Chapter 2

To consolidate your learning, the key points from this chapter are summarized here:

■ Explain the consumer product acquisition process.

Consumer buying behaviour has rational and irrational components, although rational theories tend to dominate the marketing literature. There are a variety of models of consumer buying behaviour, but the consumer product acquisition model is perhaps the simplest to understand, stressing that the consumer goes through six key stages in the product acquisition process, including motive development, information gathering, product evaluation, product selection, acquisition, and re-evaluation.

■ Explain the processes involved in human perception, learning, and memory in relation to consumer choice.

The human perception, learning, and memory processes involved in consumer decision-making are complex. When designing advertising, developing distribution strategies, designing new offerings, and implementing other marketing tactics, marketers should (repeatedly) explain the information associated with these actions to consumers. Such an approach is necessary to encourage consumers to engage with, remember, and learn about different offerings, which in turn influences consumers’ buying decisions.

■ Understand the importance of personality and motivation in consumer behaviour.

Consumers are motivated differently in their purchasing behaviour depending on their personalities and social identities, and, to some extent, how they feel that their personality or social identity fits with particular offerings. Maslow’s (1943) seminal work on human needs helps us to understand how we are motivated to satisfy five key human desires. From the theory of planned behaviour (Azjen, 1991), we know that how we intend to behave is not always how we actually behave, because this is affected by our attitudes towards the behaviour in question, subjective norms (how we think others perceive that behaviour), and our own perceptions of how we can control our behaviour.

■ Describe opinions, attitudes, and values, and how they relate to consumer behaviour.

Opinions are relatively unstable positions that people take in relation to an issue or assessment of something. Attitudes are more strongly held and are more likely to be linked to our behaviour. Values are more strongly held still and are linked to our conscience. Marketers are interested in all three because they help us to understand consumers better and to develop marketing approaches, particularly when it comes to positioning and repositioning an offering.

■ Explain how reference groups influence consumer behaviour.

Reference groups, including such role models as parents, entertainers, and athletes, have an important socializing influence on consumption behaviour, particularly, but not solely, in our adolescence. However, where we live, what social class we come from, what lifestyle we lead, what stage of the life cycle we are at, and our culture, learned as part of specific social groups, also has an impact on our behaviour as consumers. Celebrity endorsers are powerful influencers in this regard, particularly when they project a particular lifestyle that others seek to emulate.