

In this case, our moods act like a *backdrop* to our consciousness. They work in the background, almost autonomously. This helps us keep on doing whatever we are doing. Thus, if we are in a store, and the ambience and the piped-in music has put us in a pleasant mood, we just linger on a bit longer. And we buy more—which is very good for the marketer.

And when you know you are in the mood

Then there are times when we do become conscious of our moods. And we also become aware of the source of our moods. When the music in a store just puts us in a pleasant mood without even us being conscious of the music being played; in contrast, when suddenly some tune or lyrics register on our consciousness, then we become aware of the mood and we focus on its source. We want to approach or stay with its source if the mood is a positive one, and we want to distance ourselves from the source if the mood is negative. This type of mood acts as an active driver; in other words, it acts as a motivational force. We received good grades, so we want to buy a cappuccino. We got an e-mail from an old friend, so we wanted to grab a beer. We got bored reading our textbook, so we switched to surfing the Web. (Please, not right now!)

How Moods Make You...

Moods make us act in the marketplace, and these mood-based acts can be grouped into two categories:

Response to Market Stimuli Consumer researchers have found that consumers linger longer in positive-mood environments—as when good music is playing in a store, or when a salesperson is not shadowing them as they browse the merchandise. Consumers also tend to better recall those ads that create a positive mood. And they feel more positive toward brands whose advertisements create feelings of warmth.¹⁸ Overall, good moods make us respond positively to market stimuli; bad moods make us respond negatively.¹⁹

Situational Consumption Choices Our moods also affect our consumption experiences. One of the research findings is that consumers in negative moods engage in “immediate self-gratification,” such as rewarding themselves (eating desserts, drinking, self-gifting, etc.); of course, consumers also engage in these activities when in positive moods (“Dessert? Forget dieting, I deserve it!”). Thus, both negative and positive moods (compared to neutral moods) produce self-gratification-oriented consumption. Another mood effect is that the consumption experience itself is more positive when we are in a good mood, and more negative when we are in a bad mood. Have you ever wondered why food in a restaurant tastes better when we have a nice company? The nice company produces a nice mood—that is why!

Good Mood—Marketers Owe It to Us

If moods affect consumer responses to market stimuli, it behooves marketers to create the circumstances that create a positive mood in us. Moods are induced in two ways: (a) internal autistic thinking—this happens when you recall some past incident or fantasize about some future event; and (b) exposure to external stimuli—you see candy, and you instantly feel in the mood to eat some candy. As a marketer, you can tap into both of these sources; you can arrange marketing stimuli to induce the right mood in the consumer. Here are some marketing stimuli at your command:

- **The ambience of the store**
- **The demeanor of the salesperson**
- **Sensory features of the product**
- **The tone and manner of the advertisement**
- **Product packaging or the display of the product itself**

SAVVY MARKETER

