MOTIVATION & PERSONALITY

I. Motivation

A. Basic marketing question - how can we best begin to understand consumer behavior?
   1. Historical perspective
      a. Demographics - tradition from economics
      b. Marketers wanted more detail to help with communication, positioning
   2. Basic issue - Why do consumers behave the way they do?
      What motivates consumers, what are their needs & wants? What is it products mean to people? What are consumers trying to accomplish?
      a. Choices are made to achieve needs and goals
      b. If we can ascertain consumers' goals, this provides strategic focus
      c. There are many different sorts of goals consumers might have
         i. Utilitarian or functional (e.g., gas mileage, calories)
         ii. Hedonic (e.g., excitement, fantasy, experiences)
         iii. Social (e.g., impressing someone else, projecting an image, pleasing a family member or friend)
      d. Consumers' goals are not always immediately obvious
         i. Pop Rocks
         ii. Public transit vs. own car – desire for alone time as a goal
         iii. Polaroid Pocket camera – conflicts within the company about consumers' goals and how those goals interact with corporate culture – picture quality vs. size, price, fun in use
      e. Different groups (e.g., different cultures, different subcultures) may have
         i. Different goals (e.g., independence and individual status in Western cultures vs. group coherence and harmonious interdependence in Eastern cultures – e.g., low smoke cigarettes in Japan, preferences for uniqueness vs. conformity)
         ii. Different ways of satisfying the same goal (different wants - e.g., foods in various cultures)
      f. Therefore, it is very important to understand consumers' needs, goals, wants

B. Motivation has both direction (selective, one goal rather than another) and intensity, or vigor

C. Involvement is a major focus of consumer research relating to intensity of motivation; it can be thought of as the level of self-relevance evoked by a specific stimulus in a given situation
   1. Different types of involvement
      a. Ego involvement - enduring category importance to the consumer
      b. Situational involvement - specific to a particular purchase, usage situation
c. Message-response involvement - particular ads, media may be more or less involving

2. Different levels of involvement have different consequences
   a. High involvement - High attention, active search, elaborate on messages, focus on message content, attitude change is more difficult, focus on accuracy of decisions
   b. Low involvement - Limited attention, limited search, don't elaborate on messages, repetition and message source crucial, focus on effort of decisions

3. Major points about involvement
   a. For any product there will be high and low involvement segments; the size of each may differ across products. One potential pitfall - overestimating the involvement of your customers.
   b. Involvement may depend upon situation (e.g., own use or for party)
   c. Different approaches may be necessary for different segments (e.g., focusing on message information vs. an attractive source in ads)
   d. Involvement can be critical in policy, legal issues - do consumers pay attention to information or not? (e.g., Honda ATV, consumer confusion, provision of warning information in TV ads)

4. Possible alternative strategies
   a. Concentrate on high involvement segment – segment size an issue
   b. Attempt to increase or build involvement - not always possible, but some approaches are
      i. Tie to feelings - AT&T long distance original reach out and touch someone campaign tried to make long distance use an emotional, involving experience
      ii. Link to involving situations – car or flashlight batteries, film
      iii. Link to involving issue - cholesterol, health
   c. Accept low involvement
   d. How would one choose if one has a choice? Consider the types of strategies:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>High Involvement</th>
<th>Low Involvement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ads</td>
<td>Information crucial</td>
<td>Repetition</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Print can be effective, many points, more complex</td>
<td>Few points, simple</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recall important</td>
<td>Recognition, visuals, imagery</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Content important</td>
<td>Style important</td>
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<td>Distribution</td>
<td>Can be more selective, pull</td>
<td>Broad, push</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trial</td>
<td>Based on positioning, benefits</td>
<td>Price, promotions, deals</td>
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e. Choice of a strategy partially a function of what is possible. You may be
constrained by your product's characteristics, ad budget, size of segments, and so on.

D. We can analyze motivation at many different levels
   1. Basic needs (e.g., Murray - 38 needs)
   2. Benefits
   3. Specific features
   4. E.g., self-esteem; won't gain weight and will be more attractive; low calorie

E. Benefits are often the focus in marketing - intermediate level of analysis, you get some homogeneity and can link to mix variables. Benefits are a major focus of a brand report card (Kevin Keller, HBR, Jan-Feb 2000)
   1. How do we measure benefits?
      a. Focus groups
      b. Surveys
      c. Problem detection - Dog food example: When you ask what consumers want, they say something vague. When you ask what's wrong, they say it smells bad in the refrigerator. Try to ascertain common perceived problems (e.g., Arco Graphite Oil – first oil to use plastic, easy pour containers because consumers complained about getting dirty from the graphite when adding oil).
   2. Communicating benefits - benefit chains, laddering
      a. Link product characteristics to benefits
         i. Describe a product attribute, feature, or performance: e.g., a hair spray that holds, leaves hair soft
         ii. Ask consumer to provide two benefits associated with attributes, 2 further benefits from each of these, and so on (e.g., product holds, leaves hair soft ⇒ don't spend so much time on hair ⇒ free time to do other things ⇒ I can reach my potential)
      b. Provides a consumer language about benefits.

F. Not all benefits are conscious and easy to measure. Some may be unconscious or subconscious
   1. Motivation research
      a. Developed in 50s, 60s as a reaction to demographics
      b. Clinical, Freudian in focus
      c. Use of intensive depth interviews on a small number of people, clinical interpretation of the results
   2. Examples of conclusions
      a. Men don't like to fly because if plane crashes they will be blamed by family for not dying in a decent fashion
      b. Products can be masculine (coffee, potato), feminine (rice, tea) or bisexual (chicken, oranges)
      c. Clothing symbolism: suspenders ⇒ unresolved castration complex, knits ⇒ want to be nude.
   3. There has been a resurgence of qualitative research techniques
      a. Psychodrawing – ask consumers to draw cake mix users, roach killers
b. Brand personalities - describe a brand as a person (e.g., Whirlpool), animal, or automobile; write a brand obituary; match the brand with a celebrity

c. Use of indirect revelation of preferences instead of direct questioning (see Madeforchina.com article, their site, and the case studies there)

d. “Archetype” research used in designing the PT Cruiser

G. Choosing benefit to focus on - criteria include importance to target, degree product delivers, difference from competition, extent people have problem or unresolved conflict related to benefit, resistance to competitive preemption. Need to focus on necessary competitive points of parity and deliverable points of difference (Keller, brand report card).

H. Issues in determining consumers’ wants and needs

1. Marketers often want consumers to disclose information in order to target more precisely. But consumers have to be willing to disclose information directly (via surveys, etc.) or indirectly (via behavior) – e.g., use of recommendation agents that require inputs on preferences, use of supermarket or other cards that track purchases, Internet “wallets”

2. However, consumers perceive risks of self-disclosure – e.g., financial exploitation, aggravation, embarrassment (revealing age status by use of senior discount cards, buying “embarrassing” products)

3. How do consumers deal with these risks?
   a. It varies by type of risk (Tiffany Barnett’s research), in particular for financial vs. embarrassment risks.
   b. “Building relationships” may not be a panacea; this may work for exploitation risks, but not for embarrassment (application to recommendation features on web sites, e.g., amazon.com)

4. Gathering intimate self-disclosure information via computer is affected by computer “reciprocity” (whether the computer reveals information about itself) and the sequence of questioning (gradual increases in question intimacy are better) (Youngme Moon’s research, JCR, 3/2000, 323-339)

II. Personality and the self

A. The basic idea is that individuals have systematic aspects that characterize them.

B. As applied to marketing, there are two related ways products interact with these systematic aspects:

1) Products have "personalities" as well as consumers, so that using a product conveys something about a person. Jennifer Aaker (JMR, 8/97, 347-356) argues that brand personality can be characterized on five dimensions: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness – see pp. 172-173 in text

2) Another way of putting this is that products can be used by the consumer to define or convey self.
C. Simple trait approaches
   1) Measure traits with paper and pencil tests (e.g., aggression, extraversion, autonomy)
   2) Correlate trait measures to usage
   3) Such measures have displayed little success in predicting consumer behavior
      a. No conceptual basis (e.g., why should such tests predict the brand of toilet paper purchased?)
      b. Standardized tests, not designed for consumer contexts – e.g., MMPI
      c. Trait theories not really supported in general
   4) The general idea that products’ personalities/meanings should somehow relate to the consumers using them has much face validity. What approaches seem more promising?

D. The self, multiple aspects of self, and the meanings of possessions
   1. Multiple aspects of self
      a. Each person has multiple aspects of self (e.g., professional, family member, party animal, etc.; there are also temporal aspects of the self- past, present, future selves).
      b. Which self is activated depends on the situation, other people (e.g., high school reunion); if different aspects are activated, this can imply different consumer behaviors, even for the same person.
      c. Consumers can act as impression managers, using products to create a desired impression. That is, they can use products to portray that aspect of self that they wish to emphasize in a given situation.
   2. Products are extensions of the self; they can reflect and help define identity - you are what you consume (products are often used for characterization in movies, plays, novels). Consumers can have relationships with products – research by Susan Fournier (JCR, 3/98)
      a. Attachment to products is a function of memories, centrality to the self, associations with others (Mary-Chapin Carpenter’s song “This Shirt”; even stoves)
      b. Products can be used as “props” in portraying a person's roles
   3. Different cultures may have different views of the self (e.g., independent (western) vs. interdependent (eastern))
   4. Products seen as extensions of the self more for expressive vs. functional products