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Consumer Tribes

By Avi Shankar, Bernard Cova, Robert Kozinets

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Marketing and consumer research has traditionally conceptualized consumers as individuals- who exercise choice in the marketplace as individuals not as a class or a group. However an important new perspective is now emerging that rejects the individualistic view and focuses on the reality that human life is essentially social, and that who we are is an inherently social phenomenon. It is the tribus, the many little groups we belong to, that are fundamental to our experience of life. Tribal Marketing shows that it is not individual consumption of products that defines our lives but rather that this activity actually facilitates meaningful social relationships. The social ‘links’ (social relationships) are more important than the things (brands etc.)

The aim of this book is therefore to offer a systematic overview of the area that has been defined as “cultures of consumption”- consumption microcultures, brand cultures, brand tribes, and brand communities. It is though these that students of marketing and marketing practitioners can begin to genuinely understand the real drivers of consumer behaviour. It will be essential to everyone who needs to understand the new paradigm in consumer research, brand management and communications management.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

Consumer Tribes are all the rage. Across the landscape of global business and throughout the Internet, the impassioned power of Consumer Tribes is being recognized and channeled into new forms of promotion and new businesses. Whether you are a consumer researcher, a sociologist, a marketer, a cultural trend spotter, or just an interested observer, you will benefit from understanding the intricacies of today's communal consumer culture.

A powerful resource, Consumer Tribes presents cutting edge research that informs while it inspires. You hold in your hands the first book to carefully examine this global phenomenon, with chapters that:

- . Draw together contributions from scholars from around the world;
- . Offer a new a new theoretical synthesis by the editors and a chapter written by the founding father of tribal social theory, Michel Maffesoli;
- . Describe and analyze a range of consumer tribes from Star Trek and Harry Potter fans, Italian metrosexuals, female Harley bikers, surfers, Goths and Hummer owners.

Sparked by technology and led by global consumer culture's dominance, 21st century consumption has been radically transformed. The barrier between producers and consumers has fallen. What does this mean for society and culture and how should businesses respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by their most loyal consumers?

About the Author

Bernard Cova is Professor of Marketing at Euromed Marseilles - School of Management, France and Visiting Professor at Università Bocconi, Milan, Italy. A pioneer in the Consumer Tribes field since the early nineties, his internationally-influential research has emphasized what he calls "the Latin approach" of tribal marketing. His work on this topic has been published in the International Journal of Research in Marketing, the European Journal of Marketing, Marketing Theory and the Journal of Business Research.

A member of many tribes, Robert V. Kozinets is Associate Professor of Marketing at York University's Schulich School of Business in Toronto, Canada. His tribal affiliations include consumer researchers, anthropologists, media scholars, Trekkers, Burners, coffee connoisseurs, modern primitives, Star Woids, X-Philes, greens, gamers, activists, technophiles, videophiles, technopagans, netnographers, and bloggers-and he has written about most of them in his research. That research has been published in journals such as the Journal of Marketing, the Journal of Consumer Research, the Journal of Marketing Research, and the Journal of Retailing. His blog and much more detail is available on his website at www.kozinets.net.

Avi Shankar is a Senior Lecturer in Marketing and Consumer Research in one of the UK's premier schools of management at the University of Bath. His research applies social theory to the analysis of marketing and marketing related phenomenon, studies of tribal forms of consumption and most recently investigations into the management of pleasure in consumer culture. His work has been published in a variety of journals including: European Journal of Marketing; Consumption, Markets and Culture; Marketing Theory and the Journal of Marketing Management.

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