Chapter Summary

LO1 Understand how value varies with situations.
The value a consumer obtains from a purchase or consumption act varies based on the context in which the act takes place. These contextual effects are known as situational influences, meaning effects independent of enduring consumer, brand, or product characteristics. Contextual effects can involve things related to time, place, or antecedent conditions. They also can affect consumer information processing, shopping including purchase situations, and actual consumption. Situational influences change the desirability of consuming things and therefore change the value of these things. Situational influences can also override consumer brand preferences in many product categories.

LO2 Know the different ways that time affects consumer behavior.
The term temporal factors is sometimes used to refer to situational characteristics related to time. Time can affect consumer behavior by creating time pressure. A consumer facing time pressure may not be able to process information related to making the best choice. The time of year can affect consumer behavior through seasonality. Cyclical patterns of consumption exist for many products, like champagne, which is predominantly sold during the holidays. The time of day can also influence consumption significantly. For instance, most consumers do not want gumbo for breakfast. But, for lunch or dinner, gumbo is great!

LO3 Analyze shopping as a consumer activity using the different categories of shopping activities.
Shopping can be defined as the set of value-producing consumer activities that directly increase the likelihood that something will be purchased. Shopping activities are very strongly shaped by the sense of place and, therefore, are highly relevant to understanding how situations influence consumption. Shopping activities can be divided into four categories: acquisitional, epistemic, experiential, and impulsive. Each category is associated with a different orientation toward buying things and receiving shopping value.

Glossary Terms
acquisitional shopping activities oriented toward a specific, intended purchase or purchases
action-oriented consumers with a high capacity to self-regulate their behavior
advertising creative strategies that runs the advertisement primarily at times when customers will be most receptive to the message
affective quality retail positioning that emphasizes a unique environment, exciting décor, friendly employees, and, in general, the feelings experienced in a retail place
antecedent conditions situational characteristics that a consumer brings to information processing
atmospherics emotional nature of an environment or the feelings created by the total aura of physical attributes that comprise a physical environment
background music music played below the audible threshold that would make it the center of attention
circadian cycle rhythm (level of energy) of the human body that varies with the time of day
congruity how consistent the elements of an environment are with one another
customer self-regulation tendency for consumers to inhibit outside, or situational, influences from interfering with shopping intentions
crowding density of people and objects within a given space
edepistemic shopping activities oriented toward acquiring knowledge about products
experiential shopping recreationally oriented activities designed to provide interest, excitement, relaxation, fun, or some other desired feeling
fit how appropriate the elements of a given environment are
foreground music music that becomes the focal point of attention and can have strong effects on a consumer’s willingness to approach or avoid an environment
functional quality retail positioning that emphasizes tangible things like a wide selection of goods, low prices, guarantees, and knowledgeable employees

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**LO 4** Distinguish the concepts of unplanned, impulse, and compulsive consumer behavior.

The line between unplanned and impulse is not always clear because some unplanned acts are impulsive and many impulsive acts are unplanned. Simple unplanned purchases usually lack any real emotional involvement or significant amounts of self-gratification. Additionally, unplanned purchases often involve only minimal negative consequences and thus fail to really qualify as having negative consequences at all. Compulsive acts are distinguished from impulsive acts by the relative degree of harmfulness associated with them. Impulsive acts are relatively harmless and, in fact, can have significant positive outcomes in terms of a consumer’s emotional well-being. Compulsive acts, however, are associated with a consumer whose behavior is either self-detrimental or truly harmful to another consumer.

**LO 5** Use the concept of atmospherics to create consumer value.

A store’s atmosphere can create value through facilitating either the task of shopping or the gratification of the shopping experience itself. Each retail or service place is characterized by a particular atmosphere. An atmosphere that greatly facilitates the shopping task can be designed. For example, convenience stores have redesigned their sales floors and taken out substantial numbers of product offerings. The result is that the consumer can complete the task of getting a needed product in less time. An atmosphere can also simply be more emotionally pleasant and therefore gratifying to be in. Some modern retail outlets are retail theaters with multiple opportunities for consumers to be entertained regardless of whether they purchase anything.

**LO 6** Understand what is meant by antecedent conditions.

Antecedent conditions refer to situational characteristics that a consumer brings to a particular information processing, purchase, or consumption environment. Antecedent conditions include things like economic resources, mood, and other emotional perceptions such as fear. They can shape the value in a situation by framing the events that take place. A consumer in a good mood, for example, tends to look at things more favorably than a consumer in a bad mood.

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