



TOURIST CONSUMER PURCHASING BEHAVIOR: THE NEXT PHASE

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All three papers focused on indigenous textiles/apparel as the marketed product or craft, demographic information about those likely to purchase or the actual purchasers themselves (younger, more highly educated consumers), the transfer of culture through these products, and in essence the power of aesthetics as a primary motivation for purchase. A compelling implication of *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, by Tom Friedman, is that the global democratizations of technology, finance, and information and the accelerated speed at which these occur has led to a homogenization of consumer expectations about goods and services. Goods and services are no longer unique; rather, the uniqueness lies within the context or experience associated with the delivery of the good or service. This has implications for tourist goods and purchasing behavior, as expressed in *The Experience Economy: Work Is Theater & Every Business a Stage*, by Pine and Gilmore. The authors believe that we have shifted from an "Information/Service Economy" to an "Experience Economy," in which "experience" becomes the distinct economic offering and key to future economic growth. To be successful, businesses must offer a contextual "experience" in which the seller becomes the stager, the buyer becomes the guest, goods and commodities serve as the stage props, services are the stage, and sensation becomes a demand feature. Memorabilia or souvenirs of the experience that leave an "indelible impression" on the guest emerge as the most important category of goods required by the experience stager. The experience theme must be properly staged through altering the guest's (buyer's) sense of spatial, temporal, and physical reality meaning-ful experience. In conclusion, when studying tourist consumer purchasing behavior, we may need to examine first the "staged" tourist experience associated with the purchase.