

Promotion and place



**ASSIGN
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Promotion and Place Although we are often fulfilling a need when we choose to purchase various items, the decisions we make regarding exactly which brand or style of item we select are often based upon images we see on TV or things we hear on the radio. Whether we actually purchase the item or not depends greatly upon our ability to meet specific needs in our lives, usually in order of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This theory indicates that we purchase things according to how much we need them to survive. We will purchase food, a physiological need, before we purchase the new outfit that's all the rage, a purchase that will satisfy our safety needs by providing adequate clothing as well as our belonging needs by identifying us as belonging to a certain group and our esteem needs by providing us with a symbol of our current status in society. Using this theory, advertisers have learned how to capitalize on these needs to maximize their own sales. Examples of these ideas can best be illustrated by taking a look at two purchases made recently and the motivations for selecting the items and brands that were bought.

The purchase of a computer might be considered by some to be a luxury purchase because it does not directly address any of Maslow's needs. It does not feed us, clothe us, provide us with additional security or indicate we belong to any specific group. However, if I wanted to succeed in school, I needed to have a computer on which to do my homework and to help me study. This first purchase was a major purchase because it required me to spend a great deal of my savings on one item and therefore threatened my ability to meet some of my other needs, for instance, whether I would have enough money left over for groceries for the rest of the semester. That a computer was required for the successful completion of my academic career

was, in part, the fulfillment of my safety needs because it will eventually provide me with the degree I need to obtain better employment and a secure future. The decision to buy an Apple computer was based on a series of television commercials that led me to believe the Apple was a better purchase than a PC. These commercials feature two men representing each type of computer, each demonstrating different ways in which the Apple is better than the PC. By indicating that the Apple is less susceptible to spyware and computer breakdowns, these commercials appealed to my safety needs by indicating that my personal information would remain private and that my work would probably not get lost in a computer meltdown. The bundled programs and other features that are indicated come with the Apple also appealed to my belonging needs by indicating that everyone who knew anything owned an Apple and my self-esteem needs by providing me with a status symbol sitting on my desk in the form of a shiny new cool computer that could do many things. Despite knowing that these commercials were targeted primarily for the younger purchasing audience, primarily the 20-30 year old age group, it was difficult to ignore the easy, relaxed attitude of the guy playing the Apple enough to concentrate on making sure I only bought as much computer as I really needed to accomplish my goals. His attitude helped me identify with a relaxed, carefree lifestyle in which all of my other needs were met, enabling progression on to the self-actualization stage of my development.

A second purchase that didn't require such an investment of dollars was my decision to buy Tropicana orange juice while I was grocery shopping. Of course, I need to have something available to drink in order to survive, it's a basic physiological need, but water comes free out of the tap. The decision

to buy orange juice, as well as to select the specific brand purchased, was as influenced by the television commercial I saw before I walked out the door as my decision to purchase my Apple computer was. In this case, the decision to buy orange juice was as much influenced by the idea that I could also get a healthy, fresh start to my morning by drinking a glass of orange juice that was suggested by the commercial as it was to satisfy a need for beverage with flavor. Seeing people in this commercial who were evidently felt more alive and refreshed after drinking their juice made me feel as if perhaps I would have an easier start to my day if I drink some orange juice, too. The idea that it was healthy for me, meeting some of my physiological needs, was reinforced by the images of people swimming and riding their bikes while the ability of this fresh start to help me meet some of my belonging needs was reinforced by the image of the women waving to each other as they passed, one to riding the bike with her child and the other presumably off to work.

Both of these commercials appealed to my basic needs for survival even though neither product is truly essential to my well-being. They make life easier on the one hand and healthier on the other, but both goals can be achieved through other means. By indicating that purchasing these products will lead to the fulfillment of my deficit needs and, in the case of the computer at least, help me achieve some self-actualization needs, these commercials provide powerful draws to lead people to purchase their product or brand over another.

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