

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AND THE DEMAND FOR CULTURAL INDUSTRY PRODUCTS

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Abstract

Necessity for such papers, in which are analyzed cultural influences issues in the consumer behavior and the practical application of management and marketing in sectors of activity like culture, social sector and other areas, it started to impose in our country as a necessity and requirement of the market.

The present paper synthesizes the most important theoretical and practical aspects of consumer behavior study of cultural industry products.

First part of the paper presents the motivation as part of consumer behavior. Consumer behavior is analyzed both from the psychological point of view as well as from the point of view of decision factors affecting the consumption of cultural services. In this respect it was insisted on the distinction between the buying behavior based on a particular decision-making motivation and the consumption behavior having various reasons.

The second part of the paper examines the demand, production, distribution and consumption of the cultural industry products, the paper ending with conclusions.

Keywords: *consumer, demand, management, decision-making motivation, cultural industry*

JEL Classification: *J23, M11*

1. Introduction

For understanding the consumer behavior, the specialists have lent a series of theories, models and concepts, resulting in a series of approaches. Although none of these approaches is not universal valid, they presents the general framework for the research, analysis and understanding consumer and its behavior in the various situations of the buying and consumption.

In the specialized literature, for the research of consumer behavior, there are three main approaches, namely (Peter, Olson's poetry, 2003, p. 5):

- Interpretive approach;
- Traditional approach;
- The approach to the vision of marketing science.

Interpretive approach is relatively new in this field, and has started to impose strong enough. This approach, which is based on theories and methods of cultural anthropology, aims at in depth understanding of the process of consumption and of all its components.

The research methods used are qualitative methods, such as, in-depth interviews and focus groups, aiming in principal, the understanding of the associated significance of consumers with various consumer products and services as well as the modalities of forming of the purchase experience and consumption. Other objectives of such studies may be the research of the way in which the art reflects the significance consumption process or the way in which the possession of a given product influences the own image of the consumer. As a general rule, although such researches do not stay at the basis of the development of success strategies, their implications may be deducted.

Traditional approach is based on theories and methods borrowed from cognitive, social and behavior psychology, as well as from sociology.

The main goal is to explain the consumer's decision-making process and the types of behavior which it shall determine. For these there are utilized marketing experiments and

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quantitative research to explain the process of information and all other decision-making processes of the consumer as well as social nature influences of the consumer behavior. This approach has a significant impact on marketing optics, some specialists focusing on testing of theories and others to investigate various strategies influence marketing on consumers.

The approach in the vision of marketing science is based on theories and methods borrowed from economy and statistics and imply the development and testing of mathematical models to forecast the impact of marketing strategies on the behavior of the purchase and consumption of the consumer. (Peter, Olson's poetry, 2003, p. 29)

2. Cultural industries characteristics

In their multiple forms of manifestation, cultural industries create and distribute a wide variety of products. After Bernard Mičge (1997), all of these consumer goods, changing, could be reduced to two major types of products: cultural and informational. Premiums shall be that sets by:

a) Random nature of the utilization value: the object of art won't get rid of wrapping taste and fashion, factors which, even if they are dependent on certain social mechanisms, involves fluctuations variations and even unexpected reactions of public. I don't know that producers a cultural object doesn't live isolated, but as part of a broader categories (style, current); because they cannot guess what will be the title or genre gifted success (i.e. sales-attracting massive profit), they will be launched on the market does not goods isolated, but catalogs of titles. Producers reduced in such risks and limits losses: they hope that, of several titles produced and placed on the market, one will impose and will cover other. For example, 70% of the disks of music produced in one year are scarce, and a manufacturer of discs carried out half of its turnover from the sale of only 3% of the titles on the market, of course, those successful; (Flichy, 1999, p. 42)

b) Limited possibilities to produce such a consumer good: each collectivity posses a certain cultural code and does not accept (understand, consumes) goods produced after recipes of success of other companies. "It is clear that instability of cultural industries have been triggered a series of adaptation strategies put in practice by those who assume the risk to invest the capital here. First a great prudence, issue that explains the slowness of capitalization and trans-nationalization of this sector, a long time reduced to a few pilot products. Then a movement of the consequences of failure by other actors: by artists and performers; by public institutions which finance indirectly production (see, for example, the case of big symphonic orchestras or theatrical troops); by broadcasters of audiovisual, which are found in advertising revenues means to finance a part of the production costs of creation presented in their programs; finally, by the appearance of large conglomerates, specialized in distribution, which does not take only a part of the costs of production, allow the artistic and financial responsibility on the shoulders small producers". (Mičge, 1997, pp. 27-28)

In their turn, information goods have the following features:

a) the capacity to be easily copied, duplicated or resold: the same information can be reproduced on multiple media types and can be placed on different markets, to different some consumers (news agencies sell the same news both on the media market, as well as to the written press); the public can purchase from a market or on more than one market: not at the same time buy a newspaper to return on a piece of news which we watched a journal already in the news from the radio or television;

b) the price at which information goods are purchased may have nothing to do with the value of use: every day we buy the favorite newspaper at the same price; however, on some days, it is interesting, and in some others boring;

c) the informational good is substitute (we can replace a newspaper with another one, a show with another); after consumption, it remains available for any other act of

consumption (same paper can be read by more than one person). As a result, "the price fixing at informational products it are realized in accordance with information rules which differ from those generally accepted for type products from the mass consumption". (Mičge, 1997, p. 26)

From a different perspective, cultural industries products can be divided into three categories: editing of cultural goods (books, discs, and video tapes), Flow production (radio and television) and the production of written information (newspapers and magazines). (Mičge, 1997, pp. 105-106)

Patrice Flichy, analyzing the layout built by Bernard Mičge, considers that written press, although fixed on a support and sold on the piece, it is closest to the product flow through the frequency of occurrence count and the importance of financing of advertisements; therefore, It simplifies this model and proposes only two categories: cultural goods (which is mounted on a solid support material flow) and cultural (which distributes products in successive waves and continue). (Mičge, 1997, p. 107)

By taking this perspective, G. Tremblay has defined, the following torques of distinctions between editorial products and the flow products (Tremblay, 197, p. 17):

- durable content fixed on a support / ephemeral content;
- discontinuous content / continuously content (programs);
- duplicated -manufactured in series and distributed gradually / prototypes instantly broadcast;
- direct financing (by purchase) / indirect financing (via income from ads).

In this way, a book contains a message fixed durable on the page of paper; its subject it has nothing to do with the themes of other books edited by the same publishing house; books are duplicated, produced in series-and sold by the piece, which covers the production costs only through the revenues obtained from the purchasers; in antithesis, a television program is not fixed on any durable media (excepting the case in which a viewer record a fragment on a video); it is being broadcast in uninterrupted streaming, as an amount of shows and formats relatively well defined, which are succeeding and disappear one after the other; financing is mainly indirect, the revenues from advertising covering most production costs.

However, the act of creation (intellectual or artistic) cannot be entirely subjected to canons and characteristics of industrial production; next to the specific notes it presents a number of specific features, resulting from its uniqueness: creation and distribution of symbolic goods. These global notes can be synthesized according to the phases and the essential factors of any industrial production process: demand, production, distribution and consumption.

3. The motivation – factor of endogenous influence on consumer behavior

Variable which focused attention of several specialists, being considered long time the only one that occurs between stimuli and behavioral response of the consumer, it is motivation. This implies that behavioral manifestations of an individual in the buying and consumption process of the goods and services are generated by the existence of a state of tension (a physiological imbalance), because of the existence of unsatisfied need, which puts the body in action up to her disappearance. (Cătoi, Teodorescu, 2004, p. 72)

The reasons are not anything other than consumers' motives underlying at the purchase and consumption behavior. They represent the resultant of complex factors of biological, social, physical nature. Proposing to discern why consumers buy a product or services, which are therefore motives that decision to purchase, a marketing research will discover that, at the bottom of the choice process are different reasons. Their knowledge can help improve to meet consumers' needs.

Consumer represents a universe of motives, which may not be observed directly, and because of that it make it more difficult their research. To facilitate their investigation,

researchers have proposed different modalities for the classification of reasons. (Cătoiu, Teodorescu ,2004, p. 74).

After their origin, the reasons are primary (biological) or secondary (psychological), likewise the needs upon which are based.

Primary reasons are related to the biological existence of the consumer and underlie at the satisfaction of the physiological needs.

Secondary reasons are generated by leaving in society of the consumer and shall have as objective the satisfaction of the psychological needs of the customer (fame, recognition by our fellow human beings, belonging to certain groups). Any human need not only of materials goods which ensure survival, but also of "aspiration to fame" or "need not be ruled out" (Huet, 1978, p. 93).

It should be noted that the reasons are distributed in a well-defined hierarchy, depending on the category basis needs. As the needs situated at a certain level are satisfied, the reasons situated at the level immediately following becomes important.

Identification the reasons equivalent answering to the question "why?"

The tensional statuses which are the basis of reasons are expressions of the existence of certain needs or associated consumer needs, constituted in a system which confers motivation, therefore, a relative stability in the course of time. Marketing activity carried out to satisfy the needs of the different categories of needs have to take into account their special features, as well as powerful interactions between them. A specific product, through the qualities they possess, can satisfy both needs physiological and psychological needs. The need for food, for instance, is satisfied with a particular product, it is coupled with the need for prestige, satisfied by consumption product in question in an establishment catering to a category select it.

The classification in fundamental and selective reasons is important for the marketing activity. Fundamental reasons are associated with the idea of satisfaction of need for a product or service (for example, wine) and, in the case of selective reasons stay at the basis at the election of a certain a trade mark of the product or service in question (for instance, "Feteasca Neagra of Transylvania"). This aspect has a great importance, especially for promotional activity.

The reasons which are at the basis at the consumer behavior of the purchase and consumption can be classified in rational reasons and emotional reasons. (Huet, 1978, p. 67)

The rational reasons are based on customer rationality, among these enrolling functionality, durability and economy. Such grounds dominate, in general decisions for products and services of current use, with a purchase frequency relatively high.

In their turn, emotional reasons are closely related to the satisfaction of psychological needs of individuals (personal pride, ambition, the statutes or conformism), which are dominant in the new products and services or luxury, for which frequency of purchase is reduced. An interesting classification is the one in which it is made a distinction between reasons of buying a product or a service and those which determine its purchase at a given location. (Cătoiu, Teodorescu, 2004, p. 74)

For example, to meet the need for accommodation, a tourist chooses a hotel or another according to the position of a few attributes that they consider most important. By the manner in which it is realized the distribution of the product or service in question, it is influenced the purchaser's decision. For the design of effective marketing policy it is important to keep in mind the fact that the reasons are taught and have stability in time, and it is quite difficult to change.

For marketing activities it must be removed the barriers that block the satisfaction of some reason, in order to avoid the emotional reactions of dissatisfaction and the generation of conflicts reason, which may cause serious injury upon to the position on the market of firms.

Motivation, in a general approach, it is, therefore, a inside state, which mobilize a body, with a view to achieving a specific purpose. (Cătoiu, Teodorescu, 2004, p. 75)

The reasons have a highly multidimensional character, as noted in the definition consumer behavior, being established between biological and social, between internal pulses and knowledge, between subjective necessity and value as the reference system, between relations with objects and connections with the people etc, and, therefore, cannot be reduced to any of the factors which cause them and influences.

4. The demand, production, distribution and consumption of the cultural industry products

The demand of a product is, in this segment, extremely unclear: no research and no producer's intuitions may not provide a clear configuration of consumer needs and expectations. Taste and fashion rapidly evolving; some trends disappear, others are transformed into phenomena. In addition, the time that some people devote relaxing (through consumption of cultural products) is a value hard to estimate in economic terms. Creators found some "recipes" of success, but, as well as pitcher which does not go many times to water, they often prove to be misleading. Unlike other economic areas, where the quantum of production can be planned (due to the fact that consumer need and the resources utilized to meet these needs are clear), in cultural industries, the wishes, this engine of consumption (and implicitly of the production), are often a mystery.

In a famous book (*L'empire de l'éphémère*), french thinker Gilles Lipovetsky examined the mechanisms by which they are renewed, constantly, curiosity and desire for cultural consumption. He claims that today, "mass culture is a consumption culture, manufactured entirely for immediately pleasure ". How the object and the pleasure are consumed through consumption act, both products, as well as their interest in they must be constantly refreshed; that's why cultural industries are closely related to the systems of advertising. They create waves of successive "mode" which, in their turn, always produces new needs of consumption; because of the advertising system, the request shall be periodically roused to life, the products are absorbed and cultural industries may produce further.

To stimulate public curiosity, the major groups in this area, invest huge amounts in promotional campaigns: they hope that in this way to fix or to amplify the request. Their investments in attracting public are more important when, in the sphere of consumption culture, the demand is inelastic: the time and energy budget is not unlimited; its borders are drawn by the time required for the work, transport, various domestic activities and, obviously, sleep; in addition, other forms of relaxation, as travel, sport, hobby, take a part of precious moments that could be utilized for consuming the products of such industries.

On the other hand, the statistical data as well as sociological surveys often reveal differences between the assigned objectives and the true situation. One of cultural policy priorities is "improving access and participation to culture", including through programs aimed at the "Reinventing libraries" and for some projects such as the project "By reading to culture". But from research statistics of the National Institute of Statistics on the "Cultural artistic units activity " shows that in 2012, when economic crisis had begun to materialize, the number of libraries has decreased by 130 units against 2011, of which 11 are public libraries. Also, the number of volumes which have been placed in libraries, especially in the municipal and communal has dropped by about 1.276.000 units. It also has dropped the number of readers from villages and urban areas. The books price has increased concurrently with the reduction people's income, and it would have had to lead to tapping our readers in libraries. In these circumstances it returns perpetual question: are buyers/consumers of culture a secure source for cultural production?

Production of cultural goods, in an industrial regime, is characterized by the introduction principle of chute, which implies serialization, standardization, global product decomposition in clear units, carried out by groups of trained people, and put together by other specialists. Whether it this is about the book industry, music, film or press - in each of them, such procedures are generally applied to lead to efficiency increasing and to reduce costs of production. We must not forget, however, that in other areas of culture, like theater, museums, exhibitions, these aspects of industrialization are much less present: here individual creation, "manufacturing", unpredictable, is dominant. On the other hand, because at the artistic level, did not have invented techniques to increase productivity, the manufacturer's efforts for the profitability have focused mainly on the performance; as a result, it becomes more and more different than design.

In a production process dominated by technique rationality, the status of labor force is extremely precariously: between glory and huge revenues of stars and the anonymity and modest wages of the various specialists (which contribute to star propulsion) distance is huge. On the other hand, the assembly of those involved in cultural industries is very heterogeneous: we meet here occupations associated with creative universe art (writers, composers, painters, artists, actors and performers), next to the occupations typical of world production: engineers, accountants, marketers, high skilled workers. Method of payment is also heterogeneous: from copyright up to payment by the hour, there are used all possible forms of remuneration.

Distribution is the key of success for a cultural product: a show or a movie has the same costs, regardless of whether they are seen by a million or a thousand spectators. A good distribution, supported by a successful promotion campaign, ensures the depreciation of production costs, and obtaining profit. (Kotler, 1997, p. 89)

In this configuration, marketing and advertising plays a primary role. In France, the cost of a music album varies between 250,000 and 450,000 francs; the campaign of advertising can cost between 100,000 and 400,000 francs; in the USA, the production of film cost, on average, 35-40 million dollars, Distribution 30-35 million dollars, and about his promote campaign swallows another 30 million dollars; revenues from sale of a CD are divided as follows: 20% for promotion, 10-20% for design and packaging, 10-20% for recording, 10-20% for the various production costs, 5-15% for the payment of copyright, 30-40% for distribution costs of the companies which broadcasts and sell the product and 30-40% for CD maker firm.

The financing of cultural industries products may be achieved by the following means: a direct payment of the consumption act (buying at the piece of books, newspapers, racks, disks or purchase of the right to access to the cinema hall and at the coded television); subscription (tv stations by cable); taxes (specific for the financing of public TV stations and radios); subsidies granted by the state or philanthropic organizations; revenues from advertisements, sponsorship. The most important source of financing is at present, advertising. This creates a system of double correlations: on the one hand, of the magnitude of the timing and the amount of income from advertisements and, on the other, between the structure of products and of the programs and the place or time of placing of advertising messages.

The costs for inserting advertising can be incredibly high, if the product media concerned offer, through the dissemination and geographical area covered, access to an impressive number of consumers. The producers seek to obtain large distributions as hoping that achieving huge audience will entail large-scale advertising recipes, which will cover the expenses and will generate profit.

On the other hand, the interests and the requirements of those who places advertising messages lead to change of some shows, grille on the reorganization of programs and, not once, to change cultural sports events. Thus, episodes of serial films are constructed in episodes of 10-15 minutes action units, to allow story and introducing advertising insert in

the moments of suspense. At the request of television channel TF 1, matches in the important French football championship have been programmed at the time 8:45 PM, in order to leave 10 15 minutes for advertising in prime time journal of the sports news and the show. In American basketball, halves of 30 minutes have been divided into two, which has led to a further two intervals for publicity; in tennis, the tie-break has been entered to short the match duration (which no longer disturb the programs grilles) and provide maximum moments of interest before breaks (when changing terrain) opened to advertising messages.

Consumption of cultural goods is directed to perishable products, which deplete messages (and meanings) very quickly, and which must be replaced with other, identical or similar. Making of such circuit also involves (and this is an essential condition) free access to the market on which it is moving and it sells merchandise cultural, in other words, it calls for democratizing the access to culture. Industrial logic entails destruction of barriers which block or limit the contact between public masses and cultural values. They can be "consumed" in the original (and in particular in museums painting, sculpture times in theatrical performances), but especially in duplicate (albums, books, documentary films or art, discs and tapes, newspapers and magazines).

Prices which provide "access" to cultural object decreased continuously: input tickets at the theater or at the exhibition, the cost of books, magazines, cassettes, as well as your subscription at the television programs, radio, e mail (including the amounts for the purchase of radio receivers, television, computers, tape recorders, video recorders) does not represent today the impassable obstacles in front curiosity or a need for the provision of information and relaxation.

Because on the cultural goods market penetrates more consumers, producers are forced to conceive goods on the basis of purchaser's applications. Most often, they make an appeal to cultural industries to fill free time, to rest and to relax, and to your needs and aspirations related to primary consideration of rest and fun. These consumers come from all social classes, from all regions, and even continents, of all religions and cultural layers.

The proportion of young people among cultural goods market is incontestable. This is why managers' of public structures, as well as those from the commercial sector of culture are interested in knowing the demands and their aspirations, concerns and their satisfactions, on grounds of frequency of specific services and certain values. Studies of cultural policy include among the strategic priorities the objective to satisfy the youth demands. (Moldoveanu, 2010, p.69)

Consumption of cultural and information goods cannot be developed (and cannot create a dynamic market) only if the products offered have the capacity to meet all expectations, to suit all tastes, to be explained and to roust the general interest. To achieve this objective, in the act of industrial production cultural values are simplified, reduced to accessible diagrams and packed in attractive forms: "popular" versions for the major musical themes, soaps and movies built around classical works of literature or games on your computer with heroes of symbolic repertoire classic.

At the same time, because they are accessible (in terms of their content and price), because it can be fixed to easily transportable supports and because they are broadcast at home, these cultural creations begin to be consumed on an individual basis, in the privacy of your preferred room. From the book read in the bedroom up to listening to your headphones to your favorite music, the systems and modern consumption technologies have led to the progressive abolition of individuals and intermediate institutions: theaters, concert halls, movie theaters, public markets are emptied, and artists become far away presences and inaccessible, whose messages are transmitted to us by media or immaterial supports. It is clear that in this way it will disappear also the communication between consumers and producers and the solidarity of those who have experienced artistic act

together in classrooms, cenacles, exhibitions, museums or stadiums. In such intimate places, in such moments of relaxation, the purpose cultural consumption is no longer information or self-education, only the relaxation: thus, cultural practices are decisive anchored in entertainment practices and evasion.

5. Conclusions

This conversion shall have the effect that, in the act of consumption, the intellectual side (the force required to understand and to memorize, the critical analysis of the product quality, its integration in a class and comparison with other cultural categories) will lose importance in favor of emotional dimension (identification with the message, or with protagonists that embodies the message, interpretation by personal experience perspective, the overlap between artistic with every-day reality).

Since a significant part of these products have a standardized character (they are type formats with stories or type structure, which can be realized by type manufacturing processes), they are able to meet emotional and cultural horizon of some big segments of the population: so-called "the logic of the lowest common denominator" concerns the construction of messages around common values or feelings, as close as possible to the general human interest. This trend makes it easy reception and understanding of products, increase the consumers number bringing profit, but placing all at the level of a common human, can equalize the values, behaviors or human aspirations.

Recent investigations have shown that the power of modeling of the products of cultural industries is not complete: consumers develop not only the home strategies and acceptance, but also techniques to counter.

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