



DICHTER'S CONSUMPTION MOTIVES

Jean-Claude Usunier prepared this case solely to provide material for class discussion. The author does not intend to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a business situation. The author may have disguised certain names and other identifying information to protect confidentiality.

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Discuss the cross-cultural variability of the major motives for consumption as identified by Ernest Dichter (some 30 years ago!), considering all the products associated with your motives.

Motive	Associated Products
Power	Sugary products, large breakfasts, bowling, electric trains, pistols, power tool ¹
Masculinity–virility	Coffee, red meat, heavy shoes, toy guns; buying fur coats for women, shaving with a razor

¹ Outils électro-portatifs (perceuses électriques, ponceuses, etc.) / Elektroböhrer, Elektroschleifer, ...

Security	Ice-cream, full drawer of neatly ironed shirts, real plaster walls ² , home baking, hospital care
Eroticism	Sweets, gloves, a man lighting a woman's cigarette
Moral purity–cleanliness	White bread, cotton fabric ³ , harsh household cleaning chemicals ⁴ , bathing, oatmeal ⁵
Social acceptance	Companionship: ice-cream (fun to share), coffee Love and affection: toys, sugar and honey Acceptance: soap, beauty products
Individuality ⁶	Gourmet foods ⁷ , foreign cars, cigarette holders, vodka, perfume, fountain pens
Status ⁸	Scotch, ulcers, heart attacks ⁹ , indigestion, carpets
Femininity	Cakes and cookies, dolls, silk, tea, household curios ¹⁰
Reward	Cigarettes, candy alcohol ¹¹ , ice cream, cookies
Mastery over environment ¹²	Kitchen appliances, boats, sporting goods, cigarette lighters
Disalienation ¹³ (a desire to feel connectedness to things)	Home decorating, skiing, morning radio broadcasts
Magic–mystery	Soups (have healing powers), paints (change the mood of a room), carbonated drinks (magical effervescent property), vodka (romantic history ¹⁴), unwrapping of gifts

(Source: Solomon, 1992, p. 98)

² De vrais murs recouverts de plâtre, traditionnels / Traditionnel mit Gips verputzte Wände

³ Tissus en coton, cotonnades / Baumwoll Stoffe

⁴ Détergents ménagers / Putzmittel

⁵ Flocons d'avoine cuits pour le petit déjeuner (porridge) / Gekochte Haferflocken für das Frühstück

⁶ Individualité au sens de l'affirmation de soi et sa propre identité / Individualität im Sinne der Selbstbehauptung

⁷ Nourriture gastronomique, « delikatessen », mets fins / Feinkost

⁸ Statut social, démonstration de l'appartenance à une classe sociale élevée / Statussymbole

⁹ Crise cardiaque / Herzanfall (Herzinfarkt)

¹⁰ Bibelots, petits objets décoratifs utilisés dans la maison / Nippsachen

¹¹ Chocolats fourrés à l'alcool type bâtons au kirsch ou Mon Chéri de Ferrero / Mit Alkohol gefüllte Pralinen

¹² Maîtrise de son environnement autant physique (nature) que social (travail et relations sociales) /

Beherrschung der physischen und sozialen Umwelt

¹³ Le désir de se retrouver soi-même, de diminuer son aliénation et de retrouver un lien authentique à son monde personnel (y compris les objets familiers qu'on a choisis) / Wunsch nach Selbstverwirklichung und Authentizität

¹⁴ Esprit romantique lié à la Russie et au monde slave, à sa musique et à ses romans / Romantische Stimmung verbunden mit Russland und den slawischen Ländern, ihrer Musik und Romanen