

V.A.L.S. Model

(*Values and Lifestyles*)

The Most Intelligent Tool For Understanding Of Customers Values And Lifestyles

Marketing Dictionary: VALS

Acronym for *Values and Lifestyles*, a system for grouping consumers according to psychological and sociological theories in order to predict their behavior in the purchase decision process. There are three main categories: *need-directed*-consumers who make purchases based solely on need; *outer-directed*-consumers who make purchases based on their perceptions of the way others view them; and *inner-directed*-consumers who make purchases out of some inner need. VALS can aid in defining targets for products and are also helpful in the development of advertising copy and media strategies. The concept was introduced in 1978 by the California consulting firm of SRI International.

Wikipedia: VALS

The acronym VALS, (for "Values, Attitudes and Lifestyles") is a psychographic segmentation. It was developed in 1970s and inaugurated in 1978 by Mitchell at SRI International. VALS™ places U.S. adult consumers into one of eight segments based on their responses to the VALS questionnaire. The main dimensions of the segmentation framework are primary motivation (the horizontal dimension) and resources (the vertical dimension). The VALS approach

is derived from a theoretical base in Maslow's work (1954). It has since been reworked to enhance its ability to predict consumer behavior. Segmentation research based on VALS is a product of SRI Consulting Business Intelligence.

According to the VALS Framework, groups of people are arranged in a rectangle and are based on two dimensions. The vertical dimension segments people based on the degree to which they are innovative and have resources such as income, education, self-confidence, intelligence, leadership skills, and energy. The horizontal dimension represents primary motivations and includes three distinct types:

Consumers driven by knowledge and principles are motivated primarily by *ideals*. These consumers include groups called Thinkers and Believers. Consumers driven by demonstrating success to their peers are motivated primarily by *achievement*. These consumers include groups referred to as Achievers and Strivers. Consumers driven by a desire for social or physical activity, variety, and risk taking are motivated primarily by *self-expression*. These consumers include the groups known as Experiencers and Makers. At the top of the rectangle are the Innovators, who have such high resources that they could have any of the three primary motivations. At the bottom of the rectangle are the Survivors, who live complacently and within their means without a strong primary motivation of the types listed above. The VALS Framework gives more details about each of the eight groups.

VALS Framework and Segment

1. *Innovator.*

These consumers are on the leading edge of change, have the highest incomes, and such high self-esteem and abundant resources that they can indulge in any or all self-orientations. They are located above the rectangle. Image is important to them as an expression of taste, independence, and character. Their consumer choices are directed toward the "finer things in life."

2. *Thinkers.*

These consumers are the high-resource group of those who are motivated by ideals. They are mature, responsible, well-educated professionals. Their leisure activities center on their homes, but they are well informed about what goes on in the world and are open to new ideas and social change. They have high incomes but are practical consumers and rational decision makers.

3. *Believers*

These consumers are the low-resource group of those who are motivated by ideals. They are conservative and predictable consumers who favor American products and established brands. Their lives are centered on family, church, community, and the nation. They have modest incomes.

4. *Achievers*

These consumers are the high-resource group of those who are motivated by achievement. They are successful work-oriented people

who get their satisfaction from their jobs and families. They are politically conservative and respect authority and the status quo. They favor established products and services that show off their success to their peers.

5. Strivers

These consumers are the low-resource group of those who are motivated by achievements. They have values very similar to achievers but have fewer economic, social, and psychological resources. Style is extremely important to them as they strive to emulate people they admire.

6. Experiencers.

These consumers are the high-resource group of those who are motivated by self-expression. They are the youngest of all the segments, with a median age of 25. They have a lot of energy, which they pour to physical exercise and social activities. They are avid consumers, spending heavily on clothing, fast-foods, music, and other youthful favorites, with particular emphasis on new products and services.

7. Makers.

These consumers are the low-resource group of those who are motivated by self-expression. They are practical people who value self-sufficiency. They are focused on the familiar-family, work, and physical recreation- and have little interest in the broader world. As consumers, they appreciate practical and functional products.

8. *Survivors*

These consumers have the lowest incomes. They have too few resources to be included in any consumer self-orientation and are thus located below the rectangle. They are the oldest of all the segments, with a median age of 61. Within their limited means, they tend to be brand-loyal consumers.

Use of the VALS Framework

Marketing classes use this tool to determine the placement of a given product to a certain niche in an industry.