

## EXPERIENTIAL MARKETING DIVERGENT APPROACHES IN THE DISCIPLINE AND POSSIBLE RAPPROCHEMENT

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## The notion of experience in the field of consumption and marketing (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982)



## Poll Questions

In the marketing literature, experience is:

- A new type of company offering
- The consumer response to marketing stimuli
- A brand strategy
- A subjective process of the consumer
- A way consumers escape from their ordinary life

## Different research perspectives on experience: companies vs consumers (Chaney et al. 2018; Becker and Jaakkola, 2020)

### From companies:

Experience is a new type of offering to be added to commodities, products and services.



### From consumers:

Consumer experience as a subjective consumption process, in building and transforming the consumer identity

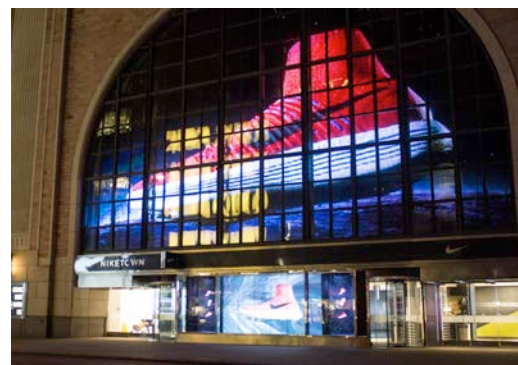


## The companies' perspective: definitions

- Companies have to create memorable and extraordinary experiences (Pine and Gilmore, 1999, 2013) and to surprise the consumer developing an experiential marketing approach (Schmitt, 1999) to differentiate their offering (Tynan, and McKechnie, 2009)
- Customer Experience Management is fundamental for practitioners (Homburg et al., 2017)
- Customer experience is the internal and subjective response customers have to any direct or indirect contact with a company (Meyer and Schwager, HBR, 2007)

## Focus on brand contexts in industries, retailing, services

### Brand Stores



## Focus on brand experience: brand contexts

### Brand Plants



### Brand Fests



## Focus on brand experience: brand contexts

### Brand Events



### Brand Internet Sites



## The customer journey

Customer experience occurs during many interactions – touch points – between companies and customers (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016)

Companies have to understand how they can use different types of stimuli to improve customers' responses along the customer journey (Patrício et al. 2011)

Social media and online channels have given exceptional importance to customer journey

## Augmented Reality Gucci Try-ons Revealed on Snapchat



## Methodological approaches: perspective from companies – measure the experience

Models and scales to measure brand experience have been developed (Brakus, et al. 2009).

Based on Customer journey, the models try to measure the experience in every single moment of the relationship (Kuehnl, C., Jozic, D., & Homburg, C., 2019)

The aim is to understand

- the impact of marketing actions taken by the company
- if and how brand experience affects consumer satisfaction and

loyalty.

## The Consumer Perspective: definitions

Consumer experience is a **subjective consumption** process (Addis and Holbrook)

**Emotions** are increasingly important (not just functional needs)

**Physical** and **sensorial** dimensions are involved (Joy and Sherry, 2003)

**Social** dimension is key (Consumers Tribes, Shankar, Cova and Kozinets, 2012)

## The consumer perspective



*“For the postmodern consumer, consumption is not a mere act of devouring, destroying, or using things. ....but an **act of production of experiences and selves or self-images**”*

Firat et Dholakia, 1998, p. 96

## The Consumer Culture Theory contribution

*“CCT research is fundamentally concerned with the cultural meanings, sociohistoric influences, and social dynamics that shape consumer experiences and identities in the myriad messy contexts of everyday life” (Arnould and Thompson 2005, p. 875)*



## A fundamental distinction (Carù and Cova, 2003)

- Ordinary Experiences (Moisio et al, 2013; Kravet and Sandikci, 2014)
- Extraordinary Experiences



## Extraordinary Experiences

*"River rafting provides absorption and integration, personal control, joy and valuing, a spontaneous letting-be of the process, and a newness of perception ... In the current historical and cultural context, it can be argued that these themes are deeply frustrated values that the American consumers seek and prize"*

(Arnould & Price, 1993)





## Extraordinary experiences as **escapes** from :

- **Civilization** (Arnould, Price and Tierney, 1998; Hirschman and Stern, 1999; Belk and Costa, 1999; Hewer and Hamilton, 2010; Canniford and Shankar, 2013; Chaney and Goulding, 2016)
- **Market and commercial** (Arnould, 2007; Kozinets, 2002; Grayson and Martinec, 2004)
- **Daily routine** (Hewer and Hamilton, 2010; Megehee, Ko and Belk 2016)
- **Responsibilities** (Kozinets et al., 2004; Griffin et al., 2016; Taheri et al. 2015)
- **Unsatisfactory work** (Scott, Cayla and Cova, 2017)
- **Social constraints** (Kozinets, 2001; Cusack et al., 2003; Taheri et al., 2015)

## Escape through **immersion** into (Cova et al., 2018):

Theme	Searching for	Contexts and Sources
<b>Nature and wilderness</b>	Purity, immersion into the wild, <b>communion</b> with natural elements	<i>River rafting (Arnould and Price, 1993); Gathering at Mountain Man (Belk and Costa, 1998); Surfing ocean's waves (Canniford and Shankar, 2013)</i>
<b>Celebrations and festivals</b>	Play and pleasure, rituality of calendrical events, broken social convention,	<i>Burning Man (Kozinets, 2002); Rock music festivals (Chaney and Goulding, 2016; Griffin et al., 2016)</i>
<b>Subcultural gatherings</b>	<b>Utopia; community;</b> shift from one identity to another; physical transformation	<i>Rave parties (Goulding et al. 2002); Star trek conventions (Kozinets, 2001; Cusack et al., 2003); Musical theatre (Greenacre et al., 2015)</i>
<b>Extreme activities</b>	<b>leisure</b> High risk leisure, challenge, risk, pleasure, difficult practices	<i>Skydiving (Celsi et al., 1993); Everest climbing (Tumbat and Belk, 2011); Obstacle racing (Scott et al., 2017); Salsa dancing (Hewer and Hamilton, 2010)</i>
<b>Spectacular built environments</b>	Pleasure, entertainment, <b>fantasies, emotions, hyper-reality</b>	<i>ESPN zone (Sherry et al., 2001; Kozinets et al., 2004); Nike Town (Penaloza, 1999; Sherry 1998); American Girl (Diamond et al., 2009);</i>

## New frontiers in consumer experiences

Beyond structure/antistructure conceptualization (Turner 1969)

Escape from a saturated self

- Pain (Obstacles racing - Scott et al., 2017)
- Spirituality (pilgrimages - Cova and Cova, 2019; long trails, Husemann and Eckhardt, 2019)
- Embodied experiences (tattooing, Roux and Belk, 2019)



Escape moments in the ordinary life (Skandalis et al., 2019)

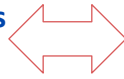


## Methodological approaches: perspective from consumers - interpretative research

- Ethnographic approaches, based on participant observation and interviews, often involving the immersion of the researcher within a context of consumption (Arnould and Price, 1993; Maclaran and Brown, 2005)
- Netnography, or the immersion of the researcher within a virtual community to better apprehend online experiences (Kozinets, 2001).
- Personal interviews (Moisander, 2009)
- Introspections, involving a return of individuals on themselves and on what they have experienced and lived (Wallendorf and Brucks, 1993; Holbrook, 2006).

## Possible (and desirable!) rapprochement: a methodological integration

Companies can design **experiential platforms and support consumers in creating their own subjective experience**, alone or with others



**Understanding the socio-cultural context** of the relationship between companies and consumers enriches the approach (Giesler, 2019)

Digital economy makes available **amount of data** and **disintermediation** makes possible a direct contact between companies and consumers



Ethnography, netnography, personal interviews can provide a fundamental **contribution in orienting data interpretation** broadening the companies perspective and powering the marketing approach