

# Preface

Marketing attempts to influence the way consumers behave. These attempts have implications for the organizations making the attempt, the consumers they are trying to influence, and the society in which these attempts occur. We are all consumers and we are all members of the society, so consumer behavior, and attempts to influence it, are critical to all of us. This text is designed to provide an understanding of consumer behavior. This understanding can make us better consumers, better marketers, and better citizens.

## **MARKETING CAREERS AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR**

A primary purpose of this text is to provide the student with a usable, managerial understanding of consumer behavior. Most students in consumer behavior courses aspire to careers in marketing management, sales, or advertising. They hope to acquire knowledge and skills that will be useful to them in these careers. Unfortunately, some may be seeking the type of knowledge gained in introductory accounting classes; that is, a set of relatively invariant rules that can be applied across a variety of situations to achieve a fixed solution that is known to be correct. For these students, the uncertainty and lack of closure involved in dealing with living, breathing, changing, stubborn consumers can be very frustrating. However, if they can accept dealing with endless uncertainty, utilizing an understanding of consumer behavior in developing marketing strategy will become tremendously exciting.

It is our view that the utilization of knowledge of consumer behavior in the development of marketing strategy is an art. This is not to suggest that scientific principles and procedures are not applicable; rather, it means that the successful application of these principles to particular situations requires human judgment that we are not able to reduce to a fixed set of rules.

Let us consider the analogy with art in some detail. Suppose you want to become an expert artist. You would study known principles of the visual effects of blending various colors, of perspective, and so forth. Then you would practice applying these principles until you developed the ability to produce acceptable paintings. If you had certain natural talents, the right teacher, and the right topic, you might even produce a masterpiece. The same approach should be taken by one wishing to become a marketing manager, a salesperson, or an advertising director. The various factors or principles that influence consumer behavior should be thoroughly studied. Then, one should practice applying these principles until acceptable marketing strategies result. However, while knowledge and practice can in general produce acceptable strategies, great marketing strategies, like masterpieces, require special talents, effort, timing, and some degree of luck (what if Mona Lisa had not wanted her portrait painted?).

The art analogy is useful for another reason. All of us, professors and students alike, tend to ask, "How can I use the concept of, say, social class to develop a successful marketing strategy?" This makes as much sense as an artist asking, "How can I use blue to create a great picture?" Obviously, blue alone will seldom be sufficient for a great work of art. Instead, to be successful, the artist must understand when and how to use blue in conjunction with other elements in the picture. Likewise, the marketing manager must understand when and

how to use a knowledge of social class in conjunction with a knowledge of other factors in designing a successful marketing strategy.

This book is based on the belief that knowledge of the factors that influence consumer behavior can, with practice, be used to develop sound marketing strategy. With this in mind, we have attempted to do three things. First, we present a reasonably comprehensive description of the various behavioral concepts and theories that have been found useful for understanding consumer behavior. This is generally done at the beginning of each chapter or at the beginning of major subsections in each chapter. We believe that a person must have a thorough understanding of a concept in order to successfully apply that concept across different situations.

Second, we present examples of how these concepts have been utilized in the development of marketing strategy. We have tried to make clear that these examples are not “how you use this concept.” Rather, they are presented as “how one organization facing a particular marketing situation used this concept.”

Third, at the end of each chapter and each major section, we present a number of questions, activities, or cases that require the student to apply the concepts.

## **CONSUMING AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR**

The authors of this book are consumers, as is everyone reading this text. Most of us spend more time buying and consuming than we do working or sleeping. We consume products such as cars and fuel, services such as haircuts and home repairs, and entertainment such as television and concerts. Given the time and energy we devote to consuming, we should strive to be good at it. A knowledge of consumer behavior can be used to enhance our ability to consume wisely.

Marketers spend billions of dollars attempting to influence what, when, and how you and I consume. Marketers not only spend billions attempting to influence our behavior but also spend hundreds of millions of dollars studying our behavior. With a knowledge of consumer behavior and an understanding of how marketers use this knowledge, we can study marketers. A television commercial can be an annoying interruption of a favorite program. However, it can also be a fascinating opportunity to speculate on the commercial’s objective, target audience, and the underlying behavior assumptions. Indeed, given the ubiquitous nature of commercials, an understanding of how they are attempting to influence us or others is essential to understand our environment.

Throughout the text, we present examples that illustrate the objectives of specific marketing activities. By studying these examples and the principles on which they are based, one can develop the ability to discern the underlying logic of the marketing activities encountered daily.

## **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR**

Should commercial sites on the World Wide Web (Internet) that focus on children be strictly regulated, banned completely, or left alone? This issue is currently the source of a major debate. As educated citizens, we have a responsibility to take part in this debate and to influence its outcome. Developing a sound position on this issue requires an understanding of children’s information processing as it relates to advertising—an important part of our understanding of consumer behavior.

The debate described above is only one of many that require an understanding of consumer behavior. We present a number of these topics throughout the text. The objective is to develop the ability to apply consumer behavior knowledge to social and regulatory issues as well as to business and personal issues.

## FEATURES OF THIS EDITION

Marketing and consumer behavior, like the rest of the world, is changing at a rapid pace. Both the way consumers behave and the practices of studying that behavior continue to evolve. In order to keep up with this dynamic environment, this edition includes a number of important features.

**Internet and Technology Applications** The Internet and technology are rapidly changing many aspects of consumer behavior. We have integrated the latest research and practices concerning the Internet and technology throughout the text and the cases.

**More Global Examples** Although previous editions have included a wealth of global material, this edition further integrates this important area. Most chapters contain multiple global examples woven into the text. In addition, Chapter 2 and several of the cases are devoted to global issues.

## CHAPTER FEATURES

Each chapter contains a variety of features designed to enhance students' understanding of the material as well as to make the material more fun.

**Opening Vignettes** Each chapter begins with a practical example that introduces the material in the chapter. These involve situations in which businesses, government units, or nonprofit organizations have used or misused consumer behavior principles.

**Consumer Insights** These boxed discussions provide an in-depth look at a particularly interesting consumer study or marketing practice. Each has several questions with it that are designed to encourage critical thinking by the students.

**Integrated Coverage Ethical/Social Issues** Marketers face numerous ethical issues as they apply their understanding of consumer behavior in the marketplace. We describe and discuss many of these issues. These discussions are highlighted in the text via ethical issues in the margin. In addition, Chapter 20 is devoted to the consumerism movement and the regulation of marketing practice. Several of the cases are also focused on ethical or regulatory issues, including all of the cases following Part Six.

**Internet Exercises** The Internet is rapidly becoming both a major source of data on consumer behavior and a medium in which marketers use their knowledge of consumer behavior to influence consumers. A section at the end of each chapter has Internet assignments. These serve two purposes. One is to teach students how to use the Internet as a research tool to learn about consumers and consumer behavior. The second purpose is to enhance students' understanding of how marketers are approaching consumers using this medium.

**DDB Needham Lifestyle Data Analyses** Each relevant chapter poses a series of questions that require students to analyze data from the annual DDB Needham Lifestyle survey. These data are available in spreadsheet format on the disk that accompanies this text. These exercises increase students' data analysis skills as well as their understanding of consumer behavior.

**Illustrations** Print ads, Web pages, storyboards, and photos of point-of-purchase displays and packages appear throughout the text. Each is directly linked to the text material both by text references to each illustration and by the descriptive comments that accompany each illustration.

**Review Questions** The review questions at the end of each chapter allow students or the instructor to test the acquisition of the facts contained in the chapter. The questions require memorization, which we believe is an important, though insufficient, part of learning.

**Discussion Questions** These questions can be used to help develop or test the students' understanding of the material in the chapter. Answering these questions requires the student to utilize the material in the chapter to reach a recommendation or solution. However, they can be answered without external activities such as customer interviews; therefore, they can be assigned as in-class activities.

**Application Activities** The final learning aid at the end of each chapter is a set of application exercises. These require the students to utilize the material in the chapter in conjunction with external activities such as visiting stores to observe point-of-purchase displays, interviewing customers or managers, or evaluating television ads. They range in complexity from short evening assignments to term projects.

## OTHER LEARNING AIDS IN THE TEXT

Three useful sets of learning material are presented outside the chapter format—cases, an overview of consumer research methods, and a format for a consumer behavior audit.

**Cases** There are cases at the end of each major section of the text except the first. Many of the cases can be read in class and used to generate discussion of a particular topic. Students like this approach, and many instructors find it a useful way to motivate class discussion.

Other cases are more complex and data intense. They require several hours of effort to analyze. Still others can serve as the basis for a term project. We have used several cases in this manner with success (the assignment is to develop a marketing plan clearly identifying the consumer behavior constructs that underlie the plan).

Each case can be approached from a variety of angles. A number of discussion questions are provided with each case. However, many other questions can be used. In fact, while the cases are placed at the end of the major sections, most lend themselves to discussion at other points in the text as well.

In addition some cases *based on Indian consumer markets* have also been included. These cases are of the latter kind and may be used for courses where the student may be expected to analyze the case prior to class discussion, as is the practice in Indian business schools.

**Consumer Research Methods Overview** Appendix A provides a brief overview of the more commonly used research methods in consumer behavior. While not a substitute for a course or text in marketing research, it is a useful review for students who have completed a research course. It can also serve to provide students who have not had such a course with relevant terminology and a very basic understanding of the process and major techniques involved in consumer research.

**Consumer Behavior Audit** Appendix B provides a format for doing a consumer behavior audit for a proposed marketing strategy. This audit is basically a list of key consumer behavior questions that should be answered for every proposed marketing strategy. Many students have found it particularly useful if a term project relating consumer behavior to a firm's actual or proposed strategy is required.

**Website** The book-specific Online Learning center located at [www.mhhe.com/hawkins09](http://www.mhhe.com/hawkins09) offers comprehensive classroom support by providing resources for both instructors and students. For instructors, it gives access to downloadable teaching supplements (Instructor's Manual and PowerPoint slides), resource links, and PageOut. For students, it offers resource links and quizzes for self-testing.

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The text would have had higher quality, been more fun to read, and been much more fun to write had Ken Coney been able to write it with us. Once again, this edition is dedicated to his memory. By his life he said to us

*Cherish your dreams*

*Guard your ideals*

*Enjoy life*

*Seek the best*

*Climb your mountains*

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