As corporate ethnography becomes common practice, we as practitioners must look for ways to uncover deeper insights in order to maintain its advantage to business.

Consideration of not only consumers but also one’s own corporate culture and others within the business ecosystem allows for more robust and useful interpretations of information.

Collaboration with the consumer opens a two-way dialogue allowing consumers to develop more connection with and ownership of the brand.

Expanding the boundaries of current ethnographic research to include “extreme” or “marginal” groups of people, and cultural and trend exploration will help to uncover richer insights about our consumer world.

The meso-level approach to ethnographic research focuses on both how people behave during and talk about the activities of their everyday life through the in-depth study of their sociocultural interactions.

The meso-level approach incorporates in-depth interviews, photographic series, videos, and in-home observation, among other techniques, to get a holistic understanding of the consumer.

The meso-level approach offers advertisers an alternative way to think of consumer-centricity as it provides information about the consumer that is not necessarily brand specific, but allows insightful analysis of how the consumer uses firm-provided resources in the context of their everyday lives.

There is a clear directional match between the level of value congruence (or match) between consumers’ values and values consumers associate with a company and its advertising, and liking for the company and its advertising.

Ethnographic narratives can connect the cultural context and descriptions of dynamic social processes to the role of values in the consumption process.

Consumers not only seek alignment between their values and consumption behavior, they also seek to avoid misalignment. Consumers also note when the expression of values is absent.

The findings of this research suggest that there is potential for advertising to be effective when directed at consumers’ value systems.
A more diverse and representative sample can be accessed via online ethnography. The online approach is less intrusive, so respondents are more willing to participate. The anonymity of the online environment prompts a high level of self-disclosure, often three to four times greater than in the more traditional approach. The text and visual images shared by respondents provide valuable insight into important rituals, symbolism, values, and beliefs that can be hard to capture in person.

Netnography offers an advantage over traditional ethnography in that it is more naturalistic and unobtrusive than focus groups, surveys, or interviews. It provides unelicited information on symbolism, meanings, and consumption patterns of online consumer groups. Also, it is typically faster, simpler, and less expensive than traditional ethnographic research. Similar to the ethnographer, the netnographer must immerse himself in the culture: read beyond the postings, learn the common languages and symbols of his subjects, meet people, and engage in both online and face-to-face interaction.

Traditional segmentations suppress the diversity found within consumer segments. Archetype analysis identifies a small number of individuals within each target segment who capture this diversity. Archetype analysis can deliver a more inspiring consumer understanding framework—and one that has the sociodemographic, behavioral, and psychographic differentiation necessary to provide direction for different functions within a company.

Advertisers should take cultural masculinity and femininity into account when developing advertising strategies for local markets. The effectiveness of image and utilitarian appeals varies as a function of cultural orientation on masculinity/femininity. Ethnographic interviews helped shed light on results of the empirical study and enhanced interpretations of findings by examining the consumers' perspectives.
The Universality of Values: Implications for Global Advertising Strategy

SIMEON CHOW and SARIT AMIR

A World Values Compass, a spatial representation of six distinct consumer types, is presented. This Compass can be used to define consumer segments on both global and country levels as well as for strategic insights for branding and media decisions.

Using the World Values Compass as a road map, we conclude that brands and media channels are distributed along two dimensions: Self-direction versus Conformity and Prosocial versus Hedonism.

In today’s market, with a global trend for free markets, deregulation, and privatization, consumers’ basic needs are fulfilled, and they will seek additional utility from their purchase decisions aligned with their values orientation.

Disabled Consumers: The Use of the Internet and Attitudes toward Web Advertising

JOHN BURNETT

The higher the disability the more frequently respondents use the internet for getting information about products, shopping online, getting information about health, paying bills, and making travel plans.

Attitude toward web advertising is more negative for the disabled groups compared to the nondisabled.

Significant differences exist between the nondisabled and the three disability groups in respect to desired web characteristics.

Disabled web users employ the web for either newsgetting/entertainment or purchasing products.

Older Consumer Responses to Marketing Stimuli: The Power of Subjective Age

GEORGE P. MOSCHIS and ANIL MATHUR

Old age–related consumer behavior is positively related to subjective age.

Unless old consumers think they are of a certain age (subjective age), they may not be receptive to an offer designed for them because of their age eligibility.