

**Selected Excerpts**  
**from the book:**

# CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

**How Humans Think, Feel, And Act In The  
Marketplace**

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+

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OPEN MENTIS

## Attention By Choice



Actually, attention comes in two forms: *voluntary* and *involuntary*. **Voluntary attention** is attention given by choice—the consumer chooses to pay attention. **Involuntary attention** is forced on the consumer.<sup>3</sup> It is an intrusion. Now, it is the case that, initially, all advertising must catch involuntary attention; i.e., the attention the advertising catches is of the involuntary sort, at least initially. This is because the consumer seldom proactively seeks an advertisement. Lisa was just turning the pages of *Elle*; she was not looking for shoes. The Fluevog ad had to intrude upon her attention. It did so by being vivid.

Intrusion is the reason why most consumers find advertising annoying. After all, it interrupts their program viewing. By getting involuntary attention, advertising acts essentially as an uninvited guest. Of course, uninvited does not necessarily mean unwelcome; like a surprise guest to a party who turns out to be likeable, it can become a welcome intrusion. For this to happen, the ad should be relevant to the consumer interest. That is why it is very important that marketers choose their media carefully. Filling print pages and the airwaves with ads that reach non-target consumers will not only waste your media budget, but it will also annoy more of the public.

If consumers find an ad to be relevant, then they will pay voluntary attention. That initially involuntary attention turns into voluntary attention. Because voluntary attention is based on consumer interest, it is also called “high involvement attention.” Conversely, involuntary attention is “low involvement attention.” Lisa of course decided to pay

the Fluevog ad voluntary attention. Consequently, she noticed, to her delight, that inscribed within the body frame is the phrase “Listen to Me!”

The objective of all advertising is, or should be, of course, to elicit high consumer involvement—at least high enough for the consumer to attend to the message. Advertisers seek to accomplish this through meaningful message designs and creative, engaging execution. If consumers decide to devote voluntary attention, then they have “selected” your ad for further intake. Thus, by intruding, you can get involuntary attention and, consequently, consumer sensation for your stimulus, but it still requires consumers’ voluntary attention for your stimulus (i.e., message) to advance to the stage called selection.

### Surviving in the Attention Economy

All advertising (all marketing stimuli, for that matter) must necessarily first get involuntary attention. But with our lives so over-cluttered with stuff to do and with so many stimuli from so many directions vying for our attention, consumer attention these days has become a scarce commodity. Some have called the present times *the attention economy*.

To survive in this attention-scarce economy, marketers must constantly reinvent new ways to gain exposure and attention. Commercial speech now shows up in strange places—on floor mats in fitness gyms, on TV screens in Wal-Mart, on mini video screens mounted on shopping carts, as place-based ads on cell phone screens, and yes, on the walls of public restrooms—this last one is not a bad idea: it displaces graffiti, and it gets a captive audience. (Of course, it would not be appropriate for all products.) Beyond the ever-expanding media presence, clever message execution also influences consumer attention. Perhaps the cleverest current example of “no fail attention getter” advertising is from Zelnorm®—yes, those exposed tummies used as billboards for marker pen-inscribed words like “Abdominal Pain,” “Bloating,” and whatever else those tummies might be suffering from.

This particular execution for Zelnorm® has a rare quality worth emulating that all students and practitioners of advertising must note: Anyone can get attention (by doing totally outrageous things, for example—remember the Paris Hilton Car Wash for the Carl’s Jr. burger chain?). The creative challenge is to get attention in a manner so that the attention “prop” is also the message.

\* \* \* \* \*



## Milk, Oranges, and Levitra—Getting Consumers to Appreciate the Truth and Beauty of Your Brand

**This we have said before, but it bears repeating. More than the product's reality, consumer perceptions of it matter. For a marketer, having a product with desirable qualities is good, even a necessity, but it is not enough. Beyond that, you have to get the consumer to perceive it correctly. And appreciate it. If consumer perceptions fall short of the product's reality, don't blame consumers for it. It is how our minds function. With efficient stimulus coding as our goal, our minds form a perception that sits well with our prior expectations—with our map of the world, so to speak. If we believe, as marketers, that consumer perceptions are currently distorted, then we have the onus, and some "power of product reality" on our side, to mold those perceptions. Savvy marketers have shouldered this responsibility with understanding and grace.**

As examples, three marketing communications come to mind—no doubt, there are umpteen others. The famous milk moustache campaign was conceived to battle a typical product image problem—most consumers thought milk was a sissy drink. Is it? Not any more—not after you have seen that now familiar milk moustache on the mouths of celebrities and athletes of every ilk. Milk is now "must have" nourishment for health-conscious adults everywhere. No, it has not exactly become a fashionable drink, but "sissy" it is no more.

**As our second example, revisit the Sunkist ad you saw earlier. The copy reads: Cookies—well, oranges are round. And moist. And certainly sweet. Okay, maybe you can't call one a cookie, but don't let an orange hear you say that it isn't a snack. Better snacking. Not exactly earth shaking (and it shouldn't be), but if some consumers now began to perceive oranges as snack food, then that is all the ad asks. Advertising should not be a gimmick to "con" consumers into thinking and perceiving what a product factually is not, and this Sunkist ad doesn't act that way. It simply, and gently, nudges consumers' current perceptions with the product's reality.**

Our third example comes from a commercial from Superbowl XXXVIII, played in the U.S. on February 1, 2004. The product is Levitra—and endorsing it is no other than well-respected coach Mike Ditka. Bob Dole, before him, had endorsed Viagra, making, in effect, the ailment it treats a non-taboo topic. But a super-performing athlete Bob Dole is not. Levitra makers wanted to make sure the product was not perceived as something meant only for wimpy old men, but that it is perfectly fair game for otherwise potent-bodied, healthy men as well—this is the perception Ditka is supposed to deliver. And he left no doubt in the consumer mind—unlike Bob Dole who spoke of the product but without explicit personal testimony, Ditka proclaimed,  
"Take the Levitra challenge, like I did."

**Will it succeed in creating the perception the company seeks? You decide. But whatever your judgment about any of the above three ads, and about countless others, at least you now know the power of perceptions and how marketers must navigate and shape these through well thought out stimuli design—i.e., all marketing communications.**

As you "encounter" exposure from other marketing stimuli in your everyday life, look at them as fodder for consumer perceptions, and judge how well they do (or not) their expected jobs.

## Consumer Lifestyles and Psychographics

### S U M M A R Y

Using Bianca's brief autobiographical narrative as a launch pad, we began with an introduction to psychographics as entailing a study of what makes up a consumer—both psychologically and behaviorally. Psychographics include personal values, personality traits, self-concept, and lifestyles. Values, personality, and self-concept—all culminate in lifestyles—the way we live. Here, in the study of lifestyles, we understood a crucial fact of consumers' marketplace behaviors: consumers choose products to build the mosaic that their lifestyle is. A visit to a Hot Topic store, along with a few other marketing campaigns, showed us the magical appeal of lifestyle targeting in the real world.

Psychographics are ways of “graphing the psychological makeup of the consumer” (hence, the name “psychographics”). This is done, we learned, through AIO (“activities, interests, and opinions”) statements, and consumer answers to these statements on numerical rating scales enable us to identify segments of consumers that differ on their psychographics. As an example, we reviewed VALS, a values and lifestyle segmentation scheme for North American consumers.

To internationalize our perspective, we also saw the psychographic profiles for two other countries: Japan and New Zealand. We concluded this section with a description of selected applications of psychographic segmentation.

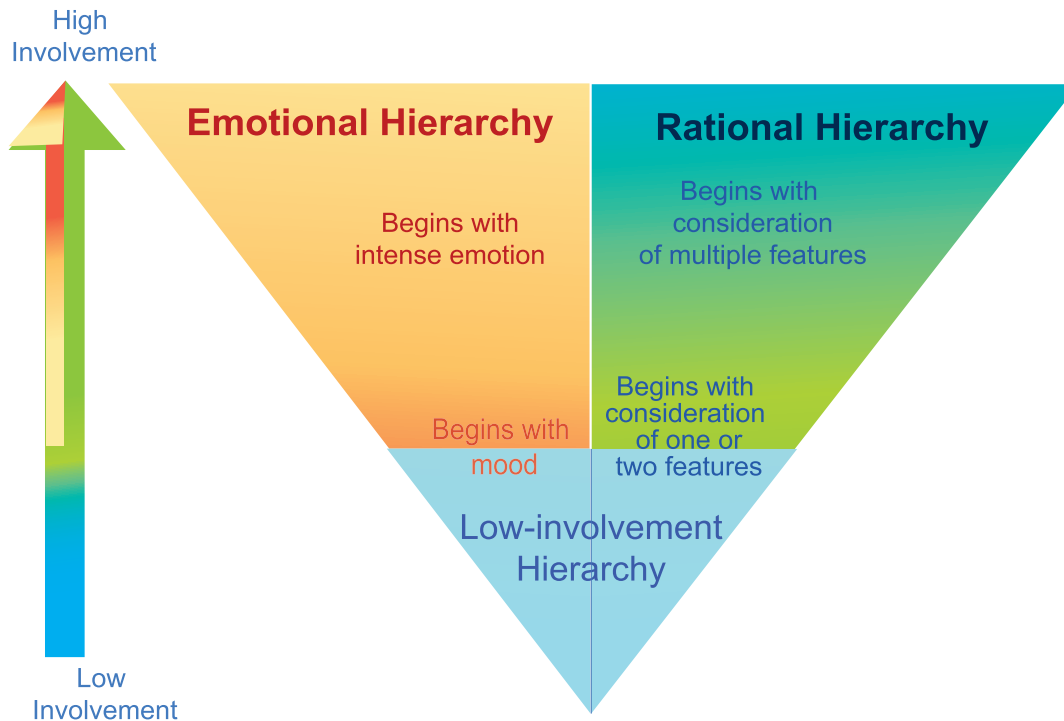
We concluded the chapter with a discussion of two overarching consumer psychographics: materialism and voluntary simplicity. Without these, no chapter on psychographics is complete. They engulf and immerse our entire lives, both in our roles as humans and as consumers, serving us as servants, or, alternatively, controlling us as masters (depending on our perspective on life and on consumption). Read them and decide for yourself what they can do for you!

## **Consumer Attitudes**

### **Consumer Involvement and Attitude Formation**

One clarification about involvement is in order. Involvement is not dichotomous (i.e., just high or low). Rather it is a matter of degree. The low-involvement hierarchy described above occurs at the very low-end of involvement when something is utterly of no consequence to the consumer. In the middle range, the high-involvement hierarchies occur, but with less intensity of thought or feeling. The emotional hierarchy still begins with affect (or feeling), but at the middle range it is likely to begin with a mood rather than deep emotion. And the rational hierarchy is still relevant, except that instead of the extensive thoughts of the high-involvement condition, just a few thoughts will drive feelings. This situation is depicted in Figure 7.7.

**FIGURE 7.7 INVOLVEMENT AND ATTITUDE HIERARCHY**



### **MARKETING IMPLICATION OF ATTITUDE HIERARCHY**

These hierarchies have marketing implications. We all know that consumers look at some products as primarily rational purchases and at others as primarily emotional purchases. We want consumers to have a positive attitude toward our products. So how do we go about building it? Here the hierarchies come to our aid. For primarily rational products (like home appliances), we must provide consumers a lot of product knowledge, so they can then base their decisions on rational grounds. We would fail if instead we began to appeal to their emotions. But once they have formed beliefs, then some emotional appeals will help to move them to action.

(the rest of the section Omitted)

## Gender and Age in Consumer Behavior

Marketing Opportunity

15.1

### A Matter of Opinion

#### Metrosexuality, Retrosexuality, Pomosexuality, and Übersexuality

A Marketing Opportunity

You have read about metrosexuals, retrosexuals, pomosexuals, and übersexuals. Now consider this:

Some say these are mere fads; we believe not. While the terms maybe new, the phenomenon they tag is not. Yes, the sheer public availability of the terms may have expanded the ranks of people whose grooming practices fit these labels. And yes, that upward trend might in time slow down. But appearance consciousness and vanity have real and significant presence among males in every culture and every nation. Not among all of them, of course, but for a significant proportion of men. Almost everyone likes to look cool, so the real issue is what is cool to whom in a particular time period. Dressing up and deep grooming have been and will be cool for some men, no matter how male fashion trends move.

It is possible to view metrosexuality as a mix of narcissism and masculinity. And both have been alive and well in cultures worldwide. The opposite type, retrosexual, has also been around for a while. The casual look of torn and faded jeans has epitomized this for Gen Xers and now does so for the Gen 'Y's. And its extreme form seems to have

incarnated as "the grunge look." As for pomosexuality, the term is perhaps the vaguest; it has yet to be fully clarified and its essence yet to be adopted by men whose fancy its meaning might ever catch. Just what type it is requires more research and social commentary.

Most interesting is the category called übersexual. Men refined both in their appearance as well as mind, and whose self-concept is intertwined more with their brain's capabilities than in the awe of their brawn. If this term catches currency, becoming geeks will be in fashion again, albeit of a savvier kind. Übersexuality beckons us to focus on things that contribute to mankind's future. If nurtured in oneself with judicious care, it is a cause for celebration. Of course, the celebrated concept should embrace both genders and should properly be called überperson.

Don't dismiss these as mere labels, though. Definitinal quibbles aside, the point to note is that these trends, as and when they gain speed, will have monumental implications for the male grooming industry. Keep your eyes on the ball!. (Write: [Opinion@mycbbook.com](mailto:Opinion@mycbbook.com).)

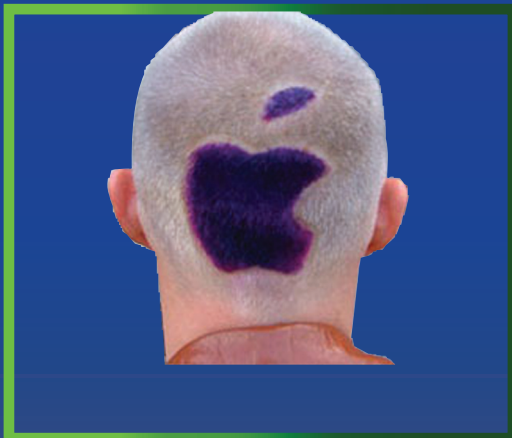


# Consumer Relationships

## with Brands: Loyalty, Romance, and Brand Tribes



- Brand Loyalty—From Behavior Scans to Mind Scans
- Brand Personality—How Products Get It
- Brand Relationships—Meet My Brand, My Alter-ego
- A Society of Consumption Communities
- Brandfests and Brand Bonding—Party Time For All Brand Lovers
- Brand Equity—Not All Brands Are Created Equal



Gabriel McIntyre of [www.XOLO.TV](http://www.XOLO.TV)



## Dear Miata, Will You Marry Me?

A sunny afternoon in a small town in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains. An outdoor wedding ceremony. A mass wedding, actually. 250 people gathered.



Each one a bride or a groom. All love struck. All eager, all ecstatic. And then the voice of Reverend James A. Massie, Jr., an Episcopal priest, comes through the microphone. He reads a few vows, and then, with a deep breath, he utters the sentence all had gathered to hear: “By the power vested in me, I pronounce that you are... car and driver.” Suddenly, 250 happy people, all married this day to their Mazda Miatas!

Reverend Massie himself is an ardent fan. Besides praying, his only other passion is driving around in his white 1996 Miata, with religious songs playing on its CD player. It is a “spiritual endeavor,” says Massie of his leisurely ride. Then there is Peter Warrick, a 53 years old advertising executive in Fort Lauderdale; he owns 28 Miatas. He survived a heart attack recently, and what does he credit it to? His passion for the Miata!!<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION

The fanatic devotion some consumers show toward their Miatas is exceptional but not unique. Many consumers feel similar passion for Apple Computers, Krispie Kreme Donuts, Saturn cars, the Harley-Davidson, and of course, their iPods. Apple computer fans, for example, make an annual pilgrimage to the Macworld Expo. There, they—graphic designers, artists, musicians, techies—browse through a galaxy of Apple products and devices, and, with great enchantment, they listen to Steve Jobs, cheering his every word. And whenever a new Krispie Kreme Donut store opens up, long queues form all night long, just to taste their first bite of the legendary donut.

## Consumer Brand and Store Loyalty

**TABLE 18.2** ILLUSTRATIVE MEASURES OF BRAND LOYALTY

Rate the following statements using this scale:				
Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Existence of Loyalty (Name the product category _____)</b>				
1.	In this product category, I have a favorite brand.			
2.	(Omitted)			
3.	(Omitted)			
<b>Loyalty toward a Specific Brand (Name the brand _____)</b>				
4.	I like this brand—— very much.			
5.	(Omitted)			
6.	(Omitted)			
7.	(Omitted)			
8.	(Omitted)			
9.	(Omitted)			
<p>Note 1. Specify the product category, such as yogurt, detergent, soft drink, jeans, athletic shoes, etc. Do not write the section headings on the survey form itself.</p> <p>Note 2. Compute the average across these statements (the first three and the last six, separately). The closer the score is to '5' (meaning "strongly agree"), the stronger the brand loyalty.</p>				
Prepared by Author for MyCBBook				

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Source: *Consumer Behavior (Banwari Mittal et al) p. 531*

**TABLE 18.3** ILLUSTRATIVE MEASURES OF STORE LOYALTY

Rate the following statements using this scale:				
Strongly disagree				Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5
(Rest of the Table omitted)				
Prepared by Author for MyCBBook				

### *Meet My Brand—My Buddy, My Alter-ego*

In a recent ad from Toshiba, the printer is shown brooding, “I do all the work of copying, and all he does [referring to a copying associate] is bring her those copies, and now he is her sushi buddy!”

This is animism at work. **Animism** refers to the belief that objects (products) possess souls, i.e., they have consciousness just like humans do. A Chrysler 300M ad declares: “The technology has changed, but the soul lives on.” The fact that advertisers use this technique and that consumers accept it (acceptance here means, simply, not rejecting something as nonsensical or absurd) shows that consumers see it as something that could exist, that could happen, at least on some implicit, latent level of thought and feeling.

While the Toshiba Printer in the ad is a lonely subject of unrequited love, other products and brands are luckier. There are many products and brands that consumers notice, yearn for, adopt and incorporate into their lives, and develop special feelings toward them. Consumers develop relationships with these products and brands, just as they have relationships with people. At first, this proposition may seem absurd. You may like, adore, or even love a product or a brand, but to say that you have a relationship with it may seem a stretch to you. But as some consumer psychologists peer deeper into the consumer mind, more and more they are finding manifestations of humanlike relationships between people and their brands.

This is not to say that all people have relationships with all the products they use. Far from it. In fact, there are many products and brands that consumers possess and use without a moment’s thought about them. (We call such products “low involvement” products, remember?) At the same time, for each of us, there is at least one product or brand toward which we feel a little personal, a little like it were human. We call this view of how consumers feel toward some products and brands **consumer-brand relationships**.<sup>10</sup>

How is it that consumers can be said to have a relationship with brands? A **relationship** is based upon a sentiment in which one feels a special sense of being connected. In a relationship, one feels that there is interdependence between two entities. Seen in this light, we as consumers do have a relationship with some of the products we consume. We depend on our cars, and our cars depend on us for proper care. If we are enduringly involved with our cars, then we also come to harbor some feeling toward it; we come to see it as having a special place in our lives. The brand becomes something more than a mere instrument for getting the job done. With



the brand Jeep, for example, not the destination, but the journey itself is meaningful. This relationship occurs in several forms<sup>11</sup>:

**1. Humanistic qualities in brands** First, we bestow on some products the same qualities that humans have, and by virtue of those qualities, we then begin to see those products as almost human-like entities.

We think of soup as a nurturer, for example. Jell-O becomes a happy cheery friend, cast in Bill Cosby's image (Bill Cosby was a comedian and a TV actor who played during the 1980's and 1990's in a TV drama series called *Cosby*, the very likable patriarch to a family of kids ranging in age from 5 to 25 and who appealed to viewers across race, gender and social class boundaries.) Audi TT is a muscular car that packs 300 horsepower and can be thought of as a muscular, agile, robust high-speed horse. The point is not simply that we think soup is good nutritional food that nurtures; but rather that we think it is our benefactor and that it nurtures us just as our mothers did. That Jell-O is a cheery friend who would actually lift us, like a friend, out of our blues. And that Audi TT will take us places with gusto, and like the horse of the cowboy era, it will care of its master and owner, never letting us down. Since consumers think of these products as possessing specific human (or animal) qualities, they find them comforting as personal friends and companions, whose company they hope will bring the same satisfaction that other humans bring them.

Consumer researchers even have a term for this: **Anthropomorphizing** the brand—giving the brand a humanlike quality. And marketers recognize and promote this by giving brands a human-like character: Mr. Peanut, Mr. Clean, Ronald McDonald, Frisch's Big Boy, the Pillsbury Doughboy, etc.

**2. Self-definition by Brand** This is the mirror image of the foregoing. Instead of giving a product or brand certain humanistic qualities, consumers begin to define themselves (and others) by a product category, or by a brand. For example, as in "She is a Real Coke Girl," or "Here comes the Tommy Hilfiger Girl," or even, he is "a meat and potatoes guy." Consumers adopt the brand (product) identity—identifying themselves as possessing the essential quality of the brand (product)—like sophisticated or rugged or simple and competent. Consequently, consumers begin to view the brand as somehow related to them.

**3. Surrogate Other (Omitted)**

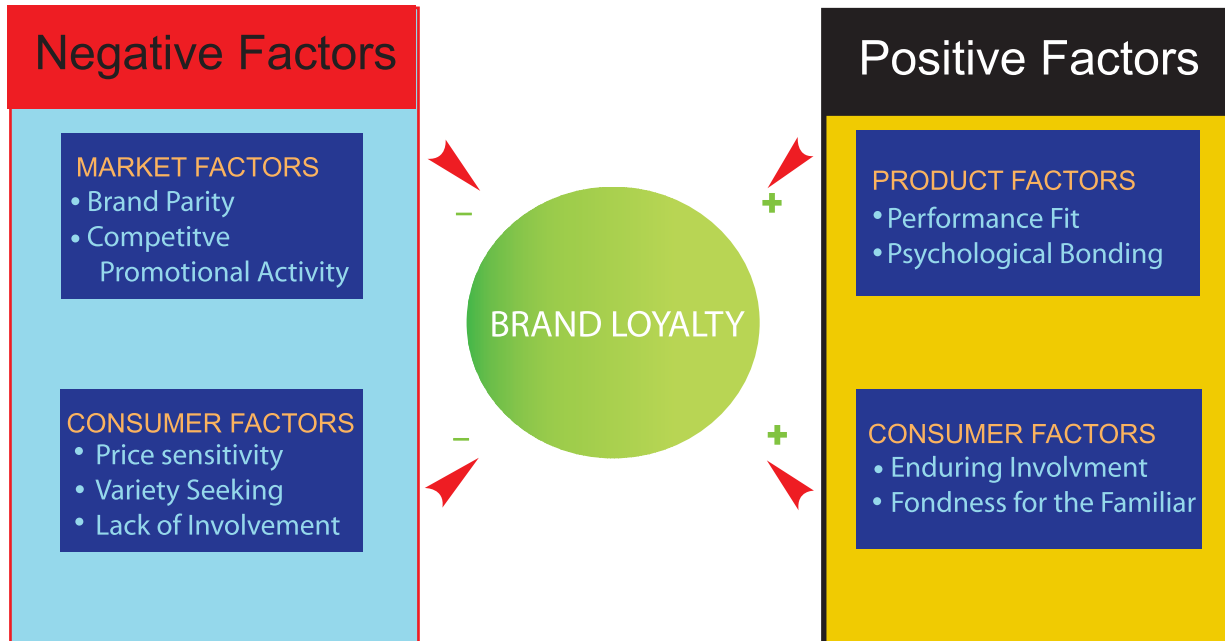
**4. Connected with Our Life Projects (Omitted)**

(The rest of the section Omitted)

FIGURE

## A COMPREHENSIVE MODEL OF BRAND LOYALTY

18.8



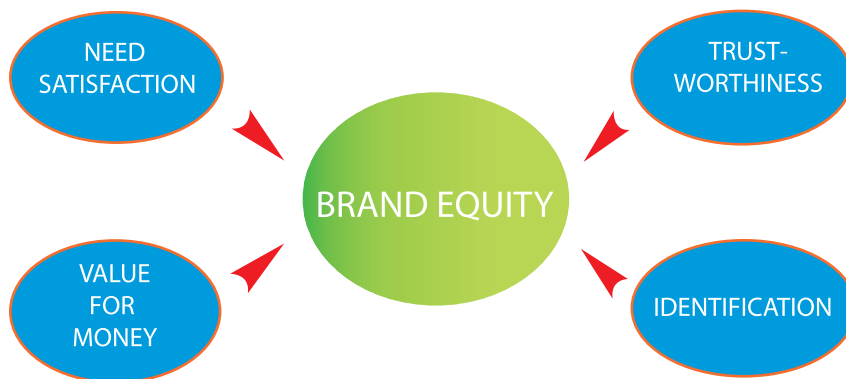
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Source: *Consumer Behavior (Banwari Mittal et al) p. 557*

FIGURE

## SOURCES OF BRAND EQUITY

18.7



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Source: *Consumer Behavior (Banwari Mittal et al) p. 554*

# SPECIAL TOPICS

- CONSUMERS JUST WANNA HAVE FUN, FEELINGS, AND FANTASY
- DEAR XPERIENCING CONSUMER: PLEASE MAKE YOURSELF XTRA COMFORTABLE
- PSYCHOLOGY MEETS ECONOMICS: Why Consumers Can't Count Their Money Correctly
- CONSUMERS IN SEARCH OF PROPER PLEASURE—How Brand Stories Help Consumers Enact Dramas in Their Lives

Morris Holbrook

Sharon Beatty

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Section editor: Arch G. Woodside

# CONSUMERS JUST WANNA HAVE FANTASIES, FEELINGS, AND FUN!!

Morris B. Holbrook, Columbia University

..... So strong is this push toward constant entertainment in all areas of human existence that consumers have become increasingly impatient and restless when faced with anything less. Fail to amuse them for even a moment, and you will lose their attention forever. Thus, natural-born surfers—habituated to fingering the mouse clicker or pawing the remote control—will be lost to the zipping-and-zapping impulse unless they are strongly lured by appealing emotional responses. Advertising messages stand no chance of attracting viewers or readers unless they pack an experiential wallop. Worse yet, the members of Generation Y—who have played with computers since infancy and who therefore have very itchy trigger fingers when clicking-or-switching with a mouse or a channel changer—will increasingly dominate the viewing habits of the population. Their dwindling attention spans plus their ingrained pointing-and-clicking inclinations will dictate the need for an even higher level of the E-factor in GenY-directed advertising campaigns.

Asking an all-too-human consumer why she bought a new hat would produce nothing but a meaningless rationalization.

**TABLE 2A** COMPARISON OF THE DECISION-ORIENTED AND EXPERIENTIAL VIEWS AS APPROACHES TO UNDERSTANDING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR  
**MARKETING MIX**

Decision-oriented View	THEME	Experiential View
Tangible offerings (goods) with objective FABs Examples: gasoline, toothpaste, light bulbs	Product (Characteristics)	Intangible offerings (services) with subjective meanings Examples: TV programs, rock concerts, museums
Cost measured in money Example: ticket for a movie priced at \$10.00	Price (Cost)	Cost measured in time Example: duration of movie calculated in minutes
Informational advertising Example: Unique Selling Proposition as reason for purchase ("M&Ms melt in your mouth, not in your hand")	Promotion (Communication)	Transformational advertising Example: Michael Jordan, Nike, the "swoosh," awesome image ("Just do it.")
Retailer viewed as purchase facilitator Examples: Kmart or corner grocery	Place (Channels)	Retailer viewed as source of shopping experience Examples: Mall of America or Bloomingdale's



## Dear Xperiencing Consumer: Please Make Yourself Xtra Comfortable A Crash Course on Becoming a Model Consumer in Our Xperience Economy by Sharon Beatty, University of Alabama

Consumer: Do you know how to serve me my Xperience?

Marketer: Do you know what it takes to be served a great Xperience?

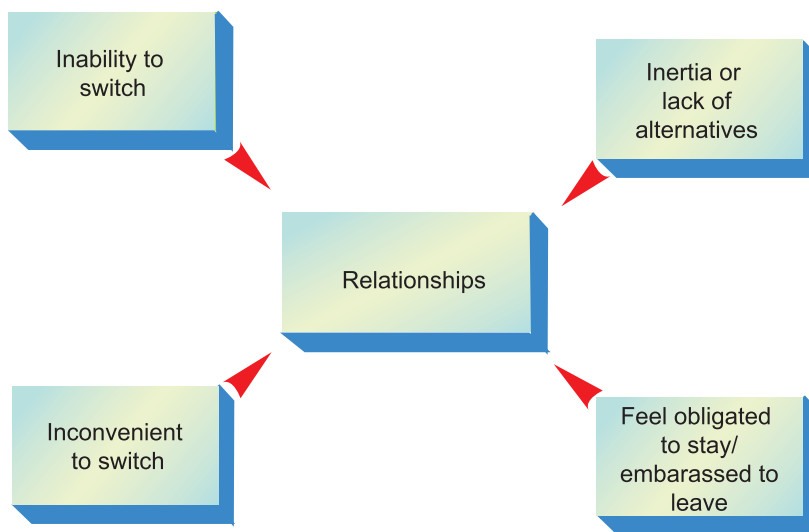
### WHY DO WE HAVE RELATIONSHIPS?

#### Relationships built on Positive Reactions

In order for you to develop and stay in a relationship with a marketer, your benefits need to outweigh your costs. These benefits come in three forms:<sup>17</sup>

1. **Special treatment benefits**—the special way you are treated because you have that relationship (maybe your favorite bartender has your drink poured before you even ask for it).
2. **Confidence benefits**—the faith you have in your service provider and the service they deliver.
3. **Social benefits**—the friendships that develop and the social interaction and conversations that occur (your massage therapist may also be your source of local news or you may love listening to your bartender’s newest jokes).

Relationships are not equally important to all customers. Some people are simply more social and seek out relationships to fulfill their social needs; others may have relationships because they fulfill functional needs (for example one retail customer had this to say about her long-time relationship with a retail salesperson: “I don’t have time to keep up with the trends and to mix and match things. Joan does this for me. The social part of the relationship is not important to me.”<sup>18</sup>), while still others may be seeking both social and functional benefits. Further, sometimes due to the perceived risk or the importance of the service to the individual, developing a relationship becomes more



**Figure 5** Relationships Built on Switching Barriers

## PSYCHOLOGY MEETS ECONOMICS:

### Why Consumers Can't Count Their Money Correctly

Priya Raghubir, Haas School of Business, University of California at Berkeley

**2. TWO SEQUENTIAL DISCOUNTS:** Suppose that a store offers a discount of 10% and then an additional discount of 10% on the new discounted price; that would seem a better value to the consumer than a single 20% discount. Note that this point is different than the fact that a total discount split into two equal parts is better than a single discount of the same value. To understand the difference, let us do some simple math. Suppose the price of an item is \$100. A 10% discount means, its discounted price is \$90. Now, an additional, sequential discount of 10% on the discounted price would be \$9, so the final discounted price would be \$81, one dollar more than what the final price would have been with a straight 20% discount or two simultaneous 10% discounts. Yet, most consumers would feel that two 10% discounts, even when applied sequentially, offer a better value!

Option 'A' Buy this item for \$100 now, then receive \$20 cash back.

Option 'B' Buy it now for a discounted price of \$80.



"I will take Option 'A'. I want my cash back."

#### REFERENCE POINTS AS ATTRACTION & COMPROMISE

Two applications of reference points are especially useful to marketers of multiple options in a product line.<sup>8</sup> These include a store that carries an assortment, or a company that offers 3 or more product versions in the same product category but at different price points. This is how it works.

*The Attraction Effect:* Suppose a travel agent offers two packages to Las Vegas: Package 'A': air plus three nights in a four star hotel, priced at \$299; Package 'B': air plus two nights in the same four star hotel, priced at \$199. Now, suppose, the travel agent adds a third option, Option 'C': air plus two nights in a *three* star hotel, also priced at \$199. What do you think would happen? Believe it or not, the sales of Option 'B' will receive a boost. This is because, to consumers, with Option 'C' as a reference, Option 'B' suddenly looks more attractive!

*The Compromise Effect:* Next, consider an option in a product line that is high quality and high priced (say, business class airfares), and a second option that is relatively lower priced and of relatively lower quality (say, economy class). If the company now introduces a third option that is priced still higher but is also of higher quality (e.g., first class seats), what do you think will happen now? The sales of the middle-priced option (e.g., business class seats) will increase! This is because, to the consumer, the business class fare now seems a good compromise option.

#### MONEY ILLUSIONS

- Coins may be valued less than notes and may be more likely to be spent.
- Amounts of a larger denomination are valued more and therefore may be less likely to be spent. That is, if you have a \$50 bill, you may be less likely to buy anything than if you have, say, only a \$10 bill.
- Notes (that are representative of higher denominations) are likely to be valued more than coins, leading to consumers spending coins more readily than bills. That is why many restaurants bring back "change" in coins and small notes, as they are more likely to be left as tips.
- Monetary forms that are more colorful and less serious are likely to be spent more readily.<sup>1</sup>

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# CONSUMERS IN SEARCH of PROPER PLEASURE

## How Brand Stories Help Consumers Enact Dramas in Their Lives

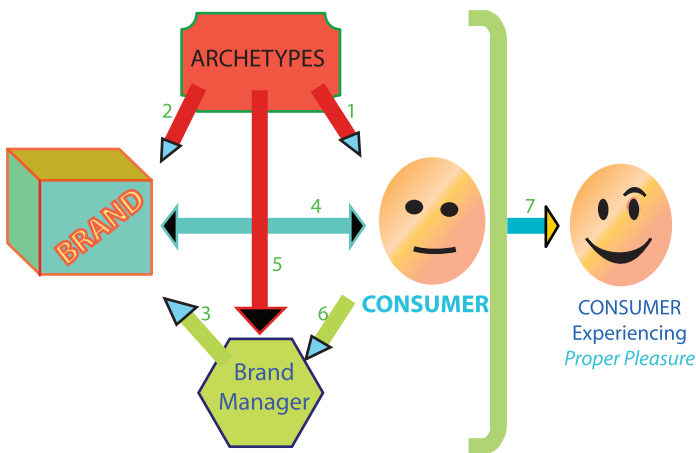
Arch G. Woodside, Boston College, USA

Consumers are hard-wired to tell stories of their consumption. Through storytelling, consumers interpret, make sense of, and relive their original consumption experience itself. Such re-experiencing through storytelling, Aristotle calls “proper pleasure.” Residing in our unconscious and behind these stories is an archetype—the hero of the story if you will. While brand communications often tell brand stories of their own, few rise to the level of successfully incorporating the archetypes specific consumers are trying to achieve—archetypes such as the hero, the anti-hero, the rebel, or the change master, for example.

We illustrate the role of such archetypes in brand communications though a brand consumption story about Versace and the archetype some consumers might well experience—namely, the siren, the seductress in a Versace coat. This story is vivid proof that archetypes are real, and it is an invitation to brand managers to become familiar with the repertoire of various archetypes, or else miss an opportunity to bring consumers “proper pleasure” they (the consumers) are seeking.

**For You, the Brand Marketer, the Wisdom of Consumer Stories**

**FIGURE 2 HOW BRANDS BUILD ARCHETYPAL STORIES**



1. Core archetypes the consumer aspires to achieve.
2. The Archetype most fitting for the brand.
3. The brand stories that brand managers build.
4. The brand stories consumers build, accept, and relish.  
This link reflects consumer-brand relationship.
5. The archetype the brand manager taps to build brand stories
6. Brand manager researches consumer brand stories.
7. Consumer tells (or listens to) the archetype-based brand story.

A substantial proportion of consumption experiences are “realized” by consumers through the telling of stories to themselves and to others—stories built around the brand’s use. Brand communications also sometimes tell such stories, but, in order to be effective, they should resonate with what consumers are trying to achieve through brand consumption. To achieve such resonance, brand managers should listen to stories consumers tell.

This requires ethnographic studies, but weeks and months of ethnographic data entailing consumer stories will be of no avail without knowledge of archetypes. Existing unconsciously behind these stories are archetypes—the hero in the story if you will. To identify the specific archetype in a story, the managers must become familiar with the repertoire of archetypes and the kinds of myths and stories associated with them.

Our description of twelve of such archetypes along with current marketing examples is a demonstration of the living, vivid reality that archetypes are in current brand dramas. Our essay is thus also an invitation to brand managers to study archetypes and harness their potential in their brand communications.

## HAPPY FAMILIES, CONSUMER VALUE, AND BUSINESS PRACTICES

On this last page of this chapter, we bring you a couple of thoughts and images.

First, enjoy the image of a family, photoshopped in a moment of creativity. Families are, as mentioned amply in the chapter, significant units of consumption. And a family portrait is not just a picture of family members collected in one place for a photo-op; a portrait shows, as well, how “connected” and “mutually celebrating” its members are. This *mutual celebration* is writ large on this photoshopped portrait, won't you agree?

Could it be that highly *connected* families will make marketplace decisions and experience joint consumption in a manner qualitatively different than families whose members share little else than a roof. This line of basic research can be intellectually rewarding. It may also yield intuitive insights on using *family connectivity* as a segmentation variable.

Second, we present a set of thoughts on the significance of value consumers seek in the marketplace (see Chapter 1) and pathways for businesses to earn customer loyalty. The thoughts are based on the themes in the cited book, composed post-hoc. As a marketer, you will find them worthy of reflection.

P.S. In case you didn't notice, all chapters end on this right side page, and rather than leave it blank, we thought it preferable to bring you this content. Read it. Enjoy it. Put in practice what you can.



Mark Mine, a professor of computer science, lives in Chapel Hill (U.S.A.) Here, in a moment of creativity, he proudly displays his family portrait.

An *EXCERPT*  
From  
Chapter 14  
*Family and  
Business  
Buying*

### Customer Value

It is the be-all  
And the end-all  
Of all business activity.

The only purpose  
Of organizations.

It is the only justifiable goal  
Of all reengineering,  
Organizational renewal,  
Entrepreneurship,  
And corporate innovation.

And it is the only path  
For sustained growth,  
And for winning the battle  
For market leadership.

—based on *ValueSpace*, 2001

[www.myvaluespace.com](http://www.myvaluespace.com)

### Customer Loyalty

How do you win it?

CRM programs, frequency  
rewards,  
Corporate hospitality events ,  
These are mere tools.

Customer retention  
As business model,  
An unwavering ethic of  
Non-opportunistic behavior,  
A human face on customer  
Interactions,  
And, most important,  
A myopic obsession  
With customer value innovation.

On these four pillars  
Are lasting  
Customer relationships founded.

—based on *ValueSpace*, 2001

[www.myvaluespace.com](http://www.myvaluespace.com)

## VALUE SPACE

Winning the  
*Battle*  
for Market  
*Leadership*

LESSONS FROM THE WORLD'S  
MOST ADMIRED COMPANIES

BANWARI MITTAL AND JAGDISH SHETH









