

JAMES R. BETTMAN
University of California, Los Angeles

An Information Processing Theory of Consumer Choice

↕ **ADDISON-WESLEY PUBLISHING COMPANY**

Reading, Massachusetts
Menlo Park, California
London • Amsterdam
Don Mills, Ontario • Sydney

TECHNISCHE HOCHSCHULE DARMSTADT	
Fachbereich 1	
<u>Gesamtbibliothek</u>	
<u>Betriebswirtschaftslehre</u>	
Inventar-Nr. :	18.196
Abstell-Nr. :	A.281959
Sachgebiete :	5.8
	00249825

Contents

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION 1

- An Information Processing Approach to Understanding Choice 1
- Why Take an Information Processing Perspective? 3
 - Phenomena Characterizing the Consumer Choice Environment 4
 - Shortcomings in Previous Research on Choice 4
- An Outline of Following Chapters 10

CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF AN INFORMATION PROCESSING

THEORY OF CONSUMER CHOICE 13

- Examples of Consumer Choice Scenarios 14
 - Choice Scenario 1 14
 - Choice Scenario 2 14
 - Choice Scenario 3 14
 - Choice Scenario 4 15
- Basic Concepts of the Theory 16
 - Processing Capacity 17
 - Motivation 18
 - Attention and Perceptual Encoding 25
 - Information Acquisition and Evaluation 28
 - Decision Processes 31
 - Effects of Consumption and Learning 35
 - Other Factors Influencing Choice Processes 36
- A Summary of the Choice Process 37

CHAPTER 3**MOTIVATIONAL MECHANISMS
IN CONSUMER CHOICE 43**

- Overview of the Motivation Component 44
- Major Aspects of the Motivation Component 45
 - Goals and Related Concepts 45
 - The Goal Hierarchy 48
 - Development and Processing of Goal Hierarchies 49
 - Scanner and Interrupt Mechanisms 54
 - Summary 57
- Linkages to Other Components of the Theory 57
- More Detailed Aspects of the Motivation Component 58
 - Effectiveness of Hierarchical Organizations 58
 - Determinants of Choice Process Intensity 59
 - Allocation of Processing Capacity between Current Goals and the Scanner and Interrupt Mechanisms 64
 - Goal Conflicts as a Source of Interrupts 65
 - Individual Differences in the Motivation Component 67
- Summary of the Propositions 68
- Needed Research 70

CHAPTER 4**ATTENTION AND PERCEPTUAL PROCESSES 73**

- Overview of the Attention and Perception Component 73
- Major Aspects of the Attention and Perception Component 75
 - Attention 75
 - Perceptual Encoding 79
 - The Role of Expectations in Perceptual Encoding 80
 - Interrupts Due to Conflict 83
 - Learning about the Environment through Interrupts 87
 - Learning about the Environment through Low Involvement Processes 89
 - Summary 91
- Linkages to Other Components of the Theory 92
- More Detailed Aspects of the Attention and Perception Component 92
 - Measurement of Attention 93
 - Models of Conflict 94
 - Reactions to Interrupts Due to Conflict 95
 - Individual Differences in the Attention and Perception Component 98
- Summary of the Propositions 98
- Needed Research 101

CHAPTER 5**INFORMATION ACQUISITION AND EVALUATION 105**

- Overview of the Information Acquisition and Evaluation Component 106
- Major Aspects of the Information Acquisition and Evaluation Component 107
 - Internal Search 107
 - External Search 111
 - Evaluation of Information 112
 - Summary 114
- Linkages to Other Components of the Theory 115
- More Detailed Aspects of the Information Acquisition and Evaluation Component 115
 - Measures of Information Search 115
 - Influences on the Degree of Internal Search 116
 - Influences on the Direction of External Search 119
 - Influences on the Degree of External Search 123
 - Analysis of Detailed Patterns of Information Acquisition 131
 - Individual Differences in the Information Acquisition and Evaluation Component 134
- Summary of the Propositions 134
- Needed Research 136

CHAPTER 6**MEMORY FUNCTIONS 139**

- Overview of the Memory Component 139
- Major Aspects of the Memory Component 141
 - The Multiple Store Approach to Memory 141
 - Memory Control Processes 143
 - Properties of Short-term Memory 147
 - Properties of Long-term Memory 149
 - Consumer Choice Tasks and Memory 151
 - Summary 155
- Linkages to Other Components of the Theory 156
- More Detailed Aspects of the Memory Component 156
 - Factors Differentially Affecting Recognition and Recall 157
 - Organization of Information Input 160
 - Effects of Context 161
 - Form of Coding and Storage of Objects in Memory 161
 - Effects of Processing Load 162
 - Memory for Rules and Operations 163
 - Effects of Input Modality 164
 - Effects of Repetition 165
 - Individual Differences in the Memory Component 167
- Summary of the Propositions 167
- Needed Research 169

CHAPTER 7**DECISION PROCESSES:****CHOICE AMONG ALTERNATIVES 173**

Overview of the Decision Processes Component 174

Major Aspects of the

Decision Processes Component 176

Choice Heuristics 176

Implementing Choice Heuristics 185

Methods for Studying Choice Heuristics and Their
Implementation 190

Consumer Usage of Choice Heuristics 201

Summary 202

Linkages to Other Components of the Theory 203

More Detailed Aspects of the

Decision Processes Component 203

Specific Processing Limitations 203

The Role of Attitudes in Choice Processes 209

Studies of Evaluation of Alternatives 210

Studies of Alternative Comparison Processes 214

Studies of Implementation Methods 222

Individual Differences in the

Decision Processes Component 223

Summary of the Propositions 223

Needed Research 227

CHAPTER 8**DECISION NETS AND CHOICE PROCESSES 229**

The Concept of a Decision Net 230

Research on Decision Nets 232

Limitations of the Decision Net Approach 244

Implementation of Decision Nets 244

Form of Processing and the Range of Choice Heuristics
Depicted in Decision Nets 246

Analysis Methods for Decision Nets 248

A Graph Theory Framework 250

Measures of Decision Net Structure 251

Measures of Information Processing Efficiency 254

Measures of Similarity and Grouping of Individuals 256

Measures of Reliability in

Developing Decision Net Models 262

Measures of Attribute Weights 262

Limitations of These Analyses 264

Summary of the Propositions 264

Needed Research 265

CHAPTER 9
CONSUMPTION AND LEARNING PROCESSES:
CHANGES IN CHOICE HEURISTICS 267

Overview of the Consumption and Learning Processes
Component 267

Major Aspects of the Consumption and
Learning Processes Component 270

Mechanistic versus Cognitive
Approaches to Learning 270

Inferences from Outcomes 272

Effects of Inferences from Outcomes 274

Other Sources of Changes in Choice Heuristics 278

Summary 279

Linkages to Other Components of the Theory 279

More Detailed Aspects of the Consumption and
Learning Processes Component 280

Simplification in Choice Processes 280

Elaboration of Choice Processes 286

Individual Differences in the Consumption
and Learning Processes Component 288

Summary of the Propositions 289

Needed Research 291

CHAPTER 10
IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY DECISIONS 293

The Nature of the Public Policy Context 294

Assumptions about the Consumer and Consumer Information
Processing Made by Policymakers 294

The View of Consumer Choice

Tasks Held by Policymakers 294

The Goals Underlying Provision of Information 295

A Framework for Examining the Design of Consumer
Information Environments 296

Methods for Providing Information to Consumers 297

Providing Information Outside of the Store 298

Providing Information in Television Commercials 298

Providing Information in Radio Advertisements 302

Providing Information in Print Advertisements 303

Providing Information Inside the Store 304

Providing Information on Packages 304

Providing Information in In-Store Displays 305

Analysis of Information Provision for Specific
Consumer Choice Tasks 306

Processing Requirements of Various Choice Tasks 306

Brand Choice with Much Prior Experience 307

Brand Choice with Little Prior Experience or Other Processing Difficulties	308
Product Class Choice	313
General Conclusions Regarding Information Provision by Policymakers	314
Information Processing Studies of Special Groups of Consumers	316
Children's Consumer Information Processing	317
Information Processing of the Elderly	318
A Strategy for Dealing with Special Groups of Consumers	319
Needed Research	320

CHAPTER 11**IMPLICATIONS FOR MARKETING DECISIONS 321**

Implications for Gathering Information from Consumers	321
Insights into What Information to Gather	321
Insights into How to Gather Information from Consumers	322
Implications for Marketing Strategy	325
Implications for Promotion Decisions	326
Implications for Pricing Decisions	334
Implications for Product Decisions	337
Implications for Distribution Decisions	340
Needed Research	341

CHAPTER 12**CONCLUSIONS 343**

Relationships to Previous Consumer Choice Theories	343
Common Elements in the Theories	343
Differences among the Theories	344
Major Areas for Future Research	353

BIBLIOGRAPHY 355**AUTHOR INDEX 383****SUBJECT INDEX 391**