

Preface

Only over the past decade or so have researchers studied the role of emotions in the economy, especially in the field of marketing. This new interest derives from widespread dissatisfaction with current theories and managerial prescriptions with respect to purchase and consumption behaviour, which are typically rational and overly cognitive. The emotional side of consumption seems to play an essential and significant role in explaining choices made and actions taken by consumers. Modern consumers increasingly realize that it is 'experience' that they desire, not so much the physical goods or services per se. But experiences of the right sort require that marketers create a venue for experiences that will arouse strong emotions in consumers prior to and at the moment of consumption and in the period of time following consumption so as to orchestrate the proper sort of positive emotions. At the same time, marketers can achieve some of their goals by the skilful arousal of certain negative emotions, such as anger, fear, or disappointment.

The emotions experienced by a consumer also awaken post-purchase behaviours, such as the decision to repurchase or abandon a brand, and lead to positive and negative word of mouth, complaints, or, in extreme cases, boycotts of a company. Until recently, marketers viewed consumer responses in simplistic ways and relied on narrow conceptions of emotion; namely, satisfaction/dissatisfaction was the sole emotion thought to account for decisions to continue with or abandon a product or a service. However, practitioners as well as academic researchers have come to the conclusion that satisfaction/dissatisfaction is a poor explanation for gaining insights into consumption: a dissatisfied consumer, for example, can both complain and spread negative information about his or her consumption experience or may even decide to abandon the brand or service provider that disappointed them, yet satisfaction/dissatisfaction does not explain which particular reaction will occur. Because each of these three types of negative behaviours has different

managerial implications, it is therefore of great importance for marketing managers to be able to anticipate their occurrence accurately, and in turn, require a better understanding of their distinctive emotional drivers, so that marketers can act accordingly.

Precisely to give managers a predictive model that is more useful than that provided by the concept of customer satisfaction/dissatisfaction, in the final chapter of this book I consider a broader, yet more fine-grained framework that can be implemented and tested in the real world. The framework incorporates three psychological concepts that are introduced in the first chapter: cognitive antecedents, emotional responses and tendencies to engage in action. In order to fully understand the distinctive characteristics of the different emotional responses presented, their perceived origins and their relative managerial implications for consumers' goal outcomes, it is necessary to scrutinize how emotions function in consumers, from both a psychological and a managerial perspective. In particular, the second chapter examines the cognitive antecedents and the action tendencies of happiness and unhappiness. The third chapter, in contrast, analyses social emotions, in particular, guilt and pride, which are affective feelings pervading the life of consumers and have important consequences for marketers. The fourth chapter examines anger and gratitude, emotional states that customers experience when they attribute full responsibility for a happy or unhappy consumption experience to the producer or service provider. The central chapters of the volume therefore set out to provide managers with conceptual tools and managerial guidance to prevent certain emotions from arising in consumers or generate desired emotions in consumers and thus inhibit or promote appropriate actions. Again, the last chapter addresses the emotions considered and presents findings from an empirical study testing hypotheses. Managerial implications are also discussed.