



To consumers, a brand is many things. It is a name to refer to the specific version of a product they want. It is shorthand, also, for all the qualities the physical thing contains, and all the benefits its use will deliver. It is assurance that the brand will do what the brand says it will. It is a badge for its user, reflecting for the consumer a certain kind of persona. It is the target of consumption, consumed by the consumer. But it is also the *subject of consumption*, with consumer being the target—the brand consumes the consumer!

Consumers are fanatic about some brands. They depend on some brands, and, in turn, the brand depends on them. By constantly thinking about them and by repeatedly consuming them, we become attached to them, yearning for their presence,

whenever pertinent. We connect to them as if they were people, like friends, trusting and trustworthy. And through them, we connect to other people.

In consumption communities and at consumption events called *brandfests*—a new form of public discourse built around a brand.

We celebrate brands, and in so doing, we celebrate our life itself as consumers.

With such rich potpourri of brand *mantra*, it is hard to overstate the import of understanding the role brands play in consumer lives.

This chapter has been our foray into the world of brand consumption.

Explore it as a consumer and relish your current brand relationships even more.

Explore it as a marketer and strategize how you can offer greater brand value to your target consumers.