

THE ROLE OF SENSES, EMOTIONS AND THE PRINCIPLES OF THE EXPERIENCE ECONOMY IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

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Abstract

Sensory features of products and services affect emotions, memories, perception, choices and consumption. The creation of new emotions or emphasising of existing ones can increase the appeal of the product or service. Furthermore, it is important for the creative industries to create products and services that inspire, include and reflect consumer values.

The creative industries – which include advertising, architecture, arts and crafts, design, fashion, film production, video, photography, music, the performing arts, publishing, research and development, software and computer game development, and electronic publishing, as well as TV and radio – are elements of the creative economy. Creativity is also one of the drivers of the experience economy. According to theorists of experience economics Joseph Pine and James Gilmore, the most prolific experiences are authentic, remain in the memory and change human notions by stimulating all five senses (vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch), provoking emotions and feelings, and allowing people to participate and be involved.

The research question of this paper is as follows: how are senses and emotions linked with experiences, when they are used in the development of creative products and services?

Therefore, this paper proposes a theoretical review of how to incorporate senses and sensory design into a more comprehensive understanding within the creative economy, as well as the experience economy.

Keywords: *creative industries, creativity, senses, emotions, feelings, sensory marketing, experience, experience economy, experiential design.*

Introduction

With the recent development of the creative industries, the aspects of added value and the experience provided to the consumer have become even more important than the product and service themselves; furthermore, the understanding of design has transformed from a problem-solving method into a way of creating meaningful experiences. According to Pine and Gilmore, businesses must orchestrate memorable events for their customers, and that memory itself becomes the product: the “experience” [Pine & Gilmore 1998].

The research question of the paper is: how are senses and emotions linked with experiences, when they are used in the development of creative products and services?

Sensory experience, which combines all five senses – sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch – creates intense and special effects. Products and services of creative industries can also be developed using related creative industry products which are sensory – for example, storytelling, design, gastronomy, art or crafts – thus creating a special atmosphere and emotions.

The process which includes these actions and strategies is called sensory marketing. Sensory marketing tends to focus on building a temporary or permanent environment specifically for conveying a message, establishing a brand, or arousing feelings and engaging the senses [Buford 2017]. Bernd Schmitt presents five types of sensory marketing approaches, referred to as “strategic experiential modules”: “sense,” “feel,” “think,” “act” and “relate.” [Schmitt 2010]. According to Schmitt, the first stage, “sense,” appeals to consumers’ senses (sight, sound, touch, taste and smell); “feel” relates to inner feelings, moods and emotions; “think” appeals to the intellect and cognitive experiences; “act” targets physical behaviour, lifestyle and interactions; and “relate” creates experiences and involves desires.

The first stage – sense – is often neglected with several messages, visual triggers and information overload. Sensory aspects also lack a systematic approach and place into the disciplines of experience economy and creative economy. The next stage – feel – is crucial for creating experiences. Emotions are subjective and affective; they are states of mind, and are created by certain events and stimuli. The manifestation of emotions is related to the fulfilment of individuals’ expectations and needs. This means that emotions define levels of satisfaction and the process of decision making.

The contents of the paper are structured as two sections. The first section is dedicated to the relation between emotions and experiences, thus providing a conceptual background. Then follows the second section, which addresses aspects of senses and emotions and their importance in the development of creative products and services.

1. Senses, emotions and experiences

As mentioned in the introduction, emotions are subjective and affective. Emotional experiences can express themselves as joy, happiness, arousal, anger, grief or fear, among others; they can lead to feelings of satisfaction, relaxation, peace, excitement, etc. Emotions are links between experiences and individuals' decision making.

Senses and emotions are strongly interrelated with experiences. The most prolific experiences are authentic, remain in the memory and change human notions by stimulating all five senses (vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch), provoking emotions and feelings, and allowing people to participate and be involved [Pine & Gilmore 1998]. Therefore, experience helps to develop products and services in a more meaningful and memorable way and to affect consumer emotions and feelings.

Goody states that all experience of the outside world is mediated by the senses, including aesthetic experiences in the arts and beyond. The senses are the means of communication, operating at both a physiological and at a cultural level [Goody 2002]. Traditionally, experience has been defined as a personal occurrence with highly emotional significance obtained from the consumption of products and services [Holbrook & Hirschman 1982] and emotions that are translated into senses. The senses are at the core of how the human body collects information and uses it as a foundation for understanding or developing meanings, by which "our bodily states, situated actions, and mental simulations are used to generate our cognitive activity" such as attitude, behaviour, and memory [Krishna 2012].

Emotions are memorable, and so are experiences. They can be activated by events, words, smells and other stimuli. For example, in the French writer Marcel Proust's work "In Search of Lost Time" (*À la recherche du temps perdu*) he describes how eating a madeleine (a small, shell-shaped sponge cake) and smelling linden tea brings him back to his childhood and lets him experience vivid emotions related to these memories. In literature, this is also called the Proust phenomenon – the sudden, involuntary evocation of an autobiographical memory, including a range of related sensory and emotional expressions [Krishna 2011]. Similarly, everyone has their own set of memories, which create emotions, and this phenomenon can be used in creating new experiences as well.

Thus, in economical terms the "product" is experience, memories and transformation. Experiences help to increase the added value of products and services, therefore providing competitive advantages in business. Experience impacts feelings, creates fantasies, pleasures and dreams, remains in the memory for a long time, and influences behaviour accordingly.

According to Hirschmann and Holbrook, the meaning of a product or service is more important than its price or function – this is the concept of hedonic consumption. Hirschmann and Holbrook list the elements as follows: meaning is the most important, followed by status/identity. A lower level of hedonic consumption is related to emotions, and only then, as the lowest priority, is the price and function of the product or service [Hirschmann and Holbrook 1982].

Experience is created through all the senses simultaneously, and the contribution of each sense is essential in building a common structure and understanding of experience. The sensory aspects of products and services (touch, taste, smell, hearing and vision) affect individuals' memories, perception and attitude, and emphasising senses, as well as highlighting feelings, can increase the attractiveness of a product or service [Schmitt 2007]. Using specific colours, emphasising tastes, adding aromas, altering shapes or even adding weight can lead to certain emotions and then create experiences. For example, fashion as a creative industry is not only about garments and fashion as a concept; it's also about the ambience of the trading room, characteristic aromas, packaging designs selected for garments and background music.

Research on the human senses has shown that sensory cues of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch can all affect preferences, memories and choices [Krishna 2010], where they play a crucial part in the creation of an emotional connection and experience of the process of purchase [Holbrook & Hirschman 1982; Schmitt 2003; Krishna 2010]. Consumers also undoubtedly perceive the world as multisensory [Spence et al. 2014]. In terms of marketing, the "Unique Selling Proposition" (USP) has given way to the "Multisensory Stimulation Proposition" (MSP) [Howes 2007].

All the earlier economic stages remain away from and outside the buyer, outside the buyer, but experiences are inherently personal. They actually occur within any individual who has been engaged on an emotional, physical, intellectual or even spiritual level [Pine & Gilmore 2011]. The previous example with fashion demonstrates this – it's a mix of elements, which affect senses and emotions, can be perceived differently among different individuals, but still creates a single integrated message and a unique multisensory proposition. Moreover, cognitive science theorists Schmidt and Rogers point out that the human mind has a modular structure – individuals appreciate and respond to sensory, emotional, intellectual, pragmatic and social experiences [Schmitt & Rogers 2009]. Everyone is driven by experiences, both good and bad, and how we relate to these experiences determines where people work, live, shop and make choices. Consequently, companies must be able to provide full experience and insight into detail in all aspects, not just strategies or brand development. The most successful brands are the ones whose creators have

a broad vision and the ability to create comprehensive experiences, not just a variety of messages or works that do not match companies' values.

The experience must be holistic, not fragmented; all the elements must be integrated around one story or around the main message. LaSalle and Britton define the starting point of a holistic experience as its involvement of a person, as opposed to a customer – at different levels and in every interaction between such person and a company, or a company's offer [LaSalle & Britton 2003]. Furthermore, Gentile states that experience is strictly personal and implies involvement at different levels (rational, emotional, sensorial, physical and spiritual). Experience originates from a set of interactions between a person and a product, a company, or part of a company's structure, which provoke a reaction. [Gentile et al. 2017]. Schmitt lists three aspects of a great customer experience:

- 1) each of the touchpoints delivers a great experience (product, communication, packaging, etc.);
- 2) integration – speaking with the same voice or offering a unified experience;
- 3) innovation – customers' preferences are changing all the time [Schmitt 2019].

Experiences may be evoked by products, packaging, communications, in-store interactions, sales relationships, events and the like. They may occur as a result of online or offline activities [Schmitt 2010].

The elements of customer experience are as follows:

- 1) sensorial – experiences whose stimulation affects the senses;
- 2) emotional – experiences which generate moods, feelings, emotions;
- 3) cognitive – thinking, problem-solving;
- 4) pragmatic – the practical act of doing something, usability;
- 5) lifestyle – values and beliefs, lifestyle and behaviour;
- 6) relational – social context, relationship, ideal self, social identity [adapted from Gentile et al. 2007].

All these dimensions must be considered from the company's perspective when creating a value proposition, as well as the consumer's perception.

Hultén defines the concept of “emotional communications” as including sensory marketing, branding, design and ambience to produce entertaining and sensory experiences which create an emotional connection [Hultén 2011]. For example, Kapferer states that luxury likes to be associated with art, because both aim to be perceived as imperial and timeless and share a love for creativity, craftsmanship, rare materials and exclusivity. It can be seen as an object of art, communicating sophistication and intrinsic value [Kapferer 2015, as cited in Jelinek 2018].

Therefore, the next question is: how to manage and direct experiences through senses and emotions within the development of creative products and services?

2. Senses and emotions, and their role in the development of creative products and services

The work and development of the creative industries are interrelated between various fields. For example, designers seek inspiration in museums or movies, video game creators collaborate with illustrators and storytellers to develop their products, architects are inspired by cultural heritage, etc. These examples are important, when experiences are created – to create products and services that inspire, include and reflect added value. Value can also be symbolic. For example, M. Peris-Ortiz and colleagues state that there are several cultural and creative industries based on handicrafts or on the degree of knowledge and capital, for example, production of wine or architecture, which must necessarily compete, combining the efficiency of their production with the symbolic nature of their products [Peris-Ortiz et al. 2019]. The meaning or the symbolic nature which the consumer attributes to the good means that the last link in the value chain – which connects the good to the market – has extraordinary importance [Lawrence & Phillips 2002].

The main difference between an experience and a sensory experience is a brand's ability to reach the inner core of customers [Kumar 2014].

The sensory features of products and services influence emotions, memories, perception, choices and consumption. The creation of new emotions or emphasis of existing ones can increase the attractiveness of a product or service. Thus, the main challenge is: how to influence clients in new, provocative and imaginative ways?

Sensory experiences, which include all five of the senses, can attract customers, and create strong, positive and special impressions by using the products and services of creative industries, for example, storytelling, design, gastronomy, craft or creation a special atmosphere.

Similar to the experience economy, where the main aim is to create added value, the creative economy, with its manifestation of humanity's capacity to think, create, innovate and design, also generates value. Supporting elements for the development of experience include art, storytelling, photo, video, design, copywriting, architecture etc., as well as science, cultural heritage, technological and creative innovations, and digital media.

They help create unique experiences for customers. Consequently, experience is developed by linking together a number of creative industries, which results in high added value.

In his book *Sensebacking*, Charles Spence states that our senses connect far more than we ever imagined. In practice, this means it is possible to change what we hear simply by altering what we see, while manipulating the way something sounds can affect what it feels like [Spence 2021]. While there is existing research on the human senses in the field of consumer behaviour, there is a need to consider how

multi-sensory interactions can affect consumers' consumption behaviour [Peck and Childers 2008].

A multisensory approach can help to develop more immersive and attractive offers in the creative industries. According to Martin Lindstrom, in our lives, events, moods, feelings, and even products are continuously imprinted on our five-track sensory recorder from the second we wake to the moment we go to sleep, and the most effective brand-building strategies recognise this fact, leveraging each of the senses to establish a true sensory brand experience [Lindstrom 2005]. Moreover, research shows that adding several senses into an offering leads to more sensory information for perception [Marks 2014], and results in stronger experiences and better evaluations, thus it is important for managers to consider the interplay of sensory cues in branding, product design and design of servicescapes [Helmefalk and Hultén 2017; Krishna 2013; Spangenberg et al. 2006]. For example, in museums it is possible to combine mixed reality technology, gaming and sensory design in the development of exhibitions. One example is the exhibition *Sensorium* at the Tate Modern in 2015, which displayed four paintings from the Tate collection. It was possible to experience sounds, smells and tastes inspired by the artworks. For instance, Francis Bacon's "Figure in a Landscape" was combined with tastes, smells and sounds – it was possible to taste charcoal, sea salt and cocoa in order to emphasise the dark nature of the painting; and the setting, Hyde Park, was evoked by the smells of grass, soil and animal scents. There was an audio background, with mechanised, industrial sounds as well. This exhibition was extremely popular, and also won several awards. This approach – adding multisensory features, can be also used in other exhibitions and museums.

The products and services of the creative industries are widely used in commerce. When a customer enters a store they do not experience the music in isolation; they do not smell the scent without seeing the colours as well; they do not walk on the floor covering without feeling the ambient temperature. The typical customer experiences gradations of all these and other stimuli as an ongoing, collective experience [Ballantine et al. 2010]. Our perception and behaviour are controlled by the activity of many millions of multisensory neurons connecting the five main senses of sight, sound, smell, touch and taste. The key question is what rules the brain actually uses to combine the inputs from the different senses [Spence 2021]. Moreover, Spence states that sensory interplay occurs when two or more senses simultaneously interact [Spence et al. 2014].

Smell enhances the ability to remember product descriptions and affects product evaluation. Music in advertising affects attention and increases ad persuasiveness [Krishna et al 2016]. Touch is the first sense to develop in the womb and the last sense one loses with age [Krishna 2011].

Hultén et al. provide a model of sensorial strategies, dividing sensors from sensations. Keeping in mind that human perception is modular, each experience is subjective, and each set of senses is individual (as mentioned and cited earlier in the paper), a holistic multi-sensory experience is created, ensuring the customer receives the experience the company intended.

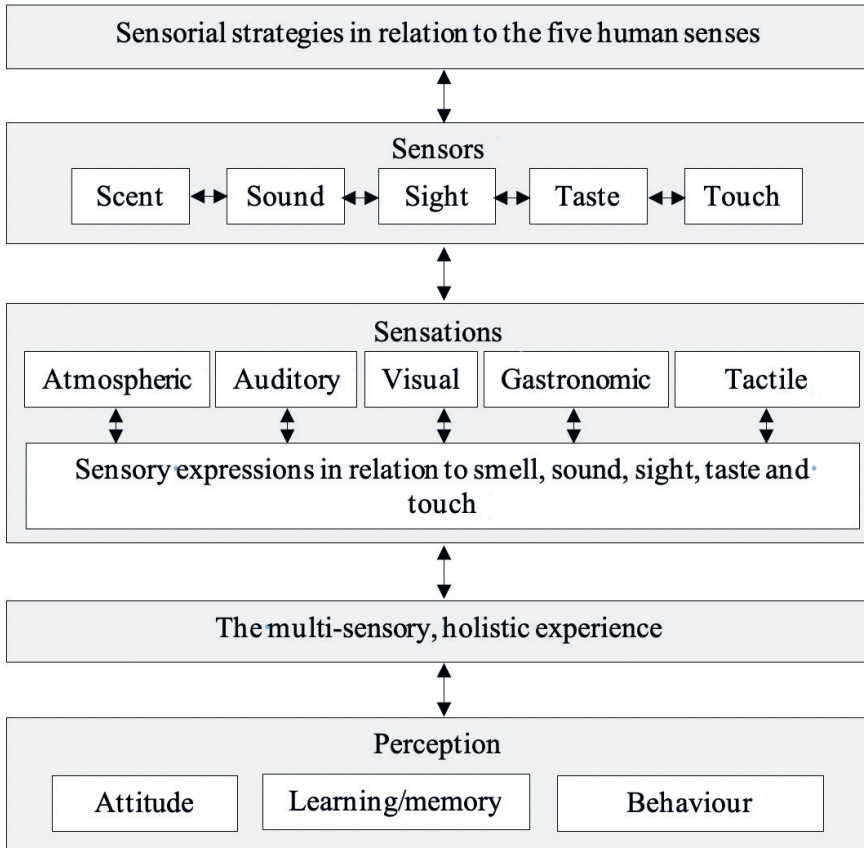


Figure 1. Multi-sensory experience and perception model [adapted by the author from Krishna 2011; Hultén 2011].

The model can be combined with Krishna's conceptual framework for sensory marketing; it has an emphasis on perception, and also defines outcomes in more detail than the model by Hultén – adding attitude, learning/memory and behaviour [adapted from Krishna 2011]. It is also important that sensorial strategies receive feedback, therefore, the models of Krishna and Hultén have been combined, and the aspect of perception added.

Therefore, the conclusion of sensory features is as follows:

Table 1. Senses and sensations, and their manifestations [Hultén 2011]

Senses	Sensations	Manifestations
Smell	Atmospheric	Intensity of products, congruence Atmosphere, theme, attitude Signature aromas
Hearing	Audial	Voices, music, jingles Characteristic sounds, especially compositions
Vision	Visual	Design, packaging, style Colour, light, theme Graphic, exterior, interior
Taste	Gastronomical	Synergy Presentation, environment Knowledge, pleasure, lifestyle
Touch	Tactile	Materials and surfaces Temperature and weight Forms and stability

All these elements must be considered when designing experiences.

Smell enhances the ability to remember product descriptions and affects product evaluations. As mentioned before, smell can provoke emotions and memories, thereby accentuating experience. However, it is important not to exaggerate smell, as it is a sense which an individual cannot get away from or “turn off”.

Hearing – music, jingles, sounds, audio-branding, and especially compositions are direct products of the creative industries. For example, music in advertising affects attention and increases the persuasiveness of ads [Krishna et al. 2016]. Music in ads also has a referential meaning, which is contextually dependent and reflects a listener’s personal associations. With respect to the context, results generally show that music can improve message processing, brand recall, and brand attitude only when it fits (is congruent) with features of the ad and brand [Krishna et al. 2016].

Vision is the most used sense. In the context of the creative industries, it refers to literally everything – design, style, colours, lights, graphic design, architecture and interiors – and is used in gaming, art, photography, publishing and other fields. However, our over-reliance on technology has skewed our sensory balance – something Oxford professor Charles Spence, a renowned sensory psychologist, knows all about. “There is a real danger that modern technology prioritises vision and sound over all the other senses,” he says. It is not without reason, then, that people talk of a sensory imbalance. “The notion that the ‘higher’ rational senses of

vision and hearing are exposed to ever more information while the more emotional – what used to be called ‘lower’ senses – of touch, smell, and taste are neglected. Hence the imbalance” [Spence 2021].

Taste and its relation to the creative industries is more related to the field of gastronomy. Various scholars agree that gastronomy is also a creative industry [Dewandaru & Purnamaningsih 2016; Pedersen 2012; Martins 2016], especially *haute cuisine*, as it requires high level skills, is related to the creation of added value, and also has a cultural context.

The sense of touch is very personal, and it deepens and clarifies the interaction between a brand, organisation and its customers at a personal level. Krishna states that it is only the sense of touch which allows people to feel things to come into contact with them [Krishna 2012]. With touch, it is possible to perceive a product and its quality. Touch allows feeling texture, stability and temperature. It can also affect evaluation of quality.

Furthermore, these senses can be mixed. Each individual can perceive them differently and create his or her own experience. There is the concept of synaesthesia – involuntary cross-modal sensory associations [Merter 2018]. This is associated with perception, creativity and imagination. Synaesthesia has been linked with the arts – e. g. literature, painting, poetry, and music – in that artistic outcomes are often the embodiment of a synaesthetic experience of some kind. For example, individuals can visualise sounds, smell words, taste colours or touch tastes. Synaesthesia is a neurological condition, in which one sensory stimulus causes different sensory physical experiences as a result of perceiving one or more different senses by cross-modal association, which is automatic, involuntary and irrepressible [Harrison & Baron-Cohen 1996; Cytowic 2002].

Conclusions

This paper gives an insight into role of senses and emotions, and the principles of the experience economy in the creative industries. It is important, as experiences help to increase the added value of products and services, thereby providing competitive advantages in business. Furthermore, paying attention to senses, emotions and experiences helps to solve problems related to information overload, several messages and visual triggers – a structured and multisensory approach in the creative industries can help companies to stand out, to create more humanistic products and services, and to add value.

The main findings and answers to the research question of the paper – how senses and emotions are linked with experiences, when used in the development of creative products and services – are related to memorable events, multisensory experiences and high added value.

Emotions are links between experiences and individuals' decision-making, as are senses. The most prolific experiences are created with stimulation of all five senses (vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch); this provokes emotions and feelings, allowing people to participate and be involved. Moreover, emotions are memorable – they can be activated by events, words, smells and other stimuli. Experience impacts feelings, and creates fantasies, pleasure and dreams; it remains in the memory for a long time, and influences behaviour accordingly.

Research on the human senses has shown that sensory cues of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch can affect preferences, memories and choices; thus, they play a crucial part in the creation of an emotional connection and experiences of the process of purchasing.

Various fields are interrelated in the work and development of the creative industries. For example, designers seek inspiration from museums or movies, video game creators collaborate with illustrators and storytellers to develop their products, and architects are inspired by cultural heritage, etc. These examples are important when experiences are created – to create products and services that inspire, include and reflect added value. Sensory experiences which include all five senses can attract customers, create strong, positive and special impressions by using products and services of the creative industries – for example, storytelling, design, gastronomy, crafts, or the creation of a special atmosphere.

To create high added value, creative industries should be interrelated – for example, linking several creative industries, such as architecture with cultural heritage, game development with design, and online publishing, etc. This leads to more sophisticated and multisensory experience, which in turn triggers more emotions and senses. Research also shows that adding several senses into an offering leads to more sensory information for perception, resulting in stronger experiences and better evaluations. For example, in museums it is possible to mix together reality technology, gaming, sensory design and performing arts. The factor connecting experiences and the creative industries is also creativity itself, as it manifests humanity's capacity to think, create, innovate and design, thus generating value.

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