

UNDERSTANDING AND USING EMOTIONS IN MARKETING

Mirela-Cristina VOICU*

Abstract

Emotion always had a special power, influencing the decisions of individuals and causing them to act in one way or another. In classical economic theory, consumers play the role of rational individuals making decisions based only on relevant information using conscious thinking. Unfortunately, conscious thinking requires a significant amount of energy from the individual, which has led to the evolution of the human body by limiting this type of thinking, to increase efficiency. Thus, the human brain has come to process unconsciously almost all communication signals in the environment (visual, auditory, tactile, etc.), through implicit processes controlled by the limbic system ("the emotional brain"). As a result, many consumer decisions are made unconsciously and are based on emotions.

It is also well known that consumers' purchasing decisions are driven by two types of needs: functional needs, satisfied through product functions, and emotional needs associated with the psychological aspects of product possession. Emotion is one of the most important motivators for purchasing, representing an important strategic element in the organization's marketing activity, giving meaning and depth to the experience with a brand or a product.

In the age of strategic-relationship marketing, emotion plays a key role. In this context, the following paper reveals important aspects regarding the necessity of understanding how emotions influence consumer behavior together with ways in which emotions can be used in the company's marketing activity.

Keywords: *emotional marketing, consumer behavior, relational marketing, strategic marketing, promotion.*

1. Introduction

Today's consumers are more educated and better equipped to research and find information about things that interest them. On the other hand, they are bombarded from all sides with advertisements, so in this very crowded space, companies have to stand out. And this can be done by accessing a very important component of consumer behavior - emotion.

It is well known that consumer purchasing decisions are driven by two types of needs: functional needs, satisfied through product functions, and emotional needs associated with the psychological aspects of product ownership¹. Emotion is one of the most important motivators for performing an action². Emotion is the necessary ingredient for almost all decisions³, an aspect identified after performing neurological studies on individuals whose connection

between the areas of the brain dedicated to "thought" and those dedicated to "emotion" have been damaged.

We rely on emotions, not information, to make brand decisions. „When we are confronted with sensory information, the emotional part of our brain can process information in a fifth of the time required by the cognitive part“⁴. In addition, the same areas of the brain dedicated to decision making are also involved in inhibiting behavior⁵. Also, neuromarketing studies performed using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) reflect the fact that in the process of brand evaluation, consumers use their emotions (personal feelings and experiences) rather than information (brand attributes, product features, etc.)⁶. All this emphasizes the importance of knowing and using emotions in the company's marketing activity, a necessity that led to the shaping of emotional marketing. Emotional marketing aims not only to provoke certain moods in consumers, but also to associate a state of mind with a

* Lecturer, PhD, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, „Nicolae Titulescu” University of Bucharest (e-mail: voicu.cristina.m@gmail.com).

¹ Consoli, D., 2010, *A New Concept of Marketing: The Emotional Marketing*, BRAND. Broad Research in Accounting, Negotiation, and Distribution, vol. 1, Issue 1, ISSN 2067-8177, <https://www.edusoft.ro/brain/index.php/brand/article/view/76>.

² *Why feelings matter: 7 examples of emotional marketing campaigns*, site-ul oficial Vcita - business management and client engagement app, <https://www.vcita.com/resources/marketing/emotional-marketing-campaign-strategy-7-examples>.

³ Murray, P.N., 2013, *How Emotions Influence What We Buy*, Psychology Today, February 26, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/inside-the-consumer-mind/201302/how-emotions-influence-what-we-buy> ; Chierotti, L., 2018, *Harvard Professor Says 95% of Purchasing Decisions Are Subconscious. When marketing a product to a consumer, it's most effective to target the subconscious mind*, Inc., 26 March, <https://www.inc.com/logan-chierotti/harvard-professor-says-95-of-purchasing-decisions-are-subconscious.html>.

⁴ Hodgson, S., *The power of emotional marketing: Once more with feeling*, Fabrik – branding agency, <https://fabrikbrands.com/the-power-of-emotional-marketing/>.

⁵ Baum, D., 2017, *How Emotion Influences Buying Behavior (And Marketers Can Use it)*, Impact Plus – online educational community, <https://www.impactplus.com/blog/emotion-influence-buying-behavior>.

⁶ Saitarli, V., 2019, *Emotion: The Super Weapon Of Marketing And Advertising*, Forbes, 4 November, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2019/11/04/emotion-the-super-weapon-of-marketing-and-advertising/?sh=2b570204df02>.

brand that will ultimately lead to loyalty to it. The use of emotions in the marketing activity gives meaning and depth to the experience with a brand or a product, an objective that is mainly targeted in the current marketing activity⁷.

In this context, the following paper aimed to reveal, through a secondary data exploratory research, the important aspects regarding the necessity of understanding how emotions influence consumer behavior, and to identify the ways in which emotions can be used in the company's marketing activity.

2. What is emotional marketing

The principles underlying emotional marketing aim to "develop and maintain a socio-emotional relationship with consumers"⁸ on the market of interest. In a society where consumers are looking for meaning and experience, the purpose of emotional marketing is to create images and transfer them into consumer consciousness⁹. In other words, emotional marketing targets all marketing activities that are based on stimulating emotions designed to influence consumer decisions¹⁰.

Emotional marketing is a form of marketing communication that involves the deliberate use of persuasive messages designed to stimulate human emotion in order to create a deep connection with the audience meant to ultimately lead to the achievement of marketing objectives, the most important of which is to achieve a long-term relationship with consumers.

In classical economic theory, consumers play the role of rational individuals making decisions based on relevant information using conscious thinking. Unfortunately, conscious thinking is an explicit process that requires a significant amount of energy from the individual, which, through the process of evolution has been limited in order to increase efficiency. This translates into the fact that the human brain processes unconsciously almost all communication signals (visual, auditory, tactile, etc.) from the environment,

through implicit processes controlled by the limbic system ("emotional brain"). As a result, many consumer decisions are made unconsciously and based on emotions¹¹.

The emergence and development of the emotional marketing concept in the context of marketing science is justified by the following main characteristics of consumer needs¹²:

- Consumers want to express themselves and their relationships with others through the objects they possess. Thus, in contemporary society, the expression of one's personality is achieved by satisfying desires based on the existing emotional relationship between the consumer and the company or its product brands. Self-expression is the highest form of personal need that possess emotional characteristics;

- Consumers place more value on those transactions and traded objects that help them express their feelings.

In the context of using emotional marketing, two basic characteristics of emotion are of interest¹³:

- *Valence*, namely whether the emotion is negative or positive;

- *Arousal* - the level of energy produced by emotion.

The variation in valence and arousal produced by an emotion causes individuals to decide whether they should continue or stop, take action, or think carefully. Positive emotions cause us to continue a certain behavior, while negative emotions cause us to consider changing a behavior. On the other hand, emotions with a high level of arousal cause us to act (a high probability of impulse shopping), while emotions with a low level of arousal push us to reflect (a relaxed or bored consumer is more likely to spend time searching, paying more attention to label information). Also, certain negative emotions, such as anger and anxiety, involve a high level of psychological and physiological arousal (revealed by the increase in heart rate, increased activity in the prefrontal area of the brain), while other negative emotions, such as sadness or depression,

⁷ Odekerken, M., 2018, *Emotional marketing: how to use emotions in your marketing*, Neurofied – Brain & Behaviour Academy, <https://neurofied.com/emotional-marketing-use-emotions-marketing/>.

⁸ Rytel, T., 2010, *Emotional Marketing Concept: the New Marketing Shift in the Postmodern Era*, Business: Theory and Practice, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 30-38, ISSN 1648-0627 print/ISSN 1822-4202 online, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269974122_Emotional_Marketing_Concept_The_New_Marketing_Shift_in_the_Postmodern_Era.

⁹ Khuong, M.N., Tram, V.N.B., 2015, *The Effects of Emotional Marketing on Consumer Product Perception, Brand Awareness and Purchase Decision — A Study in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam*, Journal of Economics, Business and Management, vol. 3, no. 5, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283245777_The_Effects_of_Emotional_Marketing_on_Consumer_Product_Perception_Brand_Awareness_and_Purchase_Decision_-_A_Study_in_Ho_Chi_Minh_City_Vietnam.

¹⁰ Why is Emotional Marketing the Key to the Consumer's Heart, 2020, June 18, École de Management Léonard de Vinci, <https://www.emlv.fr/en/why-is-emotional-marketing-the-key-to-the-consumers-heart/>.

¹¹ Goward, C., 2021, *Increase customer engagement by creating emotional marketing experiences*, Widerfunnel (blog), June 17, <https://www.widerfunnel.com/blog/emotional-relevance-marketing/>.

¹² Rytel, T., 2010, *Emotional Marketing Concept: the New Marketing Shift in the Postmodern Era*, Business: Theory and Practice, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 30-38, ISSN 1648-0627 print/ISSN 1822-4202 online, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269974122_Emotional_Marketing_Concept_The_New_Marketing_Shift_in_the_Postmodern_Era.

¹³ Eccleston, C., 2020, *What is Emotion? (Consumer Psychology 101)*, site-ul oficial LRW – Global Strategic Consultancy, <https://lrwonline.com/perspective/consumer-psychology-101-what-is-emotion/>.

involve a low level of arousal. According to studies, the level of arousal caused by an emotion, whether negative or positive, has different effects on the extent to which we can convince individuals¹⁴. Thus, emotions with a high level of arousal may lead consumers to prefer action-oriented events, while emotions with a low level of arousal may lead them to prefer passive events.

There are two types of emotions that can influence our decisions¹⁵: immediate emotions and anticipated emotions. Immediate emotions are those that we experience directly when we make a decision. Immediate emotions are much more intense and can have a major impact on our decisions. Anticipated emotions, on the other hand, are not directly experienced, being expectations of how we will feel after making a decision. The latter are the emotions most often exploited in emotional marketing. For example, BMW allows customers to track car production at every stage, building anticipation before the arrival of the purchased car¹⁶.

The human emotion targeted in emotional marketing can be fear, anger, joy or any other emotion strong enough to lead to a decision or to push to action. The human emotion, especially the negative one, persists and haunts, the tendency of people is to try to free themselves and act according to them.

According to a 2016 Nielsen study, ads with an above-average emotional response from consumers resulted in a 23% increase in sales, as opposed to ads with an emotional response placed at the average level¹⁷. Also, according to studies conducted in B2B field by Les Binet and Peter Field for B2B Institute, strategies that appeal to emotions are seven times more effective in generating long-term sales, profit and revenue compared to rational messages¹⁸. These results reflect the importance of emotions in the company's marketing activity.

3. Why is emotional marketing effective?

When properly designed, emotional marketing strategies help differentiate companies in the competitive environment in which they operate because:

- Emotional marketing has a big impact on the audience. Thus, an ad that describes the benefits of a product will have a much lower impact on the audience compared to a funny ad that brings smiles and good mood, or one that impresses to tears.

- Emotional marketing influences the purchasing decision making process. Studies show that people are more likely to rely on emotions, not information, to make purchasing decisions¹⁹. The emotional response to marketing influences consumers' purchasing intentions and decisions to a much greater extent than the content of an ad or promotional material²⁰. According to a study published in the Harvard Business Review²¹, customers become more important in terms of purchases, frequency of product use, etc., with each step of the process of "emotional connection" with the brand, a process whose stages start from "being disconnected" to "be fully connected" with the brand.

- People remember much better the companies that apply emotional marketing, considering the fact that emotion and memory are connected to each other. The probability that people will have a lasting memory of emotionally charged events is much higher. Thus, the principle we need to remember for our marketing activity is that intense memories come from strong emotional experiences. Consequently, when the company's activity has an emotional impact on the public, its brand and content will remain in the hearts and minds of consumers for a longer period of time. Also, the emotional experience is able to create memories that can have delayed effects, which can unfold at the time of consumption²².

- The emotional marketing content is much more shareable. It is human nature to share stories that

¹⁴ Collier, A.Z., 2008, *Emotion and Consumer Behavior. Can anger make us choose a hiking trip vacation?*, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, July 1, https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/emotion_and_consumer_behavior.

¹⁵ Odekerken, M., 2018, *Emotional marketing: how to use emotions in your marketing*, Neurofied – Brain & Behaviour Academy, <https://neurofied.com/emotional-marketing-use-emotions-marketing/>.

¹⁶ Hayes, C., *Consumer Behavior—Motivations, Emotions*, Cornell Research – Cornell University, <https://research.cornell.edu/news-features/consumer-behavior-motivations-emotions>.

¹⁷ *We're Ruled by Our Emotions, and So Are the Ads We Watch*, 12 January 2016, Nielsen official site, <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2016/were-ruled-by-our-emotions-and-so-are-the-ads-we-watch/>.

¹⁸ Schwarz, J., 2019, *Why B2B marketers need to get in touch with their feelings*, Marketing Blog LinkedIn, October 29, <https://business.linkedin.com/en-uk/marketing-solutions/blog/posts/B2B-Marketing/2019/Why-B2B-marketers-need-to-get-in-touch-with-their-feelings>.

¹⁹ Decker, A., 2018, *The Ultimate Guide to Emotional Marketing*, HubSpot <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/emotion-marketing>.

²⁰ Murray, P.N., 2013, *How Emotions Influence What We Buy*, Psychology Today, February 26, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/inside-the-consumer-mind/201302/how-emotions-influence-what-we-buy>.

²¹ Magids, S., Zorfas, A., Leemon, D., 2015, *The New Science of Customer Emotions. A better way to drive growth and profitability*, Harvard Business Review, Nov. <https://hbr.org/2015/11/the-new-science-of-customer-emotions>.

²² Antonetti, P., Baines, P., Walker, L., 2015, *From elicitation to consumption: assessing the longitudinal effectiveness of negative emotional appeals in social marketing*, Journal of Marketing Management, vol. 31, Issue 9-10, pp. 940-969, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0267257X.2015.1031266>.

are emotional in some way.

- Emotional marketing contributes to consumer loyalty and creating brand supporters. Studies have shown that positive emotions towards a brand have a much greater influence on consumer loyalty than their confidence or other judgements based on brand attributes would have. Emotions are the main reason consumers prefer branded products²³. Creating an emotionally charged brand means making it tangible, affordable, and credible for customers so that they unconsciously develop an emotional connection with it²⁴. Consumers that have an emotional connection to a brand are far more valuable than consumers who are simply satisfied. Emotionally connected consumers spend twice as much and even more buying from their favorite retailers and will stay true to a brand for an average of 5.1 years, compared to 3.4 years for satisfied consumers²⁵.

4. The use of emotions in marketing

In neuroscience, specialists distinguish between emotions and feelings²⁶. Feelings are consciously experienced and processed by the individual. Feelings are the result of emotions processing, being superior affective states, characterized by a longer duration and a moderate intensity. Emotions, on the other hand, are formulated by the limbic system, a fairly old area of the human brain. Emotions are not subject to awareness, they are spontaneous emotional states, of short duration, with variable intensity. Through emotions such as fear or joy, the limbic system triggers a series of reactions of which we become aware only physiologically (palpitations, nervousness, sweating, etc.). This is, after all, the objective of emotional marketing - to get an emotional reaction from the potential customer before making a conscious decision.

Studies conducted in the field of measuring consumers' emotions classify emotions into two categories - positive emotions (contentment, happiness, love, and pride) and negative emotions (sadness, fear, anger, and shame)²⁷.

As mentioned earlier, emotional marketing most often uses a single emotion to connect with the audience. And most of the time, the strongest emotion, whether positive or negative, offers the greatest chance of success.

Fear. Of all human emotions, fear probably affects us the most. Consumer fears are either physical fears (related to threats that may affect the human body) or social fears (related to threats that may affect social desirability). Fear causes the consumer to prevent, solve or jump to the aid of others²⁸. Evoking fear through a marketing message is useful provided that it aligns with the existing fears of the target audience. Fear of accidents, fear of aging are the threats we face and which can be exploited extremely easily. The proliferation of gluten-free products is an example of how health related fear has been exploited far beyond the number of consumers who are really affected²⁹. Fear can also be created where it did not previously exist. Some time ago the fear of aging did not exist for the men's segment, but now there are anti-aging products specially created for men. And danger is not the only element that can be exploited in this context. Fear of missing out ("FOMO") is a fear that can be exploited in social networks. The fear of missing out can be exploited by timing moments to the deadline of an exceptional offer. Fear also urges us to cling to something comfortable and this ultimately leads to increased brand loyalty. The use of fear in emotional marketing allows the association of the brand with the only good thing in a dark world. However, the use of fear must be done in moderation. For campaigns in which fear is exploited, it is necessary to identify how the brand (the source) influences the conveyed message and how the message exploiting this emotion, especially if used in the long term, influences the brand³⁰.

Anger. The exploitation of anger in marketing is making people realize that something needs to be done or changed in order for justice to prevail or for a problem to be solved. Anger also causes us to be stubborn, and stubbornness leads to viral content and

²³ Murray, P.N., 2013, *How Emotions Influence What We Buy*, Psychology Today, February 26, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/inside-the-consumer-mind/201302/how-emotions-influence-what-we-buy>.

²⁴ Heintz, E., 2020, *Positive energy! How emotional marketing wins the hearts of customers*, DMEXCO - Digital Marketing Exposition & Conference, July 15, <https://dmexco.com/stories/positive-energy-how-emotional-marketing-wins-the-hearts-of-customers/>.

²⁵ Mathias, M., 2018, *Understanding the Emotions that Drive Consumer Behavior*, Total Retail, November 5, <https://www.mytotalretail.com/article/understanding-the-emotions-that-drive-consumer-behavior/>.

²⁶ Popescu, M., *Emoții vs Sentimente*, Alma Psihoterapie - Cabinet de Psihoterapie și Consiliere Psihologică, <http://www.lapsiholog.eu/index.php/11-emoții-vs-sentimente>.

²⁷ Laros, F., Steenkamp, J.B., 2005, Emotions in consumer behavior: a hierarchical approach, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 58, pp. 1437-1445, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315716615_Emotions_in_consumer_behavior_A_hierarchical_approach.

²⁸ Brennan, L., Binney, W., 2010, *Fear, guilt and shame appeals in social marketing*, *Journal of Business Research*, vol. 63, Issue 2, 140-146, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0148296309000307>.

²⁹ Wong, W., 2019, *The Science Of Emotion: 4 Keys To Effective Social Media Marketing*, SEOPressor, <https://seopressor.com/blog/science-of-emotion-effective-social-media-marketing/>.

³⁰ Hastings, G., Stead, M., Webb, J., 2004, *Fear Appeals in Social Marketing: Strategic and Ethical Reasons for Concern*, *Psychology & Marketing*, Nov 2004, vol. 21, no. 11, pp. 961-986, https://download.clib.psu.ac.th/datawebclib/e_resource/trial_database/WileyInterScienceCD/pdf/MAR/MAR_2.pdf.

loyal followers, considering that strong emotions such as anger cause people to share. Thus, the "Together for Magic Home" campaign called on people to take a stand in solidarity with the parents of children battling cancer, knowing the situation in Romanian hospitals where the parents of children suffering from cancer are forced to live in a chair next to their bed. The outcome of this campaign was overwhelming. By the end of November 2017, half a million euros had been raised and 60% of initial donors had maintained their monthly subscription, making MagicHOME the recurring campaign with the highest retention rate after more than 6 months. The money raised from SMS donations alone has reached over 1 million euros³¹. Another example of effective emotional marketing is the #unfollowhate campaign launched in 2021 by ING Bank, meant to encourage Romanians to not be influenced by negative comments, in response to the online harassment phenomenon³².

Happiness. Considering that everyone is looking for happiness, a positive emotion, we can make use of the "marketing of joy" thus contributing to the association of the brand with positivity. Happiness also causes consumers to share³³ everything that makes them smile, and this action ultimately leads to increased brand awareness, taking into account the fact that today thanks to social media, good news are circulating much faster³⁴. Advertisements designed to promote Nutella, for example, successfully exploit the feeling of happiness and good mood. Since December 2020, Nutella has been promoted in the "It's Good To Be Together With Nutella" campaign³⁵, in which Nutella's contribution to family happiness is quite obvious. And who doesn't want at least a piece of happiness like the one offered in Nutella videos!?

Sadness makes us empathize and relate so that it is not surprising that animal welfare associations present touching pictures of animals when requesting a donation. In this case, the feeling of sadness makes us act and help, at least by directing the 3.5% of the income tax. On the other hand, sadness intrigues us. Thus, the use of "sad news" in the online environment

causes the consumer to access the links. In other words, using words with negative connotations contributes to a higher accessing rate³⁶.

Belonging. There are few those who want to be alone. The desire for intimacy, strong bonds and security that come with joining a group is in our human nature. Maslow acknowledged that the sense of belonging is one of the most basic needs that motivates consumer behavior. That's the reason why we're seeing more and more brands creating online and offline communities where their loyal consumers share common interests. Neumarkt, for example, created the "men as they should be"³⁷ club in 2021 aiming to make consumers feel part of a community.

Greed. Delighting consumers is one of the main goals of marketers, and this is usually the case when people feel that they have received much more than what they paid for. In this case, it's all about greed. Offers such as those with a 75% discount and free shipping accompanied by a sense of urgency ("limited offer", "offer valid only 6 days!") rely on consumer greed.

But these are just basic emotions. Emotions actually fall into a much wider spectrum. A slight change in the spectrum can lead to a certain kind of happiness, a certain kind of sadness, a certain kind of anger ... similar to the different shades of a color (see Robert Plutchik's "wheel of emotions").

On the other hand, negative emotions can have a rather intense delayed effect while positive emotions are much more appreciated by consumers when the message is communicated³⁸. Also, using negative emotions in marketing is ideal in the case we want to get people to avoid certain behaviors or events, and less when we want to build brand loyalty, in which case the strategy should target positive emotions³⁹.

As we do with any marketing objective, we should also clearly define the targeted feeling in the emotional marketing activity, this objective further influencing all the details of the marketing activity carried out in this regard. Depending on the type of product, field, and audience, emotional marketing may

³¹ Bunea, I., 2019, *STUDIUL DE CAZ. Povestea Magic Home, Grand Effie 2018: MagicHome, campania virală a anului, care a strâns donații de peste jumătate de milion de euro în mai puțin de o lună*, Paginademedia.ro, <https://www.paginademedia.ro/2019/05/studiu-de-caz-magichome-grand-effie/>.

³² ING Romania, 29 December 2021, *Unfollow hate* [Video], YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAqo-4Txn1g>.

³³ Deshwal, P., 2015, *Emotional Marketing: Sharing The Heart of Consumers*, International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences, Vol. 4, No. 11, <https://garph.co.uk/IJARMSS/Nov2015/25.pdf>.

³⁴ Thieney, J., 2013, *Good News Beats Bad on Social Networks*, New York Times, 18 March 2013, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/19/science/good-news-spreads-faster-on-twitter-and-facebook.html?pagewanted=all>.

³⁵ Nutella USA, 16 December 2020, *It's Good To Be Together With Nutella®* [Video], YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGB_HSfca5Q.

³⁶ Baum, D., 2017, *How Emotion Influences Buying Behavior (And Marketers Can Use it)*, Impact Plus – online educational community, <https://www.impactplus.com/blog/emotion-influence-buying-behavior>.

³⁷ Site-ul oficial al companiei Neumarkt, <https://barbaticumtrebuie.ro/>.

³⁸ Antonetti, P., Baines, P., Walker, L., 2015, *From elicitation to consumption: assessing the longitudinal effectiveness of negative emotional appeals in social marketing*, Journal of Marketing Management, vol. 31, Issue 9-10, pp. 940-969, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0267257X.2015.1031266>.

³⁹ Janssen, D., 2018, *Emotions: an important factor driving consumer behavior*, Neurofied – Brain & Behavior Academy, June 8, <https://neurofied.com/emotions-important-factor-driving-consumer-behaviour/>.

not target just a general feeling, such as "happiness". The targeted feeling can be extremely subtle, such as the feeling of "security", "trust" or simply getting people to like the brand. In addition, emotional marketing should aim to create a long-term relationship with consumers, a friendly relationship rather than one that has the characteristics of a marriage⁴⁰.

5. Emotional marketing tools

Similar to any type of marketing strategy, there is also a set of systematic actions in the case of emotional marketing that can lead to achieving marketing objectives:

In-depth knowledge of the audience. When it comes to emotional connection, the only way to reach consumers' hearts is to rely on a more personal understanding of them, where we know the deepest fears, the strongest desires, the personal struggles and the motivations of the targeted audience. Many companies face difficulties in determining how their product can make consumers happy. Identifying and measuring consumers' emotional motives is a rather complicated task, given that consumers may not be aware of them. Emotional motives may differ from those stated by consumers⁴¹. However, any company can start a structured process of determining the emotional motivators of its customers based on which a series of experiments can be performed in order to capitalize on them, evolving later from this point. Also, companies can go so far as to conduct in-depth research and metadata analysis or contract the specialized services offered in this field.

Establishing the emotion that is to be the subject of emotional marketing. It is advisable to select an emotion or two around which the future marketing activity will be built. In-depth knowledge of the audience should be used in interdependence with information about the type of product, the company's position on the targeted market and the cognitive and behavioral level with the greatest utility for the brand. Also, a particularly important aspect to consider in this context refers to the fact that not only the content of

applied marketing will determine emotions, but also how it interacts with the emotions that the public already has. For instance, the anxiety and fear that consumers have gone through during this pandemic should in no way be reflected in the marketing activity, a situation that could be counterproductive⁴².

Creating a story. Once we know the audience in depth, we can next create stories that consumers can relate to. People are delighted to listen to stories they can empathize with, learn from, or be inspired by. Such a story can also lead consumers to share it with their peers. In addition, emotionally charged stories increase dopamine levels in the brain, which stimulates memory. However, we must be careful that the message we use has an impact, but without selling the brand openly.

Creative design. The emotional impact that colors have on people is already well known⁴³, so that these can be used to enhance the emotional appeal of promoted content, taking into account, of course, the cultural diversity that imposes different interpretations of colors.

For example, studies conducted in this field have shown that individuals react more favorably and have a higher rate of purchases in commercial spaces where the color blue is used and that warm-colored backgrounds draw more attention and determine consumers to visit the store. Also, children associate positive feelings with light colors and negative feelings with dark colors⁴⁴.

But it's not just colors that have an impact on consumers. Music, in turn, can cause a strong emotional reaction that can influence consumers' perceptions of a particular brand. Smell and hearing are other stimuli that can trigger emotions. Odors have a great ability to imprint memories⁴⁵. Various flavors and certain melodic lines have long been used in stores. Real estate agents use coffee or cake flavor to stimulate „home” related emotions. Also, the constant development of AR and VR applications gives the opportunity of using digital media to engage customers in an even more intense way, allowing them to experience brands and products in a much more emotionally intense manner⁴⁶.

⁴⁰ Fernandes, T., Proenca, J., 2013, *Reassessing Relationships in Consumer Markets: Emotion, Cognition, and Consumer Relationship Intention*, Journal of Relationship Marketing, vol. 12, Issue 1, pp. 41-58, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15332667.2013.763719>.

⁴¹ Goward, C., 2021, *Increase customer engagement by creating emotional marketing experiences*, Widerfunnel (blog), June 17, <https://www.widerfunnel.com/blog/emotional-relevance-marketing/>.

⁴² Fleming, J., 2020, *The five most important emotions in B2B marketing today*, Marketing Blog LinkedIn, August 17, <https://business.linkedin.com/en-uk/marketing-solutions/blog/posts/B2B-Marketing/2020/The-five-most-important-emotions-in-B2B-marketing-today>.

⁴³ Cherry, K., 2020, *Color Psychology: Does It Affect How You Feel? How Colors Impact Moods, Feelings, and Behaviors*, Verywell Mind, May 28 2020, <https://www.verywellmind.com/color-psychology-2795824>.

⁴⁴ Lin, I.Y., 2004, *Evaluating a servicescape: the effect of cognition and emotion*, Hospitality Management, no. 24, pp. 163-178, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.606.2671&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.

⁴⁵ Consoli, D., 2010, *A New Concept of Marketing: The Emotional Marketing*, BRAND. Broad Research in Accounting, Negotiation, and Distribution, vol. 1. Issue 1, ISSN 2067-8177, <https://www.edusoft.ro/brain/index.php/brand/article/view/76>.

⁴⁶ Heintz, E., 2020, *Positive energy! How emotional marketing wins the hearts of customers*, DMEXCO - Digital Marketing Exposition & Conference, July 15, <https://dmexco.com/stories/positive-energy-how-emotional-marketing-wins-the-hearts-of-customers/>.

Authenticity. The use of emotional marketing involves authenticity and sincerity, aspects to which the public is particularly sensitive. In this regard, the company must clearly establish its core values and then align these values with its emotional marketing activity. It is also necessary to take into account the fact that the emotional impact is not only obtained through the words and images used, but also through behavior. Thus, the company must have a behavior that is consistent with the promoted image. In addition, the company must initiate activities in which the community has the opportunity to get involved. This leads to the creation of an emotional connection based on feelings of affinity and trust.

Creating a social movement or a community. Feelings of camaraderie and acceptance can lead to a sense of attachment to a brand. Also, the sense of community inspires members to agree with each other. In other words, if members of a community prefer certain brands, the other members are likely to prefer those brands as well. This also reduces the likelihood that members of a community will change the brand they use.

Organizing campaigns that aim for dreams, goals, or aspirations that the audience longs to fulfill. Consumers may want, for example, financial security or simply a highway run with a powerful car. In this regard, the company must determine, first of all, how its product can contribute to achieving consumers' dreams, goals and aspirations, and then build a story that turns the dream into reality.

Basically, the principle stated by Tom Fishburne that "the best marketing doesn't feel like marketing" must be taken into account in emotional marketing. A good emotional marketing strategy contains rational arguments that at the same time generate emotions. In marketing, the subtle feeling that a brand understands you is often the strongest of all⁴⁷.

6. Measuring the effectiveness of emotional marketing activity

The success of the emotional marketing activity is measured based on the same indicators used to measure the success of any marketing effort. In addition, in the emotional marketing activity, the emotional response pursued through this kind of activity is also of interest. Beyond the clicks, subscriptions or purchases made, consumers' reaction to the activity carried out is also important. In this case,

surveys can be an important method for determining this reaction. Also, the possibility of obtaining consumers' *feedback* can be an aspect to consider in the process of designing the activity carried out. *Focus groups* also give the opportunity to get important details about consumers' reaction. *Observation* of actual consumer behavior is also quite relevant. Physiological reactions, facial expressions or heart rate, reflect the emotions of individuals quite well. Moreover, *neuromarketing* allows the measurement of the brain activity of consumers in order to determine the effects of emotional marketing. At the same time, *experiments* can be performed to reflect the effectiveness of different combinations of elements in order to achieve the desired emotional effect⁴⁸.

In addition, it is useful to determine how the emotions exploited in the emotional marketing activity are translated into the actions of the targeted consumers. As mentioned earlier, happiness is expected to translate into sharing (number of shares), sadness into generosity, fear into loyalty (number of subscriptions, followers), and anger into virality. Thus, depending on the emotion exploited in the marketing activity, we can expect an increase in the expected actions.

7. Conclusions

Relationships have become increasingly important in the process of making purchasing decisions, which leads to an increased attachment to brands that reflect and are in agreement with consumers' personal values.

In addition, it should not be overlooked that a company's products and services are designed to satisfy the desires and needs of consumers, and these desires always have an emotional component. Under these conditions, emotion has become an important strategic element in an organization's marketing activity, giving meaning and depth to the experience with a brand or a product. Companies must take an active role in shaping the emotions associated with them, otherwise other feelings will certainly fill this fruitless void, feelings that will not necessarily be to the benefit of the company.

⁴⁷ Fleming, J., 2020, *The five most important emotions in B2B marketing today*, Marketing Blog LinkedIn, August 17, <https://business.linkedin.com/en-uk/marketing-solutions/blog/posts/B2B-Marketing/2020/The-five-most-important-emotions-in-B2B-marketing-today>.

⁴⁸ Majeed, S., Lu, C., Usman, M., 2017, *Want to make me emotional? The influence of emotional advertisements on women's consumption behavior*, *Frontiers of Business Research in China*, <https://fbr.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s11782-017-0016-4>.

References

- Antonetti, P., Baines, P., Walker, L., 2015, *From elicitation to consumption: assessing the longitudinal effectiveness of negative emotional appeals in social marketing*, Journal of Marketing Management, vol. 31, Issue 9-10, pp. 940-969, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0267257X.2015.1031266>;
- Baum, D., 2017, *How Emotion Influences Buying Behavior (And Marketers Can Use it)*, Impact Plus – online educational community, <https://www.impactplus.com/blog/emotion-influence-buying-behavior/>;
- Brennan, L., Binney, W., 2010, *Fear, guilt and shame appeals in social marketing*, Journal of Business Research, Vol. 63, Issue 2, 140-146, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0148296309000307>;
- Bunea, I., 2019, *STUDIUL DE CAZ. Povestea Magic Home, Grand Effie 2018: MagicHome, campania virală a anului, care a strâns donații de peste jumătate de milion de euro în mai puțin de o lună*, Paginamedia.ro, <https://www.paginamedia.ro/2019/05/studiu-de-caz-magichome-grand-effie/>;
- Cherry, K., 2020, *Color Psychology: Does It Affect How You Feel? How Colors Impact Moods, Feelings, and Behaviors*, Verywell Mind, May 28 2020, <https://www.verywellmind.com/color-psychology-2795824>;
- Chierotti, L., 2018, *Harvard Professor Says 95% of Purchasing Decisions Are Subconscious. When marketing a product to a consumer, it's most effective to target the subconscious mind*, Inc., 26 March, <https://www.inc.com/logan-chierotti/harvard-professor-says-95-of-purchasing-decisions-are-subconscious.html>;
- Consoli, D., 2010, *A New Concept of Marketing: The Emotional Marketing*, BRAND. Broad Research in Accounting, Negotiation, and Distribution, vol. 1. Issue 1, <https://www.edusoft.ro/brain/index.php/brand/article/view/76>;
- Collier, A.Z., 2008, *Emotion and Consumer Behavior. Can anger make us choose a hiking trip vacation?*, Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University, July 1, https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/emotion_and_consumer_behavior/;
- Decker, A., 2018, *The Ultimate Guide to Emotional Marketing*, HubSpot <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/emotion-marketing>;
- Deshwal, P., 2015, *Emotional Marketing: Sharing The Heart of Consumers*, International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences, vol. 4, no. 11, <https://garph.co.uk/IJARMSS/Nov2015/25.pdf>;
- Eccleston, C., 2020, *What is Emotion? (Consumer Psychology 101)*, site-ul oficial LRW – Global Strategic Consultancy, <https://lrwonline.com/perspective/consumer-psychology-101-what-is-emotion/>;
- Fernandes, T., Proenca, J., 2013, *Reassessing Relationships in Consumer Markets: Emotion, Cognition, and Consumer Relationship Intention*, Journal of Relationship Marketing, vol. 12, Issue 1, pp. 41-58, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15332667.2013.763719>;
- Fleming, J., 2020, *The five most important emotions in B2B marketing today*, Marketing Blog LinkedIn, August 17, <https://business.linkedin.com/en-uk/marketing-solutions/blog/posts/B2B-Marketing/2020/The-five-most-important-emotions-in-B2B-marketing-today>;
- Hastings, G., Stead, M., Webb, J., 2004, *Fear Appeals in Social Marketing: Strategic and Ethical Reasons for Concern*, Psychology & Marketing, Nov 2004, vol. 21, no. 11, pp. 961-986, https://download.clib.psu.ac.th/datawebclib/e_resource/trial_database/WileyInterScienceCD/pdf/MAR/MAR_2.pdf;
- Hayes, C., *Consumer Behavior—Motivations, Emotions*, Cornell Research – Cornell University, <https://research.cornell.edu/news-features/consumer-behavior-motivations-emotions>;
- Heintz, E., 2020, *Positive energy! How emotional marketing wins the hearts of customers*, DMEXCO - Digital Marketing Exposition & Conference, July 15, <https://dmexco.com/stories/positive-energy-how-emotional-marketing-wins-the-hearts-of-customers/>;
- Hodgson, S., *The power of emotional marketing: Once more with feeling*, site-ul oficial Fabrik – branding agency, <https://fabrikbrands.com/the-power-of-emotional-marketing/>;
- Janssen, D., 2018, *Emotions: an important factor driving consumer behavior*, Neurofied – Brain & Behavior Academy, June 8, <https://neurofied.com/emotions-important-factor-driving-consumer-behaviour/>;
- Goward, C., 2021, *Increase customer engagement by creating emotional marketing experiences*, Widerfunnel (blog), June 17, <https://www.widerfunnel.com/blog/emotional-relevance-marketing/>;
- Khuong, M.N., Tram, V.N.B., 2015, *The Effects of Emotional Marketing on Consumer Product Perception, Brand Awareness and Purchase Decision — A Study in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam*, Journal of Economics, Business and Management, vol. 3, no. 5, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283245777_The_Effects_of_Emotional_Marketing_on_Consumer_Product_Perception_Brand_Awareness_and_Purchase_Decision_A_Study_in_Ho_Chi_Minh_City_Vietnam;
- Laros, F., Steenkamp, J.B., 2005, *Emotions in consumer behavior: a hierarchical approach*, Journal of Business Research, vol. 58, pp. 1437-1445, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315716615_Emotions_in_consumer_behavior_A_hierarchical_approach;
- Lin, I.Y., 2004, *Evaluating a servicescape: the effect of cognition and emotion*, Hospitality Management, no. 24, pp. 163-178, <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.606.2671&rep=rep1&type=pdf>;
- Majeed, S., Lu, C., Usman, M., 2017, *Want to make me emotional? The influence of emotional advertisements on women's consumption behavior*, Frontiers of Business Research in China, <https://fbr.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s11782-017-0016-4>;

- Mathias, M., 2018, *Understanding the Emotions that Drive Consumer Behavior*, Total Retail, November 5, <https://www.mytotalretail.com/article/understanding-the-emotions-that-drive-consumer-behavior/>;
- Murray, P.N., 2013, *How Emotions Influence What We Buy*, Psychology Today, February 26, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/inside-the-consumer-mind/201302/how-emotions-influence-what-we-buy>;
- Odekerken, M., 2018, *Emotional marketing: how to use emotions in your marketing*, Neurofied – Brain & Behaviour Academy, <https://neurofied.com/emotional-marketing-use-emotions-marketing/>;
- Popescu, M., *Emoții vs Sentimente*, Alma Psihoterapie - Cabinet de Psihoterapie și Consiliere Psihologică, <http://www.lapsiholog.eu/index.php/11-emoții-vs-sentimente>;
- Rytel, T., 2010, *Emotional Marketing Concept: the New Marketing Shift in the Postmodern Era*, Business: Theory and Practice, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 30-38, ISSN 1648-0627 print, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269974122_Emotional_Marketing_Concept_The_New_Marketing_Shift_in_the_Postmodern_Era;
- Saitarli, V., 2019, *Emotion: The Super Weapon Of Marketing And Advertising*, Forbes, 4 November, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2019/11/04/emotion-the-super-weapon-of-marketing-and-advertising/?sh=2b570204df02>;
- Schwarz, J., 2019, *Why B2B marketers need to get in touch with their feelings*, Marketing Blog LinkedIn, October 29, <https://business.linkedin.com/en-uk/marketing-solutions/blog/posts/B2B-Marketing/2019/Why-B2B-marketers-need-to-get-in-touch-with-their-feelings>;
- Thiency, J., 2013, *Good News Beats Bad on Social Networks*, New York Times, 18 March 2013, <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/19/science/good-news-spreads-faster-on-twitter-and-facebook.html?pagewanted=all>;
- Wong, W., 2019, *The Science Of Emotion: 4 Keys To Effective Social Media Marketing*, SEOPressor, <https://seopressor.com/blog/science-of-emotion-effective-social-media-marketing/>;
- * * * - ING Romania, 29 December 2021, *Unfollow hate* [Video], YouTube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAqo-4Txn1g>;
- * * * - Nutella USA, 16 December 2020, *It's Good To Be Together With Nutella®* [Video], YouTube https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zGB_HSfca5Q;
- * * * - Site-ul oficial al companiei Neumarkt, <https://barbaticumtrebuie.ro/>;
- * * * - *We're Ruled by Our Emotions, and So Are the Ads We Watch*, 12 January 2016, Nielsen -official site, <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/article/2016/were-ruled-by-our-emotions-and-so-are-the-ads-we-watch/>;
- * * * - *Why is Emotional Marketing the Key to the Consumer's Heart*, 2020, June 18, École de Management Léonard de Vinci, <https://www.emlv.fr/en/why-is-emotional-marketing-the-key-to-the-consumers-heart/>;
- * * * - *Why feelings matter: 7 examples of emotional marketing campaigns*, site-ul oficial Vcita - business management and client engagement app, <https://www.vcita.com/resources/marketing/emotional-marketing-campaign-strategy-7-examples>.