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CONSUMPTION RITUALS: A STRATEGIC MARKETING FRAMEWORK

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this paper is to propose a framework of analysis of consumption rituals, which can be used as a tool to enhance brand building, by providing more relevant activation ideas to new and existing brands, and to trigger new product ideas, in a more consumer centric approach. In order to do so, we start by looking at the available literature, and summarize a definition of consumer rituals using the consumer habit concept as a starting point. We then attend the importance of rituals in our society, in our economy and in the specific case of brand building, before presenting our empirical framework and a taxonomy of consumption rituals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

HABITS ARE NOT RITUALS

Consumer habits have attracted the interest of both scholars and marketing practitioners. Academics are intrigued by how habits impose routinized behavior by separating it from high consciousness and control (Graybiel, 2008). We posit that marketers are mostly interested in the repetition of behavior, which is associated with habits, as well as the ability of consumers to learn and modify those behaviors. Nevertheless, habits lack an emotional component (Holt, 1992): they do not

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offer a symbolic meaning, nor represent a communication language. This is due to the fact that habits are often created by individuals for their own private portrayal (Tetreault, Kleine 1990). This foreword is important because too often practitioners still tend to confuse the relationship between rituals and habits: one example is the global study published by BBDO (*BBDO – The Ritual Masters*, 2007) where a ritual is presented as a series of functional steps (e.g., grooming, showering, reading email) in which we can identify many routinized behaviors for one's private enactment (e.g. brushing one's teeth in the morning).

RITUALS

The study of rituals originally belonged to the magic-religious sphere (Holt, 1992) and entered the consumer research field when Rook formulated the first definition of ritual aimed at understanding its behavioral aspect (Rook, 1984). In his undertaking, he formulated a ritual framework considering four main – and all mandatory – dimensions:

1. *Actor-participants*: with rituals ranging from very personal to very public and elaborated events (Gainer, 1995), rituals have at least one actor, but often multiple participants.
2. *Audience*: when the symbolic dimension prevails, rituals are performed to send a message to an audience; when the ritual is a private enactment, it delivers a self-centered reinforcing message.
3. *Script*: each actor in the ritual follows a well-defined script, which fosters the repetition in behavior, by also enabling knowledge sharing within the community.
4. *Artifacts*: they are clues to the rituals, with the objective of creating context and reinforcing the symbolic meaning.

In his effort to review literature, Holt also proposed a segmentation of consumer rituals definitions, according to three complementary approaches, hence by clustering rituals as:

- 1) by-product of behavioral qualities;
- 2) symbolic-expressive behavior;
- 3) behavior referencing the sacred.

The first approach includes Rook's work on rituals, which is often linked to Tetreault's and Kleine's (Rook, 1984; Tetreault, Kleine, 1990), because all of them, although with differences, argue that rituals are generated by specific behavioral traits.

According to Holt, their research presents the following common elements in definitions of rituals:

- *Standardization*: rituals impose certain standardization in terms of artifacts, behavior, to ensure that the symbolic message can be transferred and comprehended.
- *Purposiveness*: beyond its own functional scope, rituals have a higher symbolic meaning.
- *Formality*: rituals rely on established procedures to exchange messages.
- *Repetitiveness*: it ensures that a ritual can be learned and transferred among members of a community.
- *Drama*: rituals often require a theatrical performance for an audience, to ensure that the symbolic meaning is transferred.
- *Bracketing*: rituals can be clustered in time and space and type of occasion.
- *Scripted Sequences*: as introduced by Rook, each actor has a specific script in a ritual performance, whose sequence depends on his or her role in the experience drama.
- *Group Enactment*: rituals can be performed by one or multiple actors.

The second approach refers to the work of – among the many – McCracken, who defines rituals as symbolic behavior which transmits cultural meaning to products and brands (McCracken, 1986). In particular, McCracken envisions a two-step approach in which meaning is transferred to consumption: firstly, the meaning is transferred from culture to goods, which is facilitated by the advertising and fashion systems. Secondly, the meaning is transferred from the goods to the individual through four sets of rituals: *possession, exchange, grooming and divestment*.

The third approach deals with rituals as a main tool of organizing ontological disorder (Holt, 1992), hence goes beyond the scope of our consumer research focus, and deals mostly with the magic-religious dimension of the rituals study. We are more interested in, hence we focus our research on, consumption rituals: all of those, for example, belonging to taking part in a sportive event (Holt, 1992; Neale, Mizerski, Lee, 2008; Rook, 1985), or gift giving (Bradford, Sherry, 2013; McCracken, 1986), or community based consumption rituals (Otnes, Lowrey, 2004).

IMPORTANCE OF CONSUMPTION RITUALS

We strongly believe that consumption rituals are important, and we therefore examine their impact on society, on economy and on the brand building activities of marketing. We will argue later that rituals can be also a platform on which to base innovation, however at this stage we will focus on these three aspects and provide some examples.

EFFECT ON SOCIETY

While scholars tend to agree on the centrality of rituals in social life (Westman, 2011), there are several open question in the study of rituals which go beyond the scope of this paper. In particular, one open question is whether a ritual can be unglued by its social and economic context. While there is general consensus on rituals being a mechanism of order in our society (Blau, 1998), some scholars go as far as to theorize that rituals, beyond order, provide members of a society with the ability to transform (e.g. sweet sixteen parties and various other rites of passages) and to experience the community itself (Driver, 1996): rituals provide codes which members use to filter and gauge the community life; therefore rituals create a common and trusted ground, and mutual benefit (Coyne, Mathers, 2011). And with regards to this last aspect, advertising often plays on ritual codes, to facilitate the sense of belonging of a product or a brand in our communities (Otnes, Scott, 1996). We hence conclude that rituals have an important role in our society.

ECONOMIC EFFECT

The importance of rituals in economic terms is almost intuitive: suffice to learn that – in retail sales terms – the ‘gift-registry’ ritual in the US is second only to the “Christmas gift giving” ritual (Bradford, Sherry, 2013), with both representing a big share of US yearly retail sales. Even Valentine’s day in Japan has transformed in the years to include a more consumption centered script (Minowa, Khomenko, Belk, 2011), and so have ‘transformation rituals’, like the one to motherhood, which is now characterized by consumption centered rituals of ‘nesting’ and ‘gifting’ (Afflerback, Anthony, Carter, Grauerholz, 2014). Beyond these many measures, we believe that the economic importance of rituals is best summarized by Coyne and Mathers, who identify three main areas in which rituals are central to economic activity:

1. **Trading:** because rituals create norms in our communities, these norms can either facilitate or prevent trading from happening. While rituals are meant to create a common ground and a fertile ground to trusted exchanges, which clearly promotes trade, they act in an inclusive way, by focusing on insider members of a community. Hence the same rituals might prevent trading with outsiders.
2. **Ethnic conflicts:** rituals play a pivotal role in those types of conflicts, and their disastrous economic implications.
3. **Capabilities approach:** rituals might enhance and constrain one’s capabilities, and therefore play pivotal role in economic sense (Kuklys, Robeyns, 2005; Nussbaum, Sen, 1993).

We therefore infer that the impact of rituals on the economy of a community is very relevant.

EFFECT ON BRANDS

In order to attest the importance of rituals for brands, we will look in more detail on how McCracken presents the transfer of cultural meaning from society into consumption patterns (McCracken, 1986); we will then present the results of a study on rituals and consumption (Vohs, Wang, Gino, Norton, 2013); and we will finally look into brand communities and the role rituals play in them (Muniz, Jr., O'Guinn, 2001).

In McCracken definition, rituals play a pivotal role in transferring the cultural stereotypes – built through society's advertising and fashion systems – from brands and products to final consumer. He posited that this transfer happens through four categories of rituals:

- 1. Possession Rituals:** these rituals refer to and include a sub-set of rituals, that not only deal with owning a brand, but also with caring for it, discussing about it, and comparing it with other brands or brands belonging to others. The symbolic role of a possession ritual deals with claiming the brand's cultural properties while attending to stand out from all the others who that can make the same claim.
- 2. Exchange Rituals:** with gift giving being a central trait of many societies and many economies, the symbolic role of this ritual is best summarized by the influence that the donor is trying to exercise on the recipient, by forcing on the latter the socio-cultural codes of the gift.
- 3. Grooming Rituals:** within fast paced categories – e.g., fashion and consumer electronics – the cultural role of a product and a brand is limited in time. Grooming rituals have the symbolic role of extending the cultural meaning of the brand or product beyond the current wisdom of the advertising and fashion systems.
- 4. Divestiture Rituals:** these rituals deal with 'second-hand' purchasing of brands and products. For the seller, they play the symbolic role of eliminating the personal meanings that the products and brands have, before transferring them. For a buyer, they symbolically translate in a 'rinse' of all the personal meaning the seller might have infused in the products and brands.

We believe that – according to this model – rituals have a strong influence on brands, because they de-facto become the lens through which consumers interact with the brand value systems, which brand owners develop through advertising and fashion, although the same brand owners are often unaware of this mechanism.

In addition to that and beyond the theoretical model of McCracken, we also believe that Vohs' (Vohs, Wang, Gino, Norton, 2013) experiments support the importance that rituals have on brands. In their experiment they tested how ritualized consumption impacts consumption of three categories of products: chocolate, lemonade and carrots. Their finding can be summarized as follows:

1. Consumers engaged in ritualistic consumption behavior, believe that the specific product has better performance and better value for money than consumers who utilize the same product with no ritual associated to it.
2. Rituals suppose goal-directed actions, and as a consequence, a delay between a ritual and the opportunity to consume the product, enhances the pleasure of consumption.
3. Enjoyment in consumption is higher when we play an active role in the rituals, rather than only being part of the audience.
4. Rituals enhance enjoyment because they require greater involvement.

Lastly, in our effort to demonstrate the significance of rituals for brands, we focus on brand communities, looking at Muniz's research. First and foremost, brand communities are self-organized, often self-sponsored, sets of brand followers, with no particular geographical limitation. By looking at the brand communities for three brands (i.e.: Ford Bronco, Saab, and Macintosh), Muniz (Muniz, Jr, O'Guinn, 2001) concluded that the ethos of the communities is a by-product of the equity and value systems of each brand, and, more importantly, that the brand communities all experience the following characteristics: shared consciousness, sense of moral responsibilities and rituals and traditions. Furthermore, it is concluded that, rituals and traditions are critical processes of a community long-term survival, because they are the mechanisms responsible for knowledge transfer.

EXAMPLES

In order to further strengthen our position on the importance of rituals in the marketing and innovation arenas, we will now look at two separate and independent studies.

The first one is an ethnographic research among the poor of Porto Alegre in Brazil (Pinheiro-Machado, Scalco, 2012). In this examination the authors deal with the conundrum of how scarcity of resources, logic of survival and necessity are not explaining consumption. They concluded that consumption is mostly driven by the so-called 'brand-clans', which are territorial based, symbol- and brand- conscious, urban gangs. These gangs differentiate among themselves through territory and symbols: the latter is a combination of brands and rituals that can definitely identify membership to one clan or another. Consumers who are balancing their paradoxical needs of fitting in a social group while standing out from its members tend to use highly symbolic ritualized brand consumption, and in doing so they break with a value driven attitude to consumption.

The second study explores how with globalization, the Islamic beliefs are being modified by consumerism (Sandikci, Omeraki, 2006). One of the most important conclusions of this research is that even rituals as traditional as the ones belonging to the Ramadan are being reinterpreted in the marketplaces

around the world to be more in line with modern consumption-driven lifestyles (other examples include e.g., Ramadan in the United States, Christmas in Japan, Halloween in Italy).

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

OBJECTIVE

The objective of the proposed framework is to provide scholars and practitioners with a model of analysis of consumption rituals from the point of view of the main actor or main actors. In our practice we have used this structure as platform of development of new product ideas and new activations. The proposed framework includes seven dimensions.

1. STARS AND GUEST ROLES

Our starting point is the list and the characteristics of the main participants to the ritual. In line with Rook and Gainer (Gainer, 1995; Rook, 1985), we believe that rituals can range from personal to group enactments, hence this dimension mostly deals with:

- Participants personas definition and characterization.
- Main Actors personas definition and characterization.
- Audience personas definition and characterization.

2. CONTEXT AND MOMENTS

We have translated the ‘bracketing trait’ (Holt, 1992; Rook, 1985; Tetreault, Kleine, 1990), in a cross-dimensional facet of space and time. We also have merged it with the ‘purposiveness trait’. The purpose is normally to mark a transition from one consumer mood to another. This part of the framework deals with the occasion, which is a combination of space and time, and which is influencing the choice and the form of consumption (Hall, Lockshin, O’Mahony, 2001). Occasions can be more or less frequent in space and time, and formal, e.g. drinks with colleagues, dinner date with partner, watching soccer on TV with friends, Christmas dinner with family, etc.

3. MEANINGS AND SYMBOLS

This dimension includes what Driver calls the “three gifts of rituals to society: [...] community, order, and transformation” (Driver, 1996).

- *Community*: story-telling, participating in shared activities, team building, knowledge transferring, recruiting,

- *Order*: reinforcing, creating and negotiating own roles in e.g. household, workplace, social network,
- *Transformation*: moving to adulthood, transitioning from ‘work mindset’ to ‘play mindset’, changing jobs, wedding, going on holidays.

4. FREQUENCY

Analyzing frequency of occurrence of a ritual is important both from the stand-point of the researcher (Neale, Mizerski, Lee, 2008) and – we would argue – the marketing practitioner. For the latter a daily ritual, which the actor master because also of its frequency, as opposed to once in a lifetime one, have different implications from a strategic and operational marketing point of view.

5. SEQUENCE AND STRUCTURE

This dimension refers to and includes traits like ‘drama’, and ‘scripted sequences’ (Holt, 1992). It requires a detailed and structured sequence of all tasks performed during the rituals by all actors and participants to it.

6. PERFORMANCE AND ESTHETICS

As ‘Artifacts’ play a pivotal role in assessing the vitality of a ritual (Rook, 1985), we wanted this dimension to deal not only with the mere presence of objects, but also with their design features, which are enhancing and complementing to the symbolic meanings (Schmitt B. 1999). This dimension therefore includes: the accessories to the rituals and a description of their usage and their ‘look-and-feel’.

7. LEARNING AND PROPAGATION

This last dimension deals with the mechanics underlying the discovering and learning of the ritual and its proliferation method.

TAXONOMY OF CONSUMPTION RITUALS

In order to show the functioning of the framework, we have decided to apply it to four complementary case studies: we have observed empirically that there are brands that are able to embrace existing rituals or even develop new consumption rituals. Furthermore, again on the basis of empirical evidence, we distinguish two cases of brands embracing a ritual: the first is by creating a promotional activity on existing products; the second one deals with the development of a specific new product or service to exploit the ritual. We have therefore the following four occurrences:

		Ritual	
		Exiting	New
Approach	Activation	Brand Activation on existing ritual	Brand Activation developing new ritual
	Innovation	New Brand/Product/Service on existing ritual	New Brand/Product/Service developing new ritual

The first example is the Oreo ‘Twist, lick and dunk’ campaign, building on kids’ ritual consumption of the cookie. The second business case refers to the Corona Beer brand, which has created a new consumption ritual ex-novo. The third business case deals with NIKEiD on-line customization service from Nike. Finally, the last case introduces the Philips Living Colors, the mood-light system, which created new rituals in ambient living.

**CONSUMPTION RITUAL #1:
OREO ‘TWIST, LICK AND DUNK’**

Mondelez International¹ which owned Oreo, tracks its origin in New York in 1912 (Sarkar, 2013). The original product is a sandwich cookie composed by two dark chocolate biscuits, filled with vanilla cream. With distribution in over 100 countries and a global turnover in 2012 of 1,5 billion USD (Clements, Jain, Jose, Koellmann, 2013), Oreo is nowadays a truly global brand.

As mentioned by Sarkar, traditional advertising was focused on product characteristics until the mid 90s. The pivotal year is 1994, when marketers at the Oreo parent company realized the importance of the existing consumption ritual, and therefore launched the first campaign centered around the ‘twist’ (*Advertising Age: The best awards*, 1994), which later evolved in the current theme of ‘Twist, Lick and Dunk’.

In the following table, we analyzed the Twist, Lick and Dunk ritual from the point of view of a child.

¹ <http://www.mondelezinternational.com/>

Dimension	Description
1. Stars and Guest Roles	The main actor or actors in the ritual are toddlers and preschoolers. Guest roles are played by parents or adults caring for the children (e.g., child-minder, governess, teacher).
2. Context and Moments	Two main occasions: breakfast and afternoon snack, when milk is normally consumed.
3. Meanings and Symbols	<p><i>Breakfast</i>: it marks the incipit to the day; it is physically and mentally recharging and helping to become ready for the learning and playing activities ahead.</p> <p><i>Afternoon snack</i>: it represents a pause in between meals, a moment or relaxation from the playing and learning activities of the child.</p> <p>Both occasions reconnect children with warm family moments (Geoghegan, 2008).</p>
4. Frequency	Daily routine
5. Sequence and Structure	<p>For each biscuit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The guest adult provides a glass full of milk to the child, and the Oreos. 2. The child holds the biscuit, and then twists it to separate it in two portions, so that one portion supports the filling and the other does not. 3. The child licks the filling 4. The child re-assembles the biscuit, by superimposing the side supporting the filling to the other side 5. The child dunks the biscuit in the milk 6. The child eats the biscuit <p>When the allowance of biscuits is fully consumed, the child drinks the remaining milk.</p>
6. Performance and Esthetics	One or more Oreo biscuits and a glass of milk.
7. Learning and Propagation	Mainly through children teaching each other (e.g. older to younger siblings, among same age children at school or during post school activities) and through adults teaching children.

CONSUMPTION RITUAL #2: CORONA EXTRA BEER AND A SLICE OF LIME

Corona Extra is a beer produced by Mexican brewing giant Grupo Modelo (since 2013 part of Anheuser-Busch InBev). It is one of the world's most consumed beer brands around the world, with some 27.7 millions of barrels sold

annually². It is also one of Latin America's most valued brands, topping 2013 Milward Brown's Latam regional brands ranking with an assessed value of US\$6.6 billion.

Corona's imagery, featuring the brand's proprietary transparent long neck glass bottle holding its yellow gold color lager beer and a wedge of lime inside the bottle's neck, is a very well known and popular image around the globe. It communicates the ritual, which most consumers regard as a traditional Mexican custom, while it dates back only to 1981, and it was started as a bet between bartenders (Lindstrom, Underhill, 2010). Furthermore, many rumors spread around the ritual: it was claimed that due to the transparent bottle, long and direct sun exposure would modify the organoleptic characteristics of the beer, and the lime would help in masking the taste related issue. Grupo Modelo has fought in court to defend against such claims – and other – of poor quality (Deshpandé, 2010), and nowadays a large number of consumers enjoy the refreshing taste experience of Corona beer with a lime (Holt, 2004). The ritual, which according to Holt reached critical mass with American students in Mexico during spring break, has now reached consumers all around the globe.

Dimension	Description
1. Stars and Guest Roles	Any adult above legal drinking age can be the star, while any person who is part of the drinking moment can be a guest.
2. Context and Moments	Ritual is performed mainly at socialization and bonding moments (close and extended social circle). It is often performed while taking meals (particularly as an entrant with Mexican food – in and out of home consumptions – due to the country of origin of Corona and the values that it recalls). Some other times it is performed during the warm-up moments for a party or a night out occasion and it can even stay as the consumer's choice of drink for partying.
3. Meanings and Symbols	Breaking the moment for fun: ritual builds up associations with Mexican beaches, tranquility and escapades to fun. Lime is also used with tequila and is a very iconic drink, normally taken by young legal age drinkers during spring break seasons in Mexican beaches (and other locations). Reward after hard work: this association has been fostered in the USA through mass media communication and Point of Sale campaigns such as "Change Your Latitude", "Miles Away from Ordinary" and "Find your Beach".

² Grupo Modelo's Annual Report 2011 (m.modelo.mx/download/Informe_anual_2011_eng.pdf).

Dimension	Description
4. Frequency	Every day routine.
5. Sequence and Structure	Open a bottle of Corona Extra beer. Place a slice of lime inside its neck. Drink directly from the bottle and enjoy!
6. Performance and Esthetics	A slice of lime inside Corona's beer iconic transparent bottle.
7. Learning and Propagation	Ritual initial propagation began in the 1980s mainly at tourist bars and discotheques in Mexican beaches and mostly during spring breaks, where young people could live the ritual and associate it with an overall experience of party and disconnection. Massive propagation has relied basically on two elements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On-trade activation with bartenders, support material and most of all sliced limes. 2. Strong mass-media communication campaigns since the 1990s and up to date, featuring the ritual in paradisiacal beaches strengthening the association of the brand ritual with disconnection. These campaigns have helped to boost the ritual also in at home consumptions.

CONSUMPTION RITUAL #3: NIKEiD

Launched in 1999, NIKEiD is an on-line service that enables customers' personalization of Nike shoes on-line. The personalization process consists of sport type selections, color choices, sole types, shoelaces, and prospective customers can select from a set of available alternatives for each dimension. The designs can be stored, shared, and ordered for production through the service (Jackson, 2011). NIKEiD is often referred as a success story for co-creation (Abidi-Barthe, Kaabachi, 2010; Vernet, Tissier-Desbordes, 2012), integrating services into products (Ding, Chai, 2012) and mass-customization (Endo, Kincade, 2008). Nevertheless, we argue that it is also a great example of an innovative service built upon an existing consumer ritual; in fact the ritual of customizing sneakers through fabrics, permanent markers, shoelaces and so on already existed in the 1980s. We will proceed in describing the ritual of customization on which the NIKEiD concept is tapping.

Dimension	Description
1. Stars and Guest Roles	Young adults, in urban setting, 12–18 years old, both male and females.

2. Context and Moments	Two distinct moments: the first one refers to the new purchased sneakers, which in a rite of passage-type of ceremony get transformed for the first time. The second one refers to on-going personalization process which happens throughout the useful lifecycle of the shoes.
3. Meanings and Symbols	Desire of fitting in the social group while at the same time standing out as individual (Pinheiro-Machado, Scalco, 2012). The sneakers almost become a diary of social life for the owner.
4. Frequency	Driven by events: first event represented by the purchase of new sneakers, following events triggered by social life of the owner.
5. Sequence and Structure	<p>For the first purchase:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unpacking the sneakers 2. Preparing the tools of the craft (e.g. pencils, markers, paint, extra fabrics, glue, brushes, canvas, shoelaces,..) 3. Plan when to wear for the first time 4. Start the customization (which depending on the effort, might require several sessions) 5. Wear on due date <p>For subsequent customizations, sequence includes points 2 and 4.</p>
6. Performance and Esthetics	While performance is almost private, or relates only to inner circle, the esthetics is critical to the success of the ritual itself. In particular they will have to strengthen the: belonging to a certain sub-culture (e.g., hip-hop, surfers, skaters, bikers), the sense of belonging to a peer group (which might or might not be formalized) and the sense of identity of the individual, which is instrumental to stand out from the group itself.
7. Learning and Propagation	Codes are transferred through a certain sub-culture and group in the same way 'slang' is communicated and learned, as well as the brand repertoire, characterizing the group. The crafting dimension relies on peer-to-peer transmission as well as social websites.

CONSUMPTION RITUAL #4: PHILIPS LIVING COLORS

Launched in 2007, Philips Living Colors is a led lighting system operated through a remote control. The product lets consumers choose the tint of the LED and how intense the light should be, to change the atmosphere of any room (Capell, 2006). The product can be used as a visual expression of one's mood as well as a delivery mechanism for chromatherapy, the therapy of colors (Christopher, Maheshwari, Kapoor, 2012). Hence Living Colors easily becomes an accessory to many rituals at home, for its symbolic message. Furthermore, it lets consumers create a ritual of convenient self-healing therapy, to help changing one's mood, when finally back home. We will proceed in describing this newly created ritual.

Dimension	Description
1. Stars and Guest Roles	The main actors are males and females, from the mid-thirties, higher education, and hectic professional life, subject to stress. The ritual can be performed as a couple, but it is mostly private.
2. Context and Moments	At the end of the workday, to sign the transition from work sphere to the personal life sphere.
3. Meanings and Symbols	It marks the transition from 'work' to 'play', it is almost a re-birth, which is why is a private moment. It also helps contextualizing consumers' own space, compared to the outside world.
4. Frequency	Daily.
5. Sequence and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Entering own apartment. ● Changing in comfortable clothes. ● Pouring a drink (e.g. wine, beer, cocktail). ● Putting on music. ● With the remote control, select the tint of the light. ● Begin the therapy.
6. Performance and Esthetics	Of critical importance are the accessories: drinks, music, incense and the lack of contact with the outside world, therefore muting mobile devices, tablets, laptops and TV.
7. Learning and Propagation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Through the media. ● Peer to peer.

SUMMARY AND FINAL REMARKS

We started our journey by looking at habits, and how rituals differ from ritualized behavior (Tetreault, Kleine, 1990), and how the emotional and dramatic component are key differentiators. We then looked at how Holt has clustered various definitions of rituals by focusing on ritual as by-product of behavioral qualities and symbolic expressive behavior. We finally analyzed the importance of rituals in society, in economy, and then the role rituals play in our brands: first as a mechanism of transfer of our cultural value to brands and products; furthermore, as rituals enhance product and brand consumption. And finally, also because rituals are important to the development and long-term existence of brand communities.

We conclude this work by proposing a framework for analyzing new and existing consumption rituals, which can be used in activating an existing brand or developing new products, new services, new brands. The framework is derived from the ritual definitions of Rook, Tetreault, Klein, Holt and McCracken, and designed to permit an in-depth analysis of each consumer ritual. Moreover, we have proposed a taxonomy of consumption rituals, by identifying four cases based on different contexts and typologies, by also proposing rituals as an effective platform to build brands and innovation (e.g. products, services, channels and business models)

Furthermore, we believe that marketing and consumer research scholars and practitioners can use this model to better understand, present and develop strategies on rituals. While our empirical evidence and consulting practice reassure us of the strength of our proposition, we reckon further research needs to be conducted to validate and strengthen the framework.

We also believe that this has a specific relevance for Polish companies, given the current stage of the country's economic development. As a matter of facts, in the past 10 years Poland has achieved impressive results in terms of economic growth (*OECD Economic Surveys: Poland 2014*, 2014), and while further improvements are expected in product market competitiveness (Goujard., Égert, 2014), Poland needs its economic actors to focus more on innovation, for the Polish economy to be able to fully embrace the third stage of economic development (Majewska, Buszkowska, 2014). The proposed ritual framework can help polish companies³ to either improve the likelihood of success of launching existing innovations (Endo, Kincade, 2008) or to develop new brands and new products by focusing on consumer behavior (von Hippel, 1989; 1986) modeled through consumption rituals. Moreover the framework, by supporting the commercialization of existing products and services as well as the development of new ones, provides also a first step towards the strengthening of Polish consumer-centric firms abroad, given the direct link, proven in other countries (Cassiman, Golovko, 2011; Cassiman, Golovko, Martínez-Ros, 2010; Cassiman, Martinez-Ros, 2007), between product innovation and exports.

³ Mostly in B2C or B2B2C segments, such as i.e.: food and beverages, wines and spirits, domestic appliances, consumer electronics, consumer lighting, design, electronic marketplaces, Software-as-a-Service platforms, smart-phone and tablets applications, etc....

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ABSTRACT

With the increasing awareness of the role consumption rituals exert in our societies, in our economies and in the brand building process, the authors set to define a framework for analyzing consumer rituals, and in addition to that, propose a taxonomy of consumption rituals based on type of application and context.

Keywords: Marketing, Innovation, Consumption Rituals.

JEL Classification: M310, O310

RYTUAŁY KONSUMENCKIE: RAMOWA STRATEGIA MARKETINGOWA

STRESZCZENIE

W zwi zku ze wzrostem s wiadomo ci dotycz cej roli rytuał w konsumenckich – zachodz cych w naszym społecze stwie, ekonomii oraz w procesach budowy marki – autorzy definiuj  ramowy sp s b analizy tych rytuał w konsumenckich, sugeruj  spojrze nie na ich hierarchie, wynikaj c  z rodzaju ich zastosowania oraz okoliczno ci.

Słowa kluczowe: marketing, innowacje, rytuały konsumenckie.