

APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE FOR BUSINESS INSIGHT
CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE @ IPSOS



WHAT IS APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY?

Although academics and businesses often have similar objectives, they usually operate in parallel worlds. Applied Anthropology brings those worlds together by using academic frameworks and cultural insight to answer critical business questions. Understanding the different ways in which culture dictates behaviour allows us to evaluate future developments – be that in relation to products, services or communications.

Ipsos tackles the culture question in two ways: by applying classical anthropological principles to research findings, and by collaborating with the academic world, through our 'Cultural Insight Network'. The former is a set of established principles that is particularly useful to cross-cultural studies, whilst the latter offers cultural, social and historical context through expert, academic opinion.



SEEING RESEARCH THROUGH THE LENS

OF AN ANTHROPOLOGIST

11 KEY PRINCIPLES IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

The principles of anthropology are just as applicable to today's marketers as they were to early anthropologists, exploring the islands of the Western Pacific, as they relate to an individual's interaction within a culture. The 11 principles below represent a set of cultural truths to guide us all:



RECIPROCITY

Using objects and experiences as a form of ritual exchange between people as a bonding experience [think: *chocolates*]



RITE OF PASSAGE

A celebratory, transitional moment which recognises the arrival into a new group [think: *motherhood*]



HABITUS

The habits, norms, and behaviours that we are brought up to believe are important [think: *eating habits + favourite foods*]



IDENTITY

Personality traits and beliefs that allow people to become a member of a group [think: *political affiliation*]



EXOTICISM

The charm of the unfamiliar, the 'other', or a product with attributes that sensationalise culture [think: *'hygge'*]



MYTH

Popular stories that exacerbate cultural fears, dreams, anxieties or ambitions [think: *disease management*]



GLOCAL

The intersection between local and global culture that influences social beliefs [think: *global supermarkets*]



MASTERY

The desire for self-improvement and betterment over others, relating to knowledge or skills [think: *online gaming*]



MATERIALITY

The need to symbolically express ourselves through our objects [think: *premium products*]



SOCIAL CAPITAL

The web of social relations, and people's place in it, that situates individuals amongst the many [think: *car ownership*]



IMAGINED COMMUNITIES

A socially constructed community based on strong sense of group identity [think: *gold credit cards*]

THE CULTURAL INSIGHT NETWORK

The academic world is ripe with cultural intelligence, and although this is crucial to business, it is not readily available for commercial use. The Cultural Insight Network was created to bridge this gap, bringing academic knowledge to the world of business.

The Cultural Insight Network is made up of leading academics from a range of disciplines across the social sciences, all respected experts in their various fields.

The network is commissioned to write bespoke papers, review research findings and give targeted lectures; all of which give us their academic point of view – based on years of fieldwork – on your business question.

Putting questions to the network will allow you to get a cultural viewpoint on your current issue, as well as help you build up a foundation of cultural awareness for future business decisions.

USING THE CULTURAL INSIGHT NETWORK TO BREAK INTO A NEW MARKET

Looking to launch a deodorant in India, our client wanted to know how best to communicate with consumers in this market. The messaging of their product was based around ideas of 'cleanliness' and 'protection', however current anthropological knowledge tells us that the Indian cultural conscious regards sweat as a 'pollutant' that must be 'purified'.

In India, a country with a diverse and vast array of religious beliefs, notions of purity dictate day to day life. Understanding this as a motivation means capturing the imagination of consumers, in a culturally relevant way.





WHEN TO USE IT

Both methods can be combined and/or tailored to your needs, and can be used to create hypotheses when setting research objectives, making sense of findings by identifying patterns, or contributing towards an analytical framework. Mapping the historical cultural narrative of a culture allows us to see where it might be heading in the future.

KEY CONTACTS

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