

Adding Psychological Value to Heritage Tourism Experiences
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ABSTRACT. This study employed an under-utilized methodology known as the Hierarchical Value Map (HVM) technique to explore the underlying motives and needs of visitors to a heritage site. Drawing from a small sample of visitors to a preserved 18th century plantation, the analysis revealed that most respondents were looking for a satisfying leisure experience where pleasure and learning are complementary. In addition the results support the notion that there is a specialized tourist segment (e.g., heritage tourists) that as a group has unique motives and needs. Implications for both optimizing the visitors experience as well as projecting an effective image and marketing communications are discussed.

KEYWORDS. Heritage tourism, Hierarchical Value Map, psychological Values

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What are the underlying motivations of visitors to heritage tourism sites? What specific needs are visitors attempting to satisfy? What specific needs are visitors attempting to satisfy? What specific amenities or services help satisfy those needs? These are the focal questions this study will attempt to answer. For any venture to be successful, the product or service needs to be based upon an understanding of customer needs and motivations, since it is those needs and motives the consumer expects to be satisfied by the purchase. Often visitor surveys at attractions have identified such motives as: to see and experience the unusual, self-education, to relax, and to spend time with friends and family. But what motives lie behind these generic motivations? Furthermore, what are the underlying needs behind the motives and what specific amenities existing or not satisfy the visitor's needs?

The study of what motivates visitors in their decision-making has been researched over the years utilising various qualitative and quantitative methods (Crompton, 1979; Pearce and Caltabiano, 1983; Fondness, 1994; Oh, Uysal and Weaver, 1995; Baloglu and Uysal, 1996). One under-utilized methodology is the Hierarchical Value Method. This technique is designed to gain insights into the underlying psychological motivations of visitors and why people visit a particular site over another. Understanding the underlying reasons for visitation can assist management in better defining their image as well as helping visitors achieve their motivational goals, thus creating a satisfying experience for the target audience.

BACKGROUND

Definition of Heritage Tourism

Although tourism has occurred since Roman times, it has only become a major industry since the 19th Century. Increasing development of mass and resort tourism over the years has led to suggestions that the public is becoming dissatisfied with crowds and pollution and were searching for something new or different an 'alternative' (Eadington and Smith, 1992). With the rise of 'alternative' tourism came 'eco-tourism,' 'heritage tourism,' 'cultural tourism' and other specific-named forms of tourism. But what do these names mean? What is exactly 'heritage tourism'? There are many and varied definitions in the tourism industry. As Richards (2000) notes, often the terms 'heritage tourism,' 'cultural tourism,' and 'arts tourism' are intermingled without thought given to their definition or meaning. One definition which seems to encapsulate the significance of the term 'heritage tourism' "*is travel that is motivated by a desire*

to experience the authentic natural, historic and cultural resources of a community or region" (NCDOT, 2000).

Thus, heritage tourism is the desire to visit and experience a site that is unique to a community or region and cannot be found elsewhere. Buildings, artifacts, folk stories, landscapes, languages, art and music are all expressions of heritage. They are historic and cultural resources (Pearson and Sullivan, 1995). Although a region may contain a number of similar resources/sites, it is the individual stories of each site that makes a place different and unique. Heritage provides us with a sense of place, a connectedness to that place, to land, traditions, customs and family (Beck, 1995). All aspects inform us of our past where we have been, how we have shaped our present, and where we are going.

Communities often have sentimental attachments to a place, and these attachments depend on a place's social, historic and/or aesthetic value (Beck, 1995). The significance of a place may also be intertwined with local history, giving a community their sense of identity from past events of great importance (Pearson and Sullivan, 1995). Although 'heritage tourism' can be beneficial as a way of preservation; preservation organizations that manage these sites must be careful to respond to visitor needs and motives. A lack of understanding of what motivates visitors to pay for admission to these sites can undermine their preservation and education missions that are dependent on such revenue.

The use and experience of each element of the tourism product both tangible and intangible is unique to each visitor. In describing tourism places, visitors can give two types of responses. The first response lists the physical aspects of a destination the services, facilities or locations within. The second response relates to the qualities or attributes the place is perceived to have (Ashworth and Voogd, 1994). It is these perceptions which are intertwined within a visitor's values and motivations.

Visitor Motivations

Over the years research has been conducted into the areas of visitor motivation based upon Maslow's (1954) Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow purports that basic needs (e.g., physiological, safety and security) must be met before the next levels in the needs hierarchy can be met (e.g., sense of belonging, self-actualization). Development of this theory has evolved to tourist motivation being seen as a combination of push/pull factors. Push factors such as self-expression, self-development, relaxation, and prestige internally motivate a person to travel. Pull factors are external to the individual and are illustrated in the attributes of a destination (Crompton, 1979).

Sirgy and Su (2000) purport that travel behavior is influenced by both self-congruity (match between self-concept and destination image) and functional congruity (match between a destination's attributes and a tourist's ideal expectations). Moscardo, Morrison, Pearce, Long and O'Leary (1996) put forward the model that the critical link of a destination being chosen over another is motivated by the activities that a destination offers that is, there is a link between the benefits visitors seek and the activities that are pursued. Another proposition is that the benefits sought are a useful means to segment markets. Rather than segmenting by traditional characteristics such as demographics, segmentation is based on benefits that a potential visitor desires (Frochet and Morrison, 2000).

Pearce's Travel Career Ladder is based on a hierarchy of travel motives and builds on Maslow's model (in Pearce et al., 1998). During an individual's lifecycle, motives are influenced by internal and external factors such as personal needs, money, health and social influence. These motives can be at different levels of the travel career ladder and can alter according to satisfaction of a particular need as experience is gained. The Travel Career Ladder recognizes both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and that motives can change over time and situations. Situations can be family or groups travelling together. Whilst one

person in the group may have a differing motive from another, the destination chosen usually reflects and accommodates the differing interests (Oppermann and Chon, 1997).

According to Hudson (1999), central to motivation is the concept of need. Needs motivate behavior and in order to understand motivation, it is necessary to discover what those needs are and how they can be fulfilled. It is especially so in the tourism industry to understand needs. It is not the product nor the service that people purchase but the expectation of amenities and benefits to satisfy needs (Crompton and McKay, 1997). Visitors purchase expectations. It is whether these expectations are met or exceeded that give satisfaction or delight (Kotler, Bowen and Makens, 1998). The aim of managers should be to enhance and maximise satisfaction of the visitor with their experience (Pearson and Sullivan, 1995).

Measurement Strategies

Although travel motivation is seen as based on a combination of internal and external factors, how can these needs be measured? How can a motive be measured and expectations changed into satisfaction? Research can be qualitative or quantitative in nature. Data can be collected by participatory observation, use of conversations, questionnaires, or focus groups, all designed to bring forward the emotional aspect of the purchase decision (Ryan, 1995). A problem with both forms of research is that it can be seen as subjective.

Researchers often employ standard lists of motivations in their surveys that identify the surface or generic motives of consumers. Though useful, the responses do not provide insights into the deeper more underlying motivations and needs. Furthermore, the use of a predetermined set of items is problematic since there is no way to guarantee that the dimensions selected by the researcher are the most important motives of the respondents.

Problems with focus groups may also arise. Focus groups center on gaining in visitors' 'own words' their motives and feelings. Through a discussion directed by a facilitator, the motives and feelings of the group emerge (Pearce et al., 1998). However, no two people will construct the same exact meaning of a place or an event (Kelly, 1955). The meaning of an event as well as words to describe their meaning have evolved from an individual's unique set of social circumstances. Consequently, each individual can be expected to have slightly different meanings to a place or event and the conformity of thought derived from the focus group process may limit the potential of new ideas and creativity sought by the manager (Ford and Heaton, 2000). In addition, the participant selection process employed in many focus groups can affect its results (Pearce et al., 1998). Results can become biased and distorted by the 'subject effect'; that is, the researcher's participation in selection of participants can affect the nature of the situation (Schultz, 1975; Brannen, 1993). Crotts and van Rekom (1998) argue that the factors derived from individuals are more personally meaningful than factors derived from group consensus (focus groups) or supplied to them from standard lists of motivations.

A research method designed to eliminate as much research bias as possible is the Hierarchical Value Map, or the 'laddering' technique first developed by Reynolds and Gutman (1984). This methodology is designed to better understand individual's motives and what is the true underlying need or motives being sought. Further indepth questioning of why an element is important to them creates a 'ladder' of values until the higher-level meanings are uncovered. This means-end framework of the laddering technique attempts to discover, not only the key descriptors at all levels, but their connection and linkages which provides the structural components of the respondent's cognitive network (Crotts and van Rekom, 1998). Understanding the underlying motives of why a visitor travels to a heritage site can help managers not only be more effective in their marketing, but also in enhancing a visitor's experience and therefore satisfaction.

Hierarchical Value Methodology

The motives of visitors are deeply rooted in their network of expectations, goals and values (van Rekom, 1994). The Hierarchical Value Method (HVM) or 'laddering' technique is designed to identify both higher and lower values and their connections via a series of probing questions. The classic approach of Reynolds and Gutman (1984) is designed to first have visitors nominate two other choice alternatives to the one ultimately selected. Assigned as A, B, or C, visitors are then asked to state how alternatives A and B are alike but different from C. They are then asked to state how B and C are alike but different from A, and then, how A and C are alike but different to B. After the initial attribute, or distinction of a specific aspect is provided, a series of sequential indepth probing questions follows into why the distinction is important. In order to identify the full set of linkages, this style of questioning of 'why' in terms of importance is continued until the subject can no longer answer (Reynolds and Gutman, 1984; van Rekom, 1994, 1997). This classic technique is based on the visitor being able to link from concrete attributes to abstract attributes, to functional consequences, to psycho-social consequences, to instrumental values, and finally to terminal values (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 1999).

Attributes are defined as features or aspects of the attraction's experience or services. Outcomes (consequences) amass to people from consuming or experiencing these services whether they be desirable or undesirable. The desirable outcomes of visitation are the consequences of interest (Crofts and van Rekom, 1998). Consequences which in themselves have no further consequences can be considered end states. These are often called 'core values.' That is, important beliefs or attitudes people hold about themselves, towards an object or idea, and their feelings concerning others' beliefs about them (Kotler et al., 1998; Rokeach, 1968). It is values that determine the relative desirability of consequences (Crofts and van Rekom, 1998). The resultant data are visually represented in the form of a map, or tree-like structure, connecting these elements (Reynolds and Gutman, 1984).

The disadvantage of this classic means-end model are the assumptions that knowledge is organised in a hierarchy of sequence from concrete to abstract thoughts from a means to end state. That is, mental maps produced by the respondents represent cross-intuitive processes and connections interpreted as deduction-based judgements (Bagozzi and Dabholkar, 2000).

Another style of the HVM technique purported by Bagozzi and Dabholkar (2000) and Bagozzi and Dholakia (1999) is where the respondent makes a series of claims and then is asked to justify and defend those claims. The process can begin by asking respondents to indicate whether their overall evaluation of a situation is positive, negative or neutral and to what degree 'strongly' or 'somewhat.' This creates a basis for communication between interviewer and respondent by allowing the respondent to express their definite stance on an issue of importance (Bagozzi and Dabholkar, 2000). Once expressed, the respondent is then asked to provide his/her own personal reasons for such an evaluation. Beginning with the first reason given, the interviewer then asks the respondent to explain in regards to their own personal significance. They are then asked to justify their explanation in terms of personal relevance. This explanation and justification process is continued until the respondent is no longer able to give any further justification. The procedure is then continued for each of the remaining reasons originally stated in the respondent's evaluation (Bagozzi and Dabholkar, 2000). Bagozzi and colleagues have argued that data generated from this HVM method represents interconnected, ordered sets of reasoning in terms of how individuals actually reflect their own self-concept and social presentation to others (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 1999; Bagozzi and Dabholkar, 2000).

Both styles of the HVM technique have been applied to determining means-end chains or motives for attending a fine arts museum (Crofts and van Rekom, 1998; Jansen-Verbeke and van Rekom, 1996), selecting a ski destination (Klenosky et al., 1993), use of a state park interpretive services (Klenosky, Frauman, Norman, and Gengler, 1998), corporate values (van Rekom, 1994, 1997), how goals are set and

influenced to lose weight, and how people felt about a United States President whilst he was in office (Bagozzi and Dabholkar, 2000; Bagozzi and Dholakia, 1999). The HVM methodology employed in the current study was the method purported by Bagozzi and colleagues (1999, 2000).

METHODOLOGY

The current study centered on visitors to Drayton Hall, a 1738 Georgian- Palladian house in South Carolina constructed by European and African American craftsmen. Drayton Hall is the only plantation on the Ashley River to survive intact both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and its architecture represents the oldest surviving example of its kind in the American South. The house is preserved by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in its nearly original condition without running water, electric lighting or central heating.

For the purpose of this study, 30 subjects were recruited from the population of paying visitors during April 2001 for a 20-minute interview. Visitor parties were approached by a research assistant after completing the tour of the plantation home for purposes of identifying the person who made the decision to visit Drayton Hall and asking their participation in the survey. Visitors who agreed to participate were provided a \$20 gift voucher for purchases at Drayton Hall's museum store after the interview. Though the sample size is small, it is consistent with other studies employing the HVM methodology (Crotts and van Rekom, 1998; Klenosky, Frauman, Norman, and Gengler, 1998; Jansen-Verbeke and van Rekom, 1996; Van Rekom, 1994, 1997; Klenosky et al., 1993). Research has shown that new insights seldom are elicited with more than 40 subjects (Crotts and van Rekom, 1998). To help keep subjectivity from influencing participant selection, all visitors were approached by a research assistant uninvolved with the interviewing process.

Interview Procedure

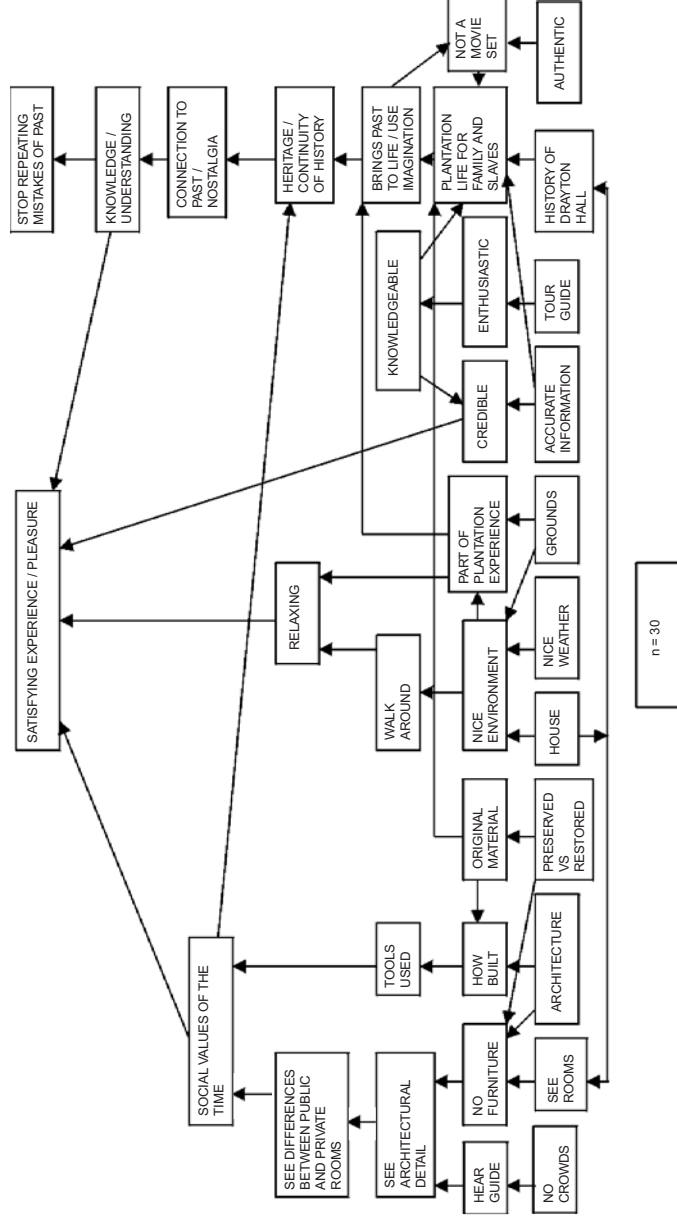
Subjects were first asked whether their overall experience of Drayton Hall was positive, negative or neutral, and if they felt strongly or somewhat strongly about their experience. They were then asked to provide aspects of what made their experience positive/negative/neutral. To identify the full set of cognitive linkages, visitors were then asked to explain why that aspect was important to them. Each time the visitor responded, they were asked to justify their explanation using the same basic question but in terms of the visitor's answer: 'Why is this important to you?' If the respondent had trouble answering, the question was repeated in the form 'If x did not occur, what would be the outcome/ consequences?' The why questions were repeated until the visitor could no longer answer. This was usually clear by the visitor answering in terms of 'it just is' or by shrugging their shoulders and saying 'I don't know.'

Not every visitor's means-end chains can be expected to reach the values level. Some visitors were able to articulate their means-end structures more so than others. However, combining all responses into a collective matrix provided a representation of the group-level motives of the respondents. A value structure map was created from the linkages across all subjects' responses. Again, the map itself represents the aggregate of all the individual linkages. All attributes, consequences and values are cast as the rows and columns of a square matrix that meets the selected criteria. The relationships between the key elements, as summarised by the cell frequencies, serve as the basis for constructing the value structure map. In this analysis, only the relationships that were mentioned by three or more visitors were included in the value structure map. Such a criteria was employed in order to produce an HVM map that was parsimonious but at the same time provided a detailed means-end framework.

RESULTS

The results of this research are summarized in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1. Hierarchical Value Map for Visitors to Drayton Hall



This figure represents the hierarchical value structure map of the 30 respondents. One way to examine such a map is to track the paths from the bottom of the map to the top. Note that many of the ladders are interconnected and that lower level attribute and consequences coverage into two higher level consequences or values (e.g., satisfying experience/pleasure, stop repeat mistakes of the past). Therefore, there are alternative ways of moving from the attributes level to the consequence level, and then onto the values level.

To interpret such an HVM map, recall that each line represents a chain of motivations mentioned by no less than three (10 percent) of the thirty respondents. Starting at the initial positive aspect of 'History of Drayton Hall' is important as it gives information about 'Plantation life for family and slaves.' This is important to the visitor as it 'Brings past to life/Use imagination.' In turn, it is a part of 'Heritage/continuity of past.' This makes the visitor feel a 'Connection to past/nostalgia' and provides 'Knowledge/understanding.' For some the highest order consequence then linked to 'Satisfying experience/pleasure,' while others 'Knowledge/understanding' linked to 'Stop repeating mistakes of the past.' In the same way, all chains of motivations are revealed following the lines in the figure upward.

The respondents provided a total of eleven initial attributes. These attributes converged into four lines of consequences that went on again to converge at 'Satisfying experience/pleasure.' Satisfying experience/pleasure does not represent an end-state in the classic means-end model. Instead they represent the final explanation of an ordered set of reasoning provided by respondents in the interviews. Another clear path of linkages extending from the attributes reflecting an opportunity to learn of the "History of Drayton Hall" and experience an "Authentic" plantation home extended along an ordered set of reasoning converging in a consequence of gaining "Knowledge and understanding." 'Knowledge and understanding' diverged to both a "Satisfying Experience/Pleasure" or to a "Stop Repeating Mistakes of the Past."

Another way to examine such an HVM map is to track the paths from the top to the bottom of the map. The end goals of 'Satisfying experience/ pleasure,' and 'Stop repeating mistakes of the past' are being served by all the lower level goals and values which motivate heritage visitors. What management has to do in order to satisfy the higher motives is described in detail, following the lines downward from these two constructs. For instance, visitors may enjoy a 'satisfying experience/ pleasure' if they felt it was 'relaxing.' They may feel it was 'relaxing' if (following the line downward from there) they were able to 'walk around.' This ability to 'walk around' (following the line farther downward from there) may be felt from the perception that it is a 'nice environment.' Going farther down, they may feel it was a 'nice environment' if it was 'nice weather.'

DISCUSSION

Before summarising the results of this study and discussing their implications, it is important to review this study's limitations. Though we feel the results are reflective of the underlying motivations and needs of the respondents interviewed, the sample was small and was limited to visitors to a single site during a limited ten-day period. Further research is warranted to validate the study's findings at this and other heritage sites. Often the HVM findings of this nature form the basis of survey instruments that can more efficiently be administered to larger samples at more diverse times and locations. Second, the findings were derived from the motives of visitors to the heritage site and thereby provided no insights as to the important non-visitor markets. Marketers are often as interested in new market development and the HVM technique applied to non-visitors could provide useful insights in what image(s) would attract specific segments to the site.

Herbert's (2001) conceptual model is particularly useful in conceptualising this study's findings. His model shows a circular process involving the production and presentation of heritage sites to visitors by

management, as well as the diverse ways in which visitors interpret these messages. Herbert shows that visitors are not passive in consumption and that managers need to be sensitive to their wants, needs and perceptions. It is our contention that the HVM method can take much of the mystery out of the process by showing management what are visitors' motives and needs as well as how to respond to their visitor needs in order to produce a satisfying experience. In this dataset, connection to a place was not only found to be important, but also that the setting, scenic environment, views, and a range of facilities available were all part of the experience.

The results of this study support the findings of Kerstetter, Confer and Graefe (2001) that the market for heritage sites can be organized along a continuum from general leisure travelers to heritage tourists in terms of their motivations. On one end of the continuum, a segment of visitors were found that were seeking a relaxing leisure experience supported by such features as the gardens and nice weather. In the middle of the continuum were those interested in gaining *knowledge of* the past but for pleasure seeking motives. On the opposite end of the continuum were what Kerstetter et al. described as heritage tourism specialists who were seeking *knowledge from* the past. We concur with Beck (1995) that this latter type of visitor is looking for a sense of place, a connectedness to a place, its land, traditions, customs and family to learn where we have been, how the past has shaped our present, and where as a society we are going.

The findings of this study provide *tentative* evidence that most visitors to heritage sites are looking for a satisfying leisure experience. Moreover the means in which management can provide visitors a satisfying experience have clearly been described in detail. In this dataset, there are three paths that can be taken in order to have a satisfying pleasure experience. The house itself and its original architecture; the views and setting in which the house is placed; and the interpretation of the history of the site through the tour guide who has accurate information. Comments by respondents who were seeking a pleasurable leisure experience indicated that the attribute of the natural setting provided a contrast and calming (consequence) experience to their modern lifestyles, and therefore, a satisfying/pleasurable experience (value). In this context, pleasure and learning were found to be complementary.

Authenticity was also mentioned as an important attribute among those visitors who were seeking 'Knowledge/understanding' and 'Stop repeating mistakes of the past.' Authenticity is a subjective experience and deals not only with facts but also with myths and the use of the imagination. We concur with Herbert (2001) that visitors may not be looking for scientific historical evidence; rather they are "looking for an experience, a new reality based on the tangible remains of the past."

In the current study, it was found that the preservation of the house was preferred over its restoration. Preservation enabled visitors to see how the house was built as well as provided historical evidence of the public and private life of the family. These aspects led to an understanding to the social values of the time, which in turn led to feelings of pleasure and a satisfying experience. Preservation in combination with hearing an accurate history of Drayton Hall and its owners, it was felt knowledge and understanding of what had happened in the past (e.g., wars, slavery, and time itself) could help in preventing their re-occurrence in the future.

The hierarchical value map represents respondents' thought patterns with respect to what they felt made an overall experience positive. Although 11 different aspects or features were initially given, explanation and justification of them led respondents to one of two higher underlying motives and values 'satisfying experience/pleasure,' and 'stop repeating mistakes of the past.' Knowledge of these linkages in the cognitive thought process can help managers compare possible positioning strategies and see whether it corresponds with respondents' world of thought, since positioning only makes sense if it can be perceived by potential visitors as serving their own goals better.

Results can also be used to refine the experience as well as define the image to be projected through advertising. The most obvious benefit from the process in refining the visitor experience would be in identifying those elements that are unique to the heritage site in question and how visitors evaluate them in terms of importance. The more successful managers are in identifying visitors' underlying means-end chains, the better their capabilities in helping visitors reach their goals of experiencing a positive leisure experience. Since visitor satisfaction is known to have a positive relationship with repeat visits and the probability of word of mouth, such fine tuning should provide positive dividends in terms of future visitation.

The HVM map also provides a foundation for external communication to potential visitors to effectively communicate concepts of what the visitor is ultimately searching for or values. The real key to accomplish this lies in communicating the linkages between attributes, consequences, and values that define the way people view themselves, their place in the world, and subsequently how they develop preferences for certain types of experiences. The hierarchical value map provides ample information for deriving powerful metaphors for communication.

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