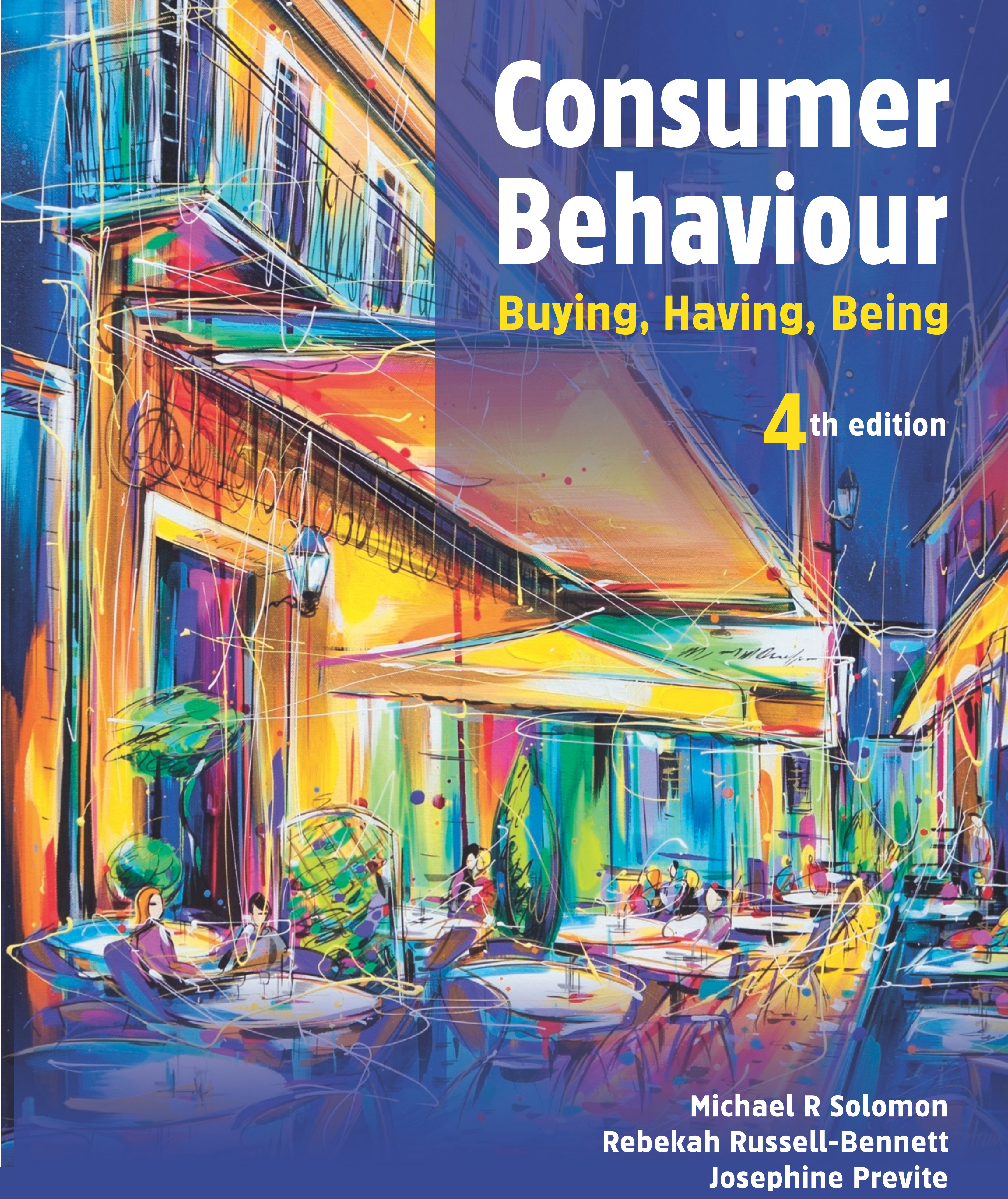

Consumer Behaviour

Buying, Having, Being

4th edition

Michael R Solomon
Rebekah Russell-Bennett
Josephine Previte

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About the authors

Michael R Solomon, PhD, is Professor of Marketing in the Haub School of Business at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. He earned his PhD in social psychology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Professor Solomon's primary research interests include consumer behaviour and lifestyle issues; branding strategy; the symbolic aspects of products; the psychology of fashion, decoration and image; services marketing; marketing in virtual worlds; and the development of visually oriented online research methodologies. He has published numerous articles on these and related topics in academic journals, and has delivered invited lectures on these subjects in Europe, Australia, Asia and Latin America. He currently sits on the editorial or advisory boards of *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, *Critical Studies in Fashion and Beauty* and *Journal for Advancement of Marketing Education*. He is also a frequent contributor to mass media and his feature articles have appeared in such magazines as *Psychology Today*, *Gentleman's Quarterly* and *Savvy*. In addition to this text, Professor Solomon is co-author of the widely used textbook *Marketing: Real People, Real Choices.* Professor Solomon has been recognised as one of the 15 most widely cited scholars in the academic behavioural sciences/fashion literature, and as one of the 10 most productive scholars in the field of advertising and marketing communications.

Professor Rebekah Russell-Bennett is a Professor in marketing in the School of Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations at Queensland University of Technology. She holds a PhD in marketing from the University of Queensland and has a research interest in consumer behaviour in the social marketing and services sectors. She teaches at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels and has won national awards for her innovations in teaching. Professor Russell-Bennett is the former national president of Australia's peak body for social marketing and has more than 25 years' practical marketing experience in the area of professional services. She also has commercial marketing experience and is a former Deputy President of the Australian Marketing Institute (Qld). Professor Russell-Bennett's current research areas are technology and consumer responses, customer co-creation and decision making. She has published more than 200 peer-reviewed articles in over 60 journals. Her research projects with real-world organisations are profiled on her website, www.research.qut.edu.au/servicesocialmarketing.

Dr Josephine Previte is a Senior Lecturer in marketing in the UQ Business School at the University of Queensland. She holds a PhD in social marketing from Queensland University of Technology. Her scholarship in social marketing is constantly informed by her ongoing work with not-for-profit and government organisations involving the development of social marketing campaigns, practitioner training and social research. Dr Previte convenes and lectures postgraduate and undergraduate marketing courses at the University of Queensland and is passionate about training and enabling the next generation of consumer researchers and marketers. Her writing and research interests also extend to a critical marketing analysis of consumption and marketplace behaviours and to the study of gender, social media and the sociology of technology. Dr Previte has also published in the areas of technology, gender and social marketing in books, articles and conference proceedings.

Preface

We love to people-watch, do you? People shopping, people interacting with friends and social media, people consuming . . . Consumer behaviour is the study of people and the products that help to shape their identities. Because we are consumers ourselves, we have a vested interest in learning more about how this process works in order to understand ourselves. In that way, you, as a student and consumer, also have a dual interest. In many courses, students are merely passive observers, learning about topics that affect them indirectly if at all. Not everyone is a plasma physicist, a medieval French scholar or a marketing professional. But we are all consumers. Many of the topics in this book have both professional and personal relevance to the reader, whether you are a student, professor or businessperson.

WHAT'S IN THE BOOK FOR YOU, AS A STUDENT?

We balance theory with practice

Consumer behaviour can be a challenging subject, although it can often appear deceptively simple—we all think we know why we spend money on the products we buy, but can we explain why others do (or don't) buy the same products? This book balances the complexity of consumer behaviour theory (and, trust us, there's advanced level content that makes rocket science look easy) with the need to make sense of the concepts for the real world (not everyone needs the rocket science level, as not everyone is into building rockets).

We've picked some fun topics

We've focused on making the book accessible for you by selecting examples and issues that are interesting or funky. We want to guide you through consumer behaviour and make it an enjoyable experience (even if you are unlikely to be examined on the content at the end of the semester).

This is consumer behaviour for the real world

Above all, we've tried to keep this consumer behaviour book as real as possible. Consumer behaviour happens in the real world, not in a science lab (or rocket test range) somewhere away from day-to-day life. We've put in real-world examples to link the research and model to daily life, and mixed local, national and international experiences into the book. We're a global community, and we take advantage of that fact to tap into the knowledge of researchers from around the world to make this book a comprehensive guide to consumer behaviour.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU, THE LECTURER?

Multi-perspective approach

Consumer researchers represent virtually every social science discipline, plus a few from the physical sciences and the arts for good measure. From this melting pot has come a healthy 'stew' of research perspectives, viewpoints on appropriate research methods, and even deeply held beliefs about what are and what are not appropriate issues for consumer researchers to study in the first place. We have also ensured that the different schools of thought within consumer behaviour are well represented and have integrated cognitive, emotional, behavioural and cultural theories throughout the book.

Contemporary theories

While we have retained the distinctive theories you would expect to see in a consumer behaviour textbook, we have also added some new ones. In addition, we have revised the structure of the book to bring the following topics to the forefront of students' learning. In Section 1 we examine consumer behaviour's foundations and issues related to consumer well-being to reinforce for students the many commercial, environmental, ethical and health issues the field addresses. Section 2 delves deeper into the micro-level influences that affect and shape consumer interactions in markets. We acknowledge the role that our psychological processes play in what we buy and consume, and expand gender theory in the significantly revised Chapter 7 to guide deeper understanding of gender influences on consumer and marketplace interactions. Section 3 adopts a multi-faceted approach to the way we make decisions using our emotions, our thoughts and our actions. Finally, Section 4 on consumers' social and cultural settings has been extended to acknowledge the growing area of consumer culture theory research and includes global and local examples of major trends and changes in marketing that affect consumer culture. Social media, gamification and other internet-based tools have been integrated throughout the book to reflect the pervasive use of technology in consumers' everyday lives.

Learning by doing

Learning by doing is an integral part of the classroom experience. Each chapter has a case that applies consumer behaviour theory to practice; these have been authored by both academic experts and marketing practitioners. Simple and complex case exercises give students the chance to critically analyse the fundamental principles of consumer behaviour while providing models for the application of consumer behaviour in the real world.

Furthermore, for this edition we've partnered with GfK, one of the largest market research organisations in the world, to provide students with actual consumer data to use in the end-of-part cases. Each case presents students with a scenario that they would face when working in the industry and asks them to use that information to make decisions and marketing recommendations.

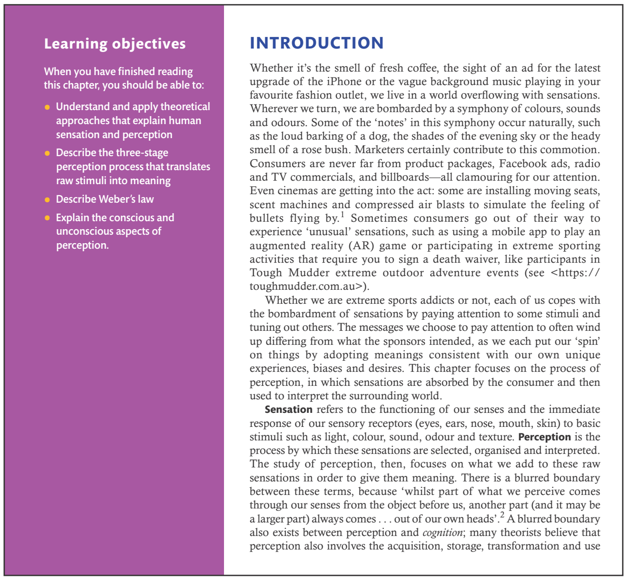
Appendix

Provided in the appendix is a guide on ethics to assist you in lectures and tutorials. It includes a checklist you can ask students to use to determine whether a new product, advertisement or marketing practice is unethical or just in bad taste.

Walk-through preface

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

Included at the beginning of each chapter, provide an overview of the key issues to be covered



Learning objectives

When you have finished reading this chapter, you should be able to:

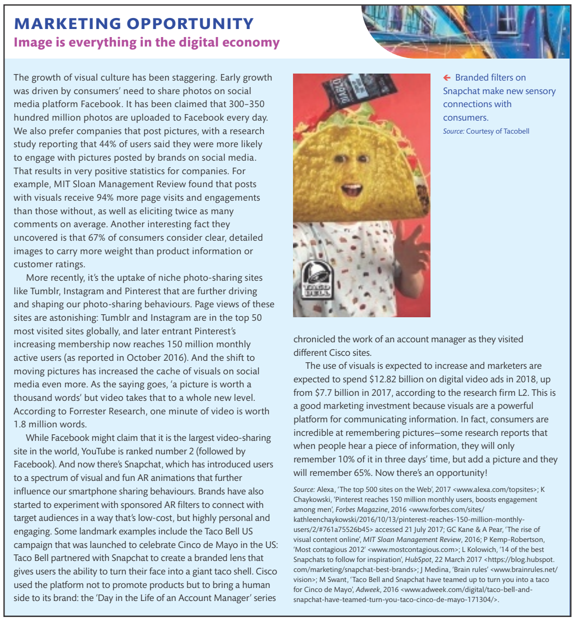
- Understand and apply theoretical approaches that explain human sensation and perception
- Describe the three-stage perception process that translates raw stimuli into meaning
- Describe Weber's law
- Explain the conscious and unconscious aspects of perception.

INTRODUCTION

Whether it's the smell of fresh coffee, the sight of an ad for the latest upgrade of the iPhone or the vague background music playing in your favourite fashion outlet, we live in a world overflowing with sensations. Wherever we turn, we are bombarded by a symphony of colours, sounds and odours. Some of the 'notes' in this symphony occur naturally, such as the loud barking of a dog, the shades of the evening sky or the heady smell of a rose bush. Marketers certainly contribute to this commotion. Consumers are never far from product packages, Facebook ads, radio and TV commercials, and billboards—all clamouring for our attention. Even cinemas are getting into the act: some are installing moving seats, scent machines and compressed air blasts to simulate the feeling of bullets flying by.[1] Sometimes consumers go out of their way to experience 'unusual' sensations, such as using a mobile app to play an augmented reality (AR) game or participating in extreme sporting activities that require you to sign a death waiver, like participants in Tough Mudder extreme outdoor adventure events (see <https://toughmudder.com.au>).

Whether we are extreme sports addicts or not, each of us copes with the bombardment of sensations by paying attention to some stimuli and tuning out others. The messages we choose to pay attention to often wind up differing from what the sponsors intended, as we each put our 'spin' on things by adopting meanings consistent with our own unique experiences, biases and desires. This chapter focuses on the process of perception, in which sensations are absorbed by the consumer and then used to interpret the surrounding world.

Sensation refers to the functioning of our senses and the immediate response of our sensory receptors (eyes, ears, nose, mouth, skin) to basic stimuli such as light, colour, sound, odour and texture. **Perception** is the process by which these sensations are selected, organised and interpreted. The study of perception, then, focuses on what we add to these raw sensations in order to give them meaning. There is a blurred boundary between these terms, because 'whilst part of what we perceive comes through our senses from the object before us, another part (and it may be a larger part) always comes . . . out of our own heads'.[2] A blurred boundary also exists between perception and *cognition*; many theorists believe that perception also involves the acquisition, storage, transformation and use



MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

Image is everything in the digital economy

The growth of visual culture has been staggering. Early growth was driven by consumers' need to share photos on social media platform Facebook. It has been claimed that 300–350 hundred million photos are uploaded to Facebook every day. We also prefer companies that post pictures, with a research study reporting that 44% of users said they were more likely to engage with pictures posted by brands on social media. That results in very positive statistics for companies. For example, MIT Sloan Management Review found that posts with visuals receive 94% more page visits and engagements than those without, as well as eliciting twice as many comments on average. Another interesting fact they uncovered is that 67% of consumers consider clear, detailed images to carry more weight than product information or customer ratings.

More recently, it's the uptake of niche photo-sharing sites like Tumblr, Instagram and Pinterest that are further driving and shaping our photo-sharing behaviours. Page views of these sites are astonishing: Tumblr and Instagram are in the top 50 most visited sites globally, and later entrant Pinterest's increasing membership now reaches 150 million monthly active users (as reported in October 2016). And the shift to moving pictures has increased the cache of visuals on social media even more. As the saying goes, 'a picture is worth a thousand words' but video takes that to a whole new level. According to Forrester Research, one minute of video is worth 1.8 million words.

While Facebook might claim that it is the largest video-sharing site in the world, YouTube is ranked number 2 (followed by Facebook). And now there's Snapchat, which has introduced users to a spectrum of visual and fun AR animations that further influence our smartphone sharing behaviours. Brands have also started to experiment with sponsored AR filters to connect with target audiences in a way that's low-cost, but highly personal and engaging. Some landmark examples include the Taco Bell US campaign that was launched to celebrate Cinco de Mayo in the US: Taco Bell partnered with Snapchat to create a branded lens that gives users the ability to turn their face into a giant taco shell. Cisco used the platform not to promote products but to bring a human side to its brand: the 'Day in the Life of an Account Manager' series chronicled the work of an account manager as they visited different Cisco sites.

The use of visuals is expected to increase and marketers are expected to spend $12.82 billion on digital video ads in 2018, up from $7.7 billion in 2017, according to the research firm L2. This is a good marketing investment because visuals are a powerful platform for communicating information. In fact, consumers are incredible at remembering pictures—some research reports that when people hear a piece of information, they will only remember 10% of it in three days' time, but add a picture and they will remember 65%. Now there's an opportunity!

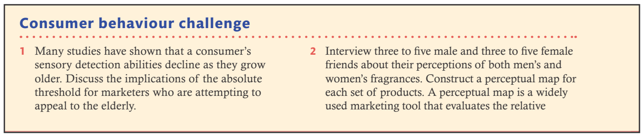
← Branded filters on Snapchat make new sensory connections with consumers.

Source: Courtesy of Tacobell

Source: Alexa, 'The top 500 sites on the Web', 2017 <www.alexa.com/topsites>; K Chaykowski, 'Pinterest reaches 150 million monthly users, boosts engagement among men', *Forbes Magazine*, 2016 <www.forbes.com/sites/kathleenchaykowski/2016/10/13/pinterest-reaches-150-million-monthly-users/2/#761a75526b45> accessed 21 July 2017; GC Kane & A Pear, 'The rise of visual content online', *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 2016; P Kemp-Robertson, 'Most contagious 2012' <www.mostcontagious.com>; L Kolowich, '14 of the best Snapchats to follow for inspiration', *HubSpot*, 22 March 2017 <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/snapchat-best-brands>; J Medina, 'Brain rules' <www.brainrules.net/vision>; M Swant, 'Taco Bell and Snapchat have teamed up to turn you into a taco for Cinco de Mayo', *Adweek*, 2016 <www.adweek.com/digital/taco-bell-and-snapchat-have-teamed-turn-you-taco-cinco-de-mayo-171304/>.

MARKETING OPPORTUNITY

Highlights the ways in which marketing practitioners translate knowledge from consumer research into actual business activities



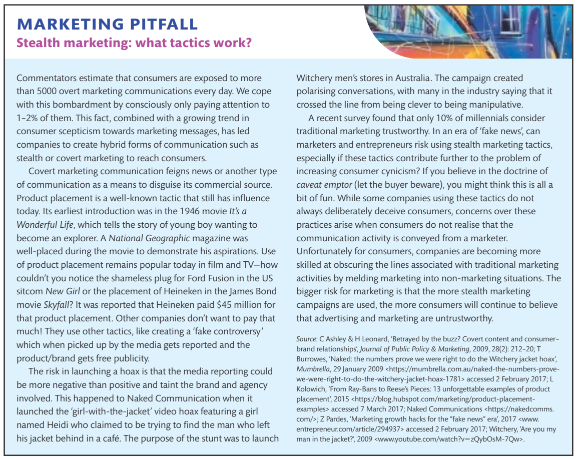
Consumer behaviour challenge

1 Many studies have shown that a consumer's sensory detection abilities decline as they grow older. Discuss the implications of the absolute threshold for marketers who are attempting to appeal to the elderly.

2 Interview three to five male and three to five female friends about their perceptions of both men's and women's fragrances. Construct a perceptual map for each set of products. A perceptual map is a widely used marketing tool that evaluates the relative

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

Tests students on the theory and concepts learned within the chapter



MARKETING PITFALL

Stealth marketing: what tactics work?

Commentators estimate that consumers are exposed to more than 5000 overt marketing communications every day. We cope with this bombardment by consciously only paying attention to 1–2% of them. This fact, combined with a growing trend in consumer scepticism towards marketing messages, has led companies to create hybrid forms of communication such as stealth or covert marketing to reach consumers.

Covert marketing communication feigns news or another type of communication as a means to disguise its commercial source. Product placement is a well-known tactic that still has influence today. Its earliest introduction was in the 1946 movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, which tells the story of young boy wanting to become an explorer. A *National Geographic* magazine was well-placed during the movie to demonstrate his aspirations. Use of product placement remains popular today in film and TV—how couldn't you notice the shameless plug for Ford Fusion in the US sitcom *New Girl* or the placement of Heineken in the James Bond movie *Skyfall*? It was reported that Heineken paid $45 million for that product placement. Other companies don't want to pay that much! They use other tactics, like creating a 'fake controversy' which when picked up by the media gets reported and the product/brand gets free publicity.

The risk in launching a hoax is that the media reporting could be more negative than positive and taint the brand and agency involved. This happened to Naked Communication when it launched the 'girl-with-the-jacket' video hoax featuring a girl named Heidi who claimed to be trying to find the man who left his jacket behind in a café. The purpose of the stunt was to launch Witchery men's stores in Australia. The campaign created polarising conversations, with many in the industry saying that it crossed the line from being clever to being manipulative.

A recent survey found that only 10% of millennials consider traditional marketing trustworthy. In an era of 'fake news', can marketers and entrepreneurs risk using stealth marketing tactics, especially if these tactics contribute further to the problem of increasing consumer cynicism? If you believe in the doctrine of *caveat emptor* (let the buyer beware), you might think this is all a bit of fun. While some companies using these tactics do not always deliberately deceive consumers, concerns over these practices arise when consumers do not realise that the communication activity is conveyed from a marketer. Unfortunately for consumers, companies are becoming more skilled at obscuring the lines associated with traditional marketing activities by melding marketing into non-marketing situations. The bigger risk for marketing is that the more stealth marketing campaigns are used, the more consumers will continue to believe that advertising and marketing are untrustworthy.

Source: C Ashley & H Leonard, 'Betrayed by the buzz? Covert content and consumer–brand relationships', *Journal of Public Policy & Marketing*, 2009, 28(2): 212–20; T Burrowes, 'Naked: the numbers prove we were right to do the Witchery jacket hoax', *Mumbrella*, 29 January 2009 <https://mumbrella.com.au/naked-the-numbers-prove-we-were-right-to-do-the-witchery-jacket-hoax-1781> accessed 2 February 2017; L Kolowich, 'From Ray-Bans to Reese's Pieces: 13 unforgettable examples of product placement', 2015 <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/product-placement-examples> accessed 7 March 2017; Naked Communications <https://nakedcomms.com/>; Z Pardes, 'Marketing growth hacks for the "fake news" era', 2017 <www.entrepreneur.com/article/294937> accessed 2 February 2017; Witchery, 'Are you my man in the jacket?', 2009 <www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQybOsM-7Qw>.

MARKETING PITFALL

Focuses on common marketing mistakes that have been made by real companies and organisations

CB AS I LIVE IT: Expanding boundaries between self-concept and sports

Daniel Rayne, *Swinburne University of Technology, Victoria*

Are you a blue or a red? Well, me, I'm a red. This means I identify as an Arsenal supporter. There are many ways this self-identification manifests itself. I own a team shirt and wear it with pride on the days my team wins. Even on those unfortunate days when Arsenal don't win, I still wear the shirt to show my loyalty to the team. I have a scarf with the team logo and wear it around my neck in winter so people know what team I support. In my house, I have a clock with the logo on it so people who come to my home know what team I support. Come the weekend, I often watch the Arsenal game on TV—week after week, year after year. In fact, I almost never miss a game. That's right—it's obvious that I view myself as a proud Arsenal supporter.

Despite these many symbolic acts I display highlighting the level of support towards my team, I am considered only a mid-level supporter. While it may not necessarily sound like it, I do not refer to Arsenal as 'we'. If Arsenal lose, which is more often than I would like, I do not let it affect my mood. If someone identifies as a supporter of another team, perhaps a main rival, I do not dislike them straight away without getting to know them first. However, while I don't exhibit these behaviours, some people do. Commonly, fans say 'we won' when their favourite team wins or may say 'you lost' when their friend's favourite team loses. In these instances, typically, sports fans view themselves as part of the team—sharing in their glory and wallowing in their losses.

To be a sports fan enables people to extend on themselves through their beliefs, morals or behaviours. For example, many people choose a sports team based on regional pride. In the AFL, those from Perth may support the West Coast Eagles, while those closely located in Fremantle support the Fremantle Dockers. When it comes to the NRL's State of Origin, if you're a Queenslander you are a Maroon and that tends not to dissipate, no matter where you live. In fact, the long-term impact of sports team/self-congruence sees an unwavering loyalty to the team. Even in cases where things go horribly wrong, sports fans regularly make excuses for their favourite team—psychologically, it seems like nothing more than self-preservation. Surely, our beloved team cannot do anything wrong.

Strongly driving the notion of sports team/self-congruence is the concept of social identity, where we look to affiliate ourselves with a particular group. When I think about my own situation and how this plays out in my life, it is quite evident how group affinity develops when it comes to our favourite sports team. For example, when I meet someone for the first time and the topic of sports teams comes up, if they too are an Arsenal supporter, then automatically there is an affiliation with this person. Perhaps we share very little in common in all other aspects of life, yet we do share this one element of common identity. This is further illustrated in particular actions when the group grows larger and supporters emulate each other's behaviour, thus solidifying their identity and strengthening the bond within the group. From singing the theme song together to holding up signs, dressing up in fancy dress or donning the team colours from head to toe, an extension of the self within one's group is exhibited.

In my opinion, nowhere does product/self-congruence expand more boundaries than when it comes to sports. That's because people love their sports team. Even if people don't love their team, it's still very common for them to express the fact that they support a team. And sometimes, people who are not fans become fans in certain situations (think about the Soccer World Cup). No matter our age, location, income, gender or profession, when it comes to the sports team we support, our identity is shown.

CB AS I LIVE IT

Shows individual and student groups who contribute their own perspectives on the key concepts

Case study

Brisbane now: positioning a place brand

Matt Granfield, *Brisbane Marketing, and* **Claudia Gonzalez**, *The University of Queensland*

Brisbane is the capital of the state of Queensland, with around 2.2 million inhabitants,[1] and is the third most populous city in Australia. Although the city incorporates the largest local government region in the country, it has struggled to position itself with a strong brand. Brisbane as a city presents several advantages for residents, businesses and visitors, with mild, sunny winters allowing for a year-round outdoor lifestyle. Brisbane is in the top 30% of the world's fastest growing cities, but the median house price is half of Sydney's, giving it an ideal balance of opportunity and affordability. Crime rates are low. Commutes are short. While the CBD isn't situated on a glamorous beach or harbour, outlying Moreton Bay is home to picturesque beaches, snorkelling spots and unique wildlife. Brisbane is also one of the only places in the world where tourists can pat a wild dolphin or cuddle a koala.[2]

Competitive cities

As an economic hub, Brisbane has few major global corporate headquarters, no stock exchange and a small financial district. Job growth is moderate and strongly linked to mining cycles, as the city plays a support role to Queensland's broader mining industry. At 5.08%,[3] unemployment is low by global standards and in line with other major Australian cities. Healthcare, professional services, retail, construction and education are the biggest employers.[4] As the 172nd biggest city in the world,[5] Brisbane is a player, but compared to London, New York, Paris and Tokyo, it has not yet reached global city status.[6]

Positioning challenge

Wanting to foster growth and ensure Brisbane's place on the world stage, but also recognising the city's mid-tier place in a global hierarchy, the city's economic development board adopted the slogan 'Brisbane: Australia's New World City' as the official brand positioning in 2009. Urbanist Professor Greg Clark summed up the 'New World City' positioning in this way:

'Brisbane is seeking to redefine what a "world city" is . . . there is a fresh path to going global, which involves not so much being a corporate hub, but being a centre for trade, talent and technology. It is not financial services, law and HQ functions, but ports, logistics, universities, energy, food and health. And much fun of course.'[7]

The 'New World City' positioning is used by the city of Brisbane as a slogan and core vision for economic development, major events and marketing campaigns aimed at drawing businesses, visitors and investors to the city from interstate (predominantly Sydney and Melbourne) and international markets. Its prominent usage has seen the statement become the default tag line for the city in general, and while 'New World City' doesn't appear on leisure collateral, the line is now intrinsically linked to Brisbane's place brand. As a tagline, it aptly explains Brisbane's complex attributes as a business and leisure destination—a city of global opportunity without the headaches that come with being a global city. The main challenge is to renew and revitalise Brisbane's positioning, so as to shape and create perceptions of the city by focusing on key segments: residents (place to live), businesses (place to do businesses) and visitors (leisure destination).

Investigating brand perceptions

Research into brand perceptions of Australian cities is conducted regularly by both Brisbane City Council and its economic development board, Brisbane Marketing. A 2016 annual survey of perceptions of Brisbane involving 2500 people from around Australia showed that residents of Sydney and Melbourne perceive the Brisbane brand favourably as friendly, subtropical, inexpensive and safe—all associations that strengthen the position of Brisbane as a good place to live. However, among Sydney and Melbourne residents,

CASE STUDY

Learning by doing is an integral part of the classroom experience—a case study is included at the end of each chapter, along with discussion questions, to help you apply the case to the chapter's contents

LEARNING SNAPSHOT

Summarises the main content within the chapter

Learning snapshot

- Perception is the process by which physical sensations such as sights, sounds and smells are selected, organised and interpreted. The eventual interpretation of a stimulus allows it to be assigned meaning.
- Marketing stimuli have important sensory qualities. We rely on colours, odours, sounds, tastes and even the 'feel' of products when forming evaluations of them.
- Not all sensations successfully make their way through the perceptual process. Many stimuli compete for our attention and the majority are not noticed or accurately comprehended.
- People have different thresholds of perception. A stimulus must be presented at a certain level of intensity before it can be detected by sensory receptors. In addition, a consumer's ability to detect whether two stimuli are different (the differential threshold) is an important issue in many marketing contexts, such as changing a package design, altering the size of a product or reducing its price.
- Some of the factors that determine which stimuli (above the threshold level) do get perceived are the amount of exposure to the stimulus, how much attention it generates and how it is interpreted. In an increasingly crowded stimulus environment, advertising clutter occurs when too many marketing-related messages compete for attention.
- Stealth marketing tactics and covert marketing activities may cause increased consumer scepticism and further reduce people's respect for the marketing profession.
- A lot of controversy has been sparked by so-called subliminal persuasion and related techniques, by which people are exposed to visual and aural messages below the sensory threshold. There is little evidence to support the view that subliminal persuasion is effective, yet many consumers continue to believe that advertisers use this technique.
- A stimulus that is attended to is not perceived in isolation. It is classified and organised according to principles of perceptual organisation. These principles are guided by a Gestalt, or overall, pattern. Specific grouping principles include closure, similarity and figure–ground relationships.
- The final step in the process of perception is interpretation. Symbols help us to make sense of the world by providing us with an interpretation of a stimulus that is often shared by others. The degree to which the symbolism is consistent with our previous experience affects the meaning we assign to related objects.
- Marketers try to communicate with consumers by creating relationships between their products or services and desired attributes. A semiotic analysis involves the correspondence between stimuli and the meaning of signs. The intended meaning may be literal (e.g. an icon, such as a street sign, with a picture of children playing). The meaning may be indexical—that is, it relies on shared characteristics (e.g. the red in a stop sign means danger). Finally, meaning can be conveyed by a symbol, in which an image is given meaning by convention or by the agreement of members of a society (e.g. stop signs are octagonal, give-way signs are triangular).

CB AS I SEE IT: Why worry about how customers feel?

Dr Alastair Tombs, *The University of Queensland*

Try this: smile at approaching strangers as you pass them on the street. You do not know them and they do not know you, but chances are that they will smile back even when they were not smiling before. How does that make you feel? For that fleeting moment, you have connected emotionally with them even though not a word was spoken. Your facial expressions were recognised by the stranger as a sign of warmth and pleasure towards them, just as you recognised their response in a similar way. Even without formal training, most of us understand how another person is feeling just through reading their facial expressions. We grow up recognising the meanings of facial expressions. Even young children can recognise whether a parent is happy or not happy with them without a word from that parent. We can recognise when we have upset them, when they are worried or when they are sad. If we see the facial expressions of others and recognise how they are feeling, we will often 'catch' the same emotions that we recognise. This transfer of emotions is termed *emotional contagion*. Emotional contagion is defined by Hatfield and her colleagues, in their book of the same name, as 'the tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize facial expressions, vocalizations, postures, and movements with those of another person and, consequently, to converge emotionally'.

My research studies the effects of individuals' facial expressions and emotional contagion within a specific marketing context. The context that is especially pertinent for this research is the service environment where customers are in the presence of other customers. Emotional contagion can occur whether or not individuals know each other, or whether there is even any verbal interaction between them. Why this is important for managers and employees of retail and service companies is that research shows the importance of positive emotional contagion in helping to create positive feelings in the customer. The transfer of positive emotions has been shown to lead to positive attitudes towards the company, greater willingness to spend time in the store (therefore exposed to more merchandise resulting in a greater chance of spending), higher repurchase intentions and spreading of positive word of mouth (recommendations).

The mere presence of others can facilitate emotional contagion and hence influence, either positively or negatively, the atmosphere of the retail store or service environment. For example, we enjoy the atmosphere of being in the stadium at a sporting event due to the emotions and behaviour of the other fans present. Likewise the social buzz that is created by others dining in a busy restaurant is generally preferred to dining in an empty restaurant. Conversely, we feel the collective sadness in the crowd if our team loses a home game. Customers are likely to become annoyed or frustrated in crowded situations where too many people interfere with the delivery of the service. In these latter situations the negative feelings of customers are also reflected in negative consumer attitudes to the organisation, propensity to exit, unwillingness to spend and spreading negative word of mouth.

Emotional contagion is not always congruent with the displayed emotions (i.e. exposure to positive displays of emotions does not always lead to positive outcomes). My work shows that emotional contagion is also determined by the purchase occasion and the prior expectations of the customer. Take, for example, going to a restaurant for a quiet romantic meal with your partner. You expect the environment to be congruent with the occasion you are going there for; that is, quiet and romantic. However, if a group arrived at the same restaurant for a celebration and were particularly noisy and boisterous, you would be unlikely to 'catch' their positive emotions and you are more likely to become annoyed. This example shows the necessity for managers and staff to manage or facilitate the expectations of customers so that positive emotional contagion can spread positive emotions throughout all the customers present.

This ability to manage the positive emotions of customers places an additional burden on the front-line employees. In an effort to avoid the contagion of negative emotions, many customer service organisations make it a requirement for employees to make an effort to contain their emotions and portray only those that are commensurate with the job. This 'emotional labour' is seen in the behaviour of airline staff and waiting staff in restaurants being friendly and happy, nursing staff appearing caring and concerned, and even funeral directors appearing solemn. Because most people grow up with the ability to read emotions they can easily pick faked or surface emotions. This means that employees are often required to put an additional effort into the emotional aspects of service delivery. Failure to display appropriate emotions regardless of what the staff may be feeling will negatively affect the customers' perception of the staff member and the organisation.

Source: E Hatfield, J Cacioppo & RL Rapson, *Emotional contagion*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994; A Tombs & J McColl-Kennedy, 'Third party customers infecting other customers for better or for worse', *Psychology and Marketing*, 2013, 33(3): 277–92.

CB AS I SEE IT

Highlights consumer behaviour professors and leading researchers who share their knowledge of and perspectives on their areas of expertise

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DATA POWERED BY GfK

Included at the end of each section, allows students to 'get their hands dirty' with real issues and to develop their analytical skills—the data are real, and the problems are too