

CHAPTER 8

Consumer Attitude Formation and Change

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

1. Understand what attitudes are, how they are learned, as well as their nature and characteristics.
2. Understand the composition and scope of selected models of attitudes.
3. Understand how experience leads to the initial formation of consumption-related attitudes.
4. Understand the various ways in which consumers' attitudes are changed.
5. Understand how consumers' attitudes can lead to behavior and how behavior can lead to attitudes.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

An attitude is a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way with respect to a given object (e.g., a product category, a brand, a service, an advertisement, a Web site, or a retail establishment). Each property of this definition is critical to understanding why and how attitudes are relevant in consumer behavior and marketing.

Of considerable importance in understanding the role of attitudes in consumer behavior is an appreciation of the structure and composition of an attitude. Four broad categories of attitude models have received attention: the tricomponent attitude model, multi-attribute attitude models, trying-to-consume attitude model, and attitude-toward-the-ad model.

The tricomponent model of attitudes consists of three parts: a cognitive component, an affective component, and a conative component. The cognitive component captures a consumer's knowledge and perceptions (i.e., beliefs) about products and services. The affective component focuses on a consumer's emotions or feelings with respect to a particular product or service. Evaluative in nature, the affective component determines an individual's overall assessment of the attitude object in terms of some kind of favorableness rating. The conative component is concerned with the likelihood that a consumer will act in a specific fashion with respect to the attitude object. In marketing and consumer behavior, the conative component is frequently treated as an expression of the consumer's intention to buy.

Multiattribute attitude models (i.e., attitude-toward-object, attitude-toward-behavior, and the theory-of-reasoned-action models) have received much attention from consumer

researchers. As a group, these models examine consumer beliefs about specific-product attributes (e.g., product or brand features or benefits). Recently, there has been an effort to better accommodate consumers' goals as expressed by their "trying to consume" (i.e., a goal the consumer is trying or planning to accomplish). The theory of trying is designed to account for the many cases in which the action or outcome is not certain. The attitude-toward-the-ad models examine the influence of advertisements on the consumer's attitudes toward the brand.

How consumer attitudes are formed and how they are changed are two closely related issues of considerable concern to marketing practitioners. When it comes to attitude formation, it is useful to remember that attitudes are learned and that different learning theories provide unique insights as to how attitudes initially may be formed. Attitude formation is facilitated by direct personal experience and influenced by the ideas and experiences of friends and family members and exposure to mass media. In addition, it is likely that an individual's personality plays a major role in attitude formation.

These same factors also have an impact on attitude change; that is, attitude changes are learned, and they are influenced by personal experiences and the information gained from various personal and impersonal sources. The consumer's own personality affects both the acceptance and the speed with which attitudes are likely to be altered.

Strategies of attitude change can be classified into six distinct categories: (1) changing the basic motivational function; (2) associating the attitude object with a specific group or event; (3) relating the attitude object to conflicting attitudes; (4) altering components of the multiattribute model; (5) changing beliefs about competitors' brands; and (6) the elaboration likelihood model. Each of these strategies provides the marketer with alternative ways of changing consumers' existing attitudes.

Most discussions of attitude formation and attitude change stress the traditional view that consumers develop attitudes before they act. This may not always, however, or even usually be true. Both cognitive dissonance theory and attribution theory provide alternative explanations of attitude formation and change that suggest that behavior might precede attitudes. Cognitive dissonance theory suggests that the conflicting thoughts, or dissonant information, that following a purchase decision might propel consumers to change their attitudes to make them consonant with their actions. Attribution theory focuses on how people assign causality to events and how they form or alter attitudes as an outcome of assessing their own behavior, or the behavior of other people or things.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

WHAT ARE ATTITUDES?

1. Researchers tend to assess attitudes by asking questions or making inferences from behavior.
2. A whole universe of consumer behaviors – consistency of purchases, recommendations to others, top rankings, beliefs, evaluations, and intentions are related to attitudes.
3. An **attitude** is a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way with respect to a given object.

*******Use Figure #8.1 Here; Use Key Term attitude Here; Use Learning Objective #8.1 Here; Use Discussion Question #2 Here*******

The Attitude “Object”

1. **Object** refers to such things as: product, product category, brand, service, possessions, product use, causes or issues, people advertisement price, Internet site, price, medium, or retailer.
 - a) Attitude “can be conceptualized as a summary evaluation of an object.”
 - b) In conducting attitude research, we tend to be object specific..

Attitudes Are a Learned Predisposition

1. Attitudes are learned.
 - a) They are formed as a result of direct experience with the product, information acquired from others, and exposure to mass media, the Internet, and various forms of direct marketing.
 - b) Although attitudes may result in behaviors, they are, however, not synonymous with behavior.
2. As **learned predispositions**, attitudes have a motivational quality.

*******Use Discussion Question #2 Here*******

Attitudes Have Consistency

1. Attitudes are relatively consistent with the behavior they reflect.
 - a) Attitudes are not necessarily permanent; they do change.
 - b) We should consider situational influences on consumer attitudes and behavior.

Attitudes Occur Within a Situation

1. Consumer attitudes occur within, and are affected by, the **situation**.

- a) By “situation,” we mean events or circumstances that, at a particular time, influence the relationship between an attitude and a behavior.
 - b) A specific situation can cause consumers to behave in ways seemingly inconsistent with their attitudes.
2. Consumers can have a variety of attitudes toward a particular object, each tied to a specific situation or application.
 - a) This can cause consumers to behave in ways seemingly inconsistent with their attitudes.
 3. It is important when measuring attitudes that we consider the situation in which the behavior takes place, or the relationship between attitudes and behavior could be misinterpreted.

*******Use Discussion Question #1 Here; Use Table #8.1 Here; Use Figure #8-2 Here *******

STRUCTURAL MODELS OF ATTITUDES

1. Psychologists have sought to construct models that capture the underlying dimensions of an attitude..
 - a) The focus has been on specifying the composition of an attitude to better explain or predict behavior.

*******Use Learning Objective #8.2 Here*******

TRICOMPONENT ATTITUDE MODEL

1. According to the **tricomponent attitude model**, attitudes consist of three major components: cognition, affect, and conation.

*******Use Key Term tricomponent model Here; Use Figure #8-3 Here*******

The Cognitive Component

1. Cognitions are knowledge and perceptions that are acquired by a combination of direct experience with the attitude object and related information from various sources.
 - a) This previous knowledge and perceptions commonly take the form of beliefs
 - b) The consumer believes that the attitude object possesses various attributes and that specific behavior will lead to specific outcomes.

*******Use Table #8.2 Here; Use Exercise #1 Here*******

The Affective Component

1. The affective component of an attitude consists of the consumer's *emotions* or *feelings*.
 - a) Researchers frequently treat these emotions and feelings as evaluative in nature.
2. Affect-laden experiences manifest themselves as emotionally charged states (such as happiness or sadness).
 - a) These states may enhance positive or negative experiences for the consumer.
 - b) Later recollections of such experiences may impact what comes to mind and how the individual acts.
3. Recent research suggests that "positive and negative forms of affect operate differently and that their direct and indirect effects on attitudes are influenced by brand familiarity."
4. In addition to using direct or global evaluative measure of an attitude object, consumer researchers can also use a battery of affective response scales to construct a picture of consumers' overall feelings about a product, service, or ad. .

*****Use Tables #8-3 and #8-4 Here; Use Exercise #1 Here*****

The Conative Component

1. **Conation**, the final component of the tricomponent attitude model, is concerned with the *likelihood* or *tendency* that an individual will undertake a specific action or behave in a particular way with regard to the attitude object.
 - a) The conative component may include the actual behavior itself.
2. In marketing and consumer research, the conative component is frequently treated as an expression of the consumer's intention to buy.
 - a) **Intention-to-buy scales** are used to assess the likelihood of a consumer purchasing a product or behaving in a certain way.

*****Use Key Term intention-to-buy scales Here; Use Discussion Question #3 Here; Use Table #8-5 Here; Use Exercise #1 Here*****

MultiAttribute Attitude Models

1. **Multiattribute attitude models** portray consumers' attitudes with regard to an attitude object as a function of consumers' perception and assessment of the key attributes or beliefs held with regard to the particular attitude object.
2. There are many variations of the attitude model, three to consider are: attitude-toward-object model, attitude-toward-behavior model, and the theory-of-reasoned-action model.
3. The *attitude-toward-object model* is especially suited for measuring attitudes toward a product category or specific brands.

4. According to the *attitude-toward-object model*, the consumer's attitude toward a product or specific brands of a product is a function of the presence (or absence) and evaluation of certain product-specific beliefs and/or attributes.
5. Consumers generally have a favorable attitude toward those brands they believe have an adequate level of attributes that they evaluate as positive, and they have unfavorable attitudes toward those brands they feel do not have an adequate level of desired attributes or have too many negative or undesired attributes.

*******Use Key Terms multiattribute attitude models, attitude-toward-object model, attitude-toward-behavior model and theory-of-reasoned-action model Here; Use Table #8.2 Here*******

The Attitude-Toward-Behavior Model

1. The *attitude-toward-behavior model* is designed to capture the individual's attitude toward behaving or acting with respect to an object, rather than the attitude toward the object itself.
2. The appeal of this model is that it seems to correspond somewhat more closely to actual behavior than does the attitude-toward-object model.

*******Use Key Term attitude-toward-behavior model Here, Use Figure #8-4 Here*******

Theory-of-Reasoned-Action Model

1. The **theory-of-reasoned-action** represents a comprehensive integration of attitude components into a structure that is designed to lead to both better explanation and better predictions of behavior.
2. Like the basic tricomponent attitude model, the theory-of-reasoned-action model incorporates a cognitive component, an affective component, and a conative component; however, these are arranged in a pattern different from that of the tricomponent model.
3. To understand intention we also need to measure the *subjective norms* that influence an individual's *intention* to act.
 - a) A *subjective norm* can be measured directly by assessing a consumer's feelings as to what relevant others (family, friends, roommates, co-workers) would think of the action being contemplated.
 - b) Consumer researchers can get behind the subjective norm to the underlying factors that are likely to produce it.
 - c) They accomplish this by assessing the normative beliefs that the individual attributes to relevant others, as well as the individual's *motivation to comply* with each of the relevant others.
4. An extension of the TRA model is the theory of planned behavior which includes an addition factor leading to "intention" – the construct of perceived behavioral control

(PBC) – which is a consumer’s perception of whether the behavior is or is not within his or her control.

*******Use Key Term theory-of-reasoned-action Here; Use Figure #8-5 Here; Use Exercise #3 Here*******

THEORY OF TRYING-TO-CONSUME MODEL

1. The **theory of trying-to-consume** is designed to account for the cases where the action or outcome is not certain but reflects the consumer’s efforts to consume.
 - a) Sometimes personal impediments or environmental impediments prevent the desired outcome.
2. Researchers have recently extended this inquiry by examining those situations where consumers do not try to consume—that is, fail to try to consume.
 - a) In this case, consumers appear to fail to see or are too ignorant of their options.
 - i) Consumers appear to make a conscious effort not to consume.

*******Use Key Term theory of trying-to-consume Here; Use Table #8-7 Here; Use Discussion Question #4 Here*******

ATTITUDE-TOWARD-THE-AD MODELS

1. As the **attitude-toward-the-ad model** depicts, the consumer forms various feelings (affects) and judgments (cognitions) as the result of exposure to an ad.
2. These feelings and judgments in turn affect the consumer’s attitude toward the ad and beliefs about the brand acquired from exposure to the ad.
3. Finally, the consumer’s attitude toward the ad and beliefs about the brand influence his or her attitude toward the brand.
4. Consumer socialization has also shown itself to be an important determinant of a consumer’s attitudes toward advertising.

*******Use Key Term attitude-toward-the-ad model Here; Use Figure #8-6 Here; Use Exercise #2 and #3 Here*******

ATTITUDE FORMATION

1. How do people, especially young people, form their initial general attitudes toward “things”?
2. How do family members and friends, admired celebrities, mass media advertisements, even cultural memberships, influence the formation of their attitudes concerning consuming or not consuming each of these types of apparel items?
3. Why do some attitudes seem to persist indefinitely, while others change fairly often?

4. The answers to the above are of vital importance to marketers, for without knowing how attitudes are formed, they are unable to understand or to influence consumer attitudes or behavior.

*****Use *Learning Objective #8.3 Here******

HOW ATTITUDES ARE LEARNED

1. When we speak of the formation of an attitude, we refer to the shift from having no attitude toward a given object to having some attitude toward it.
2. Consumers often purchase new products that are associated with a favorably viewed brand name.
 - a) Their favorable attitude toward the brand name is frequently the result of repeated satisfaction with other products produced by the same company.
3. In terms of classical conditioning, an established brand name is an unconditioned stimulus that through past positive reinforcement resulted in a favorable brand attitude.
 - a) A new product, yet to be linked to the established brand, would be the conditioned stimulus.
4. Sometimes attitudes *follow* the purchase and consumption of a product.
5. In situations in which consumers seek to solve a problem or satisfy a need, they are likely to form attitudes (either positive or negative) about products on the basis of information exposure and their own cognition (knowledge and beliefs).
6. In general, the more information consumers have about a product or service, the more likely they are to form attitudes about it, either positive or negative.
7. Consumers are not always ready or willing to process product-related information.
8. Consumers often use only a limited amount of the information available to them.
9. Research suggests that only two or three important beliefs about a product dominate in the formation of attitudes and that less important beliefs provide little additional input.

*****Use *Figure #8-7 Here******

SOURCES OF INFLUENCE ON ATTITUDE FORMATION

1. The formation of consumer attitudes is strongly influenced by personal experience, the influence of family and friends, direct marketing, mass media and the Internet.
2. A primary means by which attitudes toward goods and services are formed is through the consumer's direct experience in trying and evaluating them.
3. As we come in contact with others, especially family, close friends, and admired individuals (e.g., a respected teacher), we form attitudes that influence our lives.
 - a) The family is an extremely important source of influence on the formation of attitudes.
4. Marketers are increasingly using highly focused direct marketing programs to target small consumer niches with products and services that fit their interests and lifestyles.
 - a) Niche marketing is sometimes called micromarketing.

5. Direct marketing efforts have an excellent chance of favorably influencing target consumers' attitudes because the products and services offered and the promotional messages conveyed are very carefully designed to address the individual segment's needs and concerns and, thus, are able to achieve a higher "hit rate" than mass marketing.
6. Mass media communications provide an important source of information that influences the formation of consumer attitudes.
7. Another issue with regard to evaluating the impact of advertising messages on attitude formation is the level of realism that is provided.
 - a) Research has shown that attitudes that develop through direct experience (e.g., product usage) tend to be more confidently held, more enduring, and more resistant to attack than those developed via indirect experience (e.g., reading a print ad).

*****Use *Figure #8-8 Here; Use Exercise #2 Here******

Personality Factors

1. Individuals with a high **need for cognition** (information) are likely to form positive attitudes in response to ads or direct mail that are rich in product-related information.
2. Consumers who are relatively low in need for cognition are more likely to form positive attitudes to ads that feature attractive models or well-known celebrities.
3. Attitudes toward new products and new consumption situations are strongly influenced by specific personality characteristics of consumers.

STRATEGIES OF ATTITUDE CHANGE

1. Attitude changes are learned; they are influenced by personal experience and other sources of information, and personality affects both the receptivity and the speed with which attitudes are likely to be altered.
2. Altering attitudes is a key strategy for marketers, especially when taking aim at market leaders.
3. Marketers have several attitude-change strategies from which to choose:
 - a) Changing the consumer's basic motivational function
 - b) Associating the product with an admired group or event
 - c) Resolving two conflicting attitudes
 - d) Altering components of the multi-attribute model
 - e) Changing consumer beliefs about competitors' brands

*****Use *Learning Objective #8.4 Here; Use Discussion Question #5 Here******

CHANGING THE BASIC MOTIVATIONAL FUNCTION

1. An effective strategy for changing consumer attitudes toward a product or brand is to make particular needs prominent.
2. One method for doing this is called the functional approach and can be classified into four functions: the utilitarian function, the ego-defensive function, the value-expressive function, and the knowledge function.

The Utilitarian Function

1. We hold certain brand attitudes partly because of a brand's utility.
2. When a product has been useful or helped us in the past, our attitude toward it tends to be favorable.
3. One way of changing attitudes in favor of a product is by showing people that it can serve a utilitarian purpose they may not have considered.

The Ego-Defensive Function

1. Most people want to protect their self-images from inner feelings of doubt – they want to replace their uncertainty with a sense of security and personal confidence.
2. The ego-defensive function offers reassurance to the consumer's self-concept

The Value-Expressive Function

1. Attitudes are an expression or reflection of the consumer's general values, lifestyle, and outlook.
 - a) By knowing target consumers' attitudes, marketers can better anticipate their values, lifestyle, or outlook and can reflect these characteristics in their advertising and direct-marketing efforts.

The Knowledge Function

1. Individuals generally have a strong need to know and understand the people and things they encounter.
2. The consumer's "need to know," a cognitive need, is important to marketers concerned with product positioning.
3. Many product and brand positionings are attempts to satisfy the need to know and to improve the consumer's attitudes toward the brand by emphasizing its advantages over competitive brands.

Combining Several Functions

1. Combining several functions involves using more than one of the above because different consumers may like a product for different reasons.

*******Use Key Terms functional approach, utilitarian function, ego-defensive function, value-expressive function, and knowledge function Here; Use Discussion Question #5 Here; Use Exercise #4 Here; Use Figures #8-9, #8.10, and #8.11 Here*******

ASSOCIATING THE PRODUCT WITH A SPECIAL GROUP

1. It is possible to alter attitudes toward products by pointing out their relationships to particular social groups, events, or causes.
2. Research findings seem to indicate that it is likely to be a good idea for a sponsor to reveal to target consumers the reasoning behind their sponsorship, so that consumers know the sponsor's motives rather than form their own potentially inaccurate or negative motives.

*******Use Figures #8-12 and #8.13 Here*******

RESOLVING TWO CONFLICTING ATTITUDES

1. Attitude-change strategies can sometimes resolve actual or potential conflict between two attitudes.
2. If consumers can be made to see that their negative attitude toward a product, a specific brand, or its attributes is really not in conflict with another attitude, they may be induced to change their evaluation of the brand (i.e., moving from negative to positive).

ALTERING COMPONENTS OF THE MULTIATTRIBUTE MODEL

1. Multi-attribute models provide marketers with insights as to how to bring about attitude change.

Changing the Relative Evaluation of Attributes

1. The market for many product categories is structured so that different consumer segments are attracted to brands that offer different features or beliefs.
2. In these market situations, marketers have an opportunity to persuade consumer's to "crossover," or to shift their favorable attitude toward another version of the product.

Changing Brand Beliefs

1. This is the most common form of advertising appeal.
2. Advertisers constantly remind us that their product has "more," or is "better," or "best" in terms of some important product attribute.
3. Within the context of brand beliefs, there are forces working to stop or slow down attitude change.

- a) Therefore, information suggesting a change in attitude needs to be compelling and repeated enough to overcome the natural resistance to letting go of established attitudes.

*****Use Discussion Question #5 Here*****

Adding an Attribute

1. This cognitive strategy pivots on adding a previously ignored attribute, or adding an attribute that reflects an actual product or technological innovation.
2. Adding an attribute reflects an actual product change or technological innovation is easier to accomplish than stressing a previously ignored attribute.
3. Sometimes eliminating a characteristic or feature has the same enhancing outcome as adding a characteristic or attribute.

*****Use Discussion Question #5 Here; Use Figures #8-14 and #8.15 Here*****

Changing the Overall Brand Rating

1. Another cognitive-oriented strategy is altering consumers' overall assessment of the brand directly, without attempting to improve or change their evaluation of any single brand attribute.
2. Such a strategy frequently relies on some form of global statement that "this is the largest-selling brand" or "the one all others try to imitate," or a similar claim that sets the brand apart from all its competitors.

*****Use Figure #8.16 Here*****

CHANGING BELIEFS ABOUT COMPETITOR'S BRANDS

1. This strategy involves changing consumer beliefs about attributes of competitive brands.
 - a) One tool is comparative advertising.
 - b) But comparative advertising can boomerang by giving visibility to competing brands.

*****Use Figure #8.17 Here; Use Discussion Question #5 Here*****

Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

1. The **elaboration likelihood model (ELM)** involves a more global view that two different persuasive routes change attitudes.

- a) The central route is particularly relevant to attitude change when a consumer's motivation or ability to assess the attitude object is high; that is, attitude change occurs because the consumer actively seeks out information relevant to the attitude object itself.
 - i) When consumers are willing to exert the effort to comprehend, learn, or evaluate the available information about the attitude object, learning and attitude change occur via the central route.
 - b) In contrast, when a consumer's motivation or assessment skills are low (e.g., low-involvement), learning and attitude change tend to occur via the peripheral route without the consumer focusing on information relevant to the attitude object itself.
 - i) In such cases, attitude change often is an outcome of secondary inducements (e.g., cents-off coupons, free samples, beautiful background scenery, great package, or the encouragement of a celebrity endorsement).
2. Research indicates that even in low-involvement conditions (e.g., like exposure to most advertising), where both central and secondary inducements are initially equal in their ability to evoke similar attitudes, it is the central inducement that has the greatest "staying power"—that is, over time it is more persistent.
 3. An offshoot of the elaboration likelihood model is the dual mediation model (DMM).
 4. The DMM model adds a link between attitude toward the ad and brand cognitions.
 - a) This model demonstrates the interrelationship between the central and peripheral processes.

*******Use Key Term elaboration likelihood model (ELM) Here; Use Figure #8.18 Here; Use Discussion Question #6 Here *******

BEHAVIOR CAN PRECEDE OR FOLLOW ATTITUDE FORMATION

1. There are alternative to the "attitude precedes behavior" perspective that include: cognitive dissonance theory and attribution theory.

*******Use Learning Objective #8.5 Here*******

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

1. According to **cognitive dissonance theory**, discomfort or dissonance occurs when a consumer holds conflicting thoughts about a belief or an attitude object.
2. Postpurchase dissonance occurs after the purchase.
 - a) Purchase decisions often require compromise.
 - b) Postpurchase dissonance is quite normal.
 - c) Dissonance gives consumers an uneasy feeling about their prior beliefs or actions – a feeling that they seek to resolve by changing their attitudes to conform to their behavior.
 - d) Attitude change is frequently an outcome of an action or behavior.

- e) Conflicting thoughts and dissonant information following a purchase are prime factors that induce consumers to change their attitudes so that they will be consonant with their actual purchase behavior.
 - f) Dissonance propels consumers to reduce the unpleasant feelings created by the rival thoughts.
3. Tactics that consumers can use to reduce dissonance include reduction:
 - a) By rationalizing the decision as being wise
 - b) By seeking out advertisements that support the original reason for choosing the product
 - c) By trying to “sell” friends on the positive features of the brand
 - d) By looking to known satisfied owners for reassurance
 4. Marketers can help reduce postpurchase uncertainty by aiming specific messages at reinforcing consumer decisions by complimenting their wisdom, offering stronger guarantees or warranties, increasing the number and effectiveness of its services, or providing detailed brochures on how to use its products correctly.
 5. The term, cognitive dissonance, has recently taken on two additional meanings.
 6. Some marketers are using the term as a manipulative marketing strategy that separates a product from its intended purpose.
 7. Additionally, it has been reported that some innovative high-end products owe their success to their ability to create cognitive dissonance in observers.

*****Use Key Term **cognitive dissonance theory** Here; Use Discussion Question #8 Here; Use Exercise #5 Here*****

Attribution Theory

1. **Attribution theory** attempts to explain how people assign causality to events on the basis of either their own behavior or the behavior of others.

*****Use Key Term **attribution theory** Here*****

Self-Perception Theory

1. **Self-perception theory** addresses individuals’ inferences or judgments as to the cause of their own behavior.
2. In terms of consumer behavior, self-perception theory suggests that attitudes develop as consumers *look at and make judgments about their own behavior*.
3. **Internal and external attributions**—attitudes develop as consumers look at and make judgments about their own behavior. These judgments can be divided into internal, external, and defensive attributions.
 - a) **Internal attribution**—giving yourself credit for the outcomes—your ability, your skill, or your effort.
 - b) **External attribution**—the purchase was good because of factors beyond your control—luck, etc.

4. **Defensive attribution**—consumers are likely to accept credit personally for success, and to credit failure to others or to outside events.
 - a) For this reason, it is crucial that marketers offer uniformly high-quality products that allow consumers to perceive themselves as the reason for the success; that is, “I am competent.”

*******Use Key Terms self-perception theory, internal and external attributions, and defensive attribution Here; Use Discussion Question #7 Here*******

5. **Foot-in-the-door technique**—the foot-in-the-door technique is based on the premise that individuals look at their prior behavior (e.g., compliance with a minor request) and conclude that they are the kind of person who says “Yes” to such requests (i.e., an internal attribution).
 - a) Such self-attribution serves to increase the likelihood that they will agree to a similar, more substantial request.
 - b) Research into the foot-in-the-door technique has concentrated on understanding how specific incentives (e.g., cents-off coupons of varying amounts) ultimately influence consumer attitudes and subsequent purchase behavior.
 - c) It appears that different size incentives create different degrees of internal attribution that, in turn, lead to different amounts of attitude change.
 - d) It is not the biggest incentive that is most likely to lead to positive attitude change.
 - e) What seems most effective is a moderate incentive, one that is just big enough to stimulate initial purchase of the brand but still small enough to encourage consumers to internalize their positive usage experience and allow a positive attitude change to occur.
6. In contrast with the foot-in-the-door technique is the **door-in-the-face technique**, in which a large, costly first request that is probably refused is followed by a second, more realistic, less costly request.

*******Use Key Terms foot-in-the-door technique and door-in-the face technique Here*******

Attributions Toward Others

1. Every time a person asks “Why?” about a statement or action of another or “others”—a family member, a friend, a salesperson, a direct marketer, a shipping company—**attributions toward others** theory is relevant.

Attributions Toward Things

1. It is in the area of judging product performance that consumers are most likely to form product **attributions toward things**.
2. Specifically, they want to find out why a product meets or fails to meet their expectations.

- a) In this regard, they could attribute the product's successful performance (or failure) to the product itself, to themselves, to other people or situations, or to some combination of these factors.

How We Test Our Attributions

1. Individuals acquire conviction about particular observations by acting like “naive scientists;” that is, by collecting additional information in an attempt to confirm (or disconfirm) prior inferences.
2. In collecting such information, consumers often use the following:
 - a) Distinctiveness—The consumer attributes an action to a particular product or person if the action occurs when the product (or person) is present and does not occur in its absence.
 - b) Consistency over time—Whenever the person or product is present, the consumer's inference or reaction must be the same, or nearly so.
 - c) Consistency over modality—The inference or reaction must be the same, even when the situation in which it occurs varies.
 - d) Consensus—The action is perceived in the same way by other consumers.

*******Use Key Terms attributions toward others and attributions toward things. Use Table #8-8 Here*******

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Explain how situational factors are likely to influence the degree of consistency **between attitudes and behavior.**

Although attitudes may be relatively consistent with behavior, they are influenced by situational factors, such as time, place, and social environment. A person's attitudes may lead to one kind of behavior in one situation and a different behavior in a different time and place. For example, a person may have a strong preference for one brand but purchase a brand that is on “special” because of having to economize.

2. **Because attitudes are learned predispositions to respond, why don't marketers and consumer researchers just measure purchase behavior and forget attitudes?**

Knowledge of attitudes is valuable because attitudes can be used to predict behavior before it occurs. In addition, attitudes have several components, such as perceptions, evaluations, and intentions. By knowing the strength of these components, we can plan marketing strategies designed to affect these components. Therefore, measurement of behavior does not provide guidance for strategy development in the way that attitude measurement does.

3. Explain a person's attitude toward visiting Disney World in terms of the tricomponent attitude model.

The first component of the tricomponent attitude model consists of a person's **cognitions**; that is, the knowledge and perceptions that are acquired by a combination of direct experience with the attitude-object and related information. In the case of Disney World, this component reflects the person's knowledge of the various theme parks, hotels, prices, and activities, as well as his or her beliefs about Disney. A consumer's emotions or feelings about a particular product or brand constitute the **affective** component of an attitude. A person's positive feelings about Disney ads might lead him/her to conclude that visiting Disney World will be a positive, pleasant, and good experience. **Conation**, the final component of the tricomponent attitude model, is concerned with the likelihood or tendency that an individual will undertake a specific action or behave in a particular way with regard to the attitude-object. In the context of visiting Disney World, this component reflects a person's intention to visit the resort in the foreseeable future.

4. How can the marketer of a "nicotine patch" (a device which assists individuals to quit smoking) use the theory of trying to segment its market? Using this theory, identify two segments that the marketer should target and propose product positioning approaches to be directed at each of the two segments.

The **theory of trying** is designed to account for the many cases (including consumption situations) where the action or outcome is not certain, but instead reflects the consumer's attempts to consume. According to this theory, a person who attempts to quit smoking combines personal impediments (i.e., liking the act of smoking) and environmental impediments (i.e., situations where others smoke) that might prevent the desired action or outcome from occurring. The model also proposes that the frequency of past trying, that is, the consumer's prior experience with trying to quit smoking, impacts on both intention-to-try and on actually trying the nicotine patch. One segment for the nicotine patch are individuals who would adopt the product in order to overcome personal and/or environmental impediments to quitting smoking. To these consumers, the product should be positioned as a mechanism to overcome these impediments. Another segment are smokers who have tried to quit and failed. To them, the product should be positioned as a mechanism that is likely to succeed where many other methods had failed.

5. Explain how the product manager of a breakfast cereal might change consumer attitudes toward the company's brand by: (a) changing beliefs about the brand; (b) changing beliefs about competing brands; (c) changing the relative evaluation of attributes; and (d) adding an attribute.

(a) **Changing brand beliefs** is the most common advertising appeal. If this approach is used, the cereal ads should tell consumers that the product has more vitamins and fiber

and/or less sugar than competing brands. (b) The use of **comparative advertising**, illustrating the brand's superiority over other brands, along key product attributes, will effectively convey this message to consumers. (c) The marketer may also stress the importance of fiber in one's diet (i.e., change the **relative evaluation of an attribute**) and, simultaneously, stress the cereal brand's high fiber content, thus appealing to consumers whose primary concerns are health and nutrition. (d) Also, the marketer can **add an attribute** by stressing the previously ignored fiber content and by putting more fiber (or even creating a new "extra fiber" version) in the cereal.

6. **The Department of Transportation of a large city is planning an advertising campaign that encourages people to switch from private cars to mass transit. Give examples of how the department can use the following strategies to change commuters' attitudes: (a) changing the basic motivational function; (b) changing beliefs about public transportation; (c) using self-perception theory; and (d) using cognitive dissonance.**

(a) The **functional approach** will entail changing beliefs regarding mass transit along one or more of the basic motivational functions of attitudes; appealing to the knowledge function by showing how one might get to work faster by using mass transit rather than a private car. (b) According to the **assimilation contrast theory**, the Department of Transportation must be careful to avoid overkill or overselling their case. The users of private cars will assimilate (accept) only moderate changes between the mode of transportation they presently use and the mode they are encouraged to use (i.e., mass transit). If the change suggested by the mass transit ads is too extreme, the contrast will result in the rejection of mass transit as a transportation alternative. (c) The Department of Transportation can show the positive environmental outcomes of using mass transit, and position it as an ecologically sound transportation mode. According to **self-perception theory**, many people are likely to make inferences from the behavior portrayed in the ads (i.e., using mass transit helps the environment) and begin to like the object advertised. Also, many consumers may begin to view using mass transit as a chance to personally contribute toward improving the environment (i.e., internal attribution). (d) According to **cognitive dissonance theory**, the Department of Transportation should first induce behavior because a favorable attitude toward mass transit will follow. Thus, the ads for mass transit should be designed to induce behavior and encourage people to try mass transit by, for example, offering them free rides over a period of time. The department should reinforce this initial experience by providing good, dependable service as well as follow-up contacts (e.g., mail and phone) which include asking first-time riders for comments, thus making them feel important, involved, and comfortable about the experience. Cognitive dissonance theory predicts that an initial, effectively reinforced experience with mass transit will result in a favorable attitude toward this service and continued use of mass transit.

7. Should the marketer of a popular computer graphics program prefer consumers to make internal or external attributions? Explain your answer.

Internal and external attribution indicates whether consumers assign the cause for successful or unsuccessful experiences with a product, to themselves, or to the product. For example, if consumers use **external attribution** to explain a good experience with a computer program, they “explain” the success as a result of the software package itself. Likewise, a poor experience would be blamed on the product. Although it seems that marketers would like to see their products given credit for consumers’ satisfaction, it is actually a greater benefit if consumers use **internal attributions** to explain a successful experience with a product. If consumers see themselves as skillful users of the computer graphics program rather than the users of an idiot-proof product, their self-image improves with respect to that behavior and they are more likely to repeat it. Consider the benefits—greater enjoyment of the product and greater self-esteem leads to greater product usage and greater engagement in positive word-of-mouth.

8. A college student has just purchased a new personal computer. What factors might cause the student to experience postpurchase dissonance? How might the student try to overcome it? How can the retailer who sold the computer help reduce the student’s dissonance? How can the computer’s manufacturer help?

Although attitudes may be relatively consistent with behavior, they are influenced by situational factors, such as time, place, and social environment. A person’s attitudes may lead to one kind of behavior in one situation and a different behavior in a different time and place. For example, a person may have a strong preference for one brand but purchase a brand that is on “special” because of having to economize. **Postpurchase dissonance** is likely to occur here because a personal computer is an expensive product where many brands and models are available, and many of the brands that were not selected by the student have some unique features. After the purchase, the student may be exposed to ads depicting other brands with more features and more extensive software than the computer he or she selected. In order to reduce postpurchase dissonance, the student might seek out advertisements that support his or her choice (i.e., ads for the brand purchased), talk with satisfied brand owners and users and, maybe even join a club or a users group of that computer brand. The manufacturer should help reduce postpurchase dissonance by using advertising which includes messages reassuring purchasers that they made the “right” choice, offering strong, comprehensive warranties, and providing a toll-free user-information hotline. The retailer can help by backing the manufacturer’s warranty with a service contract and by mailing buyer’s information about new software packages for the computer when such products become available.

EXERCISES

- 1. Find two print ads, one illustrating the use of the affective component and the other illustrating the cognitive component. Discuss each ad in the context of the tricomponent model. In your view, why has each marketer taken the approach it did in each of these ads?**

Instructor's Discussion

This assignment is designed to demonstrate that sometimes marketers try to form an overall favorable evaluation (i.e., appealing to the affective component) without reference to particular attributes or features, although at other times they provide detailed information that is organized around specific product or service benefits (i.e., appealing to the cognitive component).

- 2. What sources influenced your attitudes about this course before classes started? Has your initial attitude changed since the course started? If so, how?**

Instructor's Discussion

The sources of influence in attitude formation are: (a) personal experience with the product or service; (b) advertisements for various brands; (c) group influences (e.g., family, friends, word-of-mouth); (d) data from objective sources (e.g., *Consumer Reports*); (e) publicity in the media; and (f) information/advice provided by salespersons.

In the case of a college course, students are likely to cite word-of-mouth and course evaluations by former students (if such scores are available and published) as the primary sources in attitude formation. More interesting discussion will develop when students talk about changes in their initial attitudes toward the course and the reasons for such changes.

- 3. Describe a situation in which you acquired an attitude toward a new product through exposure to an advertisement for that product. Describe a situation where you formed an attitude toward a product or brand on the basis of personal influence.**

Instructor's Discussion

Students' answers will vary. Their response regarding advertising influence should include several elements: (a) the advertising medium involved; (b) an indication of whether the attitude was positive or negative; (c) whether the advertisement was noticed as a result of passive (e.g., TV) or active (e.g., magazine) learning; or (d)

whether the exposure led to the actual purchase of the item or to further information search.

The answer regarding attitude formation through personal influence should include: (a) the degree of personal involvement with the purchase; (b) the type of the personal source and its importance to the receiver; (c) the perceived credibility of the personal source (e.g., a friend) versus that of impersonal sources (e.g., ads in the media); (d) whether the attitude was positive or negative; and (e) whether the exposure led to actual purchase of the item or to search for more information about the new product.

- 4. Find advertisements that illustrate each of the four motivational functions of attitudes. Distinguish between ads that are designed to reinforce an existing attitude and those aimed at changing an attitude.**

Instructor's Discussion

The ad for the **utilitarian function** should stress the product's usage-related benefits (e.g., durable shoes). The **ego defensive function** should reinforce the consumer's self-concept and protect it from feelings of doubt (e.g., personal care products which offer the consumer reassurance and the likelihood of approval by others). The **value-expression function** shows how the product is consistent with the person's values and lifestyles (e.g., advertising a fine, expensive fountain pen as an instrument of self expression). An ad using the **knowledge function** should indicate the brand's advantages over competitive brands (e.g., a bar graph showing the comparative levels of saturated fat in several brands of butter).

- 5. Think back to the time when you were selecting a college. Did you experience dissonance immediately after you made a decision? Why or why not? If you did experience dissonance, how did you resolve it?**

Instructor's Discussion

Selecting a college is a personal, extensive, high-involvement decision which often results in postpurchase dissonance. Thus, most students probably experienced dissonance immediately after choosing a college. An interesting class discussion will develop when students compare their dissonance reduction processes.

S.T.A.R. PROJECTS

Ethical Issues in Consumer Behavior

S.T.A.R. Project #1

The Tellus Institute (www.tellus.org) is sponsored by foundations, government agencies, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, and business. The primary mission of this institute is to aid our country in navigating the transition toward ways of producing, consuming, and living that bequeath a sustainable world to future generations. Just exactly what does that noble goal mean? It means that business, industry, and other organizations that have influence in our country should adopt policies of environmental stewardship and provide for equitable development of resources and talents. The Tellus Institute conducts a diverse program of research, consulting, and communication to meet these ends.

- a. Visit the Tellus Institute Web site. Write a one-page paper that describes how this organization seeks to influence attitudes and opinions.
- b. What consumer and business ethics issues seem to be most important to this organization?
- c. Do organizations such as Tellus advance the cause of business ethics? Explain.

Instructor's Discussion

The Tellus Institute is an interesting story. After students acquaint themselves with the historical data, discussion about areas of environmental stewardship and the attitudes necessary to move in this direction should be possible. Discussion can also focus on how organizations such as this aid the fostering and advancement of consumer and business ethics. Of particular interest will be the Tellus *Business and Sustainability Group*. Students from diverse backgrounds should find this information interesting and pertinent to the study of attitudes.

S.T.A.R. Project #2

Got Milk? This famous advertising campaign by the Milk Producers organization is betting that you do. With the growing number of drink alternatives (especially for youth), however, milk has had a tough time maintaining market share. Are you supportive of people drinking milk? Whether you do or not says something about your attitude toward this product. Pursue the following exercises to learn more about how attitudes toward milk and milk drinking can be an excellent way to learn about consumer attitudes and attitude formulation (for information on the Got Milk? campaign see [www.gotmilk.com]).

- a. Attitudes have four properties. How could the Got Milk? campaign use these properties to influence attitudes toward the product?
- b. What ethical issues must the Got Milk? campaign be aware of when attempting to influence consumption of milk? Would these issues be different for other drink producers? If so, how?
- c. After examining Table 8-1, how might situations affect attitudes toward drinking milk?
- d. Using the **attitude-toward-the-ad model**, describe how the Got Milk? campaign attempts to influence attitudes. Is the approach ethical? Explain.

Instructor's Discussion

The Got Milk? campaign is an excellent way for students to discuss the pros and cons of milk drinking and the attitudes associated with each. Milk is a product that everyone knows about and has experienced. The exercise also hopes to assist students in understanding the ethical responsibilities of products such as milk. The exercise will also give students the opportunity to utilize Table 8-1 and review the **attitude-toward-the-ad model**. Encourage students to bring Got Milk? ads to class to assist with visualizing the exercise.

Small Group Projects

S.T.A.R. Project #3

The DVD movie format is rapidly replacing the VHS movie format as the format of choice in the United States. Notice the changes with respect to inventory mix the next time you are in your favorite movie rental store. Capitalizing on this trend, Netflix (www.netflix.com) has created a business model wherein the movie-watching consumer can order DVD movies via their computer, receive the movies in the mail (with no shipping charges), and return them through the mail after viewing. Sound simple? Netflix is betting that you will say “yes.” With over 13,500 titles (classic to new releases), shipping within 1–3 days, no late fees, no driving, no lines, and no hassles Netflix offers a viable alternative to today's time constrained consumer. Why doesn't everyone use this new form of movie rental service? Have your group investigate this very issue.

- a. Using the tricomponent attitude model shown in Figure 8-2, have your group examine the attitudes that may be affecting the movie rental consumer.
- b. Have part of your group write a position paper supporting the traditional movie rental business model and include suggestions for influencing consumer attitudes in the future. Have another part of your group write a position paper supporting the Netflix business model and include suggestions for influencing consumer attitudes in the future.
- c. As a group, evaluate the two papers and reach consensus on which is the superior approach.

Instructor's Discussion

This exercise gives students the opportunity to work in an area that is a student favorite—movies. The two business models are easy to understand. The attitudes behind usage are not, however. Students can use themselves as test subjects. The three questions in the exercise should provide ample opportunity to explore the issue. The Web site can be brought up in class to enhance discussion.

S.T.A.R. Project #4

Opinions are formed from attitudes and beliefs. Part of the opinion process is the comparison of something. Have your group go to Epinions.com (www.epinions.com) to

explore how comparisons are made in a variety of product fields. Divide the group into smaller groups and examine the rankings for the products and services found on the Epinions Web site (your group is free to pick subject evaluation areas). After this is done, relate how attitudes influence such ranking and comparison processes. Which attitude model(s) would be useful in making comparisons and formulating rankings such as those shown on this Web site? How might attitudes (opinions) change once a viewer has examined the rankings and comparisons? What bias might be present in this evaluation system? Have your group prepare a summary report that summarizes your group's findings.

Instructor's Discussion

Epinions.com has a wealth of information. This group exercise is a good one to see how comparison and evaluation processes work and how these processes might impact attitudes. For example, let us say that a student did not know much about DVD players. He or she reads that a particular RCA player is ranked number one by 60 percent of respondents to the Epinions.com site. The student then has a positive attitude toward this player. What might be wrong with this evaluation method? First, how many evaluations were done, under what circumstances, were purchases made, how authentic were the evaluators, etc.? Several of the attitude models can be used.

Using the Internet to Study Consumer Behavior

S.T.A.R. Project #5

Some marketing firms work toward forming attitudes in the minds of their consumers. Others work toward changing those attitudes. Strategies for attitude change is an extremely interesting subject, especially, if you consider how many attitudes might need to be changed to persuade a brand loyal consumer to switch brands. A perfect example of this is the ongoing struggle between Campbell's Soup (www.campbellsoup.com) and industry rival Progresso Soup (www.progressosoup.com). Your assignment is to visit both Web sites and make a list of attitude change strategies being employed by both companies. Evaluate the success of each. Which competitor seems to be most adept with respect to change? Comment.

Instructor's Discussion

The rivalry between Campbell's and Progresso is well known. Progresso has labeled Campbell's as watery and consisting of small portions. Campbell's has labeled Progresso as too spicy and too expensive. Both claims are built on fact and fiction. Students should review the section in the text on **Strategies of Attitude Change** before attempting this exercise. The Web sites will provide several examples that match well with these strategies. Who is winning the war? This is not clear, however, Campbell's has developed a new bigger-portion line that mimics the Progresso products.

S.T.A.R. Project #6

One of the multiattribute attitude models described in the chapter is the attitude-toward-object model. To learn more about how to apply this model, undertake the following interactive Web-based exercise. Go to the Nike Web site at www.nike.com and create your own tennis shoe. To do this use the “usa homepage,” then “customize” then follow the directions for creating your own tennis shoe (and, yes, if you create it, they will build it). Once you have accomplished this feat, write a short analysis paper that compares attitudes you have formed through this experience (attitude-toward-object) versus attitudes you already had toward Nike and Nike products. Comment on the differences you observe between your attitudes (before and after) toward Nike. Lastly, comment on how allowing consumers to customize products might influence attitudes.

Instructor’s Discussion

The interactive Nike project is an excellent way to not only have fun and be creative but to illustrate how attitudes toward objects (especially through identification and potential ownership) can change through involvement. Even those students that do not particularly like Nike or Nike products often have an attitude change after the shoe creation process is complete. Additionally, one can readily observe the ease of navigation and observation associated with the Nike Web site as opposed to a rival like Reebok (www.reebok.com). Does this affect attitudes? Probably so.

CASE COMMENTS**Case One: Customer attitude formation – Skin-care products for men**

The questions for this case are designed to illustrate the two models of attitude formations: Theory of Reasoned Action and Attitude-Toward-the-Ad Model.

1. Students’ discussion should be building around the two elements of the model that lead to intention: a) attitude toward the behavior, and b) subjective norm.
 - a) With better education (both from schools and marketers), Men have become more conscious about their appearance and personal hygiene.
 - b) Personal appearance and hygiene are important elements on impression management, the subjective norm become important because this is how the men would assess how the important others would comment and accept on their appearance.
2. In class discussion, instructor may shows any brand of the local TV commercials or print advertisements of Men’s skin-care products to let students discuss the four elements of the model that lead to attitude formation toward the brand: a) Judgments about the Ad (Cognition), b) Feelings from the Ad (Affect), c) Beliefs about the Brands, and d) Attitude toward the Ad.

Case Two: Changing customer attitudes – Redesign of McDonald's

The questions for this case are designed to illustrate the model of Attitude-Toward-Object and discuss how marketers make influence on customer attitudes.

1. Students' discussion should be building around the consumer's attitude toward a product or specific brands of a product is a function of the presence (or absence) and evaluation of certain product-specific beliefs and /or attributes. Consumers generally have favorable attitudes toward those brands that they believe have an adequate level of attributes that they evaluate as positive, and vice versa. The recent marketing efforts and repositioning of McDonald had added more and more favorable attributes to the brand. For example, adding more healthy food like sweet corn, salad and yogurt to the menu, extending its opening hours to 24 hours business, etc. All these new or modified attributes and the positive evaluations from its customers help McDonald's to reshaping customers' positive attitude toward its branding.
2. This question is opened for discussion, instructor are expected to lead students to consolidate different attitude formation models (including those not yet discussed in the above case studies) in order to let students understand the consumer attitude formation and change process.