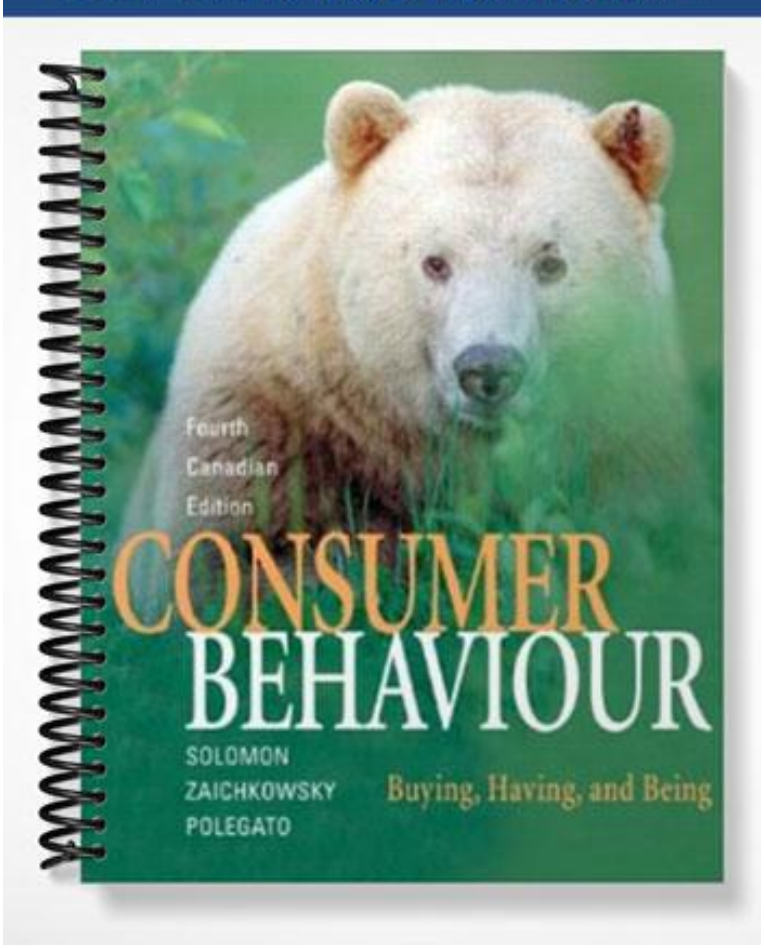
SOLUTIONS MANUAL



CHAPTER 2
Perception

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

When students finish this chapter they should understand that:

- Perception is a three-stage process that translates raw stimuli into meaning.
- Products and commercial messages often appeal to our senses, but many of them will not succeed.
- The design of a product today is a key driver of its success or failure.
- Subliminal advertising is a controversial—but largely ineffective—way to talk to consumers.
- The stimuli to which we pay attention are interpreted according to learned patterns and expectations.
- The science of semiotics helps us to understand how symbols are used to create meaning.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

♦ Perception is the process by which physical sensations such as sights, sounds, and smells are selected, organized, and interpreted. The eventual interpretation of a stimulus allows it to be assigned meaning. A perceptual map is a widely used marketing tool that evaluates the relative standing of competing brands along relevant dimensions.

♦ 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 nor 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. A consumer's ability to detect whether two stimuli are different (the differential threshold) is an

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important issue in many marketing contexts, such as changing a package design, altering the size of a product, or reducing its price.

- A lot of controversy has been sparked by so-called subliminal persuasion and related techniques, by which people are exposed to visual and audio messages below the threshold. Although evidence of subliminal persuasion's effectiveness is virtually nonexistent, many consumers continue to believe that advertisers use this technique.

- Some of the factors that determine which stimuli (above the threshold level) 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.

- A stimulus that is attended to is not perceived in isolation. It is classified and organized according to principles of perceptual organization. The principle of perceptual organization is 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; 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 agreement of members of a society (e.g., stop signs are octagonal, while yield signs are triangular). Marketer-created associations often take on a life of their own as hype is assumed to be real; this condition is known as hyperrreality.

LECTURE/DISCUSSION IDEAS

I. INTRODUCTION (The Perceptual Process) -- Sensation -- sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Perception -- process of selecting, organizing, and interpreting

Real World Application

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- A classic misunderstanding stemming from a marketer's promotional campaign illustrates what can happen when the stimulus categorization process goes awry. Sample bottles of Sunlight dishwashing liquid, which contains 10 percent lemon juice, were mailed to consumers. Almost 80 people were treated at poison centers after drinking some of the detergent. These individuals apparently assumed that the product was actually lemon juice, because many of the packaging cues resembled Minute Maid frozen lemon juice. Among the characteristics of the Sunlight stimulus used during the cue check stage in the perceptual process was the yellow bottle with a prominent picture of a lemon. During confirmation check, a juice schema was selected instead of a dishwashing liquid schema. Consumers found out their mistake the hard way following confirmation completion.[i]

Class Interaction Opportunity: *What colour should a good quality CD player be? Why?*

Use **Power Point Slides** 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5 here

II. SENSORY SYSTEMS – hedonic consumption: multisensory, fantasy, and emotional aspects of consumers' interactions with products.

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A. **Vision** -- what we see

1. **Colour in the Marketplace** -- symbolic value and cultural meanings

Real World Application

- The colour red is arousing, but this quality may be only in the eye of the beholder. A survey of colour preferences found that while men, particularly younger ones, prefer to buy bright red and hot pink undergarments for women, while the wearers themselves are more likely to choose white, beige, or pale pink.[ii]

- THE MALL, located about an hour outside of Firenze, Italy, uses a black brochure with crisp type (similar to the Arial font) to convey the upscale image of the 12 designer outlets located in the midst of the Tuscan countryside. The three-fold brochure is written in three languages: Italian, English, and Chinese.

- A recent study on executional cues in advertising manipulated three dimensions of colour: hue (pigment), chroma (saturation), and value (lightness). Chroma and value were particularly potent mediators of ad likeability.[iii]

2. **Package Design** -- colour can give instant product recognition

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- Colour was used as part of a segmentation strategy, when Black & Decker inaugurated a new line of tools, called DeWalt, targeted to the residential construction industry. Black & Decker selected 30 of its regular black professional and industrial power tools, made slight modifications and coloured them yellow. This rollout was supported by a fleet of yellow vans emblazoned with the yellow DeWalt logo that visited construction sites to demonstrate the new products.[iv]

- Visual imagery is an important mediator of advertising effectiveness. A number of recent studies have explored the impact of such variables as vividness of imagery on reactions to advertising copy.[v]

3. **Colour Industry** -- the art of forecasting "hot" colours

Real World Application

- DuPont forecasted colours that will be preferred by car buyers over the next 3-5 years. While white (currently the most popular colour for cars) will remain strong, the report predicts deep green will gain in popularity, as will turquoise/aqua, yellow, and purple.[vi]

- Colour schemes are also important in industrial settings. Steelcase Inc. recently set up a customized paint division that allows office furniture manufacturers to match the colour of their products to the decor of prized corporate clients. Steelcase created a colour called french fry yellow for McDonald's, and it created toddler-sized furniture by Lego Systems Inc. for a day-care center that exactly matched the colours of plastic Lego blocks.[vii]

Class Interaction Opportunity: *What colours are uniquely associated with a particular company or product? Give at least three illustrations. Have you noticed any confusing similarities with these companies or products?*

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B. **Smell** -- odours can both stir emotions or create a calming effect; scented advertising, products and outlets.

- Fragrances can be classified into various types: floral, woodsy, green citrusy, spicy, and oriental. Experts create fragrances by combining a number of individual scents from as many as 200-300 ingredients. Like colour, our perception of fragrance has three components, known as the top, middle, and bottom notes. Top notes, perceived with the first sniff, provide only a fleeting sensation; middle notes carry the aromatic theme; and bottom notes retain the character of the fragrance.[viii]

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- In recent studies, students who smelled chocolate during a word memorization exercise were better able to recall the words the next day when they were again exposed to the smell.[ix]

Class Interaction Opportunity: *Ask students to consider their favourite and least liked scents. Engage the class in a discussion about whether or not these scents affect product purchase or avoidance. The discussion can be directed to cross-cultural considerations as well.*

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C. **Hearing** -- sound can relax or stimulate consumers and workers

1. **The Sound of Muzak** -- increases the tempo of music during slack times

- The "sound of music" is becoming an issue with consumers who increasingly find themselves "on hold" for telephone inquiries. Perhaps companies should consider the option of choosing your own music – or waiting in silence.

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Class Interaction Opportunity: *If you owned a store that sold compact disc players and speakers, what would you want customers to experience when they entered your store?*

D. **Touch** -- richness, quality, and durability are assessed by touch

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Class Interaction Opportunity: *Why do car dealers want you to test drive their cars?*

E. **Taste**

1. **Taste Testing** -- consumers with exceptional "taste buds" are trained

2. **Blind Taste Tests** -- products are compared with competitors unknowingly (As Coke found out, taste wasn't necessarily the most important factor!)

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World Application Real

- "Plain" vanilla has become a flavorful marketing concept. Vanilla flavored or scented products, from perfumes and colognes to cake frosting, coffees, and ice cream, are currently big sellers for the flavor industry. Coty Inc. introduced Vanilla Fields cologne spray in 1994, and reported $25 million in retail sales over a four-month period. One industry executive explains that the flavor's popularity is because vanilla "evokes memories of home and hearth, warmth and cuddling." [x]

Class Interaction Opportunity: *What is your favourite new taste? How did you discover it? What stimulus influenced you the most to try this "new" taste?*

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III. EXPOSURE

A**. Sensory Thresholds --** Psychophysics -- how the physical environment affects our personal experiences.

1. **The Absolute Threshold** -- the lowest amount of stimulus that a person is able to detect

Class Interaction Opportunity: *How is the absolute threshold important in designing marketing stimulation? Be prepared to give illustrations related to each element of the marketing mix.*

2. **The Differential Threshold** -- the ability to detect differences between two products

Class Interaction Opportunity: *Ask the class to write down the price of the following goods: (a) litre of milk, (b) Big Mac, (c) 3-piece set of luggage. Then see if they can figure out the differential threshold they have for these goods. (See how much price would have to change before they would actually know it.) Why is it different depending on the price of the product in question?*

Wanting consumers to notice a change -- e.g., style of new model

Real World Application

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☯ Campbell's soup has been gradually modifying its label for the last 135 years. In perhaps the most dramatic packaging change, Campbell's unveiled new cans in 1994 that featured a photograph of a bowl of soup in the center.[xi] The Campbell Kid has also been slimmed down in recent years.

Not wanting consumers to notice change -- e.g., price increase
Just Noticeable Difference (JND) -- minimum change that is detectable

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B. **Subliminal Perception** -- stimulus below your level of awareness (can't prove it occurs)

Real World Application

☯ An individual's perceptual threshold is usually defined as that stimulus value correctly detected 50 percent of the time. Many studies claiming to show subliminal effects present stimuli that may actually be noticed as much as 49 percent of the time. Responses may thus be due to weak but not subliminal stimulation. For example, when three of Pepsi's Cool Cans (introduced in 1990) are stacked vertically, the designs form the word "sex" in one of the four designs produced. A company spokesman insisted that the letters were randomly generated combinations of the letters in the word Pepsi, and the result was just a coincidence. In any case, the letters are clearly visible, and hence not subliminal at all.[xii]

1. **Subliminal Techniques**

Visual Subliminals -- "embeds" are hidden figures usually of a sexual nature

☯ Much of the furor surrounding embeds can be attributed to Wilson Bryan Key, who has written several books on subliminal seduction. Systematic research studies, however, have found no evidence that embeds exert unconscious influence on unwitting consumers.[xiii] Success in an advertising context is unlikely, since the messages are not carefully calibrated and presented on an individual level to specific individuals.

Auditory Subliminals -- hidden messages in sound recordings (self- help tapes)

Low-Level Auditory Stimulation -- messages played at a barely audible level

2. **Does Subliminal Perception Work? Evaluating the Evidence** -- probably of little value to marketers

- Individuals have wide differences in their threshold levels
- Advertisers can't control the distance consumers are from the screen

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- Consumers must give absolute attention to the screen -- do you?
- The specific effect can't be controlled -- your thirst won't make you buy "Pepsi"

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Class Interaction Opportunity: *Find an example of what you perceive to be a subliminal message. Explain your rationale, and show the product or message to the class*

IV. ATTENTION -- the degree to which consumers focus on the stimulus

Class Interaction Opportunity: *What do you think are the characteristics of the best banner ads (or best web ads)? Give an illustration.*

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A. **Personal Selection Factors** – we are selective about what we pay attention to; perceptual vigilance; perceptual defense.

Selective Exposure – the degree to which we pay attention to what our senses tell us; we "hear, see, etc., " what we want to "hear, see, etc.."

Perceptual Filters – consumer decisions are based on experience

Perceptual Vigilance – awareness of stimuli that meet our current needs

Selective Exposure to Television Messages: Consumer Take Control – Zipping

Adaptation – over time, consumers stop noticing an unchanged ad. Factors leading to adaptation – intensity, duration, discrimination, exposure, relevance.

Class Interaction Opportunity: *Ash students when they have used perceptual vigilance or perceptual defense. Think of examples and circumstances when advertisers consciously are able to overcome these effects in consumers. How can these barriers be broken?*

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B**. Stimulus Selection Factors** – size, colour, position, novelty

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V. INTERPRETATION – deciding what things mean

Schemas -- organized collection of beliefs and feelings

A. **Stimulus Organization** – people tend to categorize stimuli based on their experiences

The Gestalt – "the whole is greater than the sum of the parts"

Closure – tendency to finish an established but incomplete pattern

Similarity – grouping on the basis of similar physical characteristics

Real World Application

- The Matex Corporation was experiencing sluggish results with a rust-proofing compound called Thixo-Tex because consumers could not perceive product qualities from this meaningless name. When the product's name was changed to Rusty Jones, sales grew from $2 million to more than $100 million in four years.[xiv]

Figure-Ground -- act of focusing on either the object or its background

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VI. THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER: INTERPRETATION BIASES

A. **Semiotics: The Symbols Around Us** – making sense of a marketing stimulus; hyperreality – hype becomes real

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B. **Perceptual Positioning**

Positioning Strategy – the place a brand occupies in the consumer's mind with regard to important attributes and competitive offerings.

Repositioning – Changing the place a brand occupies in the consumer's mind to make it more competitive with other brands or to change its image. Positioning (and repositioning) dimensions may include lifestyle, price leadership, attributes, product class, occasions, users or quality.

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Class Interaction Opportunity: *Ask students to think of a product or service that has been positioned or re-positioned recently. What new market was pursued? How did you find out about the positioning or re-positioning?*

Real World Applications

- Marketers strive to develop the kind of affection loyal consumers have for strong brands: Krispy Kreme doughnuts, Poilane bread, Tide detergent, Harley-Davidson motorcycles, Cheerios cereal, Herman Miller's Aeron office chair, Google search engine, Crayola's Burnt Sienna shade of crayon.[xv]
- To counteract market fragmentation and aggressive competition from bottled water brands such as Dasani and (Coca-Cola) and Aquafina (PepsiCo), Evian (bottled by Groupe Danone and distributed by Coca-Cola) is being repositioned as a health and beauty aid – a wider appeal, rather than as a premium thirst-quencher – with a $10 m. ad campaign.[xvi]

END-OF-CHAPTER SUPPORT MATERIAL

Summary of Special Feature Boxes

1. Marketing Pitfall

This box focuses on the effects that perceptions of food serving size has on consumption. Various studies have shown that the larger the container that people are presented with, the more they will eat. People also tend to eat more when portions are larger. Additionally, the height of a container has a greater impact on consumer perception of size than does the width. Container sizes can even affect perceptions of the variety contained therein.

2. Regional Dimensions

This box illustrates the impact of consumer advocacy in "pushing back" against the use of certain products. In many workplaces, schools and other venues where the public gather the use of fragrances (perfumes, aftershave lotion, scented deodorants) has been discouraged or even restricted. The anti-fragrance movement began in 1991 after a problem with indoor air quality at a medical center caused hundreds to become ill. Since then the move to restrict the use of fragrances has made significant advances in many parts of the world.

3. Marketing Opportunity I

This box takes a look at the technology of micro-editing. This technology speeds up the rate of speech for recorded media, such as radio, and audio or video recordings. In this manner, more content can be compressed into a shorter time frame, without impacting the consumer's ability to process the information.

4. Marketing Opportunity II

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This section discusses the changing perceptions of consumer freshness for chilled foods versus frozen foods. Consumers are leaning toward chilled, so this is where much of the innovation of new products is appearing.

5. Net Profit

This box explores the origins of unsolicited email on the internet (i.e. spam). Some companies compile consumer profiles through either a record of legitimate purchases or contests. Mailing lists are then sold to other spammers and millions of emails are sent out to solicit business. Spammers are paid a commission based on the number of purchases the emails generate.

6. Reality Check

This box offers several different perspectives on America's obsession with "bigness". The evidence is found in everything from serving portions in restaurants, vehicles, and homes. Some theorize that this view stems from an ingrained perception that "more" is a confirmation of "value for money". Negative consequences of this approach include the expanding waistlines of many Americans, and the extravagance and waste generated in North America compared with most European and Asian countries.

Review Questions

1. Define hedonic consumption and provide an example. *The Owens-Corning Fiberglass Corporation was the first company to trademark a colour when it used bright pink for its insulation material and adopted the Pink Panther cartoon character as its spokescharacter. Harley-Davidson actually tried to trademark the distinctive sound made by a "hog" revving up. These responses are an important part* ***of hedonistic consumption{*** *XE "****hedonic consumption****" }, the multisensory, fantasy, and emotional aspects of consumers' interactions with products.*

2. Does the size of a package influence how much of the contents we eat? How? *When pouring or eating foods from larger boxes, these boxes suggest it is appropriate or "acceptable" to eat more than smaller ones—and we do!*

3. How does the sense of touch influence consumers' reactions to products? *Moods are stimulated or relaxed on the basis of sensations reaching the skin, whether from a luxurious massage or the bite of a winter wind. Touch has even been shown to be a factor in sales interactions. We are more sure about what we perceive when we can touch it.*

4. Identify and describe the three stages of perception. ***Exposure{*** *XE "Exposure"* ***}*** *occurs when a stimulus comes within the range of someone's sensory receptors.* ***Attention{*** *XE "Attention"* ***}*** *refers to the extent to which processing activity is*

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devoted to a particular stimulus. ***Interpretation{*** *XE "Interpretation"* ***}*** *refers to the meaning that we assign to sensory stimuli.*

5. What is the difference between an absolute threshold and a differential threshold? *The* ***absolute threshold{*** *XE "absolute threshold"* ***}*** *refers to the minimum amount of stimulation that can be detected on a given sensory channel. The* ***differential threshold{*** *XE "differential threshold"* ***}*** *refers to the ability of a sensory system to detect changes or differences between two stimuli.*

6. Does subliminal perception work? Why or why not? *Some research by clinical psychologists suggests that people can be influenced by subliminal messages under very specific conditions, though it is doubtful that these techniques would be of much use in most marketing contexts. Effective messages must be very specifically tailored to individuals, rather than the mass messages required by advertising.*

7. "Consumers practice a form of 'psychic economy' ". What does this mean? *Psychic economy is picking and choosing among stimuli to avoid being overwhelmed. How do they choose? Both personal and stimulus factors help to decide.*

8. Describe two factors that can lead to stimulus adaptation. *There are five factors that can lead to stimulus adaptation:*

   - ***Intensity****: Less-intense stimuli (e.g., soft sounds or dim colours) habituate because they have less sensory impact.*
   - ***Duration****: Stimuli that require relatively lengthy exposure in order to be processed tend to habituate because they require a long attention span.*
   - ***Discrimination****: Simple stimuli tend to habituate because they do not require attention to detail.*
   - ***Exposure****: Frequently encountered stimuli tend to habituate as the rate of exposure increases.*
   - ***Relevance****: Stimuli that are irrelevant or unimportant will habituate because they fail to attract attention.*

9. Define a "schema" and provide an example of how this concept is relevant to marketing. *Consumers assign meaning to stimuli based on the* ***schema{*** *XE "schema"* ***}****, or set of beliefs, to which the stimulus is assigned. An applied example of a schema is given in the opening vignette to the chapter when Gary is revolted at the thought of warm milk.*

10. "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Explain this statement. ***Gestalt{*** *XE "Gestalt"* ***}*** *roughly means whole, pattern, or configuration, and this perspective is best summarized by the saying "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts."*

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11. List the three semiotic components of a marketing message, giving an example of each. *The **object{ XE "object" }** is the product that is the focus of the message (e.g., Marlboro cigarettes). The **sign{ XE "sign" }** is the sensory image that represents the intended meanings of the object (e.g., the Marlboro cowboy). The **interpretant{ XE "interpretant" }** is the meaning derived (e.g., rugged, individualistic, American).*

12. What do we mean by the idea of hyperreality? *Hyperreality refers to the process of making real what is initially simulation or "hype." Advertisers create new relationships between objects and interpretants by inventing new connections between products and benefits, such as equating Marlboro cigarettes with the frontier spirit.*

13. What is a positioning strategy? What are some ways marketers can position their products? *A **positioning strategy{** XE "positioning strategy" **}** is a fundamental part of a company's marketing efforts as it uses elements of the marketing mix (i.e., product design, price, distribution, and marketing communications) to influence the consumer's interpretation of its meaning. Marketers can use many dimensions to carve out a brand's position in the marketplace. These include:*

- ***Lifestyle**: Grey Poupon mustard is a "higher-class" condiment.*
- ***Price leadership**: L'Oréal's Noisôme brand face cream is sold in upscale beauty shops, whereas its Plenitude brand is available for one-sixth the price in discount stores—even though both are based on the same chemical formula.*
- ***Attributes**: Bounty paper towels are "the quicker picker upper."*
- ***Product class**: The Mazda Miata is a sporty convertible.*
- ***Competitors**: Northwestern Insurance is "the quiet company."*
- ***Occasions**: Wrigley's gum is an alternative at times when smoking is not permitted.*
- ***Users**: Levi's Dockers are targeted primarily to men in their 20s to 40s.*
- ***Quality**: At Ford, "Quality is job 1."*

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CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR CHALLENGE

Discussion Questions

1. Many studies have shown that our sensory detection abilities decline as we grow older. Discuss the implications of the absolute threshold for marketers attempting to appeal to seniors.

It would be wise to begin this exercise by identifying the particular senses and the ways in which they decline the consumer gets older. Once this has been done, students should brainstorm to develop a list of the ways that a message may not be received or interpreted correctly. Students might be encouraged to develop a matrix, placing the senses down the left-hand side and forms of communication across the top. The matrix then should be filled in with descriptions of how communications may fail and how these failures could be avoided. For example, print advertisements aimed at an older audience could use larger type, or radio and television ads could decrease the pace of information presented and slightly increase the volume to allow older recipients to more fully process the information. Retail store and restaurants can increase lighting.

2. Assuming that some forms of subliminal persuasion may have the desired effect of influencing consumers, do you think the use of these techniques is ethical? Explain your answer.

Many students will consider the use of subliminal persuasion to be unethical. Accordingly, a discussion could focus on why subliminal messages are undesirable. An interesting issue to raise may be how, or even if, subliminal persuasion differs from other advertising consumers are exposed to everyday. Once these differences have been noted, the discussion could turn toward analyzing the reasons why individuals react negatively to subliminal persuasion. Students who believe the use of these techniques is ethical should be encouraged to develop their arguments so that those representing each side of the argument might see the opposing view. Regardless of the position adopted by the majority of students, be prepared to stimulate discussion by developing an argument in favour of the use of subliminal messages. This argument could center on the idea that subliminal persuasion might result in less "clutter." Arguing for its effectiveness, the amount of advertising could decrease overall.

3. Do you believe that marketers have the right to use any or all public spaces to deliver product messages? Where would you draw the line in terms of places and products that should be restricted?

This question needs to split into two parts: (1) whether marketers have the right to use any public spaces, and (2) whether they have the right to use all public spaces. These are the two extremes on the issue, and the students will most likely find themselves somewhere between complete and unlimited access for marketers on one hand, and complete and total ban on the other. A key concept in this discussion is the definition of

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"public spaces" and, therefore, a common definition should be adopted early in the discussion. To develop their position on this issue, students should be encouraged to list both appropriate and inappropriate places for product messages and offer reasons why each place should be categorized in a particular way. See if they think signs on the highway should be eliminated. If they agree, ask them how they would ever find McDonald's!

4. Interview three to five male and three to five female friends regarding their perceptions of both men's and women's fragrances. Construct a perceptual map for each set of products. Based on your map of perfumes, do you see any areas that are not adequately served by current offerings? What (if any) gender differences did you obtain regarding both the relevant dimensions used by raters and the placement of specific brands along these dimensions?

Have the students start this project by listing a number of descriptive words that are or could be used when positioning perfumes in the market place. Have them ask the respondents to position various perfumes on the map according their impressions of the perfumes selected. (Possible Field Project)

5. Assume that you are a consultant for a marketer who wants to design a package for a new premium chocolate bar targeted to an affluent market. What recommendations would you provide in terms of such package elements as colour, symbolism, and graphic design? Give the reasons for your suggestions.

Most students will recognize that the label (package), the weight of the product and the brand name of the product are all combined to communicate the image of the product. In this exercise the students are examining premium product targeted to an affluent market. Obviously, the suggestions developed by students are likely to reflect their own experiences. What needs to be added to the discussion of product labels and names is (1) the colours that will augment the desire premium image, (2) the smell that is associated with candy, (3) the sound of the candy wrapper in your hand, and (4) and the symbolism that may be used to position the product in the consumer's mind. The issue of symbolism may provide the best avenue for discussion, and a broader discussion of how symbols can be used in advertising and promotion would be helpful.

6. Using magazines archived in the library, track the packaging of a specific brand over time. Find an example of gradual changes in package design that may have been below the JND.

You might give a few hints here. For example, Aunt Jemima, and Betty Crocker are trademarks that have changed over time and can be found in ads. Package changes include Ivory Soap, Kellogg's Rice Krispies, and Campbell Soup. Students can simply exam automobile ads to see how styles of a particular car have changed over the years; the body is the car's package. (Possible Field Project)

7. Visit a set of Web sites for one type of product (e.g., personal computers, perfumes laundry detergents or athletic shoes), and analyze the colours and other design principles employed. Which sites "work" and which don't? Why?

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See if the students will notice how similar many of the products and brands are in terms of shape, weight, colour, and size. (Possible Field Project)

8. Look through a current magazine and select one ad that captures your attention over the others. Give the reasons why.

After students have indicated what the ad caught their attention, probe to see if there are any other reasons. Ask the class if it was struck by any other aspects of the ad. (Possible Field Project)

9. Find ads that utilize the techniques of contrast and novelty. Give your opinion of the effectiveness of each ad and whether the technique is likely to be appropriate for the consumers targeted by the ad.

Opinions will vary here. Some people like novelty in most everything while other want people to be more serious. (Possible Field Project)

CBC VIDEO USERS' GUIDE

Concepts at Work for Beer Necessities

Running Time: 19 minutes

Video Summary: Beer is a favourite beverage of many Canadians! We have been brewing this beverage Canadian-style for more than a century, but surprisingly few of us really know what we're drinking when we open "a cold one." Under Canadian law, requirements for listing ingredients are rather lenient compared to those for other food and beverage products. Breweries, which generally promote beer on lifestyle dimensions, are not much help, nor are our own taste buds. Taste tests continue to demonstrate that beer drinkers have difficulty identifying their favourite beer.

Beer experts are aware of the limitations of consumers' perceptual acuity when it comes to beer. Periodically, questions are raised about the need for the ingredient lists and expiry dates that are mandatory in other countries where beer is also a popular beverage. These experts also remind us that a trained palate can distinguish among the myriad of beer brands, and that some beers may actually be better than others. However, there is no guarantee that your favourite brand will be the number one contender! Or that the marketing communications strategies used by large and small breweries will be any more enlightening.

Questions & Answers:

1. What is the difference between experts and novices in how they perceive beer?

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Experts and novices differ in the extent to which they engage each of their five senses in assessing beer, as well as the perceptual acuity of each of their senses. The following table considers the type of information picked up by each sense and their perceptual acuity.

Instructors should note that without your direction students might not think of the differences in perceptual acuity between the two groups.

SENSE	EXPERTS	NOVICES
Perceptual acuity	Sophisticated overall. Employ scientific assessment approaches in lab settings. Notice differences within a very narrow range.	Generally unsophisticated. Highly dependent on selective perception, the person's innate acuity and characteristics of consumption setting. Can pick up large differences only.
Taste	Able to detect main ingredients, i.e., hops, malt, as well as additives, secondary flavours and variations in consistency of liquid and foam.	May be able to detect main ingredients, i.e., hops, malt, only.
Smell	Included in assessment	Usually of little importance.
Sight	Recognize colour gradations. Label and bottle of little importance. Notice dandruff.	May notice colour differences, if large. Label and, more recently, bottle shape are important. Notice and comment on the appropriate height of foam.
Sound	Can detect characteristics based on « noise » upon pouring & drinking.	Do not usually notice; generally unimportant in assessment.
Touch	Can distinguish qualities across temperature range.	Distinguish mainly between warm and cold enough. May also notice « body » (e.g., chewiness) of beer.

It should also be noted that experts assess beer using all senses, separately and in interaction with each other, and have a much smaller JND across a diverse set of attributes, while novices usually have a holistic assessment that they generally describe as « taste ». Many beer drinkers will claim that they have a preferred brand (based on taste), but blind taste tests show that this preference is associated strongly with a known label image

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created by sophisticated marketing communication strategies, which is heavily supported by advertising for the big breweries, or by regional or local loyalty to a microbrewery (or due to other attributes that are not part of the physical product). In other words, preferred brands very frequently cannot be identified in blind taste tests!!! See the following web site for useful links related to this video case:
http://cbc.ca/marketplace/files/food/beer_challenge/

2. *Describe the structure of the Canadian beer industry and the marketing strategies used to reach the Canadian beer market.*

The Canadian beer industry consists of two tiers:
1) large national breweries, Molson's and Labatt's, which have the lion's share of the market, based on a few brands/labels, as well as a few « boutique » brands with a microbrewery image, and
2) small regional or local breweries.

STRATEGIC ELEMENTS	LARGE BREWERIES	MICRO-BREWERIES
Overall Strategy (in a heavily regulated environment in Canada)	Mass marketing, with micro-brands to prevent erosion of market share from microbrewery competition.	Niche marketing (unique brand personality) in local and regional markets. Difficult to avoid copying of unique brand attributes/benefits by large companies.
Target Market	« The following ». Males between 18 & 24 years and 25 & 35 years are important age segments.	Self-image of the « discriminating » beer drinker. Local loyalty or affinity an underlying motivation.
Product	Development of brand, label & package image development important for mass appeal. Package size is an important attribute. Brand extensions are very common, i.e., Labatt's Blue, Classic & Ice.	Development of brand, label & package image important for unique appeal. Unusual brand names. Colour and bottle shape are important.
Price	All price points: Low to high	Moderate to high
Marketing Communications: • ***Advertising***	Mass advertising very important; TV-based; frequent & broad audience reach. Lifestyle/slice-of-life themes; expensive, sophisticated. Recently, more liberal approaches, such as featuring lesbians & a	Local & regional advertising. Magazine-based. Themes are more likely to emphasize ingredients.

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• ***Personal selling***	shopping cart race have been abandoned due public protests. "Representatives" cover not only the retail trade, but also prospective entertainment purviews, such as campuses & sports events.	Not as extensive as large breweries.
• ***Sales promotion***	Sophisticated trade support.	Not as extensive as large breweries.
• ***Publicity***	Some reliance on media coverage of entertainment & sponsorship events. WOM less important.	WOM very important
Distribution	Mass distribution. Extensive & varied, including retail & entertainment locales. Some exporting.	Limited. Compete for shelf space in conventional outlets. Some exporting.

3. *Why are breweries against putting "best before" dates on their products?*

As beer ages, it develops "dandruff," so adding an expiry date would make sense from a consumer's point of view. However, expiry dates also imply perishability and with physical evidence of aging, consumers would very quickly use this attribute when making beer selections. Thus, the marketing process, especially at the product development, marketing communications and distribution levels, would become very complicated. Presently, the typical Canadian beer drinker looks for "a cold one" with a preferred label, and the breweries would like to keep it that way!

4. *What kind of consumer protection do beer consumers have in Canada and other countries? Why do you think countries use different approaches?*

Countries use different approaches because they differ in the context in which they drink beer, in cultural significance, in their philosophy of consumer protection, in the regulation of beer production and in the quantities consumed at one sitting. Germany, for example, is regulated heavily and Ireland requires an ingredient list.

Instructor's Notes:

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FIELD PROJECT IDEAS

Individual Assignments

1. Have a student find examples of these scent strips in magazines and then interview a few people to determine their reactions to scent strips. Are they positive or negative? Do the people who were interviewed think that this type of advertising will have any effect on what products a person will buy? Record their remarks.

2. Have a student bring to class several brands of well-known products and their "look-a-like" counterparts. Then have the student compare the shared physical attributes of these products. What are some of the psychological attributes of pricing and packaging? Are there any legal or ethical implications for the producers of these products?

3. Ask a student to visit a toy store and take note of the various types of toys that are displayed. Then have the student categorize these toys based on age, gender, socioeconomic class, and educational level. Have them discuss how manufacturers and retailers use these attributes to appeal to potential customers.

4. Have a student visit two different types of restaurants and make a note of how each establishment appeals to the five senses. How are they the same? How are they different?

5. Ask a student to bring in three ads from a favourite magazine. Have the student identify examples of the stimulus factors that the advertiser used to capture attention. What are some of the other stimuli that could have been chosen to accomplish the same thing?

6. Have a student interview 3-5 male and 3-5 female friends regarding their perceptions of both men's and women's fragrances. Then ask the student to construct a perceptual map for each set of products. Based on the map of perfumes, are there any areas that are not adequately served by current offerings? What (if any) gender differences surfaced regarding both the relevant dimensions used by raters and the placement of specific brands along these dimensions? (See Consumer Challenge Question #2)

7. Ask the student to use magazines archived in the library to track the packaging of a specific brand over time. Find an example of gradual changes in package design that may have been below the JND. (See Consumer Challenge Question #6)

8. Have a student look through a current magazine, select one ad that captures their attention over the others, and identify the reasons why. (See Consumer Challenge Question #8)

9. Have a student find ads that utilize the techniques of contrast and novelty. Let the student give an opinion of the effectiveness of each ad and whether the technique is

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likely to be appropriate for the consumers targeted by the ad. (See Consumer Challenge Question #9)

10. Ask a student to spend an afternoon watching a popular soap opera or an evening watching a favourite television show. Ask them to be particularly observant of the various products and services that are used as props during the show. Do these products or services have any symbolic value? Are they used to help develop the plot? How?

11. Instruct a student to find one ad that is rich in symbolism and perform a semiotic analysis of it. Have the student identify each type of sign used in the ad and the product qualities being communicated by it. Then have him or her comment on the effectiveness of the signs that are used to communicate the intended message.

Team Assignments

12. Have three or four students develop ten brand names for a new (a) hamburger, (b) hair care centre, (c) car, or (d) a product of their choice. Then test these names on the class to capture their reaction. Have the project leaders describe the process they went through to choose the names.

13. Either you or a team of students could collect a set of current ads for one type of product (e.g., personal computers, perfumes, laundry detergents or athletic shoes) from magazines. Bring these ads to class and have the students analyze the colours used in them. Students should describe the images conveyed by different colours, and try to identify any consistency across brands in terms of the colours used in product packaging or other aspects of the ads.

14. Have students bring in three food products ads which present the products in a particular scene or setting. Ask them to report on the symbols used in the setting and how they believe the marketers intended them to be interpreted relative to the food product. Do they think the ads are effective?

Individual or Team Assignments

15. Ask students to bring in a collection of sexually-oriented ads to stimulate discussion of the different techniques and types of products that use sexual themes in their ads. Did they find more nudity magazines targeted toward men or women? See if they think these ads are effective. What are the ethical issues?

16. Have your students look for several examples of magazine advertisements that use sexual themes or illustrations which seem to capture the reader's attention or in some way influence their perceptual process. Are these methods appropriate for the target market the advertiser is trying to reach?

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17. Ask students to choose any two restaurants or pubs that are frequented by friends. Have them measure their image profiles by asking ten fellow students or friends to write a list of descriptive words that apply to each restaurant or pub. It will be easier for the subjects if the students provide the subjects with a list of potential descriptions. What conclusions can be drawn from these data?

18. Ask students to select two websites that contrast effective and ineffective application of techniques that attract the attention of web browsers.

19. Ask students to speak with international students about the meaning of specific colours and numbers in their culture. How do these meanings contrast with those of Canadians?

eLAB

Individual Assignments

1. Go to **www.tvguide.com**. On the opening Web page, how many ads (including pop-ups) do you notice? Compare and contrast the approach of each ad to exposure, attention, and interpretation. Comment on how the consumer goes through these steps when coming in contact with each ad. Provide an illustration of your description.

2. Go to **www.scion.com**. Toyota launched its Scion brand for the 2004 model year. Already, three of the top ten hottest models (as measure by number of days spent on dealer lots) are Scion models. Not bad considering the division only has three models! Scion has focused its promotional efforts on the Internet and other non-traditional media. Is this Web site a good way to promote a car? In terms of concepts of perception, why or why not?

3. Go to **www.leapfrog.com**. This is a Web site designed for children to facilitate learning. Analyze the Leapfrog site for sensory stimulation, attention value, and ability to promote a sale of the product. How are semiotics used on this site? Discuss briefly in class.

4. Go to **www.bose.com**. Bose promises that once you listen to their Quiet Comfort 2 headphones you will never be satisfied with another comparable unit. Determine the competitive advantages and disadvantages of the Quiet Comfort 2. How does the company use sensory stimulation to promote the product? What key words can be used to evoke a response from consumers? Is the Bose approach effective? Explain.

Team Assignments

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1. Go to **www.crutchfield.com**. Spend some time becoming familiar with this Web site. The group should evaluate the Crutchfield's strategy. What is it? What do you think will be the long-term result of the strategy you just described? How is the organization using exposure, attention, and interpretation to its benefit? What does the group think will be the secrets of success for Crutchfield? The seeds of failure? Which symbols should be used to ensure success? Which should be avoided?

2. Go to **www.apple.com**. It seems like only yesterday that Steve Jobs re-joined Apple Computer and launched the company on a new product development spree that helped the ailing organization to pull itself out of its computer doldrums. Your group assignment is to analyze how Apple used colour and design to differentiate the iPod line from other mp3 players. Give illustrations of what was done. Was this a good strategy? What target markets were pursued? How did Apple use exposure, attention, and interpretation to their advantage? What are the criticisms about the iPod line? Can colour and design overcome these criticisms?

PROFESSORS ON THE GO!

Chapter Objectives

When students finish this chapter they should understand why:

- Perception is a three-stage process that translates raw stimuli into meaning.
  - Go to **www.tvguide.com**. On the opening Web page, how many ads (including pop-ups) do you notice? Compare and contrast the approach of each ad to the concepts of exposure, attention, and interpretation. Comment on how the consumer goes through these steps when coming in contact with each ad. Provide an illustration of your description.
  - Go to **www.crutchfield.com**. Spend some time becoming familiar with this Web site. The group should evaluate the Crutchfield's strategy. What is it? What do you think will be the long-term result of the strategy you just described? How is the organization using exposure, attention, and interpretation to its benefit? What does the group think will be the secrets of success for Crutchfield? The seeds of failure? Which symbols should be used to ensure success? Which should be avoided?

- Products and commercial messages often appeal to our senses, but many of them will not succeed.
  - Interview three to five male and three to five female friends regarding their perceptions of both men's and women's fragrances. Construct a perceptual map for each set of products. Based on your map of perfumes, do you see any areas that are not adequately served by current offerings? What (if any) gender differences did you obtain regarding both the relevant dimensions used by raters and the placement of specific brands along these dimensions?

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  - Each student should visit a shopping mall and note all of the stores for which scents are an important component of their product offerings. Does it appear that each of these is appealing to the sense of smell in a strategic manner?
  - Have students visit a grocery store and pick out five products. They should identify how each scent appeals to the five senses. How are they the same? How are they different? To what extent do any of them appear to be strategically designed to appeal to the five senses?

- The design of a product today is a key driver of its success or failure.
  - Have student groups find three examples of brands or companies that have made changes to their products (i.e., retail chain redesigning their stores, a new logo, etc.). Have them discuss how the concept of "just noticeable difference" might affect consumer perceptions of these changes. Are the changes something that the marketers wanted to be noticed?

- Subliminal advertising is a controversial—but largely ineffective—way to talk to consumers.
  - Assuming that some forms of subliminal persuasion may have the desired effect of influencing consumers, do you think the use of these techniques is ethical? Explain your answer.
  - Find an example of what you perceive to be a subliminal message. Explain your rationale to the class and show the product or message.

- We interpret the stimuli to which we do pay attention according to learned patterns and expectations.
  - Ask students to collect three different pieces of direct mail. How do the advertisers attempt to attract consumer attention? What are some of the other stimuli that could have been chosen to accomplish the same thing?
  - For this project, each student should keep a log of all the advertising information that he or she is exposed to in a single hour when out in public. The students should keep track of the quantity and not try to note the names or descriptions of each. From memory, what are some of the ways that companies attempt to get their ads noticed?
  - For this project, students will need to pay attention. The students need to notice and identify a piece of marketing material to which they have adapted and generally do not pay attention. Discuss the five factors of adaptation in relation to this particular piece of marketing material.

- The science of semiotics helps us to understand how symbols are used to create meaning.
  - Assume that you are a consultant for a marketer who wants to design a package for a new premium chocolate bar targeted to an affluent market. What recommendations would you provide in terms of such package elements as colour, symbolism, and graphic design? Give the reasons for your suggestions.
  - Ask students to find three ads that contain symbolism. Examine the symbols and discuss the meaning the symbols convey. Encourage the students to identify the

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different types of signs used in the ads and the product qualities being communicated by each.

- Here is a field project that students always like. Have students (you might have only one or a few students do this as a special or alternative assignment) photocopy or print a collection of brand/product symbols (an alternative would be to have students create a PowerPoint presentation with images inserted to be projected in the classroom for all to see). Then have this students quiz fellow classmates to see if they can recognize the product or company. This will show students how effective symbols are and how much involuntary learning has taken place in their life. You might give a reward to the student who had the most correct responses.
- Here is a tough assignment for undergraduates. Ask students to spend an afternoon watching a popular soap opera or an evening watching a favourite television show. Ask them to be particularly observant of the various products and services that are used as props during the show. Do these products or services have any symbolic value? How would viewer perception be different if alternative brands or even generic brands had been used? To what extent are the props shown or mentioned? Are they used to help develop the plot? How?

ENDNOTES

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Instructor's Notes:

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