2

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR

Vacations from the Heart: Traveller Philanthropy

In all regions of the world, a new source of international development aid called 'traveller philanthropy' is evolving. Civic-minded travellers and travel businesses are giving time, talent and financial resources to further the well-being of the places they visit. Traveller philanthropy is described as 'the process of visitors choosing to give money (or other help) to assist the conservation or management of places they visit'. The phenomenon is expected to grow exponentially, benefiting from trends in giving, travel and globalization.

Philanthropic initiatives have a number of benefits. Destinations obviously benefit from increased funds for conservation; lack of money to sustain tourism destinations is a growing problem worldwide. Travellers themselves also benefit. Travel provides the rare opportunity to witness first hand the beauty and fragility of other societies, cultures, and natural systems. Such experiences generate strong philanthropic impulses. The majority of travellers agree that their travel experience is better when the destination preserves its natural, historical and cultural sites and attractions.

Tourism organizations also benefit from traveller philanthropy. It has been shown to offer a number of strategic benefits to corporations, including brand differentiation, enhanced image, higher sales and increased brand loyalty. Travellers exhibit a high degree of commitment to travel that protects the local environment, engages visitors in the local culture, and returns benefits to the community. Previous research shows that travel companies can gain competitive advantage by adopting ethical policies.

Scores of travellers' philanthropy programmes now exist across the globe, representing every sector of the travel and tourism industry. In many of the programmes, a foundation has been created that channels donations and

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Responsibletravel.com web page describing volunteer travel holidays

charitable funds to address environmental and social needs. An example is the Yasawa Island chain of Fiji, where resort owners have created the Yasawas Community Foundations, which channels charitable funds to village chiefs to address many social needs. The foundation typically receives US$23,000 to $35,000 annually in donations from guests who are primarily American.

How guests are asked to contribute to these philanthropic efforts varies. For the Galapagos Conservation Fund created by Lindblad Expeditions, guests are provided with a direct solicitation envelope the night before landing, and offered a discount coupon of US$250 on future Lindblad excursions in return for charitable contributions of $250 or more. Since 1997, guests have contributed close to $1 million. The New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau enlist large convention groups to forgo dessert and donate the saved money to local non-profits. Some operators send out newsletters to clients once they have returned home, and these often have details about projects the tourists could support.

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Many schemes exist whereby the travel company makes a 'per booking' contribution on behalf of their customers. For example, Sunvil Africa brought together 19 operators in 2002 who committed to donating £50 per person booking a trip to Zambia or Malawi. Alternatively, a travel company might include an optional additional item on invoices that is then donated to support work in the destination country. Gambian Expeditions, for example, match donations by clients with equal or greater contributions to assist schools in the Gambia.

Other schemes ask travellers (or corporations) to make quite significant payments to support a very specific project or activity. The name of the sponsor may then be linked to the project. The gift may be in the form of a one-off payment, or a pledge to give support over a number of years. Another method is to invite visitors to join a club that supports a conservation cause. Payment is usually by annual subscription. Typical examples are 'Friends' schemes for national parks. Merchandizing is another form of philanthropic giving. Visitors are invited to purchase specific items where it is indicated that a percentage of the purchase price will be passed on by the retailer or manufacturer to support a conservation cause.

Finally, a growing form of traveller philanthropy comes in the form of what has been labelled 'voluntourism', whereby travellers contribute time and effort to philanthropic initiatives. Visitors may get involved in practical tasks, such as restoring old buildings or wildlife habitats, or undertake research. Activities may take place for a few hours, like an organized beach cleaning, or form the basis of a complete working eco-tourism package holiday. One company that specializes in offering this type of package is responsibletravel.com. Based in the UK, Justin Francis and Harold Goodwin co-founded responsibletravel.com in April 2001. The idea was to create a place for tourists to find and book holidays from tour companies that were committed to more responsible travel. They originally launched with 20 holidays from just 4 tour companies that met their criteria. Since then they have turned away far more tour companies than they have accepted, but at the end of 2006 had over 2000 holidays from 220 tour companies. The web page above gives some examples of the type of volunteer holidays the company offers.

Sources: CESD. (2004) 'Travellers' philanthropy. Centre on Ecotourism and Sustainable Development', retrieved from www.ecotourismCESD.org; Goodwin, H. (2004) 'Visitor payback in the outbound UK tourism industry', retrieved from www.responsibletourismpartnership.org; Tearfund. (2000) 'A tearful guide to tourism: don't forget your ethics', London: Tearfund.

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OBJECTIVES

On completion of this chapter, you should understand:

- the importance of consumer behaviour within tourism marketing;
- the major factors influencing consumer behaviour;
- some of the typologies of tourist roles;
- the underlying principles of organizational buying behaviour; and
- some of the trends in consumer behaviour influencing tourism marketing today.

Introduction

The opening vignette is an excellent example of changing behavioural patterns among tourists – in this case the increasing desire of tourists to give time, talent and financial resources to further the well-being of the places they visit. This chapter looks at behavioural trends in tourism, and begins by reviewing the factors that influence consumer behaviour. The second part of the chapter focuses on typologies of tourists, and the third examines the external factors that influence consumer behaviour. The fourth section looks at the stages in the buying process. This is followed by a section devoted to organizational buying behaviour, as tourism marketers need to understand both the decision-making criteria used and the process of decision-making that groups and organizations go through in buying tourism services. The final section looks in depth at some of the trends in consumer behaviour affecting tourism marketing today.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR ANALYSIS
the study of why people buy the products they do and how they make decisions

The cornerstone of marketing theory is the satisfaction of the consumer. Therefore, the marketer needs to understand three related aspects of **consumer behaviour analysis**: consumer motivations, consumer typologies, and the consumer purchasing process. Most tourism and hospitality organizations have an imperfect picture of their customer, and few monitor patterns of consumer behaviour at a level of detail necessary to remain competitive. Many organizations consider that they are sufficiently close to their visitors and therefore do not commit resources to more formal consumer studies. Others are constrained by limited marketing budgets and by the fact that researching consumer motivation and the buying process can be a time-consuming and difficult procedure. In fact, most organizations rely almost entirely on the scanning of

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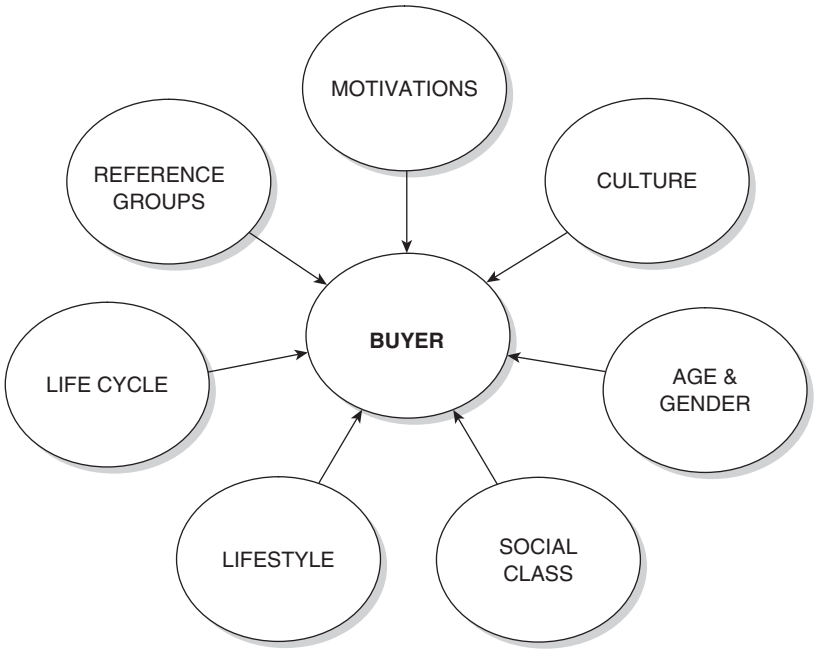

Figure 2.1 Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour

secondary consumer data, combined with management observation and judgment. However, in a rapidly changing environment, conclusions drawn from secondary data can be out of date in no time. Consumer patterns recorded in 2008, for example, will most likely have changed by the year 2015, but many companies might still be using this type of information as a benchmark.

Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour

Figure 2.1 shows the seven key factors that influence a consumer's behaviour. Motivation is often seen as a major determinant of consumer behaviour, but cultural, personal, and social influences will also have an important effect on consumer purchases. Each of the influences in Figure 2.1 will be discussed here in turn.

Motivations

Motivations are inner drives that cause people to take action to satisfy their needs. Understanding consumer motivation is one of the most effective ways of gaining competitive differential advantage. Understanding the key triggers that lead to the purchase of a tourism or hospitality product, such as a visit to an attraction or a hotel booking, is recognized as one of the main factors in the success of competitive organizations. Central to most content theories of motivation is the concept of need. **Needs** are seen as the forces that arouse motivated behaviour,

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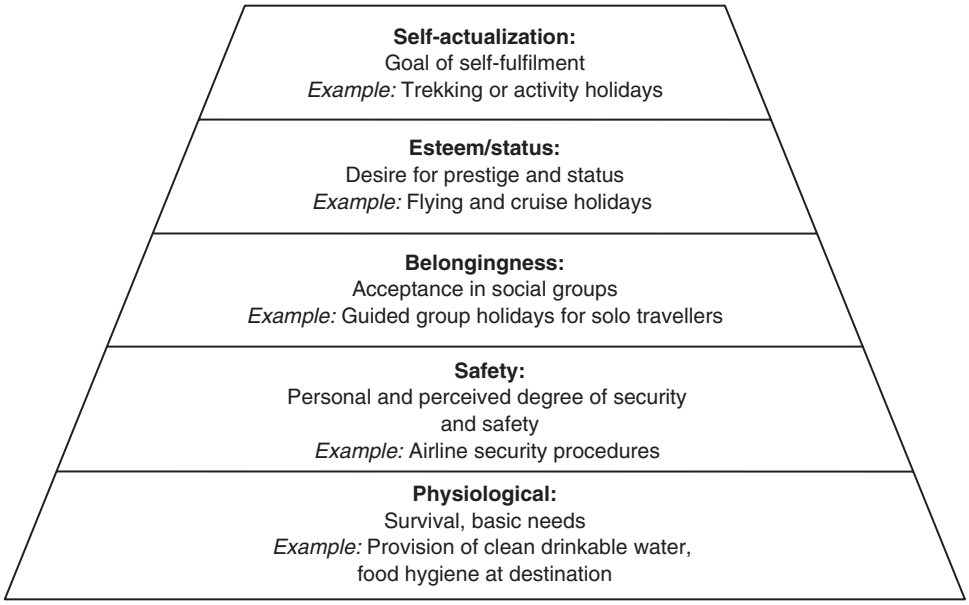

Figure 2.2 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Maslow, A. H. (1943) 'A theory of human motivation', Psychological Review, 50, 370–396.

and it is assumed that, to understand human motivation, it is necessary to discover what needs people have and how they can be fulfilled. Maslow, in 1943, was the first to attempt to do this with his needs hierarchy theory, now the best-known of all motivation theories (see Figure 2.2).

MOTIVATIONS
inner drives that people have that cause them to take action to satisfy their needs

NEEDS
the gaps between what customers have and what they would like to have, seen as the force that arouses motivated behaviour

Maslow's theory is that human needs are arranged in a hierarchy, from the most pressing to the least pressing; these needs, in order of importance, are physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. One of the main reasons for the popularity of **Maslow's hierarchy of needs** is its simplicity. A person tries to satisfy their most important need first. When that need is satisfied, it will stop being a motivator, and the person will then

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try to satisfy the next most important need. It could be argued that traveller philanthropy, as described in the Opening Vignette, is an outcome of the modern consumer seeking to satisfy self-actualization needs, since all the other needs in Maslow's hierarchy have been met.

Attempts to explain tourist motivation have agreed with Maslow's hierarchy. Mills and Morrison (1985), for example, see travel as a need or want satisfier, and show how Maslow's hierarchy ties in with travel motivations and travel literature.[1] Similarly, tourism motivators as described by Dann (1977) can be linked to Maslow's list of needs. He argues that there are basically two factors in a decision to travel: the push factors and the pull factors.[2] The push factors are those that make you want to travel, and the pull factors are those that affect where you go. Crompton (1979) agrees with Dann as far as the idea of push and pull motives are concerned. He identifies nine motives, seven classified as sociopsychological or push motives, and two classified as cultural or pull motives. The push motives are escape from a perceived mundane environment; exploration and evaluation of self; relaxation, prestige, and regression; enhancement of kinship relationships; and facilitation of social interaction. The pull motives are novelty and education.[3]

Krippendorf (1987), in an enlightening book on tourism, sees a thread running through all these theories of tourism motivation. First, travel is motivated by 'going away from' rather than 'going toward' something; second, travellers' motives and behaviour are markedly self-oriented. The author classifies these theories into eight explanations of travel: recuperation and regeneration, compensation and social integration, escape, communication, freedom and self-determination, self-realization, happiness, and broadening the mind.[4]

LEARNING
the way in which visitors receive and interpret a variety of stimuli

BELIEFS
the thoughts that people have about most aspects of their life

Other factors influencing motivation and purchase include learning, beliefs and attitudes, and perception. **Learning** refers to the way in which visitors receive and interpret a variety of stimuli. People gain experience through taking holidays, by listening to others, and from a variety of other sources. From these experiences a consumer will develop a mental inventory of expectations about places – a catalogue of good and bad holiday experiences. These form the basis of learned criteria that will be recalled when selecting future holidays and destinations. **Beliefs** refer to the thoughts that people have about most aspects of their life. As far as tourism is concerned, consumers will have beliefs about companies, products, and services, including tourism offerings and destinations. Such thoughts can be positive, such as trust or confidence in a certain hotel or tour guide, or negative, such as a feeling about lack of

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security on airlines, or fear of injury on the ski slopes. **Attitudes** are more difficult to change, as they are ingrained feelings about various factors of an experience. Many people have a negative attitude towards flying, so airlines are attempting to convert non-flyers into flyers by holding special flying educational days to combat their fear. Similarly, theme parks hold seminars on combating the fear of rollercoaster rides – a session one psychologist described as helping people cope with their 'weaker self'.[5]

ATTITUDES
ingrained feelings about various factors of an experience

PERCEPTION
an overall mind-picture of the world, shaped by information that people filter and then retrieve

Finally, **perception** is an overall mind-picture of the world, shaped by information that people filter and then retrieve. Thus, perception is inextricably bound to the concepts of bias and distortion. People choose to interpret different stimuli in different ways, ignoring some factors while enhancing others. This is known as selective perception. People often perceive tourism offerings in a way that compliments their self-image. In this way tourism products are viewed as bundles of benefits that are personal to the consumer. It is, however, through the technical factors (which are called 'significative stimuli') that the marketer can seek to change perceptions.

PERCEPTUAL MAPPING
technique used to identify the relationship between the level of perceived importance of certain aspects of a product on the part of the tourist and the actual performance on the part of the supplier

Marketers sometimes use a technique known as **perceptual mapping** to identify the relationship between the level of perceived importance of certain aspects of a product or destination on the part of the tourist and the actual performance on the part of the supplier. Figure 2.3 shows how the Czech Republic was perceived by visitors relative to seven other destinations (Orth and Tureekova, 2004).[6] The x-axis was labelled according to the polarity between traditional and modern, with traditional representing the negative and modern the positive. Germany, the Czech Republic and Hungary are representatives of the traditional hemisphere while France, Austria, Italy and Spain represent the modern destination. The second dimension (y-axis) measures the difference between education and brain versus relaxation and body. Accordingly, vacationers consider the destinations below the x-axis to

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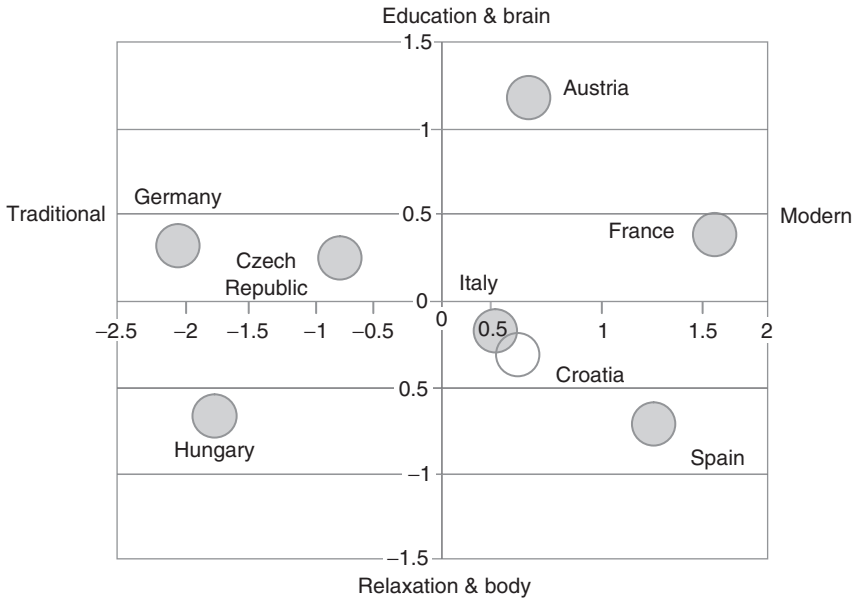

Figure 2.3 Perceptual map showing Czech Republic's competitive position among eight international vacation destinations.

be more suitable for sunbathing and relaxing (Spain, Croatia, Hungary and Italy) while countries closer to the positive pole have more cultural interest (Austria, France, the Czech Republic and Germany). According to visitors, Italy and Croatia have strong similarities.

CONSUMER ATTITUDES
a consumer's enduring favourable or unfavourable cognitive evaluations, emotional feelings, and action tendencies toward some object or idea

Consumer attitudes are a consumer's enduring favourable or unfavourable cognitive evaluations, emotional feelings, and action tendencies toward some object or idea. As these attitudes and perceptions evolve, travel industry organizations must try to stay ahead without venturing too far off course. Some changes are evident years in advance – for example, few failed to anticipate the impact that aging baby boomers would have on the industry. Others changes, however, are unforeseeable. After 11 September 2001, many in the hospitality industry had to adapt strategies quickly to suit customers whose perceptions and needs changed literally overnight. Destinations began to focus on the geographic demographic of the driver market.

Restaurants, too, have had to adapt to changing needs. Ed Michalski, president of Management Insight, a hospitality consulting firm, says that, 'For some, comfort food had a new appeal, while for others, suddenly it seemed the time to try something new and be more

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adventurous.' (sutherland, 2002)[7] Michalski also says that people are increasingly demanding high-quality ingredients, service and presentation, whether they are eating pork chops or prime rib. 'There's so much access to information about fine foods, with the popularity of food magazines, the food channel and cooking shows on television, that people are much more knowledgeable than they used to be, and restaurants have to upgrade their products and services.'

CULTURE
the norms, beliefs and rituals that are unique to each person

Culture

The second key factor from Figure 2.1 that influences a consumer's behaviour is culture. **Culture** can be defined as the norms, beliefs and rituals that are unique to each person. These different factors influence how we live, communicate, and think about certain things; culture can also dictate how a person will act in a certain situation. In terms of self-image and the satisfaction of underlying tensions, most people seek to satisfy their desires in a way that fits societal norms. For example, it is acceptable to be a green consumer, but sex tourism is viewed disparagingly. Awareness of cultural shifts is equally important. For example, smokers are increasingly being prohibited from smoking in social places, especially on transport carriers and in restaurants.

A complete and thorough appreciation of the origins (geography, history, political economy, technology, and social institutions) and elements (cultural values, rituals, symbols, beliefs, and ways of thinking) of culture may well be the single most important goal for a marketer in the preparation of international marketing plans and strategies (Cateora and Graham, 2005).[8] One of the most accepted theories in cross-cultural and marketing research was developed by Gert Hofstede (1980).[9] He defined culture as 'the collective mental programming of the people in an environment', and stated that 'culture is not a characteristic of individuals; it encompasses a number of people who were conditioned by the same education and life experience'. It was mentioned in the opening chapter that cultural globalization is characterized by cultural homogenization as Western consumption and lifestyle patterns spread throughout the world, a process facilitated by the flow of travellers from the West to the developing world. However, it is still critical for tourism marketers to have an understanding of different cultures. For example, Korea has one of the most homogenous populations in the world with few cultural or racial variations, and virtually no ethnic minorities. In Myanmar, on the other hand, there are an estimated 135 ethnic minority groups with over 100 languages and dialects spoken in the country.

Other aspects of culture that are appropriate to motivational studies include languages, societal practices, institutions, and subcultures. The transmission of culture is primarily through the spoken and written word, but also through symbolic gestures, including the ways in which people expect to be greeted by others. Cultural practices include how we divide the day and our attitudes toward opening hours for shops or restaurants. Institutions, such as the church, the media, and educational systems will affect cultural

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patterns. The church, for example, seeks to retain a special day for worship and hence is reluctant to sanction secularization of this day, often in opposition to the promoters of tourism. Finally, most societies comprise a number of subcultures that exhibit variations of behaviour as a result of ethnic or regional differentiation.

Age and Gender

As mentioned later in Chapter 3, a traditional way of segmenting markets has been by age. For example, many travel suppliers are today targeting the growing senior market. This market is both lucrative and unique because it is less tied to seasonal travel, involves longer trips, and is not wedded to midweek or weekend travel, so it can boost occupancy rates for business and leisure travel operators. For the senior market, too, perceived value is much more important than price. After people retire, they may stay loyal to brand names they know best, but the price points will have to be suitable to a retirement income. Disney's recent push to attract visitors in their fifties and sixties is a good indicator that the baby boomer bandwagon is picking up momentum, as the majority of the population in North America starts sliding down the wrong side of middle age. Some believe that this will result in a decline in the number of family restaurants and quick-food service, as these were products demanded by the baby boomers who are now aging.

In some societies gender can influence consumer behaviour in terms of the roles men and women are expected to play. Gender segmentation has long been used in marketing clothing, hairdressing, cosmetics, and magazines. But more recently it has been applied to tourism and hospitality products and services. For example, the number of women travelling for work purposes has been growing steadily for two decades, and vocal women travellers have influenced the introduction of better-lit parking garages, higher-quality soaps and lotions in hotel bathrooms, and improved room-service fare. Travel industry experts say that women travellers are more demanding and discerning than their male counterparts. Their main concerns are safety and security, followed by comfort and convenience.

SOCIAL CLASS
the position one occupies within society, determined by such factors as income, wealth, education, occupation, family prestige, value of home and neighbourhood

Social Class

Social class is still considered to be one of the most important external factors influencing consumer behaviour. **Social class** is the position one occupies within society, and it is determined by such factors as income, wealth, education, occupation, family prestige, value of home and neighbourhood. Social class is closely linked to the existence of social institutions. The role and status positions found within a society are influenced by the dictates of social institutions. The caste system in India is one such institution. The election of a low-caste person – formally

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called an 'untouchable' – as president made international news because it was such a departure from traditional Indian culture. Decades ago, touching or even glancing at an untouchable was considered enough to defile a Hindu of high status. Even though the caste system has been outlawed, it remains a visible part of the culture in India, and it is difficult for people to move out of the class into which they were born.

In the West, it is easier for people to move into social classes that differ from their families'. However, most developed countries still have a class system consisting of upper, middle, and lower classes. In the UK for example, the middle class has been expanding and is forecast to overtake the working class by 2020 as the largest social group. A report published by the Future Foundation in 2006, titled *Middle Britain*, found that 43 per cent of Britons say they are middle class, a figure that is rising (Brean, 2006).[10] Unfortunately, that does not mean social inequality is on the decline – quite the opposite. By 2000, the gap between rich and poor was the highest it had ever been, and it continues to widen.

Marketers assume that people in one class buy different goods and services and for different reasons than people in other classes. As a rule, the higher the level of disposable income people have, the more likely they are to travel, and premium income earners tend to be those people who have studied at a higher educational level. The Snapshot below shows how the backpacking segment has changed over the years, due to rising income and a higher disposable income amongst young people.

Snapshot

Backpackers with Gold Cards

Few modern social developments are more significant and less appreciated than the rise of backpacker travel. The tens of thousands of young Australians, Germans, Britons, Americans, and others who wander the globe, flitting from Goa to Costa Rica, from Thailand to Tasmania, are building what may be the only example of a truly global community. Nobody has an accurate way of guessing the size of the backpacker market, but the growth of the Lonely Planet brand offers an approximation. The first Lonely Planet guidebook was stapled together on an Australian kitchen table in the early 1970s; 30 years later, the company publishes more than 600 destination guides from all over the world.

Although the majority of backpackers are still aged between 18 and 25, and use inexpensive, communally oriented accommodations like hostels, there is evidence that the traditional backpacker profile is changing. John Hughes, a British expatriate who runs a website for backpackers in Asia, says that young people taking breaks in schooling, and those seeking temporary employment and learning opportunities abroad, have largely replaced the travellers of old who wandered footloose and fancy-free as far and long as their money would take them. And there are some older ones who come back drawn by fond memories of their younger backpacking days. 'It seems to me that a lot of backpackers have plastic in their back pockets whereas they didn't before,' says Hughes. 'They're better organized and getting more packaged.'

Hostel owners are also saying they are seeing a marked increase in the number of backpackers in their thirties and forties. As people marry later, make more money earlier, and

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switch careers more often, many are tapping into savings to have an extended adventure before going back to the grind. Moreover, companies that value their employees are bowing to their workers' wanderlust by granting travel sabbaticals. These travel patterns are being catered for by specialized guidebooks that increasingly give more expensive options to an older market. Backpacker destinations are also attracting growing numbers of Koreans, Taiwanese and Hong Kong citizens, and a vast potential market is seen in China and India. An example of a more sophisticated backpacking package comes from Vietnam. Ho Chi Minh City-based Linh Nam Travel Co. has a 79-day tour of Vietnam with an itinerary of 8,000 kilometres through 59 cities and provinces nationwide. The programme runs twice a year and tourists can chose to stay in hotels of one to three stars, or take a home-stay.

'Flashpackers' is the name often given to those who prefer nice hotels to the backpacker's dormitory. They not only boast an adventurous spirit but enjoy the safety net of a healthy bank balance when the going gets tough. 'The twentysomething flashpacker accounts for around 20 per cent of our overall bookings,' says Nikki Davies, marketing manager for Trailfinders, a backpacking specialist in the UK. According to Dan Linstead, editor of *Wanderlust*, the adventure travel magazine, the advent of the young flashpacker is down to the blurring of distinctions between suitcase and backpacking holidays. 'Conventional backpacking territories have broken down,' he says. 'While travellers are still booking independent flights and exploring adventurous locations, they prefer to stay in upmarket hotels.' The reason for this, according to Lonstead, is that today's twentysomething travellers are used to far higher standards of living than their predecessors on the original hippy trail. 'A flashpacker pays in money rather than time,' he says, 'condensing what a backpacker spends in a year into a two- or three-week break.'

These trends have brought new tensions to the adventure of the backpacker trail. Younger, more traditional backpackers say the sense of community they cherish in hostels is being lost as the richer backpackers use the accommodation only to sleep. 'These new backpackers can take away from the communal aspect of what these backpacker hostels started out as,' complains Lauren Roberts, manager of Whale House Backpackers in Hout Bay, near Cape Town. Traditional backpackers, she says, use hostels as one-stop social outlets – inexpensive places to sleep and meet travellers from around the world to share adventures and travelling tips. But older backpackers often rent cars and flash credit cards to ditch the hostel and fellow tourists for (in this case) white-linen wine-tasting evenings in Cape Town's excellent wine regions. 'The double rooms people are building defeat the object of the backpackers; the dorm rooms get people talking to each other,' she said. 'It's sort of a fight in the industry now. You can lose the whole concept of the hostel.

Sources: Winston, A. (13 August 2006). 'The flash pack', *The Independent on Sunday: The Compact Traveller,* 15; Anon. (25 September 2002) 'Backpackers lift an economy', *The Vancouver Sun,* A15; Cousineau, A. (2 November 2002) 'Backpackers really do have more fun', *Calgary Herald*, TS04; Daley, B. (29 September 1999) 'Slumming it, with a gold card', *National Post,* B9; Gray, D. (27 July 2002) 'The new backpacker: less scruffy and stinky, more moneyed and packaged', *Times–Colonist.* Victoria, B.C., D2.

LIFESTYLE ANALYSIS
examines the way people allocate time, energy and money

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PSYCHOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS
attempts to measure people's activities, interests and opinions

VALS™
a typology framework that divides the population into eight lifestyle groups, defined according to factors such as self-image, aspirations, values and products used

Lifestyle

Marketers are increasingly segmenting their markets by consumer lifestyles. **Lifestyle analysis** examines the way people allocate time, energy and money. Lifestyle analysis tends to exclude demographic traits, so researchers in marketing have combined demographic and psychological variables into a concept called 'psychographics'. **Psychographic analysis** attempts to measure people's activities, interests and opinions. By profiling the way groups of people live, it is possible to predict their travel motivations and purchases. One of the best-known categorizations in this area is the **VALS™** System. The VALS framework divides the US population into different lifestyle groups, defined according to psychological factors that correlate with purchase behaviour. As can be seen in Figure 2.4, VALS distinguishes between eight psychographic groups: innovators, thinkers, achievers, experiencers, believers, strivers, makers, and survivors. Members of each group have different psychological profiles and maintain different lifestyles. The position of a person in the VALS framework depends on the person's primary motivations (ideas, achievement or self-expression) and resources including income, education, self-confidence, health, eagerness to buy and energy level. The VALS tool can be used to help businesses develop and execute more effective strategies. For example, a cruise company in the US used VALS to identify and understand which consumers were most interested in its specialized tours. By designing direct mail to appeal to targeted consumers and mailing to key ZIP codes, the cruise line increased reservations by 400 per cent.

FAMILY LIFE CYCLE
the stages through which families might pass as they mature

LIFE CYCLE MODEL
suggests that travel patterns and destinations vary as people move through their life cycle

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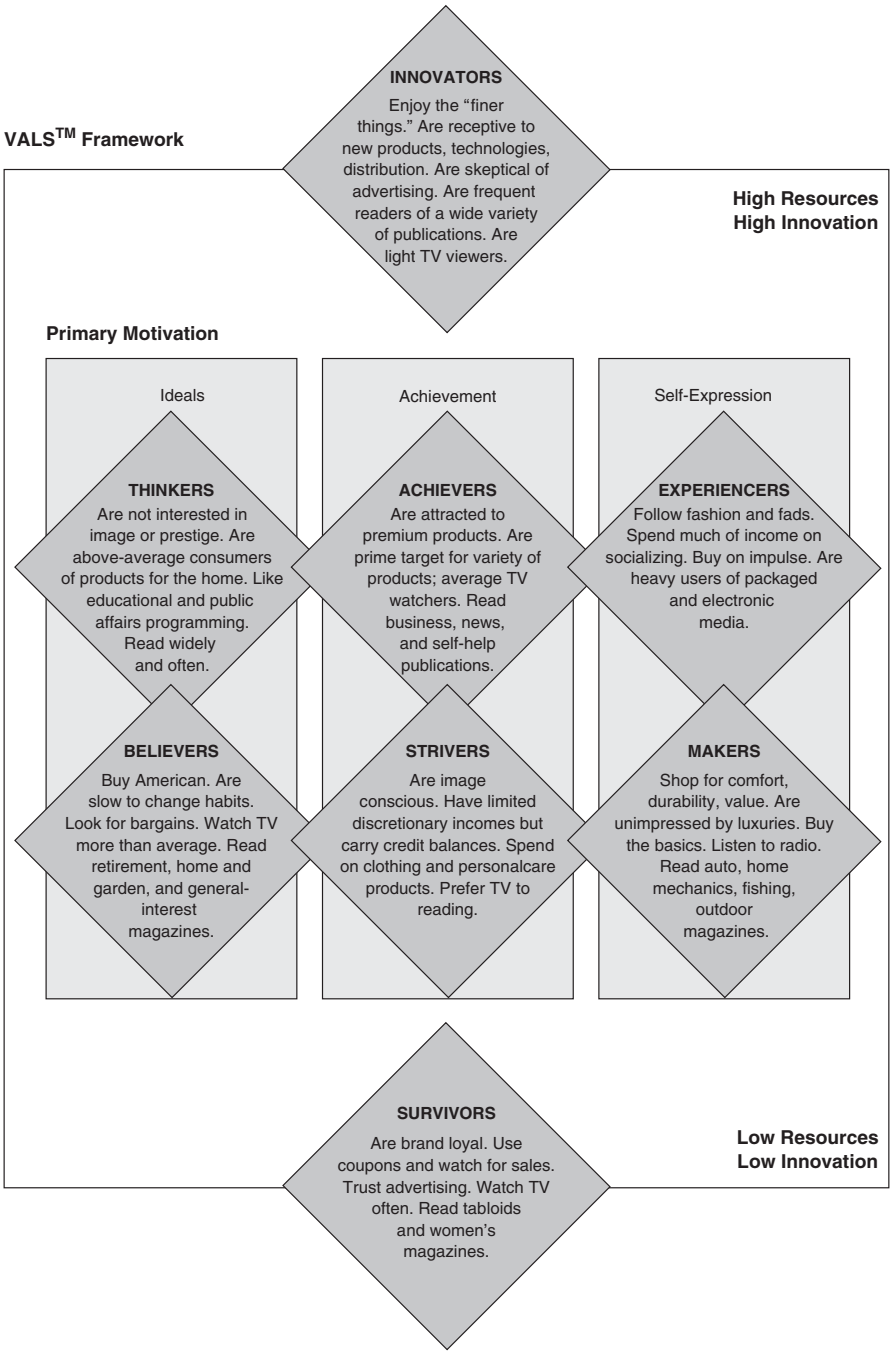

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(www.sric-bi.com/vals/)

Figure 2.4 The VALS™ Typology Framework

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Life Cycle

The concept of the **family life cycle** – the stages through which families might pass as they mature – is based on the premise that when people live together, their way of life changes. Single people are likely to behave differently from couples, and if couples subsequently have children, their lifestyle changes more radically, as do their levels of financial and other commitment. Many authors have applied the **life cycle model** to tourism, suggesting that travel patterns and destinations vary as people move through their life cycle (Pearce, 1993).[11] The model works well when investigating the traditional nuclear family composed of two parents and one or more children. It does not, however, purport to represent the increasing proportion of households that do not fall into this pattern, such as single-parent families, extended family networks, and those who remain single throughout their life. Tourists may also change their behaviour patterns over time, so if the life cycle model is used to predict behaviour, then trends in consumer behaviour need to be monitored. For example, the Snapshot 'Backpackers with Gold Cards' showed how backpackers are no longer just young people aged between 18 and 25. They have been joined by an older and wealthier segment of backpackers who are changing the structure of the backpacker market. The Case Study at the end of this chapter is a good example of a tourism product – Schoolies Week – that has developed because of the life cycle model. Schoolies Week is one of the few 'rites of passage' remaining to Australian teenagers. The rites of passage concept implies a transition from adolescence to adulthood, an activity designed to enhance the development of a distinct self identity.

REFERENCE GROUPS
groups that have a direct (face-to-face) or indirect influence on a person's attitude or behaviour

Reference Groups

Learning also takes place through sharing values and expectations with others in a variety of social **reference groups**, including the family, college, workplace or church. This brings exposure to a normative set of values, i.e., those that set a tone as to how we should behave morally in society. For example, experienced travellers, who have been exposed to other cultures and to people who are less fortunate than they, are influencing the new trend of volunteer tourism highlighted in the Opening Vignette. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) has noticed that there is 'an increasing tendency among contemporary travel consumers to view travel as a means for enhancing the quality of their own lives by building on a philosophy of doing well while doing something good for society'.[12] The WTO and other tourism organizations that monitor trends in the travel industry say it is precisely the growing number of well-heeled, well-educated older travellers – people who are indeed concerned with 'doing something good for society' – that has been driving the demand for such developing niche

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markets as educational tourism, ecotours, agritourism, and cultural tourism. Travellers can take a 'volunteer vacation' and give their time and expertise to help in projects in developing countries. These trips aren't free, but they're often cheaper than conventional tours.

ALLOCENTRICS
travellers who prefer exotic destinations, unstructured vacations rather than packaged tours, and more involvement with local cultures

PSYCHOCENTRICS
travellers who prefer familiar destinations, packaged tours, and 'touristy' areas

Typologies of Tourists

The discussion so far has been about the variables that influence tourist behaviour. But many tourism researchers have tried to explain tourist behaviour by developing typologies of the tourists themselves. The tourist motivation model proposed by Stanley Plog (1974) is one of the most widely cited.[13] According to Plog, travellers may be classified as allocentrics or psychocentrics. Travellers who are more **allocentric** are thought to prefer exotic destinations, unstructured vacations rather than packaged tours, and more involvement with local cultures. **Psychocentrics**, on the other hand, are thought to prefer familiar destinations, packaged tours, and 'touristy' areas. Later, Plog changed these labels to more 'reader-friendly' terms; specifically, **psychocentrics** became dependables, and allocentrics **venturers**. Figure 2.5 presents a visual picture of the old and new concepts, as applied to a normal population curve. Plog found that the majority of the population was neither allocentric nor psychocentric, but 'midcentric' – somewhere in the middle. It has been argued, however, that Plog's theory is difficult to apply, as tourists will travel with different motivations on different occasions. There are many holidaymakers who will take a winter break in an allocentric destination, but will then take their main summer holiday in a psychocentric destination.

Other tourism researchers have developed different typologies. Most are based on empirical data obtained from questionnaires and/or personal interviews. Cohen's typology (1972) – one of the first – proposed four classifications of tourists: (1) the organized mass tourist, highly dependent on the 'environmental bubble', who purchases all-inclusive tours or package holidays; (2) the individual mass tourist, who is more autonomous and free than those in the previous group; (3) the explorer, who seeks new areas but would sometimes opt to step back into comfortable accommodation, etc.; and (4) the drifter, who avoids any kind of 'tourist establishment'.[14] The Snapshot on Adventurer Annie below takes a tongue-in-cheek look at the typology of modern-day 'explorer'.

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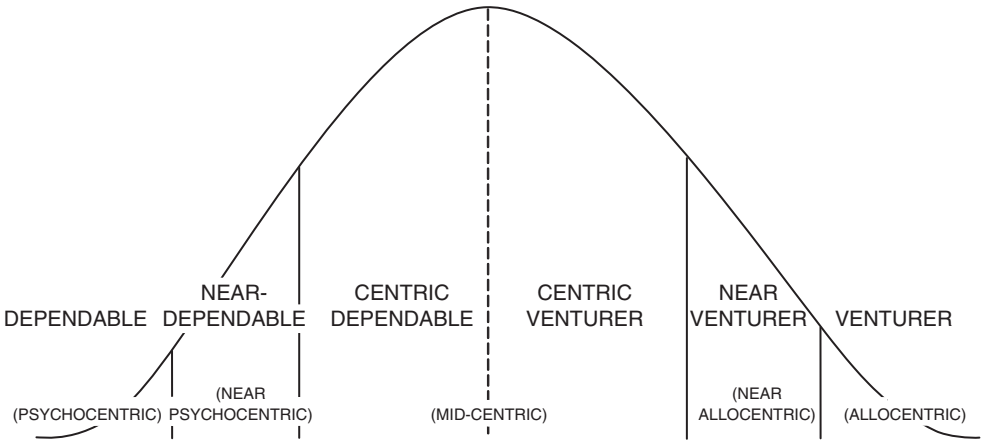

Figure 2.5 Plog's Psychographic Personality Types: Current Versus (Previous)

Sources: Plog, S.C. (1974) 'Why destination areas rise and fall in popularity', *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly*, 14(4), 55–58; Plog, S.C. (2002) 'The power of psychogaphics and the concept of venturesomeness', *Journal of Travel Research*, 40, 244–251.

Snapshot

Adventurer Annie

Adventurer Annie gets around. In the last few years she's been heli-skiing in the Rockies, watched killer whales off the coast of British Columbia, climbed Everest, kayaked around Greenland, bungee-jumped in Queenstown, and been on a 'Survivor Tour' in Thailand. In between, she is busy making big bucks in the city, trading stocks, and planning her trips. Next year she is off on a wildlife safari in Tanzania, hiking up Kilimanjaro and rafting down the Zambezi. But Annie doesn't do any of this on a budget, and wouldn't compromise on comfort. Annie is part of a new breed of adventure tourists that many in the outdoor recreation business are referring to as 'Bobos': bourgeois bohemians. They are looking for an escape to nature from their stressed-out urban lives, but they want the experience without the hassle of hauling a lot of gear into the back-country, sleeping on lumpy ground, or hunting for kindling to cook smoky, second-rate meals.

So who is Annie? She's 45 years old and hence classified as a baby boomer. She is fit, well educated, and is interested in novelty, escape and authentic experiences. These days, she and her friends are opting for more physically challenging and 'adrenalin-driven' activities. She is also rich monetarily but poor in time, and so wants to squeeze as much experience into as short a time as possible. What makes Annie tick? She is certainly motivated by the thrill and challenge of learning, and by the experience of nature and the environment. She is also health conscious and has realized that her travel experiences are a terrific stress reliever and make her more productive at work. However, she is also motivated by the physical and symbolic capital she can accumulate by purchasing these adventure tourism holidays.

She holds regular dinner parties in between her trips to let all her friends and family know where she has been and where she is going next. In return for being fed, guests have to gaze with

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awe and murmur appreciatively as Annie serves up a slide show for a main course and a portfolio of digital photos for dessert. Occasionally Annie gets too busy at work to get away for an adventure experience. Fortunately there is a new 'dirt spray' on the market that she can use to discolor her SUV. She wouldn't want friends thinking she was becoming a suburban bore.

Adventure tourism is one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism industry (growing 10–15 per cent annually) and it is the experiential engagement that distinguishes it from other types of tourism. In the past, adventure was associated with uncertainty of outcome; any outdoor recreation that was *planned* could not be an adventure. Yet today this is precisely how adventure tourism is marketed. There exists, therefore, something of a paradox whereby the more detailed, planned and logistically smooth an adventure tourist itinerary becomes, the more removed the experience is from the notion of adventure. Much as Annie would like to think she is engaging in a dangerous, unplanned adventure, in reality she is so dependent on her guides that if she was left to her own devices, she would kill herself within an hour!

As for the future, it is likely that Annie will continue her adventure tourism activities but will go from being a Bobo to a GRAMPIE – that is, someone who is 'growing old, retired and moneyed, in good physical and emotional health'. It is estimated that by 2040, over half the population in the developed world will be over 50. This means there will be more people in good health with a more informed global perspective – more GRAMPIES – and thus more adventure tourists. The only change for Annie will be that her adventures will be softer, and she will be supported by an increasing number of masseuses, chiropractors and physiotherapists.

The Buying Process

Before discussing the buying process, it is important to recognize that various buying situations will have an influence on this process. First of all, consumers are likely to display various levels of commitment, depending on the nature of the purchase. It has been suggested that there are three such levels (Howard and Sneth, 1969):[15]

1. **Extended problem solving**: In this situation, such as the decision to take a long-haul holiday, the consumer is likely to have a deep level of commitment, to make a detailed search for information, and to make an extensive comparison of the alternatives;
2. **Limited problem solving**: In this situation, the consumer will have some degree of knowledge or experience already, but many factors will be taken for granted and the information search will be far more limited. A second holiday at a favorite skiing destination may be purchased in this way;
3. **Habitual problem solving**; This is a repeat purchase of a tried and tested short break or day excursion, which requires little or no evaluation. The purchase is made primarily on the basis of a previous satisfactory experience and a good understanding of the destination or brand name of the tourism or hospitality offering.

Given the variation in decision-making styles, it is difficult to propose just one universal decision-making process for travellers. Depending on the project, Decrop and Snelders (2005) suggest that six types of vacationers can be described: habitual, rational, hedonic, opportunistic, constrained and adaptable.[16] These typologies were based on a study of

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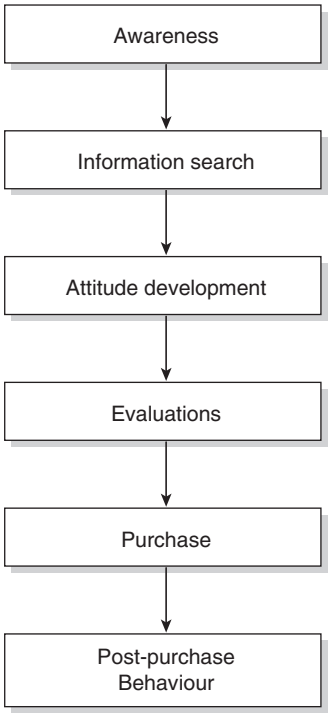

Figure 2.6 The Consumer Buying Process

Belgian travellers, but the authors believe that these six types could be found in different parts of the world.

Role adoption will also influence the buying process, and it is proposed that there are five roles (Engel, Blackwell and Miniard, 1990):[17]

1. **Initiator**: the person who starts the purchasing process and who gathers information;
2. **Influencer**: a person or persons who expresses preferences in choice or selection of information – this can be a group of friends, relatives, or a partner;
3. **Decider**: the person who has the financial control and possibly the authority within a group of people to make the purchase;
4. **Buyer**: the person who actually makes the purchase, visits the travel agent, and obtains the tickets, etc.; and
5. **User**: the person or persons who consumes the purchase and actually goes on the trip.

The consumer buying process for tourism is often regarded as similar to that for other products and services. The assumption is that a consumer moves through a number of stages leading up to a purchase. Figure 2.6 outlines these stages.

The process begins with **awareness**, a stage that may be initiated by promotional efforts, by word of mouth, or through an informational search such as an online search. The next

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stage involves the buyer **obtaining more information**, and as suggested previously, there are likely to be various levels of commitment depending on the nature of the purchase. Recent surveys show that the internet plays a major role when travellers research and book travel (see Chapter 10). This information search will result in the **formation of an attitude**, perhaps reinforcing an existing attitude or bringing about a change on the part of the buyer. At the **evaluation** stage, the buyer will make more detailed comparisons. For example, a consumer may consider a number of destinations and will choose based on criteria such as price, recommendation, convenience or convention. Subject to time and financial constraints, the consumer will then make the **purchase**. The majority of travellers prefer to book their vacations months in advance, but an increasing number of consumers are booking their trips on the spur of the moment, a phenomenon facilitated by the growth of the internet.

The purchase is followed by the final stage of the buying process, **post-purchase behaviour**. If the experience is satisfactory, the visitor may purchase the same type of holiday in the future. Often the importance of this stage is underestimated, but several studies have examined the association between service quality and more specific behavioural intentions, and there is a positive and significant relationship between customers' perceptions of service quality and their willingness to recommend the company or destination to others (Zeithaml et al., 1996).[18]

Organizational Buyer Behaviour

Decision-making for Organizations

Tourism marketers need to understand both the decision criteria used and the decision-making process undergone by groups and organizations in buying tourism services. The process is likely to be quite different for group buyers, and there can be many individuals or groups involved in making decisions for the conference market. These include the users, influencers, deciders and buyers. It has been argued that in order to close a sale within a business-to-business market, the supplier has to identify and satisfy all stakeholders in the decision-making unit.

A marketer will also need to understand the buying phases for organizations. The conference market, for example, follows a pattern of group decision-making, and the 'buy phase' has been described as follows: problem recognition, general need description, product specification, supplier search, proposal solution, supplier selection, order routine specification, and performance review (Radburn, 1997).[19] These buy phases sometimes take a long period of time, depending on the size of the conference or the complexity of arrangements, with lead times of two or three years in some instances and longer ones for mega-events such as the World Cup soccer tournament.

The process is also affected by the nature of the purchase, as it can be a new purchase, a modified re-buy, or a straight re-buy. A new purchase involves a high degree of risk, as the client is buying a facility or service for the first time. A modified re-buy is less risky, as the

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client has bought a service offering before, perhaps at another hotel or conference centre within the group, but now seeks to modify the purchase. This might mean a new venue or new specifications for service levels. The straight re-buy is the least risky purchase situation, as it involves, for example, re-ordering a service at the same venue.

Having identified the key decision-makers and phases in the purchase process, the marketer must then establish which criteria these decision makers have used to differentiate between suppliers. Webster and Wind suggest that four main factors influence the decision-making criteria of organizational buyers: environmental, organizational, interpersonal, and individual (Webster and Wind, 1972).[20] These factors are constantly changing, so it is essential to re-evaluate market trends frequently.

The Behaviour of Business Travellers

The behaviour of business travellers is significantly different from that of leisure travellers. In fact, according to experts, executives do not see travel as a perk but rather as another source of stress (Cohen, 2000).[21] They feel that they have no proper balance between home and work life, and that this causes problems in their relationships with partners and children. And it is not just the business traveller who suffers. One study found that people whose spouses travel frequently on business suffer more mental health problems than those whose partners remain at home (Tong, 2002).[22] Short, frequent trips away from home have a worse effect on people than longer, less frequent trips. The study recommended that workers travel no more than 90 days a year and that companies allow employees to refuse too many trips; it also suggested video-conferencing and flexible work arrangements as substitutes for travel. Unfortunately, few businesses pay attention to the damaging effect travel can have on their employees. The paradox is that travel costs the company money, and much business travel has been made redundant by modern communication technologies such as telephone- and video-conferencing.

Airlines spend a lot of time and money trying to understand the needs of their business travellers. As the demographic gets wider for this group (as it has been doing for the last decade), zeroing in on which services and programmes would most appeal is becoming more difficult. The group is not necessarily unified in terms of age, dress, or tastes, or in terms of what its members want to do or have in business class. Whether a flight is inbound for business or outbound for home makes a difference to what a customer expects, and the key for airlines is to offer their customers the ability to work or play. Work-related technology – laptop power plugs and in-air phones – are obligatory for any airline interested in attracting the business traveller. For passengers' downtime, not much has changed: movies, food and drink remain required staples. The selection in the last category has become much broader, due in part to the fact that 30 to 40 per cent of frequent business passengers are women, and women don't always want a beer or a soft drink. One factor that is consistent among all passengers, however, is the need for space, and airlines are always looking for ways to increase personal space for passengers. Space is an equally important service consideration on the ground. It is standard to isolate first or business class passengers from those flying economy with special lounges and facilities devoted to

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their needs. Computer hook-ups, boardrooms, and entertainment centres are now standard requirements.

Global Trends in Consumer Behaviour

As mentioned in Chapter 1, many major cultural trends affect the tourism industry, and the final section of Chapter 2 focuses on ten key trends or demands in consumer behaviour that are influencing tourism and hospitality marketing today.

LEARNING AND ENRICHMENT TRAVEL
vacations that provide opportunities for authentic, hands-on, or interactive learning experiences

Learning and Enrichment

One of the major trends in tourism today is the desire of the tourist to have a learning experience as part of the vacation. Educational travel has boomed over the past few decades. A recent survey found that half of North American travellers want to visit art, architectural or historic sites on vacations, while one third would like to learn a new skill or activity. Of course, the desire for self-improvement is nothing new. Young gentlemen of the 18th and 19th centuries who set out on the Grand Tour were looking for a dose of classical culture spiced with some pleasant debauchery as part of the package. But putting the label 'educational' on vacation trips is becoming increasingly popular these days.

Today's travellers are seeking experiences that provide them with greater insight, increased understanding, and a personal connection to the people and places they visit. Rather than choose their vacation by the destination, many are first determining the experiences they want, and then choosing the destination where these experiences are located. **Learning and enrichment travel** refers to vacations that provide opportunities for authentic, hands-on, or interactive learning experiences, featuring themes such as adventure, agriculture, anthropology, archaeology, arts, culture, cuisine, education, forestry, gardening, language, maritime culture, mining, nature, science, spirituality, sports, wine and wildlife – to name just a few!

L'Oceanografic in Valencia, Europe's largest marine park, is an example of a tourism attraction whose goal is to educate as well as entertain. The US$200 million project opened in 2003 and has 42 million litres of saltwater holding 45,000 fish and marine mammals, comprising 500 species. There is even an aquarium of the senses, where visually handicapped visitors can acquaint themselves with the size and shape of life-size models of fish and crustaceans. This hands-on approach is a common theme throughout Valencia's City of Arts and Sciences. The Global Spotlight on Semester at Sea, below, provides a closer look at a unique educational experience.

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Global Spotlight

Semester At Sea

Educational tourism is not a recent innovation. It has its roots in the Grand Tour, a term first applied in England over 300 years ago. This type of travel was seen as the best means of teaching wealthy young men about culture, taste, geography, art and general worldliness in preparation for careers in the military, government and civil services. Nowadays, more than 150,000 American college students go on their own international travels every year in the form of study-abroad programmes. One of the most varied of such educational opportunities is provided by Semester At Sea which twice annually takes around 650 students around the world in a 100-day semester, visiting ten different countries in a fusion of education and travel.

For more than 40 years, over 40,000 students from the US and abroad have experienced Semester At Sea programmes, studying four credit courses from a comprehensive international curriculum. The Institute for Shipboard Education, a non-profit organization, has been administering these programmes since 1975 in conjunction with various US universities. The actual concept was inaugurated in 1926 with the University World Cruise which later became the University of the Seven Seas, then World Campus Afloat and finally, with the help of the late C. Y. Tung (founder of the Orient Overseas Container Line), Semester At Sea.

Students, staff and faculty from all over the world work, socialize, study, and travel together during a 100-day spring or fall semester or the 65-day summer programme. Spring trips usually proceed eastwards around the world and fall tours head west, with the shorter summer trips concentrating on Asia or Latin America. The focus is on non-Western cultures with developing economies and diverse political and cultural systems. A multidisciplinary overview of the areas and issues encountered during the voyage is provided by a mandatory upper-level geography course. Called Global Studies, this draws upon the experience and expertise of the whole faculty as well as specialized inter-port lecturers who provide a more personal insight into their nations' histories, cultures and customs.

The author of this book, Simon Hudson, was a professor on Semester at Sea during the Spring 2006 Voyage. "It really was a fulfilling experience" he said "I could never normally afford to travel around the world for four months with my family (the cost for a 109-day cruise with Crystal Cruises is around US$57,000), so this was the perfect opportunity to combine travel with work in an affordable fashion. My two boys just loved every minute and have not stopped talking about the experience. Interestingly, tourism had not been taught on the ship in previous voyages, and yet it seemed like an obvious choice for such a venture. I ended up with three full classes (about 36 students in each class) and a wonderfully eclectic group of students. For me, the most memorable countries we visited were Myanmar, India and South Africa, but every port offered a distinctive adventure.

It's not just undergraduates who are learning about the world on these trips. A small contingent of 'Senior Passengers' also pays to circumnavigate the world, joining in with

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classes, Community College activities, clubs, Global Studies and lectures on board. They form part of the extended family on the ship, acting as surrogate 'parents' and 'grandparents' for the younger generations. Students, too, volunteer as 'Big Brothers' and 'Big Sisters' for the school-age kids on board – children of faculty and staff are also educated while travelling around the world with their parents.

Subjects include anthropology, biological studies, business, economics, music, geology, philosophy and theatre arts among many others. Students with every major can apply and there are also grants available for those who qualify for financial aid. Fieldwork, which accounts for 20 per cent of the hours needed for course credits, is geared to each specific interest as well as different budgets. Day trips might include a tea ceremony in Japan or a candomble ceremony in Brazil; overnight travel could take students to sites of significant cultural, historical or political interest such as the Great Wall of China or Angkor Wat in Cambodia.

Other field experiences concentrate more on the local people and active involvement in the countries visited. Students and faculty can learn about local customs during a home-stay with a Japanese or Indian family. There are overnight trips to 'untouchable' villages where students work, eat and sleep as the locals do. There are also opportunities to meet university students in each country during welcome receptions, sports competitions and lectures.

The ship, *M V Explorer*, includes all the luxuries of a regular cruise ship with the academic atmosphere and rules of a normal land-based campus. Thus there is a fully-equipped library and computer room as well as a gym and a health centre.

At a basic cost of around US$16,000 per 100-day voyage, Semester At Sea is by no means cheap for students. But when you factor in the opportunity to visit ten different countries for about five days apiece, on top of the potential to obtain 12 course credits during a regular school semester, it is not particularly expensive. However, students also need money for in-country travel, books and general spending. As the promotional brochure says: 'Semester At Sea costs more than the average semester at college. But, if you consider that you will earn a semester of academic credit and add a dimension to your undergraduate education that will pay dividends throughout your life, it will be the investment of a lifetime.'

Such international educational tourism is in keeping with the current trend towards globalization, where, through trade, countries are increasingly interdependent and the marketplace is global in scope. Semester At Sea's mission statement echoes this trend: 'Humankind's pursuit of knowledge has been intricately linked to ships and the sea. From early civilizations to the modern era, the exploration of distant lands, the exchange of ideas and commodities, and the search for knowledge have occurred in this manner.' It goes on to define its commitment to combining academic excellence with challenging experiential programming in order to remain at the forefront of global education.

Sources: Personal communication with Lauren Heinz, associate director of communications, Semester At Sea, March 2007; Semester At Sea Media Kit, retrieved from www.semesteratsea.com, April 2007.

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Ethical Products

In the last few decades, responsible tourism has emerged as a significant trend in the Western world, as wider consumer market trends towards lifestyle marketing and ethical consumption have spread to tourism. Tourism organizations are beginning to realize that promoting their ethical stance can be good business as it potentially enhances a company's profits, management effectiveness, public image and employee relations. In a recent survey, 26 per cent of people aged 33–44 said they increasingly used their purchasing power to reward ethically, socially, and environmentally aware companies (Hickman, 2006).[23] International leisure travellers are increasingly motivated to select a destination for the quality of its environmental health and the diversity and integrity of its natural and cultural resources. Studies of German and US travel markets indicate that environmental considerations are now a significant aspect of travellers' destination-choosing process, down to – in the case of the Germans – the environmental programmes operated by individual hotels. Certainly in the United States, the growth in special-interest, nature-oriented travel reflects an increasing concern for the environment. A recent study also showed that approximately 80 per cent of American travellers believe it is important that hotels take steps to preserve and protect the environment. According to the study, 70 per cent are willing to pay as much as US$150 more for a two-week stay in a hotel that has a 'responsible environmental attitude', and 55 per cent are more likely to book a hotel that purports to be environmentally friendly.[24]

Even restaurants are taking the green route. Chanterelle Country Inn, on the Cabot Trail in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada offers a 'green environment' and 'Cape Breton fresh' cuisine. Besides recycling and precycling, the inn uses only organic and fragrance-free facial, bath, and laundry soaps, as well as cleaning products; linens and bedding of natural fibres; and solar power for water and space heating. Its water comes from a deep well fed by a spring. All dishes are prepared in the restaurant's own kitchens, using organic and locally produced ingredients. Its dining room also stocks organically grown wines.

Nostalgia

According to author Charles Leadbeater, we are in the middle of a nostalgia boom. The more rapidly people are propelled into an uncertain future, the more they yearn for the imagined security of the past. 'Globalization promotes a yearning for local roots and identities. Our immersion in the digital and virtual world creates a demand for tactile and tangible skills at home: cooking, gardening, and decorating. The growth of individualism makes us yearn for a time when we imagined that we lived in real communities, with a sense of shared memory and moral commitment,' says Leadbeater (2002).[25]

The outcome is an increase in nostalgia tourism, and the Snapshot below shows how two nostalgia tourism attractions – Pier 21 in Canada and Dianaville in the UK – are capitalizing on this trend.

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Snapshot

Longing for the Way We Were: Nostalgia Tourism

From films to music, from cars to architecture, we are using new technology to return us to the past, to deliver better versions of old experiences. Not only have we become more interested in history, but the scale, richness, and diversity of the history we are interested in has also expanded enormously in the past 30 years. History used to be about stately homes, battles, and kings and queens. Now it can be about everything from pencils to maple syrup, from toys to matches, from kitchens to bricks. Nostalgia tourism allows people to revisit the past, enabling them to come to terms with tragic historical events in order to put them into perspective, obtain closure, as well as keep good memories alive. Two examples of nostalgia tourism attractions are Pier 21 in Canada and Dianaville in the UK.

A National Historic Site located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Pier 21 is a unique tourism facility that offers the visitor the opportunity to understand the difficult early immigration process that many people had to endure. Winner of a national award for being the Best New Attraction in 2001, Pier 21 operates as a learning facility and an informational and experiential tourism destination, and presents an in-depth look at what over one million people went through to make a new life in a new country. It also provides a place to honour the members of Canada's armed forces who served in World War II.

First operational in 1928, Pier 21 was the immigrant gateway to Canada until its closure in 1971. When ships arrived, immigrants would begin the final process leading to their new lives. No more than 250 people at once would disembark and be led to the Assembly Room. From there, they filed into the Examination Room for a medical exam and an immigration interview. If successful, they could then take trains to their final destination. During World War II, Pier 21 also operated as the departure point for the troops who sailed to Europe to engage in battle. Today, the Wall of Service, located on the World War II Deck, stands as a tribute to members of the Canadian military who fought to safeguard the freedoms enjoyed by so many. In 1999, Pier 21 reopened to honour the contributions of immigrants to the building of Canada and to acknowledge the sacrifice of Canadian troops. Today, it operates as a non-profit society and offers a variety of services to special interest groups, visitors, and the local community.

Britain's Dianaville commemorates the life of Princess Diana, whose tragic death in 1997 inspired national and international mourning. Thousands flocked to the Crowther Gates of Kensington Palace to leave flowers, messages and other mementos immediately after the news of her death. This is still a well-visited, symbolic spot for Diana fans, since it was from Kensington Palace that her funeral cortege left for Westminster Abbey. After the tragedy, Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, opened up the family estate at Althorp House in rural Northamptonshire, England, so that visitors could see Diana's island grave, visit the museum displaying memorabilia from her youth and adulthood and pay tribute to the internationally influential princess. Within six dedicated rooms, tourists can visit a permanent exhibition of the life and work she undertook, see the famous bridal gown, view relics from her childhood and schooling, and find information about the Diana, Princess of Wales' Memorial Fund. The estate has seen success since it first opened in 1998. Dianaville, with its souvenir shop and café, has become a pilgrimage

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destination; thousands of grief-stricken mourners, often whole families, from all over the world have made the journey. Tickets run at around £5 for children, £8 for seniors and £10 for adults.

Sources: Leadbeater, C. (6–7 July 2002) 'Longing for the way we were', *Financial Times Weekend*, IV; Lowrie, M. (1998) 'Visitors flock to Diana museum on first day', CNN. Retrieved from www.cnn.com; Pier 21 promotional printed material; Pier 21 Education Kit; Pier 21 website: www.pier21.ca.

Health Consciousness

A more health-conscious society is often attributed to the influence of the baby boomer. Patterson has examined the demographic characteristics of baby boomers and their growing interest in active tourism as they age (Patterson, 2002).[26] Baby boomers are generally healthier, financially better off, better educated, and more interested in novelty, escape, and authentic experiences than were previous cohorts of older people. Many baby boomers and senior adult groups are consequently opting for more physically challenging and 'adrenalin-driven' activities. The demographics of the baby-boom bulge are also having an impact on the health and wellness industry. Health and wellness centres are springing up in many tourism destinations, although spa tourism is not a new phenomenon. One of the oldest spa towns in history is Arima Onsen, just north of Kobe in Japan. Arima has a 1400-year history and has attracted such luminaries as Shõgun Hideyosho Toyotomi, tea ceremony master Sen-no-Rikyu, and in recent times, novelist Jun'ichiro Tanizaki. Tucked in a valley at the foot of the Rokkõ mountains, the Onsen area is compact with about 30 ryokan and hotels. Arima's waters – kinsen (rusty red) and ginseng (transparent) – work together against gastrointestinal diseases, women's disorders, neuralgia and skin problems. Long ago, people who came to bathe in the spas of Arima used a walking stick when they came, and, on returning home, would throw the stick in the river. Even today, there is a bridge called 'Tsuesute Bridge' (Tsuesute means to throw away one's walking stick).

Tourists are also looking to eat healthier foods on vacation. Interestingly, in 2005 Scottish & Newcastle, which makes Fosters and Kronenbourg lagers, became the first brewer in the world to put general health warnings on beer bottles. The company said the initiative, similar to health warnings on cigarette packets, was just a part of being a responsible company, whereas critics argue that it was introducing the warnings as a way of avoiding potential lawsuits that could blame drink companies for health problems (Dennis, 2004).[27] Either way, the move is responding to growing consumer pressures for a healthier lifestyle and for socially responsible companies, as mentioned previously.

Customization

Requests for customized and personalized vacations are also rising sharply, and both agents and traditional tour operators are changing their businesses to meet that demand. In addition to booking air and hotel reservations, agents and outfitters today are arranging customized wine tastings, visits to artisan workshops, and private after-hour tours of the British crown jewels and

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the Vatican. Even at companies like Butterfield & Robinson and Abercrombie & Kent – both of which have been primarily associated with pre-arranged tours – requests for customized trips are increasing. Kristina Rundquist, spokesperson for the American Society of Travel Agents, says that there are two parallel trends now: people who want personalized service and those who want highly specialized trips: 'Many tourists have precious little time for vacations, so they like to make sure they get exactly what they want, whether it's a boutique hotel or a special kind of restaurant. They need someone who will listen and cater to their needs.' (whitlock, 2001)[28]

An example of such customization can be found in Jamaica. During a stint as guest relations manager with the Holiday Inn in Montego Bay, Diana McIntyre-Pike (only 21 years old at the time) noticed there was nothing of the real Jamaica to be found at the hotel. 'Even the so-called "native show" had nothing to do with us. It was limbo dancing and fire dancing,' she says. After studying hotel management in Germany, Diana returned to Jamaica and, in 1997, launched the Countrystyle Institute. She had two goals: to give visitors a real experience of Jamaican life, and to get tourism dollars to areas where unemployment rates are high. Here seven-day all-inclusive tours cost about US$1600, including airfare, food, accommodation and entertainment. She customizes her vacations for her clients, depending on whether they have an interest in cooking, playing cricket or golfing. Guest speakers visit to tell groups about the local economy, politics and food. 'What was drawing people to the Sandals and the SuperClubs was that they could pay one rate and get an experience,' she says. 'Now I'm offering the same thing but with a chance to see the real Jamaica.' (Cornell, 2005)[29]

Convenience and Speed

The increasing desire for convenience and speed is having a great impact on various sectors of the tourism industry. In the restaurant sector, drive-through sales are on the rise; in transportation, self check-in terminals are increasingly popular; and in accommodation, business travellers are seeking convenient rooms for shorter stays. An example of the latter is the new hotel concept introduced recently at Heathrow and Gatwick airports in the UK. Owing much to Japanese 'capsule hotels', Yotel cabins are a cross between a hotel and a first-class airline seat. Each self-contained cabin has a double rotating bed, and facilities include an ensuite bathroom with shower, a flat-screen television and a pull-down desk. The first phase of cabins cost about £80 for an overnight stay, with the option of paying less for shorter periods, offering the opportunity to stretch out and freshen up even on a short stopover. The company has plans to extend the concept into central London to compete with similar accommodation concepts such as Stelios Hakiloannou's EasyHotel.

Theme parks are also responding to the desire for convenience and speed. At both Universal's Orlando theme parks (Islands of Adventure and Universal Studios) visitors can get priority access to all rides and attractions at no extra cost. In front of each attraction is a Universal Express Kiosk with a computer touch screen. Guests insert their park ticket or pass and choose from a selection of times to return later in the day. The distribution centre prints out a Universal Express Pass with the attraction name and return time, and guests can use this later to proceed directly inside, bypassing the usual queues. The Universal Express Plus

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programme, as it is called, allows customers to create their own schedule and maximize their Universal Orlando experience.

The Unpredictable

An increasing number of tourists are seeking experiences that have a sense of unpredictability. For example, during the October 2004 earthquake activity of Mount St. Helens, Washington captured worldwide attention as the volcano came back to life, spewing clouds of steam and ash. Thousands of tourists travelled to the area, determined to catch a close-up glimpse of North America's most active volcano. Local hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops all enjoyed brisk business from tourists and the onslaught of the media. One expedition outfit offered helicopter rides over the volcano for US$100 per person. Similarly, in Canada in 2003, firefighters battling British Columbia's forest fires said 'fire tourists' in Kelowna were making it increasingly difficult for firefighters to do their job. Tourists were travelling to suburbs to view the 200 homes destroyed by the fires and venturing into the woods to see the still-raging fires first hand (Skelton, 2003).[30]

Tour operators are beginning to cater to this new type of tourist. LIVE Travel in the UK specializes in tours to countries in the midst of warfare. In 1997 Philip Haines became the youngest person to have visited all 193 sovereign countries, including a trip to off-limits Iraq. He now offers packages to Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran, Vietnam and Cambodia, Bali, East Timor, Bolivia and more. The company even had a trip to see the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Many of the destinations on LIVE's itinerary have strict warnings issued by the US State Department against non-essential travel.

Spiritual Enlightenment

The desire for spiritual enlightenment on a vacation has led to a boom in religious tourism (see the Global Spotlight on 'The Holy Land Experience' in Chapter 1). Even monks are cashing in on this growing trend. Monasteries and temples provide the perfect backdrop for peaceful periods of meditation, prayer and reflection for world-weary businessmen and women. Often set in beautiful scenery, more religious institutions are jumping on the tourism bandwagon and opening their facilities for one- to three-day stays. Southern Koreans, for example, have around 36 different Buddhist temples to choose from for their retreats from everyday life. While the food can be very basic (vegetarian and lots of rice gruel), the peace and tranquillity is priceless. Haein Temple, a World Heritage site, is in the idyllic Kaya Mountains and offers two-day stays for approximately US$60 per night. Tourists have to don monkish robes, pray and meditate with the real monks, eat together and even have lessons in calligraphy before an early bedtime of 9.30 pm. Wake-up call each day is 3.30 am and the day kicks off with an hour of silent meditation. Guests enjoy tours around the beautiful grounds and the hermitages after breakfast.

The notion of combining religion and tourism is also gaining momentum in other countries, notably Japan, where the Wakayama region is attracting day trippers from Kyoto and

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Nara. Visitors can also stay overnight in rooms ranging from simple to luxurious. With views of the Pacific from ancient forest trails, tourists learn about Shinto and Buddhist theory by day. By night, accompanying their vegetarian meals served by the monks, guests can also enjoy sake and beer. In Utah, Trappist-Cistercian monks are offering up to three-day trips for males only at their Huntsville Monastery. Women are allowed to stay in the guest house, when available. The Catholic monks lead prayer, reading and hiking and counselling is also offered.

Service Quality

Service quality has been increasingly identified as a key factor in differentiating service products and building a competitive advantage in tourism. The process by which customers evaluate a purchase, thereby determining satisfaction and likelihood of repurchase, is important to all marketers, but especially to services marketers because, unlike their manufacturing counterparts, they have fewer objective measures of quality by which to judge their production. Many researchers believe that an outgrowth of service quality is customer satisfaction. Satisfying customers has always been a key component of the tourism industry, but never before has it been so critical. With increased competition, and with more discerning, experienced consumers, knowing how to win and keep customers is the single most important business skill that anyone can learn. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are the keys to long-term profitability, and keeping the customer happy is everybody's business. Becoming customer-centred and exceeding customer expectations are requirements for business success. Chapter 11 gives examples of individuals or companies that have succeeded in the tourism industry by being customer-focused.

EXPERIENCE
occurs when a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event

Experiences

According to Pine and Gilmore, today's consumer desires what the industry is calling **experiences**, which occur when a company intentionally uses services as the stage, and goods as props, to engage individual customers in a way that creates a memorable event. More and more travel organizations are responding by explicitly designing and promoting such events. As services, like goods before them, increasingly become commodified, experiences have emerged as the next step in the 'progression of economic value'. From now on, cutting-edge companies – whether they sell to consumers or businesses – will find that the next competitive battleground lies in staging experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1998).[31]

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An experience is not an amorphous construct; it is as real an offering as any service, good, or commodity. In today's service economy, many companies simply wrap experiences around their traditional offerings to sell them better. To realize the full benefit of staging experiences, however, businesses must deliberately design engaging experiences that command a fee. Commodities are fungible, goods tangible, services intangible, and experiences memorable. Buyers of experiences value what the company reveals over a period of time. While traditional economic offerings – commodities, goods, and services – are external to the buyer, experiences are inherently personal, existing only in the mind of an individual who has been engaged on an emotional, physical, intellectual, or even spiritual level. Thus, no two people can have the same experience, because each experience derives from the interaction between the staged event (like a theatrical play) and the individual's state of mind.

Experiences have always been at the heart of the entertainment business – a fact that Walt Disney and the company he founded have creatively exploited. But today the concept of selling an entertainment experience is taking root in businesses far removed from theatres and amusement parks. At theme restaurants such as the Hard Rock Cafe, Planet Hollywood and the House of Blues, the food is just a prop for what is known as 'eatertainment'. And stores such as Niketown, Cabella's and Recreational Equipment Incorporated draw consumers in by offering fun activities, fascinating displays, and promotional events (sometimes labelled 'shoppertainment' or 'entertailing'). But experiences are not exclusively about entertainment; companies stage an experience whenever they engage customers in a personal, memorable way. For example, WestJet and Southwest airlines go beyond the function of transporting people from point A to point B, and compete on the basis of providing an experience. The companies use the base service (the travel itself) as the stage for a distinctive en route experience – one that attempts to transform air travel into a respite from the traveller's normally frenetic life (see the Snapshot on WestJet in Chapter 11). Other tourism experiences that engage consumers in a personal, memorable way have been highlighted in this chapter, and include Semester at Sea, volunteer tourism packages, Pier 21 and Dianaville.

Chapter Summary

Understanding the consumer's needs and buying process is the foundation of successful marketing. By understanding the buyer's decision-making process, the various participants in the buying procedure, and the major influences on buying behaviour, marketers can acquire many clues about how to meet buyer needs. The key factors that influence consumer behaviour are motivation, culture, age and gender, social class, lifestyle, life cycle, and reference groups.

It has been suggested that there are three levels of buying commitment, which are dependent on the nature of the purchase: extended problem solving, limited problem solving and habitual problem solving. It is also proposed that there are five buying roles: initiator, influencer, decider, buyer and user. A consumer moves through a number of

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stages leading up to purchase: awareness, information gathering, formation of an attitude, evaluation, purchase and post-purchase.

A marketer will also need to understand the buying phases for organizations. The conference market, for example, follows a pattern of group decision-making, and the 'buy phase' has been described as follows: problem recognition, general need description, product specification, supplier search, proposal solution, supplier selection, order routine specification and performance review.

The behaviour of business travellers is significantly different from that of leisure travellers. For example, business travellers do not see travel as a perk but rather as another source of stress. Hence some sectors of the tourism industry, such as airlines, are spending considerable effort trying to understand the needs of their business travellers.

There are a range of trends or demands in consumer behaviour that are influencing tourism and hospitality marketing today. These include the desire for learning and enrichment travel, concern for the environment, a more health-conscious society, the desire on the part of tourists to be active on holiday, requests for customized and personalized vacations, the increasing desire for convenience and speed, and the desire for experiences.

Key Terms

allocentrics, p. 53
attitudes, p. 44
beliefs, p. 43
consumer attitudes, p. 45
consumer behaviour analysis, p. 40
culture, p. 46
experience, p. 67
family life cycle, p. 50
learning, p. 43
learning and enrichment travel, p. 59
life cycle model, p. 50
lifestyle analysis, p. 49
motivations, p. 42
needs, p. 42
perception, p. 44
perceptual mapping, p. 44
psychocentrics, p. 53
psychographic analysis, p. 50
reference groups, p. 52
social class, p. 47
VALS™, p. 50

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Discussion Questions and Exercises

1. Using the Snapshot on backpackers, and all the material on consumer behaviour in this chapter, create a profile of a typical backpacker. How is he or she different in behaviour from other types of travellers, such as the packaged or the business traveller?
2. Where would you place the backpacker on Plog's continuum? What are likely to be the popular backpacker destinations of the future? Are there some destinations that are not capitalizing on this market?
3. Why is the post-purchase behaviour stage included in most models of the buying process?
4. Consider the trends in consumer behaviour discussed at the end of the chapter. Can you think of any other trends that have emerged since this book was published?
5. Discuss the roles that each member of the family plays in the decision-making process when choosing a holiday. Is there any evidence that children play an influential role?

Case Study

Rites of Passage: Schoolies Week in Queensland, Australia

Schoolies Week is actually a month-long graduation festival celebrated by Year 12 school leavers from all over Australia. It takes place after the Year 12 Leaving Certificate, between mid-November and mid-December. The event is predominantly held on Queensland's Gold Coast, but alternative destinations include Byron Bay, Sunshine Coast, Airlie Beach, Magnetic Island and Lorne on the Great Ocean Road in Victoria. Traditionally there are separate Schoolies Weeks for Queensland and New South Wales/Victorian Year 12s on the Gold Coast, so that at each one, students party with their peers. It is estimated that between 30,000 and 35,000 school leavers take part in the event every year, generating over AUS$60 million for Queensland's economy.

Schoolies Week is one of the few 'rites of passage' remaining for Australian teenagers. The rites of passage concept implies a transition from adolescence to adulthood, an activity designed to enhance the development of a distinct self-identity. Such a transition can be seen as a basic human development stage characterized by a postponement of the taking up of adult responsibilities, a desire for novel and varied activities, interest in risk-taking and experimentation, and a desire to spend time socializing with peers.

At one time, the rites of passage of young adults in Australia took the form of debutante balls. However, the popularity of the debutante ball fell due to a number

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Schoolies in Lorne, Victoria, enjoying the beach

Case Study

of social and economic changes in the '60s and '70s. These included a rise in the number of high school leavers associated with the baby boom after World War II, a stronger emphasis on higher education by governments in Australia, and an increasingly liberal and permissive social climate. These social changes, coupled with free tertiary education introduced in 1974, and a lowering of the legal drinking age from 21 to 18 years of age, resulted in a large number of students not immediately occupied in seeking work after completing Year 12 and who were more likely to experiment with previously 'forbidden' activities.

Schoolies Week is often the first holiday these students go on without their families, and their youth creates special needs. The festival affects Schoolies themselves, residents, other tourists and tourism operators and businesses; it is therefore not surprising that Schoolies Week has become a contentious issue. Each year it is associated with numerous reports of crimes by and against Schoolies, and the activities of Schoolies, including drunk and disorderly behaviour, have affected the image of Queensland's Gold Coast as a family destination.

When the Gold Coast developed as the original primary location of Schoolies Week in the late 1970s and 1980s it was not an organized or commercial event. Instead it was a spontaneous group activity over an extended period that developed through a

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Case Study

process of communication and diffusion into a cultural event – part of the youth 'rites of passage'. Commercialization of Schoolies Week began in the late 1980s, as companies like Breakfree Holidays focused on the Schoolies market. In the 1990s, the Gold Coast City Council (GCCC) became active in the planning and management of the festival (in part because of negative publicity caused by drunken Schoolies), and so Schoolies Week developed into a much more organized event. Commercial forces have since guided the evolution of Schoolies into a carefully choreographed event, sponsored by big companies and decorated by a flourishing line in merchandising. The Queensland Government has even provided a text messaging information service whereby registered Schoolies can agree to have their details passed on to third parties. The festival has also become a focus for State Education, Health and Police Departments who provide educational material about Schoolies Week in schools across Queensland. One particular problem associated with the festival is predatory sexual behaviour by older males. Incidents of violence associated with the festival are also believed to have been perpetrated by older non-school leavers.

Today, a number of tour operators cater to the Schoolies Week market, including Schoolies.com who claim to be the market leader for Schoolies travel arrangements. In their promotional material the company promises qualified and licensed security guards on all 'Schoolies' properties, individual Photo ID building entry passes, supervised no-alcohol Schoolies-only dance parties, as well as a 24-hour helpline throughout the Schoolies month. For other tourism businesses, particularly budget accommodation, Schoolies Week occurs in a traditional low occupancy period and so counters the negative impacts of seasonality. However, the Queensland Gold Coast is a popular holiday destination for a large, and diverse, number of domestic and international travellers. Managing and developing quality standards for such heterogeneous visitors can be a challenge for the destinations concerned.

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Questions

1. Account for the growth in Schoolies Week in Queensland.
2. Does the increasing management and control of Schoolies Week challenge the reason for its existence as a 'rite of passage'?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of Schoolies Week for tourism operators in Queensland?
4. How should destination managers in Queensland deal with the challenge of pleasing both Schoolies and other tourists?
5. Can you think of other tourism products that have been developed in response to changes in the consumer life cycle?

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Web Sites

www.voluntourism.org	Information on Volunteer Tourism
www.responsibletavel.com	Responsibletravel.com website
www.astanet.com	American Society of Travel Agents
www.letacanada.com	The Learning & Enrichment Travel Alliance
www.ntaonline.com	National Tour Association
www.pier21.ns.ca	Pier 21 (Nova Scotia)
www.disney.go.com	Walt Disney World
www.semesteratsea.com	Semester at Sea
www.templestay/korea.com	Temples in Korea
www.landofvalencia	Valencia's tourist office
www.czech.cz	Official Czech Republic Destination website
www.countrystylecommunitytourism.com	Countrystyle Community Tours

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