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SITUATIONAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT PEOPLE'S BUYING BEHAVIOR

Situational influences are temporary conditions that affect how buyers behave, whether they actually buy your product, buy additional products, or buy nothing at all from you. They include things like physical factors, social factors, time factors, the reason for the buyer's purchase, and the buyer's mood. Accordingly, we must know what questions a customer sets before a purchase.

The Consumer's Physical Situation

Have you ever been in a department store and couldn't find your way out? No, you are not necessarily directionally challenged. Marketing professionals take physical factors such as a store's design and layout into account when they are designing their facilities. Presumably, the longer you wander around a facility, the more you will spend. Grocery stores frequently place bread and milk products on the opposite ends of the stores because people often need both types of products. To buy both, they have to walk around an entire store, which of course, is loaded with other items they might see and purchase.

The Consumer's Social Situation

The social situation you are in can significantly affect what you will buy, how much of it, and when. Perhaps you have seen Girl Scouts selling cookies outside grocery stores and other retail establishments and purchased nothing from them. But what if your neighbor's daughter is selling the cookies? Are you going to turn her down, or be a friendly neighbor and buy a box (or two)?

The Consumer's Time Situation

The time of day, the time of year, and how much time consumers feel like they have to shop also affects what they buy. Researchers have even discovered whether someone is a "morning person" or "evening person" affects shopping patterns.

The Reason for the Consumer's Purchase

The reason you are shopping also affects the amount of time you will spend shopping. Are you making an emergency purchase? Are you shopping for a gift? In recent years, emergency clinics have sprung up in strip malls all over the country. Convenience is one reason. The other is sheer necessity. If you cut yourself and you are bleeding badly, you are probably not going to shop around much to find the best clinic to go to. You will go to the one that's closest to you.

The Consumer's Mood

Have you ever felt like going on a shopping spree? At other times wild horses couldn't drag you to a mall. People's moods temporarily affect their spending patterns. Some people enjoy shopping. It's entertaining for them. At the extreme are compulsive spenders who get a temporary "high" from spending.