to explain why consumers like to be associated with positively valued objects. Forming a unit relation with a popular product (buying and wearing fashionable clothing or driving a high-performance car) may improve one's chances of being included as a positive sentiment relation in other people's triads.

Finally, balance theory is useful in accounting for the widespread use of celebrities to endorse products. In cases where a triad is not fully formed (that is, one involving perceptions about a new product or one about which the consumer does not yet have a well-defined attitude), the marketer can create a positive sentiment relation between the consumer and the product by depicting a positive unit relation between the product and a well-known personality. In other cases, behaviours are discouraged when admired people argue against them, as is the goal when athletes feature in government-sponsored anti-drug campaigns.

This 'balancing act' is at the heart of celebrity endorsements, in which it is hoped that the star's popularity will transfer to the product. This strategy will be considered at length in the next chapter.

■ ATTITUDE MODELS

A consumer's overall evaluation of a product sometimes accounts for the bulk of his or her *attitude* towards it. When market researchers want to assess attitudes, it can often be sufficient for them simply to ask the consumer, 'How do you feel about Heineken?', or 'How do you feel about the eventual acceptance of a European constitution?'

However, as we saw earlier, attitudes can be a lot more complex than that. One problem is that a product or service may be composed of many attributes or qualities – some of which may be more important than others to particular people. Another problem is that a person's decision to act on his or her attitude is affected by other factors, such as whether it is felt that buying a product will meet with approval of friends or family (if Leah's closest friends are strongly opposed to using cheap labour for the making of Nike soccer boots, this may be a key reason for her not to buy Nike). For these reasons, attitude models have been developed that try to specify the different elements that might work together to influence people's evaluations of attitude objects.

Multi-attribute attitude models

- ▶ A simple response does not always tell us everything we need to know about why the consumer has certain feelings towards a product or about what marketers can do to change the consumer's attitude. For this reason, **multi-attribute attitude models** have been extremely popular among marketing researchers. This type of model assumes that a consumer's attitude (evaluation) of an attitude object (A_o) will depend on the beliefs he or she has about several or many attributes of the object. The use of a multi-attribute model implies that an attitude towards a product or brand can be predicted by identifying these specific beliefs and combining them to derive a measure of the consumer's overall attitude. We'll describe how these work, using the example of a consumer evaluating a complex attitude object that should be very familiar: a university.

Basic multi-attribute models specify three elements:⁴²

- *Attributes* are characteristics of the A_o . Most models assume that the relevant characteristics can be identified. That is, the researcher can include those attributes that consumers take into consideration when evaluating the A_o . For example, scholarly reputation is an attribute of a university.
- *Beliefs* are cognitions about the specific A_o (usually relative to others like it). A belief measure assesses the extent to which the consumer perceives that a brand possesses a particular attribute. For example, a student might have a belief that Oxford colleges have a strong academic standing.
- *Importance weights* reflect the relative priority of an attribute to the consumer. Although an A_o can be considered on a number of attributes, some will be more important than others (i.e. they will be given greater weight), and these weights are likely to differ across consumers. In the case of universities, for example, one student might stress the school's library resources, while another might assign greater weight to the social environment in which the university is located.

Measuring attitude elements

Suppose a supermarket chain wanted to measure shoppers' attitudes towards its retail outlets. The firm might administer one of the following types of attitude scales to consumers by mail, phone or in person.⁴³

Single-item scales One simple way to assess consumers' attitudes towards a store or product is to ask them for their general feelings about it. Such a global assessment does not provide much information about specific attributes, but it does give managers some sense of consumers' overall attitudes. This single-item approach often uses a Likert scale, which measures respondents' overall level of agreement or feelings about an attitude statement.

How satisfied are you with your grocery store?

Very satisfied Somewhat satisfied Satisfied Not at all satisfied

Multiple-item batteries Attitude models go beyond such a simple measure, since they acknowledge that an overall attitude may often be composed of consumers' perceptions about multiple elements. For this reason, many attitude measures assess a set of beliefs about an issue and combine these reactions into an overall score. For example, the supermarket might ask customers to respond to a set of Likert scales and combine their responses into an overall measure of store satisfaction:

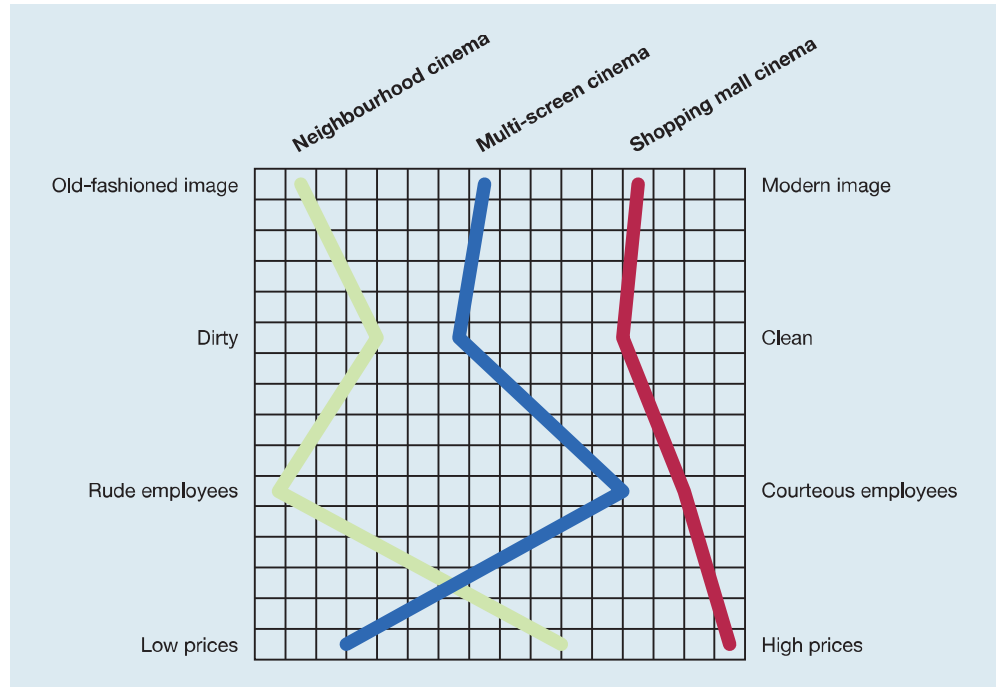
- 1 My supermarket has a good selection of produce.
- 2 My supermarket maintains sanitary conditions.
- 3 I never have trouble finding exotic foods at my supermarket.

Agree	Agree	Neither agree	Disagree	Disagree
strongly	somewhat	nor disagree	somewhat	strongly

The *semantic-differential scale* is useful for describing a person's set of beliefs about a company or brand, and it is also used to compare the images of competing brands. Respondents rate each attribute on a series of rating scales, where each end is anchored by adjectives or phrases, such as this one:

My supermarket is
Dirty 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 Clean

Semantic-differential scales can be used to construct a profile analysis of the competition, where the images of several stores or products can be compared visually by plotting the mean ratings for each object on several attributes of interest. This simple technique can help to pinpoint areas where the product or store diverges sharply from the

Figure 5.3 Hypothetical profiles of three types of cinema

competitors (in either a positive or a negative way). The fictitious profiles of three different types of cinema are shown in Figure 5.3. Based on these findings, the management of a multi-screen cinema might want to emphasize its wide selection of films and/or try to improve its image as a modern cinema, or improve its cleanliness.

The Fishbein model

The most influential multi-attribute model is the Fishbein model, named after its primary developer.⁴⁴ The model measures three components of attitude.

- 1 *Salient beliefs* people have about an A_o (those beliefs about the object that are considered during evaluation).
- 2 *Object-attribute linkages*, or the probability that a particular object has an important attribute.
- 3 *Evaluation* of each of the important attributes.

Note, however, that the model makes some assumptions that may not always be warranted. It assumes that we have been able to specify adequately all the relevant attributes that, for example, a student will use in evaluating his or her choice about which college to attend. The model also assumes that he or she will go through the process (formally or informally) of identifying a set of relevant attributes, weighing them and summing them. Although this particular decision is likely to be highly involving, it is still possible that his or her attitude will be formed by an overall affective response (a process known as *affect-referral*).

By combining these three elements, a consumer's overall attitude towards an object can be computed. (We'll see later how this basic equation has been modified to increase its accuracy.) The basic formula is

$$A_{ijk} = \sum B_{ijk} I_{ik}$$

where i = attribute; j = brand; k = consumer; I = the importance weight given attribute i by consumer k ; B = consumer k 's belief regarding the extent to which brand j possesses attribute i ; and A = a particular consumer k 's attitude score for brand j .

Table 5.1 The basic multi-attribute model: Sandra's college decision

Attribute (i)	Beliefs (b)				
	Importance (I)	Smith	Princeton	Rutgers	Northland
Academic reputation	6	8	9	6	3
All women	7	9	3	3	3
Cost	4	2	2	6	9
Proximity to home	3	2	2	6	9
Athletics	1	1	2	5	1
Party atmosphere	2	1	3	7	9
Library facilities	5	7	9	7	2
Attitude score		163	142	153	131

Note: These hypothetical ratings are scored from 1 to 10, and higher numbers indicate 'better' standing on an attribute. For a negative attribute (e.g. cost), higher scores indicate that the school is believed to have 'less' of that attribute (i.e. to be cheaper).

The overall attitude score (A) is obtained by multiplying a consumer's rating of each attribute for all the brands considered by the importance rating for that attribute.

To see how this basic multi-attribute model might work, let's suppose we want to predict which college a middle-school graduate is likely to attend. After months of waiting, Sandra has been accepted at four colleges. Since she must now decide between these, we would first like to know which attributes Sandra will consider in forming an attitude towards each college. We can then ask Sandra to assign a rating regarding how well each college performs on each attribute and also determine the relative importance of the attributes to her. An overall attitude score for each college can then be computed by summing scores on each attribute (after weighing each by its relative importance). These hypothetical ratings are shown in Table 5.1. Based on this analysis, it seems that Sandra has the most favourable attitude towards Smith. She is clearly someone who would like to attend an all-women's college with a solid academic reputation rather than a college that offers a strong athletics programme or a party atmosphere.

Strategic applications of the multi-attribute model

Imagine you are the director of marketing for Northland University, another institution Sandra is considering. How might you use the data from this analysis to improve your image?

Capitalize on relative advantage If one's brand is viewed as being superior on a particular attribute, consumers like Sandra need to be convinced that this particular attribute is an important one. For example, while Sandra rates Northland's social atmosphere highly, she does not believe this attribute is a valued aspect for a college. As Northland's marketing director, you might emphasize the importance of an active social life, varied experiences or even the development of future business contacts forged through strong school friendships.

Strengthen perceived product/attribute linkages A marketer may discover that consumers do not equate his or her brand with a certain attribute. This problem is commonly addressed by campaigns that stress the product's qualities to consumers (e.g. 'new and improved'). Sandra apparently does not think much of Northland's academic quality, sports facilities or library. You might develop an informational campaign to improve these perceptions (e.g. 'Little-known facts about Northland').

Add a new attribute Product marketers frequently try to create a distinctive position from their competitors by adding a product feature. Northland might try to emphasize some unique aspect, such as a supervised work-experience programme for business graduates, which takes advantage of links with the local community.

Influence competitors' ratings Finally, you might try to decrease the positive rating of competitors. This type of action is the rationale for a strategy of comparative advertising. One tactic might be to publish an ad that lists the tuition fees of a number of local colleges, as well as their attributes with which Northland can be favourably compared, as the basis for emphasizing the value for money obtained at Northland.

■ USING ATTITUDES TO PREDICT BEHAVIOUR

Although multi-attribute models have been used by consumer researchers for many years, they have been plagued by a major problem: in many cases, knowledge of a person's attitude is not a very good predictor of behaviour. In a classic demonstration of 'do as I say, not as I do', many studies have obtained a very low correlation between a person's reported attitude towards something and his or her actual behaviour towards it. Some researchers have been so discouraged that they have questioned whether attitudes are of any use at all in understanding behaviour.⁴⁵ This questionable linkage can be a big headache for advertisers when consumers love a commercial yet fail to buy the product. A Norwegian charity won an award for a popular advertising campaign on which it spent 3 million Nkr (£300,000), only to find that it resulted in just 1.7 million Nkr in donations.⁴⁶

The extended Fishbein model

The original Fishbein model, which focused on measuring a consumer's attitude towards a product, has been extended in a number of ways to improve its predictive ability.

- The revised version is called the **theory of reasoned action**.⁴⁷ The model is still not perfect, but its ability to predict relevant behaviour has been improved.⁴⁸ Some of the modifications to this model are considered here.

Intentions vs. behaviour

Many factors might interfere with actual behaviour, even if the consumer's intentions are sincere. He or she might save up with the intention of buying a stereo system. In the interim, though, any number of things – being made redundant or finding that the desired model is out of stock – could happen. It is not surprising, then, that in some instances past purchase behaviour has been found to be a better predictor of future behaviour than is a consumer's behavioural intention.⁴⁹ The theory of reasoned action aims to measure behavioural intentions, recognizing that certain uncontrollable factors inhibit prediction of actual behaviour.

Social pressure

The theory acknowledges the power of other people in influencing behaviour. Many of our behaviours are not determined in isolation. Much as we may hate to admit it, what we think others would like us to do may be more relevant than our own individual preferences.

In the case of Sandra's college choice, note that she is very positive about going to an all-female institution. However, if she feels that this choice would be unpopular (perhaps her friends will think she is mad), she might ignore or downgrade this preference when making her final decision. A new element, the subjective norm (SN), was thus added to include the effects of what we believe other people think we should do. The value of SN is arrived at by including two other factors: (1) the intensity of a normative belief

(NB) that others believe an action should be taken or not taken, and (2) the motivation to comply (MC) with that belief (i.e. the degree to which the consumer takes others' anticipated reactions into account when evaluating a course of action or a purchase).

Attitude towards buying

- The model now measures **attitude towards the act of buying (A_{act})**, rather than only the attitude towards the product itself. In other words, it focuses on the perceived consequences of a purchase. Knowing how someone feels about buying or using an object proves to be more valid than merely knowing the consumer's evaluation of the object itself.⁵⁰

To understand this distinction, consider a problem that might arise when measuring attitudes towards condoms. Although a group of college students might have a positive attitude towards condom use, does this necessarily predict that they will buy and use them? A better prediction would be obtained by asking the students how likely they are to buy condoms. While a person might have a positive A_o towards condoms, A_{act} might be negative due to the embarrassment or the trouble involved.

Obstacles to predicting behaviour

Despite improvements to the Fishbein model, problems arise when it is misapplied. In many cases the model is used in ways for which it was not intended or where certain assumptions about human behaviour may not be warranted.⁵¹ Other obstacles to predicting behaviour are as follows:

- 1 The model was developed to deal with actual behaviour (e.g. taking a slimming pill), not with the outcomes of behaviour (e.g. losing weight) which are assessed in some studies.
- 2 Some outcomes are beyond the consumer's control, such as when the purchase requires the cooperation of other people. For instance, a woman might seek a mortgage, but this intention will be worthless if she cannot find a banker to give her one.
- 3 The basic assumption that behaviour is intentional may be invalid in a variety of cases, including those involving impulsive acts, sudden changes in one's situation, novelty-seeking or even simple repeat-buying. One study found that such unexpected events as having guests, changes in the weather or reading articles about the health qualities of certain foods exerted a significant effect on actual behaviours.⁵²
- 4 Measures of attitude often do not really correspond to the behaviour they are supposed to predict, either in terms of the A_o or when the act will occur. One common problem is a difference in the level of abstraction employed. For example, knowing a person's attitude towards sports cars may not predict whether he or she will purchase a Porsche 911. It is very important to match the level of specificity between the attitude and the behavioural intention.
- 5 A similar problem relates to the time-frame of the attitude measure. In general, the longer the time between the attitude measurement and the behaviour it is supposed to assess, the weaker the relationship will be. For example, predictability would improve markedly by asking consumers the likelihood that they would buy a house in the next week as opposed to within the next five years.
- 6 Attitudes formed by direct, personal experience with an A_o are stronger and more predictive of behaviour than those formed indirectly, such as through advertising.⁵³ According to the attitude accessibility perspective, behaviour is a function of the person's immediate perceptions of the A_o in the context of the situation in which it is encountered. An attitude will guide the evaluation of the object, but only if it is activated from memory when the object is observed. These findings underscore the importance of strategies that induce trial (e.g. by widespread product sampling to encourage the consumer to try the product at home, by taste tests, test drives, etc.) as well as those that maximize exposure to marketing communications.



marketing pitfall

Free the carp?

For Joseph Vladsky, the insight came one December evening in Warsaw at a supermarket packed with Christmas shoppers. While walking past the fish department, he saw something that stopped him in his tracks. There, in white plastic tubs, were carp – more carp, it seemed, than water. Some were floating belly up. A group of shoppers peered eagerly into the tubs, selecting the main course for their holiday supper. Shop assistants in stained aprons fished out the chosen carp, tossed them onto scales, then dropped them, still flopping, into plastic bags. If asked, the shop assistants would kill the carp with a quick blow to the head from a thick wooden stick or metal pipe. 'Christmas is supposed to be a joyful time', Mr Vladsky recalls thinking. 'But then you go to the market, and there's a tank of fish, dying, being killed. How terrible.'

Carp have graced east European holiday tables since the seventeenth century, when Christian monks first recognized the Asian import as a substitute for meatless feasts. Hundreds of years later, having carp for Christmas came to symbolize defiance of Communist rule. Today, Polish consumers still buy their carp live, and deliver the fatal blow at home, letting the fish swim out their final days in the family bathtub. Lately, however, sales have been stagnant, even though the price has fallen more than 30 per cent over the past three years. Newly affluent Poles seem to prefer salmon or mahi-mahi. Others simply hate waiting for the carp to get out of the bathtub and into the oven (there is a lingering smell in the tub!), and then there are those like Mr Vladsky who object to the seasonal slaughter. Recent media coverage by the Animal Protection Society regarding the inhumane and insanitary conditions surrounding 'Christmas Carp' have slowed the consumption of carp. In Mr Vladsky's case, his children became so attached to the carp in their friend's bathtub that they gave them names, and started treating them as pets. Slowly, attitudes towards killing live carp for Christmas are changing...⁵⁴

Question: How would you apply Fishbein's (no pun intended) multi-attribute model to predict future behaviour of Polish consumption of carp, given the changing attitudes described above?



multicultural dimensions

The theory of reasoned action has primarily been applied in the West. Certain assumptions inherent in the model may not necessarily apply to consumers from other cultures. Several of the following diminish the universality of the theory of reasoned action:

- The model was developed to predict the performance of any voluntary act. Across cultures, however, many consumer activities, ranging from taking exams and entering military service to receiving an inoculation or even choosing a marriage partner, are not necessarily voluntary.
- The relative impact of subjective norms may vary across cultures. For example, Asian cultures tend to value conformity and face-saving, so it is possible that subjective norms involving the anticipated reactions of others to the choice will have an even greater impact on behaviour for many Asian consumers.
- The model measures behavioural intentions and thus presupposes that consumers are actively anticipating and planning future behaviours. The intention concept assumes that consumers have a linear time sense, i.e. they think in terms of past, present and future. As will be discussed in a later chapter, this time perspective is not held by all cultures.
- A consumer who forms an intention is (implicitly) claiming that he or she is in control of his or her actions. Some cultures tend to be fatalistic and do not necessarily believe in the concept of free will. Indeed, one study comparing students from the United States, Jordan and Thailand found evidence for cultural differences in assumptions about fatalism and control over the future.⁵⁵

Table 5.2 Recycling rate of container glass (%)

Country	1990	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Austria	60	n.a.	n.a.	88	86	84	84	83	87	86	88
Belgium	59	67	66	75	n.a.	n.a.	87	88	95	88	90
Denmark	40	63	66	70	63	63	65	65	76	71	75
Finland	46	50	63	62	69	78	89	91	92	73	72
France	41	70	50	52	55	55	55	55	55	58	58
Germany	54	75	79	79	81	81	83	87	90	88	91
Greece	16	35	29	26	27	25	26	27	27	30	24
Ireland	19	39	46	38	37	35	35	40	49	67	69
Italy	49	53	53	34	37	41	40	55	58	59	61
Netherlands	66	80	81	82	85	91	78	78	78	81	76
Norway	34	75	75	76	81	83	85	88	88	86	90
Portugal	23	42	42	44	42	42	40	34	35	38	39
Spain	27	32	35	37	41	40	31	33	36	38	41
Sweden	35	61	72	76	84	84	86	84	87	92	96
Switzerland	61	85	89	91	91	93	91	92	94	96	96
Turkey	30	12	13	20	31	25	24	24	23	22	24
United Kingdom	21	27	22	23	24	26	29	34	34	36	44

n.a. = Not available

Source: FEVE (European Container Glass Federation); *Consumers in Europe: Facts and Figures*, Eurostat, Theme 3: Population and Social Statistics (Luxembourg, 2001).

Tracking attitudes over time

An attitude survey is like a snapshot taken at a single point in time. It may tell us a lot about the position of a person, issue or object at that moment, but it does not permit many inferences about progress made over time or any predictions about possible future changes in consumer attitudes. To accomplish these tasks, it is necessary to develop an attitude-tracking programme. This activity helps to increase the predictability of behaviour by allowing researchers to analyse attitude trends over an extended period of time. It is more like a film than a snapshot. For example, a longitudinal survey conducted by Eurostat of Europeans' attitudes regarding recycling behaviour shows how attitudes can shift over a decade of time, and across countries. Table 5.2 shows the results of a large-scale study carried out in 15 countries. The percentage of respondents reporting that they recycle container glass tends to be growing over the past decade, but at uneven rates, and at very different starting points for each country in the EU.

These results would suggest that even as Europe moves towards a more integrated union with a common currency, consumers from individual countries vary in their recycling attitudes.

Tracking studies

Attitude tracking involves the administration of an attitude survey at regular intervals. Preferably, the same methodology will be used each time so that results can be reliably compared. Several services, such as Gallup, the Henley Centre or the Yankelovich Monitor, track consumer attitudes over time.

This activity can be extremely valuable for strategic decision-making. For example, one financial services firm monitored changes in consumer attitudes towards one-stop banking centres. Although a large number of consumers were enthusiastic about the idea when it was first introduced, the number of people who liked the concept did not increase over time despite the millions of dollars invested in advertising to promote the centres. This finding indicated some problems with the way the concept was being presented, and the company decided to 'go back to the drawing board', and eventually came up with a new way to communicate the advantages of this service.

Changes to look for over time

Some of the dimensions that can be included in attitude tracking include the following:

- *A focus on changes in different age groups.* Attitudes tend to change as people age (a life-cycle effect), and this will be of continual interest to government and business as the demographic profile of Europe continues to get older. More on this in Chapter 13. In addition, cohort effects occur; that is, members of a particular generation (e.g. teens, generation X, or the elderly) tend to share certain outlooks. Also, historical effects can be observed as large groups of people are affected by profound cultural changes (for example, the democratization of eastern European countries, and their admission to the European Union).
- *Scenarios about the future.* Consumers are frequently tracked in terms of their future plans, confidence in the economy, and so on. These measures can provide valuable data about future behaviour and yield insights for public policy.
- *Identification of change agents.* Social phenomena can change people's attitudes towards basic consumption activities over time, as when consumers' willingness to buy fur products shifts. Or people's likelihood of seeking divorce may be affected by such facilitators as changes in the legal system that make this easier, or by inhibitors, such as the prevalence of AIDS and the value of two salaries in today's economy.⁵⁶

■ 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, affect 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 an evaluation of that object (affect) and then some action (behaviour). Depending on the consumer's level of involvement and the circumstances, though, attitudes can result from other hierarchies of effects.
- A key to attitude formation is the function the attitude plays 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 conform with others. Such theoretical approaches to attitudes as cognitive dissonance theory, balance theory and congruity theory stress the vital role of 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.

► KEY TERMS

Affect (p. 140)**Attitude** (p. 138)**Attitude object (A_o)** (p. 138)**Attitude towards the act of buying**
(A_{act}) (p. 156)**Attitude towards the advertisement**
(A_{ad}) (p. 144)**Balance theory** (p. 149)**Behaviour** (p. 140)**Cognition** (p. 140)**Foot-in-the-door technique** (p. 149)**Functional theory of attitudes** (p. 139)**Hierarchy of effects** (p. 140)**Latitudes of acceptance and rejection**
(p. 149)**Multi-attribute attitude models** (p. 151)**Principle of cognitive consistency** (p. 146)**Self-perception theory** (p. 148)**Social judgement theory** (p. 149)**Theory of reasoned action** (p. 155)

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?
- 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>. Which sorts of attitudes expressed in different countries seem utilitarian, value-expressive or ego-defensive? Why?
- 3** Think of a behaviour exhibited by an individual that is inconsistent with his or her attitudes (e.g. attitudes towards 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.
- 4** Using a series of semantic-differential scales, devise an attitude survey for a set of competing cars. Identify areas of competitive advantage or disadvantage for each model you incorporate.
- 5** Construct a multi-attribute model for a set of local restaurants. Based on your findings, suggest how restaurant managers can improve their establishments' image using the strategies described in the chapter.

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ATTITUDE CHANGE AND INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS



Jenny was delighted when she found out she was pregnant and, unusually for her, she loved all the attention and fuss that pregnancy entailed. However, she also found it quite stressful and focused her efforts on trying to ensure that she made the 'right' decisions along the way. Prior to Freddie's birth, Jenny tried to get hold of as much information about pregnancy and babies as possible. She read books, magazines, pamphlets in doctors' surgeries, in fact pretty much anything she could get her hands on to ensure that she had the most current and accurate information available. Armed with this information she made a series of decisions about how she would bring up her baby and the major consumption decisions associated with this.

In Jenny's attempts to be environmentally friendly she had made the decision to use cloth nappies rather than the more popular and convenient choice of disposable nappies. She considered the energy used when machine washing nappies – the focus of recent PR campaigns by the major producers of disposable nappies – but remained convinced that terry cotton nappies were a better bet for the environment. She also did lots of homework before choosing a pushchair. She tended to look at the *Which?* guides produced by the UK Consumers' Association before making important choices. On this occasion she also consulted various magazines and newspaper articles, which helped her to differentiate between the plethora of brand names and models such as Mamas and Papas O3 Sport, Silver Cross XT Pushchair, Bugaboo Frog, Maclaren Volo, Stokke Xplory and Britax Vista. With so much choice she had needed to read all the manufacturers' advertising very carefully; and the various consumer reports helped her to clarify what was really important (such as weight, size, tyres, foot rest). In the end she went for one of the more reasonably priced pushchairs, which as well as ranking highly in the various reports was recommended by her health visitor.

Jenny was determined to breastfeed. Her family, the midwives and the information she had read all convinced her that 'breast is best'. Breastfeeding would be fairly straightforward she thought – so that was one commitment she shouldn't have a problem with. But on Freddie's arrival breastfeeding proved extremely difficult for her. The more difficult it became the more guilty and frustrated Jenny felt – what was wrong with her? Why couldn't she do what was 'best' for her baby? Her difficulties culminated in the development of a breastfeeding infection, which necessitated supplementing her breast milk with formula milk.

Also, Jenny was determined that Freddie would not use a dummy – she considered them as the ‘easy option’ and ‘lazy’ parenting. Jenny’s mother had never believed in the use of dummies and several of the parenting books she read also discouraged dummies. However, Jenny had been given a set of dummies as a ‘Secret Santa’ present* and had held on to them – ‘just in case’. One day, following the advice of some women at the mother and baby group she attended, she found that Freddie could soon be calmed by the occasional use of a dummy when he was particularly upset. She said: ‘Before I had a baby I thought “I am not having a dummy” but when they are crying you start to think about what you can do to make it work. But it is knowing that other people approve of it as well, that makes you think it is OK.’ All the books and words from other parents were helpful but for some decisions Jenny found that, for her, motherhood is about flexibility and there is no ‘best’ way – except for what is best for you and your own child.

* Secret Santa is a Christmas work ritual whereby work colleagues draw a name at random and buy Christmas presents for each other (anonymously) for a specified amount (typically £5, about 8 euros).

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■ CHANGING ATTITUDES THROUGH COMMUNICATION

As consumers we are constantly bombarded by messages inducing us to change our attitudes. These persuasion attempts can range from logical arguments to graphic pictures, and from intimidation by peers to exhortations by celebrity spokespeople. And, communications flow both ways – the consumer may seek out information sources in order to learn more about these options, for instance by surfing the net. The increasing choice of ways to access marketing messages is changing the way we think about persuasion attempts. In Jenny’s case, her attitudes towards motherhood had been influenced by health professionals (dietary advice from the doctor during pregnancy; midwives at the antenatal classes who showed videos about breastfeeding her new baby); other experts (authors of mother and baby books); by public policy statements (e.g. ‘breast is best’); by her mother and peers (friends from the mother and baby group); and by her pre-existing political views (importance of environmentally responsible behaviour). However, some of her beliefs and attitudes moderated when she became a mother: the difficulties which she experienced in establishing breastfeeding made her more accepting of using formula milk; and when desperately seeking to comfort a crying baby, she discovered the relief that dummies could bring to both distressed baby *and* mother.

This chapter will review some of the factors that help to determine the effectiveness of marketing communications (the issues of peer influence and word-of-mouth are dealt with at greater length in Chapter 10). Our focus will be on some basic aspects of communication that specifically help to determine how and if attitudes will be created or modified. This objective relates to **persuasion**, which refers to an active attempt to change attitudes. Persuasion is, of course, the central goal of many marketing communications. We’ll learn more about how marketers try to accomplish this throughout the chapter. However, marketers need to bear in mind that there is evidence of increasingly negative perceptions of advertising. Research reported by J. Walker Smith, President of Yankelovich and Partners, showed the 54 per cent of respondents to their survey ‘avoid buying products that overwhelm them with advertising’; 60 per cent said their opinion of advertising ‘is much more negative than just a few years ago’; 61 per cent said they agreed that the amount of advertising and marketing to which they are exposed ‘is out of control’. Also, 65 per cent said they believed that they ‘are constantly bombarded with

too much' advertising; and 69 per cent said they 'are interested in products and services that would help them skip or block marketing.'¹

We begin by setting the stage and listing some basic psychological principles that influence people to change their minds or comply with a request:²

- *Reciprocity*: People are more likely to give if they receive. That's why including money in a mail survey questionnaire increases the response rate by an average of 65 per cent over surveys that come in an empty envelope.
- *Scarcity*: Items become more attractive when they are less available. In one study that asked people to rate the quality of chocolate biscuits, participants who got only two biscuits liked them better than did those who got ten of the same kind of biscuit. That helps to explain why we tend to value 'limited edition' items.
- *Authority*: We'll talk more about the importance of who delivers the message. We tend to believe an authoritative source much more readily. That explains why public service broadcasters, who have hard-won reputations for impartiality and objectivity (e.g. the BBC in Great Britain) can be so influential in forming public attitudes; and also why they are so fiercely protective of their independence from government and politicians.
- *Consistency*: As we saw in the last chapter, people try not to contradict themselves in terms of what they say and do about an issue. In one study, students at an Israeli university who solicited donations to help people with disabilities doubled the amount they normally collected in a neighbourhood by first asking the residents to sign a petition supporting those with disabilities two weeks before asking for donations.
- *Liking*: As we'll see later, we tend to agree with those we like or admire. In one study good-looking fund-raisers raised almost twice as much as other volunteers who were not as attractive.
- *Consensus*: We often take into account what others are doing before we decide what to do. We'll talk more about the power of conformity in Chapter 10. This desire to fit in with what others are doing influences our actions – for example, people are more likely to donate to a charity if they first see a list of the names of their neighbours who have already done so.

Decisions, decisions: tactical communications options

Suppose a car company wants to create an advertising campaign for a new soft-top model targeted at young drivers. As it plans this campaign, it must develop a message that will create desire for the car by potential customers. To craft persuasive messages that might persuade someone to buy this car instead of the many others available, we must answer several questions:

- *Who will be shown driving the car in an ad?* A motor-racing ace? A career woman? A new mother like Jenny? A rock star? The source of a message helps to determine consumers' acceptance of it as well as their desire to try the product.
- *How should the message be constructed?* Should it emphasize the negative consequences of being left out when others are driving cool cars and you're still driving around in your old banger? Should it directly compare the car with others already on the market, or maybe present a fantasy in which a tough-minded female executive meets a dashing stranger while cruising down the highway with the soft top down? Should it emphasize the safety features which would appeal to parents with a new baby to consider?
- *What media should be used to transmit the message?* Should it be depicted in a print ad? On television? Sold door to door? On a website? If a print ad is produced, should it be

run in the pages of *Good Housekeeping*? *Car and Driver*? *Mother and Baby*? Sometimes *where* something is said can be as important as what is said. Ideally, the attributes of the product should be matched to those of the medium. For example, magazines with high prestige are more effective at communicating messages about overall product image and quality, whereas specialized expert magazines do a better job at conveying factual information.³

- What characteristics of the target market might influence the ad's acceptance? If targeted users are frustrated in their daily lives, they might be more receptive to a fantasy appeal. If they're status oriented, perhaps a commercial should show bystanders swooning with admiration as the car glides by.

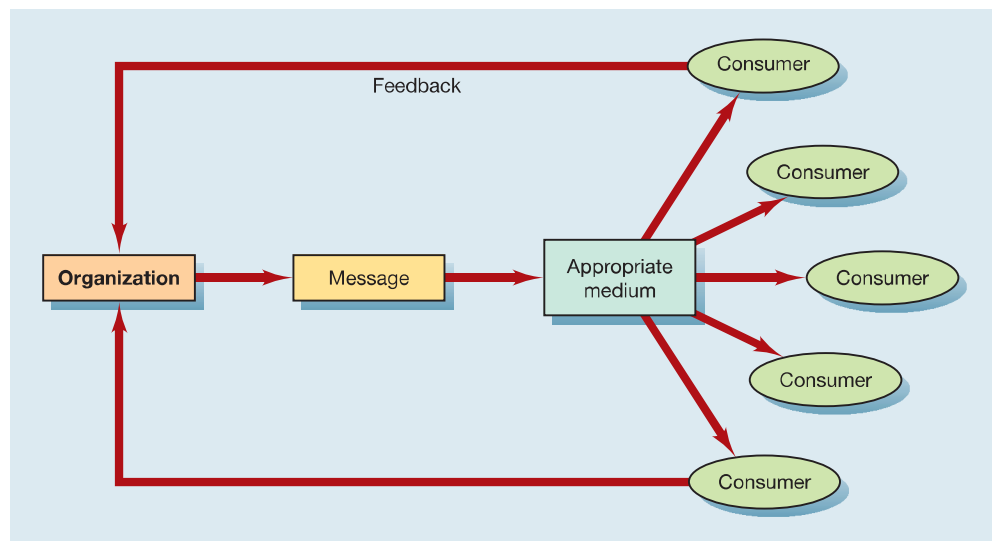
The elements of communication

▶ 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 communication to be achieved. In this model, a *source* must choose and encode a message (i.e. initiate the transfer of meaning by choosing appropriate symbolic images which represent the meaning). The meaning must be put into the *message*. There are many ways to say something, and the structure of the message has a major effect on how it is perceived. The message must be transmitted via a *medium*, which could be television, radio, magazines, hoardings, personal contact, website, or even a matchbook cover. Toyota placed its message about the Spider in a sophisticated CD-ROM format for the US market that it knew would be accessed by young, cutting-edge consumers – just the ones it was trying to reach. One or more *receivers* then interpret the message in the light of their own experiences. Finally, *feedback* must be received by the source, which uses the reactions of receivers to modify aspects of the message. *Launch* uses the Web to collect such information from its subscribers. Figure 6.1 depicts the traditional communications process.

An updated view: interactive communications

While the traditional communications model is not entirely wrong, it also doesn't tell the whole story – especially in today's dynamic world of interactivity, in which consumers

Figure 6.1 The traditional communications model



- ▶ have many more choices available to them and greater control over which messages they will choose to process.⁴ In fact, a popular strategy known as **permission marketing** is based on the idea that a marketer will be much more successful trying to persuade consumers who have agreed to let him or her try – consumers who ‘opt out’ of listening to the message probably weren’t good prospects in the first place.⁵ On the other hand, those who say they are interested in learning more are likely to be receptive to marketing communications they have already chosen to see or hear. As the permission marketing concept reminds us, we don’t have to just sit there and take it. We have a voice in deciding what messages we choose to see and when – and we exercise that option more and more.

The traditional model was developed to understand mass communications, where information is transferred from a producer (source) to many consumers (receivers) at one time – typically via print, television or radio. This perspective essentially views advertising as the process of transferring information to the buyer before a sale. A message is seen as perishable – it is repeated (perhaps frequently) for a fairly short period of time and then it ‘vanishes’ as a new campaign eventually takes its place.

This traditional communications model was strongly influenced by a group of theorists known as the *Frankfurt School*, which dominated mass communications research for most of the last century. In this view, the media exert direct and powerful effects on individuals, and are often used by those in power to brainwash and exploit the population. The receiver is basically passive – a ‘couch potato’ who is simply the receptacle for many messages – and may often be duped or persuaded to act based on the information he or she sees or hears (i.e. is ‘fed’ by the media).

Uses and gratifications

- ▶ Is this an accurate picture of the way we relate to marketing communications? Proponents of **uses and gratifications theory** argue instead that consumers are an active, goal-directed audience who draw on mass media as a resource to satisfy needs. Instead of asking what media do *for* or *to* people, they ask what people do *with* the media.⁶

The uses and gratifications approach emphasizes that media compete with other sources to satisfy needs, and that these needs include diversion and entertainment as well as information. This also means that the line between marketing information and entertainment is continuing to blur – especially as companies are being forced to design more attractive retail outlets, catalogues and websites in order to attract consumers. Toyota’s site (www.toyota.com) provides a lot more than the latest specifications about available car options: it includes interests like gardening, travel and sports.

Research with young people in Great Britain finds that they rely on advertising for many gratifications, including entertainment (some report that the ‘adverts’ are better than the programmes), escapism, play (some report singing along with jingles, others make posters out of magazine ads), and self-affirmation (ads can reinforce their own values or provide role models).⁷ A new satellite network, the Advert Channel, recently started showing advertisements 24 hours a day in Great Britain.⁸ It’s important to note that this perspective is not arguing that media play a uniformly positive role in our lives, only that recipients are making use of the information in a number of ways. For example, marketing messages have the potential to undermine self-esteem as consumers use the media to establish unrealistic standards for behaviour, attitudes or even their own appearance.⁹ A comment by one study participant illustrates this negative impact. She observed that when she watched TV with her boyfriend, ‘really, it makes you think “oh no, what must I be like?” I mean you’re sitting with your boyfriend and he’s saying “oh, look at her. What a body!”’¹⁰

An interactionist perspective on communication

- ▶ The **interactionist** perspective on communication does not describe human communication as ‘mechanistically’ as does the classic communications model. Briefly, interactionism

relies on three basic premises about communication, which focus on the meaning of objects, ideas and actions:¹¹

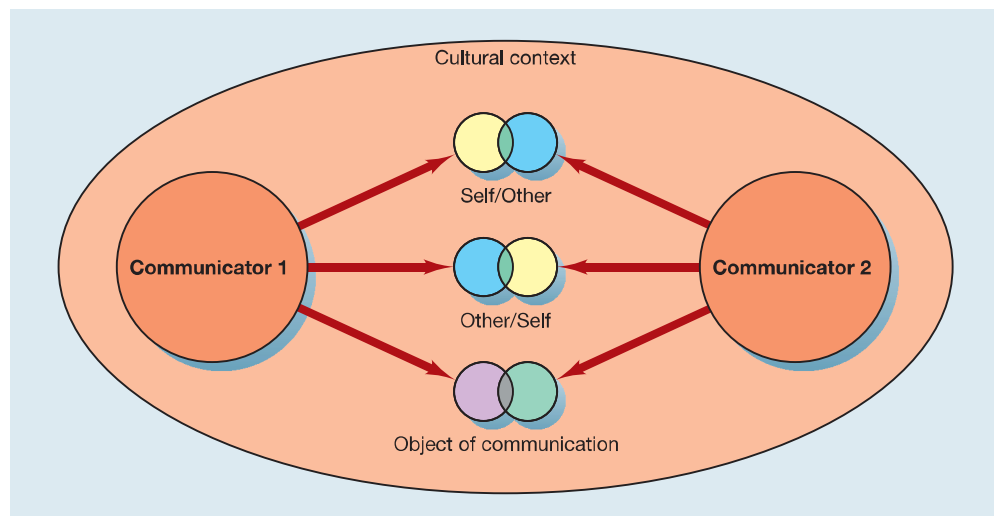
- 1 Human beings act towards objects on the basis of the meanings that objects have for them.
- 2 The meaning of objects is derived from the social interaction that they provide.
- 3 These meanings are processed and modified through an interpretive process which a person uses in dealing with the object encountered.

The interactionist perspective tones down the importance of the external stimuli, and views consumers as 'interpreters', wherein meaning does not arise from the objects themselves, nor from the psyche, but from interaction patterns. This view argues that meanings are not given 'once and for all' and are readily retrievable from memory. Rather, they are recreated and interpreted anew in each communicative action. Hence, the central role of the 'communicating self' must be taken into consideration. The self is seen as an active participant in the creation of meaning from the various signs in the marketplace rather than as a passive decoder of meanings which may be inherent in the message. Thus, from an interactionist perspective, there is no sender and receiver as such, only *communicators* who are always engaged in mutual sending and receiving of messages. Here, the self is both an object (a 'me') and a subject ('I') of action. The 'me' contains the consciousness of the acting self seen in relation to past experiences of the self and of others. There is thus a constant interpretation of both the self and the other as objects, as well as the object of the communication (the 'message' in the traditional communication model) going on. Figure 6.2 provides an overview of this interactionist communication model.

The model comprises several components.¹² The first component is that of '*role and role taking*'. Here, the communicator performs a role, following some scripts of past experiences, interpreting the situation and acting accordingly. These are efforts at seeing the 'other' from the perspective of 'self'. But the role-playing also involves taking the role of the 'other' to see oneself or seeing the self from the perspective of the other (imagining the image that the other may have).

The second component is *orientation*, which suggests that these roles we carry out are oriented towards an object. This object might be one of the communicators but also any other idea, thing or person. To the extent that the interpretive orientations of the

Figure 6.2 Interactionist communications model



communicators are similar, we can say that there is agreement, or congruence, between them, and that the communicators share the meanings pertaining to themselves and the object. Congruence is typically a matter of degree, and neither total congruence nor total incongruence are possible. Finally, there is the component of *cultural embeddedness*, which suggests that the symbols and other communicative devices used in the communicative process occur in a cultural context.

As an example, consider a company and its advertising agency. As part of the creative process, the ways in which the advertising agency see themselves, the selected target market, the product and campaign in question and the cultural context of the country will play a role in how they interpret the message they are about to create and send out. Likewise, the consumer's past experiences with this company's products, the meanings that the consumer attaches, based on cultural background and present context (present aspirations), coupled with the campaign seen in relation to former campaigns, are all important to the interpretation of the campaign's elements and the subsequent interpretation of the whole message (see Question 5 at the end of this chapter to assess a global print and web campaign for encouraging young men to purchase a particular brand of cognac).

Who's in charge of the remote?

Technological and social developments are forcing us to rethink the picture of the passive consumer, as people are increasingly playing a proactive role in communications. In other words, they are to a greater extent becoming active partners in the communications process. Their input is helping to shape the messages they and others like them receive, and furthermore they may seek out these messages rather than sit at home and wait to see them on TV or in the newspaper.

One of the early signs of this communications revolution was the humble hand-held remote control device. As VCRs became commonplace in the home, consumers had more say in what they wanted to watch – and when. No longer were they at the mercy of the TV networks to decide when to see their favourite programmes; nor did they necessarily have to forsake one programme because it conflicted with another's time slot.

Since that time, of course, our ability to control our media environment has mushroomed. Just ask some of the people who are now using DVRs (digital video recorders) to watch TV shows whenever they wish – and who are skipping over the commercials.¹³ Caller ID devices and answering machines allow us to decide if we will accept a phone call during dinner, and to know the source of the message before picking up the phone. A bit of surfing allows us to identify kindred spirits around the globe, to request information about products, and even to provide suggestions to product designers and market researchers.

Levels of interactive response

The key to understanding the dynamics of interactive marketing communications is to consider exactly what is meant by a response.¹⁴ The early perspective on communications primarily regarded feedback in terms of behaviour – did the recipient go out and buy the soap powder after being exposed to an ad for it?

However, a variety of other responses are possible as well, including building awareness of the brand, informing us about product features, reminding us to buy a new package when we've run out, and – perhaps most importantly – building a long-term relationship. Therefore a transaction is *one* type of response, but forward-thinking marketers realize that customers can interact with them in other valuable ways as well. For this reason it is helpful to distinguish between two basic types of feedback.

First-order response Direct marketing vehicles such as catalogues and television infomercials are interactive – if successful, they result in an order, which is most

definitely a response! So, let's think of a product offer that directly yields a transaction as a *first-order response*. In addition to providing revenue, sales data are a valuable source of feedback that allow marketers to gauge the effectiveness of their communications efforts.

Second-order response However, a marketing communication does not have to result in an immediate purchase to be an important component of interactive marketing. Messages can prompt useful responses from customers, even though these recipients do not necessarily place an order immediately after being exposed to the communication. Customer feedback in response to a marketing message that is not in the form of a transaction is a *second-order response*.

A second-order response programme, the Pepperidge Farm No Fuss Pastry Club in the United States, illustrates how a firm communicates directly with users without trying to make an immediate sale. The club boasted more than 30,000 members who had been generated through a combination of promotion efforts, including a magazine mail-in offer, an offer on packages of Pepperidge Farm products, publicity created by news reports about the club and a sign-up form available in supermarket outlets. Pepperidge Farm used surveys to determine members' attitudes towards issues related to its business, and the company also collected valuable information on how those people used frozen puff pastry products.¹⁵ Though the company's immediate goal was not to generate the first-order response of selling frozen pastry, it knew that the second-order responses received from club members would result in loyal customers over time – and many more first-order responses as a result.

Another example of second-order response is feedback via freephone numbers. In a survey of caller logs Nestlé found that only 20 per cent represented complaints from customers. In a pilot study, they followed up consumers who had agreed to be contacted for further feedback. Some of the issues which came to light, which had not emerged via earlier market research such as focus groups, included the view that the standard 8 oz Coffee-mate jar was too small – Nestlé increased the standard size jar to 15 oz and saw a substantial increase in sales. The company also learnt that the flavours were difficult to identify from the pastel-coloured containers: in response, the company brightened the colours of the containers.¹⁶

■ THE SOURCE

Regardless of whether a message is received by 'snail mail' or email, common sense tells us that the same words uttered or written by different people can have very different effects. Research on *source effects* has been carried out for more than 50 years. By attributing the same message to different sources and measuring the degree of attitude change that occurs after listeners hear it, it is possible to determine which aspects of a communicator will induce attitude change.¹⁷

Under most conditions, the source of a message can have a big impact on the likelihood that the message will be accepted. The choice of a source to maximize attitude change can tap into several dimensions. The source can be chosen because he or she is an expert, attractive, famous, or even a 'typical' consumer who is both likeable and trustworthy. Two particularly important source characteristics are *credibility* and *attractiveness*.¹⁸

How do marketing specialists decide whether to stress credibility or attractiveness when choosing a message source? There should be a match between the needs of the recipient and the potential rewards offered by the source. When this match occurs, the recipient is more motivated to process the message. People who tend to be sensitive about social acceptance and the opinions of others, for example, are more persuaded by

an attractive source, whereas those who are more internally oriented are swayed by a credible, expert source.¹⁹

The choice may also depend on the type of product. A positive source can help to reduce risk and increase message acceptance overall, but particular types of sources are more effective at reducing different kinds of risk. Experts are effective at changing attitudes towards utilitarian products that have *high performance risk*, such as vacuum cleaners (i.e. they may be complex and not work as expected). Celebrities are more effective when they focus on products such as jewellery and furniture that have high *social risk*: the user of such products is aware of their effect on the impression others have of him or her. Finally, 'typical' consumers, who are appealing sources because of their similarity to the recipient, tend to be most effective when providing real-life endorsements for everyday products that are low risk, such as biscuits.²⁰

Source credibility

- **Source credibility** refers to a source's perceived expertise, objectivity or trustworthiness. This characteristic relates to consumers' beliefs that a communicator is competent, and is willing to provide the necessary information to evaluate competing products adequately. A credible source can be particularly persuasive when the consumer has not yet learned much about a product or formed an opinion of it.²¹ The decision to pay an expert or a celebrity to promote a product can be a very costly one, but researchers have concluded that on average the investment is worth it simply because the announcement of an endorsement contract is often used by market analysts to evaluate a firm's potential profitability, thereby affecting its expected return. On average, then, the impact of endorsements appears to be so positive that it offsets the cost of hiring the spokesperson.²²

The sleeper effect

Although in general more positive sources tend to increase attitude change, exceptions can occur. Sometimes a source can be obnoxious or disliked and still manage to be effective at getting the product's message across. In some instances the differences in attitude change between positive sources and less positive sources seem to get erased over time. After a while people appear to 'forget' about the negative source and end up changing

- their attitudes anyway. This process is known as the **sleeper effect**.²³

The explanation for the sleeper effect is a subject of debate, as is the more basic question regarding whether and when it really exists. Initially, the *dissociative cue hypothesis* proposed that over time the message and the source become disassociated in the consumer's mind. The message remains on its own in memory, causing the delayed attitude change.²⁴

Another explanation is the *availability-valence hypothesis*, which emphasizes the selectivity of memory owing to limited capacity.²⁵ If the associations linked to the negative source are less available than those linked to the message information, the residual impact of the message enhances persuasion. Consistent with this view, the sleeper effect has been obtained only when the message was encoded deeply; it had stronger associations in memory than did the source.²⁶

Building credibility

Credibility can be enhanced if the source's qualifications are perceived as somehow relevant to the product being endorsed. For example, the footballer Gary Lineker is popularly known in the UK as 'Mr Nice' – a personality type which was a natural for the crisp manufacturer Walkers to tie in to their advertising campaign that Walkers Crisps are 'so nice that the nicest people would nick [steal] them'. Before the campaign unprompted awareness of Walkers ads was around 40 per cent. Following Lineker's antics of stealing packets of crisps from little boys, awareness never fell below 60 per cent, and sales have