# **Chapter 8: Internal Influences on Consumer Behavior Attitudes**

By understanding how consumers think, feel, and behave, businesses can craft more effective marketing strategies. Among the internal factors that influence consumer behavior, **attitudes** play a central role. Attitudes shape how individuals perceive products, brands, and marketing messages. This chapter explores the multifaceted nature of attitudes, their components, various types, and the psychological mechanisms through which they impact consumer decision-making.

At the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

1. Define attitudes and beliefs and discuss their role in consumer behavior.
2. Recognize components of attitudes.
3. Discuss how consumer attitudes are shaped by advertising appeals, message strategies, and source characteristics, and the implications for marketing.
4. Discuss the Elaboration Likelihood Model.

Key Concepts to Remember:

* Attitudes
* Beliefs
* Types of belief:  
  descriptive beliefs, inferential beliefs, evaluative beliefs
* Attitude components:  
  cognitive, affective, behavioral components
* Multiattribute attitude model
* Appeals
* Types of attitudes
* Changing attitudes – strategies
* Exposure, familiarity
* Conditioning - types
* Inducing trial strategies
* Elaboration likelihood model
* High vs. low involvement
* peripheral vs. central route
* advertising appeals
* message strategies
* source characteristics
* Source credibility, celebrities, trustworthiness, expertise

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## **Attitudes and Beliefs[[1]](#footnote-1)**

An attitude is a learned tendency to respond positively or negatively to an object, person, or event. It reflects a consumer’s evaluations, emotions, and behavioral inclinations toward specific products or brands. These attitudes play an important role in shaping consumer behavior. They influence whether someone will buy, recommend, or avoid a product. Attitudes can be favorable, unfavorable, or neutral, and they significantly impact the decision-making process.

### Types of Beliefs

Beliefs are the foundation upon which consumer attitudes are formed. They represent subjective perceptions about the attributes or qualities of a product or brand. Beliefs can be classified into three main types: evaluative beliefs, which involve judgments about a product’s value; descriptive beliefs, which are based on direct observations or experiences; and inferential beliefs, which are drawn from indirect information or assumptions. Understanding these belief types helps marketers anticipate how consumers might respond to marketing messages and product offerings.

*Types of Beliefs*

**Descriptive beliefs** are formed from direct experiences with a product, such as when someone observes that "this shampoo made my hair shiny." In contrast, **inferential beliefs** arise from limited information, leading to assumptions like "this brand must be good because it's expensive." **Evaluative beliefs**, on the other hand, involve personal judgments about a product's characteristics, as exemplified by the statement, "this product is too harsh for my skin." Together, these three types of beliefs illustrate the complex ways in which consumers form opinions about products based on their experiences, assumptions, and evaluations.

*Types of Beliefs*

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| **Type of Belief** | **Definition** | **Example** |
| Descriptive | Based on direct experience | "This product is comfortable." |
| Inferential | Assumptions based on limited information | "This brand is for professionals." |
| Evaluative | Based on personal judgment | "I believe this product is expensive." |

### **Beliefs and Implications for Consumer Behavior and Marketing[[2]](#footnote-2)**

To effectively leverage descriptive beliefs, marketers should focus on giving consumers direct experiences with products. For example, offering free trials of a new skincare line can generate positive feedback such as, “This moisturizer makes my skin feel hydrated,” which helps reinforce favorable attitudes. In-store product demonstrations, like allowing customers to test a new cosmetic, can also boost engagement and encourage word-of-mouth promotion.

Addressing inferential beliefs is equally important, as consumers often form assumptions based on limited information. For instance, many associate higher prices with better quality. Marketers can use this to their advantage by positioning products to align with these perceptions. Highlighting the craftsmanship of handmade goods, such as artisan chocolates, can validate and strengthen these inferred beliefs.

Managing evaluative beliefs, which involve personal judgments, requires clear and targeted communication of product benefits. A laundry detergent brand, for example, might emphasize its hypoallergenic formula and stain-removing power to appeal to parents concerned about their children’s sensitive skin. Similarly, a car manufacturer could spotlight safety ratings and features when marketing to families, as these evaluations heavily influence purchasing decisions.

By understanding and addressing these three types of beliefs: descriptive, inferential, and evaluative, marketers can craft more effective messaging and strategies that align with consumer perceptions, ultimately driving purchase decisions and building brand loyalty.

*Beliefs and Marketing Strategies*

*Reflect*

1. How do descriptive, inferential, and evaluative beliefs shape your product choices as a consumer?
2. How can marketers effectively balance the use of descriptive, inferential, and evaluative beliefs to create a cohesive brand message that appeals to diverse consumer segments?

### **Components of Attitude[[3]](#footnote-3)**

Attitudes are multifaceted constructs made up of three key components: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The cognitive component involves the beliefs and thoughts individuals hold about an object or idea, forming the basis of their attitudes. For example, a consumer may believe that electric vehicles are environmentally friendly due to their lower emissions, which fosters a positive attitude toward them. The affective component relates to the emotional responses such as joy, anger, or excitement that a person experiences in relation to a product or idea. A consumer might feel thrilled about owning the latest smartphone, which contributes to a favorable attitude toward the brand. The behavioral component reflects the intention to act based on one’s attitude, such as purchasing a product or recommending it to others. For instance, someone who enjoys a restaurant’s food and service may choose to dine there regularly and share their experiences with friends. Together, these components demonstrate how attitudes are shaped by a blend of beliefs, emotions, and actions, all of which significantly influence consumer behavior.

*Attitudes – Components*

*Example – Snack Bars*

Understanding the components of attitude—cognitive, affective, and behavioral—is essential for marketers aiming to influence consumer behavior effectively.

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| **Attitude Component** | **Consumer Behavior Example** | **Marketing Strategy** |
| **Cognitive** | Consumers believe pasture-raised 100% grass fed meats are healthier and better for the environment. | Provide factual information about health benefits and eco-friendliness through educational content, packaging, and social media campaigns. |
| **Affective** | Consumers feel happiness or indulgence thinking about a guilt-free treat. | Create emotionally driven advertising campaigns that evoke positive feelings, using relatable imagery and testimonials from satisfied customers. |
| **Behavioral** | Consumers intend to purchase snack bars or recommend them to others. | Implement incentives such as discounts for first-time buyers, loyalty programs, and clear calls to action like “Try a free sample in-store.” |

Consider a new brand of organic snack bars:

**Cognitive Component:** This aspect relates to the beliefs consumers hold about snack bars. For example, a consumer might believe that organic products are healthier and better for the environment. Marketers can target this cognitive component by providing information about the health benefits of the ingredients used and highlighting certifications such as “USDA Organic.” This can be achieved through educational content on packaging, informative blog posts, or social media campaigns that emphasize the nutritional value and eco-friendliness of the product.

**Affective Component:** The affective component involves the emotions consumers feel towards the snack bars. A consumer may experience feelings of happiness or indulgence when thinking about a guilt-free treat that aligns with their health goals. To target this component, marketers can create emotionally driven advertising campaigns that evoke positive feelings. This might include relatable imagery of active families enjoying the snack bars during outdoor activities or testimonials from satisfied customers expressing joy about their healthy choices, fostering a strong emotional connection with the brand.

**Behavioral Component:** This component reflects the consumer's intentions to act, such as purchasing snack bars or recommending them to others. Marketers can influence this behavior by creating incentives, such as discounts for first-time buyers or a loyalty program that rewards repeat purchases. Additionally, providing clear calls to action, such as “Try a free sample in-store,” can encourage consumers to experience the product firsthand, reinforcing positive attitudes and driving actual purchases.

By strategically targeting each component—cognitive, affective, and behavioral—marketers can shape consumer attitudes and influence purchasing decisions, ultimately increasing brand loyalty and market share.

### **Multiattribute Attitude Model - Composite Attitudes[[4]](#footnote-4)**

The multiattribute attitude model is a pivotal framework in consumer behavior that helps explain how individuals form attitudes toward products based on various attributes. According to this model, consumers assess products by considering multiple factors, each of which contributes to their overall evaluation and attitude. This evaluation process involves two critical elements: the importance of each attribute to the consumer and the consumer's perception of the product concerning those attributes.

Core Concepts of the Multiattribute Attitude Model:

* **Attributes**: Characteristics or features of a product that consumers consider significant. In the context of the automotive industry, attributes might include safety features, comfort, fuel efficiency, design, brand reputation, and price. Each consumer may prioritize these attributes differently based on their personal preferences, lifestyle, and specific needs, influencing their attitude toward various car models.
* **Importance Weights**: Not all attributes hold equal weight in influencing a consumer's overall attitude. Importance weights reflect how much a consumer values each attribute in their decision-making process. For example, a parent might place a higher importance on safety features when purchasing a family vehicle, while a young professional may prioritize fuel efficiency and design.
* **Evaluation Scores**: Consumers rate each product on the various attributes according to their experiences or perceptions. For instance, a consumer may rate a specific car model as having excellent safety features but mediocre fuel efficiency. These evaluation scores are often quantified on a numerical scale, enabling marketers to understand how their products stack up against competitors.

*Example - Composite Attitude Formation*

The overall attitude toward a product can be calculated by multiplying the importance weight of each attribute by the evaluation score for that attribute and then summing these products. This statistical approach provides a comprehensive view of how a consumer generally perceives a product based on its multiple attributes.

For example, a consumer evaluating two different car models might perceive the following:

Car A:

Safety (importance weight: 0.4; evaluation: 8/10)

Comfort (importance weight: 0.3; evaluation: 7/10)

Fuel Efficiency (importance weight: 0.3; evaluation: 9/10)

Attitude Score = (0.4 \* 8) + (0.3 \* 7) + (0.3 \* 9) = 3.2 + 2.1 + 2.7 = 8.0

Car B:

Safety (importance weight: 0.4; evaluation: 6/10)

Comfort (importance weight: 0.3; evaluation: 9/10)

Fuel Efficiency (importance weight: 0.3; evaluation: 8/10)

Attitude Score = (0.4 \* 6) + (0.3 \* 9) + (0.3 \* 8) = 2.4 + 2.7 + 2.4 = 7.5

In this example, Car A has a higher overall composite score (8.0) than Car B (7.5), indicating that the consumer might be more inclined to have a favorable attitude and potentially prefer Car A based on its performance across the attributes deemed important.

By combining the evaluations with the importance ratings, marketers can assess which attributes contribute most to the overall attitude toward a brand.

Understanding the multiattribute attitude model is essential for marketers as it provides valuable insights into how consumers evaluate products based on multiple attributes, influencing their overall attitudes and purchasing decisions. To effectively leverage this model, marketers should prioritize highlighting key attributes that resonate with their target audience. For instance, in the automotive industry, if safety features are deemed crucial, marketing campaigns could focus on advanced safety technologies such as automatic braking, lane-keeping assistance, and comprehensive crash test ratings, ensuring these elements are prominently featured in advertisements and promotional materials.

Additionally, conducting consumer research is vital; surveys and focus groups can help identify which attributes consumers prioritize, enabling marketers to align their product offerings accordingly. For example, if consumer feedback reveals that luxury features such as a high-end sound system or leather upholstery are important to potential buyers, companies should emphasize those aspects in their messaging.

Furthermore, competitive analysis plays a significant role and marketers should assess strengths and weaknesses of rival brands across various attributes. For example, if a competitor excels in fuel efficiency but lacks in safety ratings, a car manufacturer can highlight its superior safety features to attract consumers seeking peace of mind.

Marketers must also remain agile in addressing changing consumer priorities as market trends evolve, for instance, with the increasing importance of sustainability, companies in the automotive sector could promote hybrid or electric vehicles, showcasing their eco-friendly attributes to appeal to environmentally conscious consumers. By harnessing the insights from the multiattribute attitude model, companies can tailor their marketing strategies effectively, enhance their product positioning, and ultimately drive more significant consumer engagement and loyalty.

### **Implications for Market Segmentation and Product Development[[5]](#footnote-5)**

The multiattribute attitude model is instrumental in market segmentation as it helps identify distinct consumer segments based on their preferences for specific product attributes. By analyzing attitudes toward various product features (e.g., price sensitivity versus quality consciousness), marketers can derive segments that differ significantly in their evaluation criteria. For example, tech-savvy consumers may prioritize advanced features and specifications, while budget-conscious buyers focus primarily on price and basic functionality.

Once segments are identified, the model allows marketers to tailor products and messaging to meet the specific needs of each group. For instance, a brand targeting environmentally conscious consumers may emphasize eco-friendly manufacturing processes and energy-saving features in its messaging, while another segment that values luxury may focus on premium materials and exclusive benefits.

Multiattribue attitude model also shapes the product development process in a number of ways:

1. **Identifying Key Attributes:** During the product development process, the multiattribute attitude model helps businesses identify the key attributes that consumers value most in a relevant category. For example, if a company is developing a new smartphone, it may conduct market research to determine that consumers prioritize camera quality, battery life, screen size, and brand reputation. Understanding these preferences allows the development team to focus on enhancing these specific features, ensuring that the final product aligns with consumer expectations.
2. **Consumer Feedback and Evaluation:** By employing the multiattribute attitude model, companies can gather consumer evaluations of existing or prototype products based on various attributes. This feedback can be quantified, enabling developers to analyze which aspects of the product resonate well with consumers and which may require improvement. For instance, if consumer testing reveals that battery life is rated highly, while design aesthetics are rated lower, the development team can prioritize design improvements while maintaining strong battery performance.
3. **Benchmarking against Competitors:** The model allows companies to evaluate their product attributes relative to competitors. By comparing how consumers perceive their offerings against others in the market, businesses can identify competitive advantages or gaps that need to be addressed. For instance, if a new washing machine is found to offer superior energy efficiency compared to competitors, this feature can be emphasized in marketing and product positioning.
4. **Iterative Design and Refinement:** Using insights derived from the multiattribute attitude model, companies can engage in iterative design processes where prototypes are tested, consumer feedback is gathered, and products are refined based on evaluations of key attributes. This ongoing cycle of development ensures that the final product meets or exceeds consumer expectations, ultimately leading to higher satisfaction and loyalty.

## **The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)[[6]](#footnote-6)**

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) explains how persuasion influences attitudes through two routes: the central and peripheral. The central route involves careful, logical thinking, and is used when consumers are highly engaged, leading to lasting attitude changes. The peripheral route relies on surface cues like celebrity endorsements or emotional appeal, working best when consumers are less involved. Marketers can use ELM to tailor messages based on how deeply their audience is likely to process information.

### Central Route vs. Peripheral Route[[7]](#footnote-7)

The central route involves deep, thoughtful consideration of the arguments presented in a message. This route is activated when consumers are both motivated and able to critically evaluate the information. Individuals using the central route analyze content logically, weighing pros and cons based on the strength of the arguments. For example, when purchasing a new car, a consumer may research various models, compare features, evaluate safety ratings, and read reviews. They are likely to be influenced by detailed information such as fuel efficiency, warranty terms, technological advancements, and performance metrics. Advertisements targeting the central route often include expert endorsements, in-depth comparisons, and credible data like highlighting top safety ratings from trusted organizations to appeal to rational decision-making.

In contrast, the peripheral route relies on superficial cues rather than the substance of the message. This route is typically used when consumers have low involvement or lack the motivation or ability to process information deeply. Persuasive elements in this route include the attractiveness or credibility of the communicator, emotional appeal, or celebrity endorsements. For instance, a snack food ad may avoid discussing nutritional content and instead feature a popular athlete or influencer enjoying the product, creating a positive association through familiarity and likability. Humor, catchy jingles, and eye-catching visuals are also common tactics that engage consumers through the peripheral route. A consumer influenced by this way might choose a snack simply because they recognize the brand or are drawn to the packaging, rather than through any critical evaluation of its qualities.

Understanding both routes allows marketers to tailor their messages based on the audience’s level of engagement. By aligning persuasive strategies with how consumers process information, marketers can more effectively influence attitudes and drive behavior.

*Central Route vs. Peripheral Route*

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Central Route** | **Peripheral Route** |
| **Definition** | Deep, thoughtful consideration of arguments | Reliance on superficial cues |
| **Processing Depth** | High-depth processing | Low-depth processing |
| **Motivation** | High motivation and ability to process | Low motivation or ability to process |
| **Consumer Behavior Example** | Researching car features, safety ratings, and performance metrics | Choosing a snack due to attractive packaging or celebrity endorsements |
| **Type of Products** | High-involvement items (e.g., cars, electronics) | Low-involvement items (e.g., snacks, toiletries) |
| **Key Influencers** | Factual information, logical arguments, detailed comparisons | Emotional appeal, source credibility, aesthetics |
| **Advertising Strategy** | In-depth comparisons, expert endorsements, detailed specifications | Memorable jingles, humor, attractive visuals |

### **High vs. Low Involvement and the Processing Route**

The concepts of high and low involvement are integral to the ELM, as they dictate which route consumers are likely to take when responding to persuasive messages. In **high-involvement situations**, such as purchasing a car, individuals are very invested in the decision-making process. This investment often arises from the expense, personal relevance, or perceived risk associated with the product. As a result, consumers engage more deeply with the information available, favoring the central route of processing. They critically evaluate all aspects of the decision, seeking out detailed specifications, consumer reviews, expert testimonials, and comparisons with competing models. For instance, when considering an electric vehicle, a consumer may meticulously research battery life, range, charging speed, and environmental impact to ensure informed choices, with their final decision strongly influenced by the depth of information processed.

Conversely, in **low-involvement situations**, like buying snacks or household items, consumers typically lack the motivation to engage with the product information and are more likely to utilize the peripheral route. Here, decisions are made quickly and with less critical thought, often based on heuristics or shortcuts. For example, a consumer may choose a certain brand of potato chips simply because they recognize the name from previous purchases or because the packaging stands out on the shelf. Emotional triggers and brand familiarity play a significant role here. Marketing strategies for low-involvement products often focus on creating memorable advertisements, attractive packaging, or leveraging celebrity endorsements to make their message resonate. A brief but catchy jingle associated with a popular snack can influence purchasing behavior without necessitating deeper product evaluation.

*High vs. Low Involvement*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Involvement Level** | **Definition** | **Consumer Decision Process** | **Example** |
| **High Involvement** | Significant investment in the decision-making process | Engages in extensive information processing | Researching electric vehicle options, comparing features, safety ratings, and price |
| **Low Involvement** | Minimal investment or perceived risk in the decision | Engages in quick decision-making based on heuristics | Purchasing a common snack based on brand recognition or packaging appeal |

In summary, the Elaboration Likelihood Model effectively explains how different levels of involvement dictate the routes through which consumers process persuasive information. By understanding the central and peripheral routes, as well as high and low involvement contexts, marketers can tailor their strategies to engage consumers effectively. High-involvement situations call for in-depth, informative content that addresses consumer concerns and supports thoughtful decision-making, while low-involvement situations benefit from emotional appeals, brand recognition, and attention-grabbing tactics that facilitate quicker, less analytical choices. Thus, recognizing the application of the ELM is crucial for developing effective marketing communications that resonate with target audiences based on their involvement levels.

*Reflect*

1. Why do some consumers engage in **central route processing**, while others rely on **peripheral route processing**?
2. Can you think of a product that would require **high involvement** and one that would involve **low involvement**?

## **Changing Consumer Attitudes**

**Consumer attitudes** can be changed through advertising appeals, message strategies, and source characteristics. Advertising plays an important role in shaping consumer attitudes towards products and brands. By employing various appeals, message strategies, and source characteristics, marketers can influence how consumers perceive and evaluate offerings. This section explores these elements in detail, providing examples of how each contributes to changing consumer attitudes.

### Advertising Appeals[[8]](#footnote-8)

Advertising appeals are the underlying themes or emotional triggers used to engage and persuade consumers. There are several types of appeals, including emotional appeals, rational appeals, testimonial appeals, and fear appeals.

#### Emotional Appeals:

Emotional appeals target consumers' feelings, evoking emotions such as happiness, nostalgia, or fear, in order to foster a connection with the brand. For example, the hallmark of many successful advertisements is the use of storytelling to elicit an emotional response. An excellent illustration of this is the Coca-Cola "Share a Coke" campaign, where the brand personalized its bottles with popular names. By encouraging consumers to find their names or those of friends and family, Coca-Cola created a sense of personal connection and joy, leading to positive feelings associated with the brand. Emotional connections are powerful, as they can motivate consumers to engage with a brand beyond mere product attributes.

#### Rational Appeals

Rational appeals focus on factual information and logic, highlighting the benefits and features of a product. These appeals often rely on statistics, comparisons, and testimonials to persuade consumers. For example, a car manufacturer might run an ad campaign highlighting a vehicle's safety features, fuel efficiency, and performance metrics, such as “best-in-class fuel economy.” These ads cater to consumers seeking logical justifications for their purchase decisions. Rational appeals are particularly effective in high-involvement purchase scenarios, where consumers are more likely to engage in careful evaluation of the product features and benefits.

#### Value-Expressive Appeals

Value-expressive appeals focus on enhancing consumers' self-image and aligning with their values and beliefs. For instance, a brand like TOMS emphasizes its mission of social responsibility through its “One for One” model, where a pair of shoes is donated for every pair purchased. This appeal allows consumers to feel good about their purchase, associating it with a greater purpose, thus enhancing their attitude toward the brand.

#### Utilitarian Appeals

Utilitarian appeals, on the other hand, highlight practical benefits and functional attributes of a product. For example, an ad for a high-efficiency washing machine may emphasize its low energy consumption and cost savings on utility bills. By addressing the practical benefits, utilitarian appeals resonate with consumers looking for value and functionality.

#### Testimonial Appeals:

Testimonial appeals involve endorsements from satisfied customers or influencers who share their positive experiences with a product. This approach leverages social proof by illustrating that others have benefited from the product, fostering trust and credibility. For instance, beauty brands often collaborate with influencers to showcase skincare or makeup products, with influencers sharing their routines and results. These testimonials can sway consumer opinions and increase the likelihood of purchase due to the relatability and authenticity they convey, as potential customers see individuals similar to themselves achieving desirable results.

#### Humorous Appeals

Humor can be a powerful tool in advertising, capturing attention and creating positive associations with the product or brand. For example, Geico's ads featuring the "Gecko" and humorous scenarios have successfully engaged audiences and made the brand memorable. Humor can make consumers more receptive to messages, as laughter creates a positive emotional experience that can translate to a favorable attitude toward the brand. However, marketers must ensure that the humor does not overshadow the product message, as this could lead to consumer confusion or diminished brand recall.

#### Fear Appeals

Fear appeals aim to create a sense of urgency or concern about a problem that the product can resolve. A well-known example is the advertising of anti-smoking campaigns that underscore the severe health risks associated with smoking through graphic imagery and statistics. While fear appeals can be effective, it’s essential to balance the messaging with constructive solutions, such as highlighting resources for quitting smoking. If consumers feel overwhelmed without actionable solutions, they may disengage rather than change their attitudes.

### Message Strategies[[9]](#footnote-9)

Message strategies dictate how advertising messages are structured and conveyed. Key strategies include comparative advertising, positioning, and fear-based messages.

#### Comparative Advertising

Comparative advertising directly compares a brand to competitors, highlighting the advantages and superior features of one product over another. For example, Verizon famously utilized comparative advertising to assert that its network had the best coverage compared to AT&T, showcasing an advertisement where a Verizon customer confidently speaks on the phone in locations where an AT&T user can’t. This strategy can effectively shift consumer attitudes by framing the competition as deficient, thereby positioning the brand as the preferred choice in the category.

#### Positioning Strategies

Positioning strategies focus on differentiating a brand based on unique attributes or values. For example, Volvo positions itself as the safest car brand by consistently highlighting its commitment to safety innovations such as the introduction of seat belts and advanced safety technologies. This message strategy aligns with consumers who prioritize safety in their vehicle purchases, fostering a positive attitude toward Volvo and reinforcing its brand identity.

#### Fear-Based Messages

As mentioned earlier, fear appeals are designed to evoke concern or anxiety while suggesting that a particular product can alleviate those fears. Such strategies must be crafted delicately to ensure that consumers are motivated to act without feeling paralyzed by fear. For instance, a health insurance company might run ads detailing the severe risks of not having coverage during a medical emergency but concurrently stress the peace of mind that comes with their plans. This balanced approach can effectively shift attitudes toward the importance of securing health coverage.

#### One-Sided vs. Two-Sided Messages

One-sided messages present only the positive aspects of a product, aiming to bolster a favorable attitude. For example, a detergent brand might highlight its stain-fighting capabilities, omitting any mention of potential downsides. Conversely, two-sided messages acknowledge both positive and negative attributes of a product. For instance, a smartphone advertisement might tout its innovative features while also briefly mentioning its higher price point. This strategy can enhance credibility and may be particularly effective when addressing skeptical consumers by demonstrating transparency and awareness of potential objections.

#### Positive vs. Negative Framing:

Framing refers to how information is presented and can significantly influence attitudes. Positive framing emphasizes the benefits of a product, while negative framing highlights potential losses or drawbacks. For example, a health food product might frame its message positively by stating, “Enjoy a delicious snack that is low in calories,” whereas negative framing might present it as, “Don’t miss out on this low-calorie option or risk unhealthy snacking.” Positive framing often leads to more favorable attitudes, as consumers are generally more motivated by gains than losses.

### Source Characteristics[[10]](#footnote-10)

The characteristics of the source delivering the message significantly impact consumer attitudes and receptivity. Key source characteristics include credibility, attractiveness, and expertise.

#### Credibility

Credible sources enhance trust in the message. Consumers are more likely to change their attitudes when information comes from a trustworthy source. An example of this is pharmaceutical advertisements that feature doctors or healthcare professionals discussing the efficacy of medications. The authority of these figures lends credence to the claims made, leading consumers to view the product more favorably.

This notion extends to online influencers, who often have power to shape consumer perceptions. Influencers who have established rapport with their followers and are viewed as authentic and relatable can effectively enhance the credibility of the products they endorse. For instance, a beauty influencer with a loyal following may provide honest reviews about skincare products, showcasing their personal experiences and results. This perceived authenticity can lead consumers to trust the product recommendations more than traditional advertisements. However, the effectiveness of influencer marketing hinges on the influencer's perceived credibility. If the influencer is seen as inauthentic or overly promotional, it can lead to skepticism among their audience, thereby diminishing the impact of their endorsements. As such, brands often collaborate with influencers whose values align closely with their own to ensure that the messaging resonates well and feels genuine to potential consumers.

#### Attractiveness:

Attractive sources whether because of physical attractiveness or likability can draw attention and create positive associations with the brand. For instance, many personal care brands employ celebrities or models in their advertising to embody the desired characteristics of beauty and confidence. If a popular actress endorses a skincare line, consumers may associate her attractiveness with the product, thereby fostering a positive attitude toward it. If a popular actress endorses a skincare line, consumers may associate her attractiveness with the product, thereby fostering a positive attitude toward it. This effect, often referred to as the “halo effect,” highlights how attractiveness can enhance the perceived value of the product.

#### Expertise

Expertise refers to the knowledge and skill possessed by the source regarding a specific subject matter. Experts are perceived as more reliable. Therefore, their endorsements can significantly influence consumer attitudes. For example, a computer software company might feature IT specialists in its advertisements, emphasizing how the software solves specific technical problems. The audience benefits from the perceived expertise, leading to a more favorable attitude toward the product based on trust in the expert's opinion. For example, a beauty influencer with a deep understanding of skincare and cosmetics might create tutorials or reviews that discuss the science behind certain ingredients, thereby positioning themselves as knowledgeable in the field. When a beauty influencer like Huda Kattan, who is not only a makeup artist but also the founder of her own cosmetics line, shares insights and recommendations, her expertise lends significant weight to her endorsements. Consumers are more likely to trust her opinions on makeup products because they see her as credible and knowledgeable, which in turn can lead to increased sales for the brands she endorses. This combination of personal experience and professional knowledge creates a powerful influence on consumer attitudes and purchasing behavior.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of advertising in changing consumer attitudes hinges on the strategic use of appeals, message strategies, and source characteristics. Emotional appeals foster connections, rational appeals convince consumers with facts, testimonial appeals build trust, and fear appeals motivate action. Message strategies such as comparative advertising and positioning work to distinguish products and influence perceptions, while the credibility, attractiveness, and expertise of the source can enhance the persuasive effects of the message. By understanding and effectively leveraging these elements, marketers can create compelling advertising campaigns that reshape consumer attitudes, ultimately influencing purchasing behavior and brand loyalty. Through the art of persuasion, companies can connect with their target audiences, driving market success in a competitive landscape.

*Reflect*

1. How do emotional appeals influence your consumer attitudes compared to rational appeals?
2. Why do fear appeals sometimes backfire in marketing? What impact do you feel they have on you?
3. How important is source credibility in marketing? Can a lack of credibility hurt a brand?
4. Do you think celebrity endorsements actually influence consumer behavior? Do they influence you? Why or why not?

*End-of-Chapter Self-Reflection*

* 1. Think about a product you recently purchased. What attitudes and beliefs influenced your decision?
  2. When making a big purchase, do you tend to rely on central or peripheral route processing? Why?
  3. Reflect on an advertisement that emotionally impacted you. Did it change your attitude toward the brand?
  4. How do social influences (like testimonials or influencer endorsements) shape your opinions on brands?
  5. Have you ever been persuaded by fear appeal in marketing? If so, what made it effective?

Reflect

1. How do emotional appeals influence your consumer attitudes compared to rational appeals?

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Parts of this textbook have been adapted, revised, and remixed from the following OER resources:

* Introduction to Advertising: Advertising Practices  
  <https://oer.galileo.usg.edu/business-textbooks/10/>
* Launch! Advertising and Promotion in Real Time by Solomon et al. 2009: <https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/launch-advertising-and-promotion-in-real-time>
* Principles of Marketing by Lumen Learning <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/waymakerintromarketingxmasterfall2016/>
* Introduction to Marketing   
  <https://pressbooks.nscc.ca/nsccprinciplesofmarketing2e/>
* Introduction to Marketing by USG Ecore   
  <https://go.view.usg.edu/d2l/home/2366486>
* Exploring Intercultural Communication  
  <https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Courses/Butte_College/Exploring_Intercultural_Communication_%28Grothe%29/05%3A_Nonverbal_Processes_in_Intercultural_Communication/5.02%3A_Types_of_Nonverbal_Communication>
* Exploring Relationship Dynamics  
  <https://open.maricopa.edu/com110/chapter/4-4-nonverbal-communication-in-context/>

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