



THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONSUMER

As the world has evolved, so too has the nature of consumption.

In the **Networked Society**, the disruptions that transform industries, cities and society also change the role of the consumer – only businesses that grasp the new reality will survive and flourish. And the emerging forms of consumption mean that growth no longer has to be at the expense of the global environment.



THE PRE-AGRARIAN CONSUMER

From dawn of mankind - 4000 BCE

CONSUMPTION FOR SURVIVAL

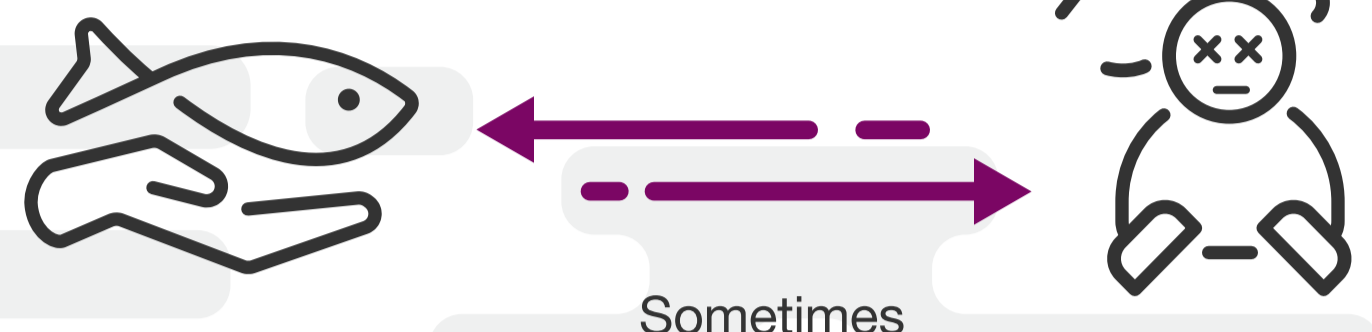
The pre-agrarian era was an age of hunting and gathering. Each individual was skilled at all tasks essential to survival, regardless of individual abilities.

PRODUCTION CATERING FOR BASIC NEEDS:



9000 BCE

The beginning of barter trade.



Sometimes a small surplus could be used for trading.

6000 BCE

The invention of first agricultural techniques and tools.



THE AGRICULTURAL REVOLUTION!

ca 4000 BCE

Once hunter-gatherers transitioned into agriculturalists, they could comfortably move beyond survival mode and produce surpluses for more bartering.



THE AGRARIAN CONSUMER

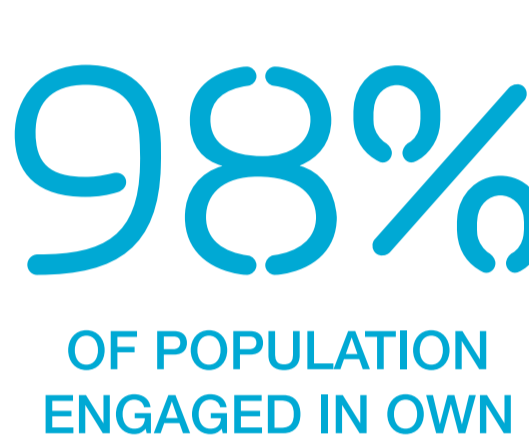
From 4000 BCE - 1780

CONSUMPTION OF CRAFTED PRODUCTS

The coming of the agricultural revolution allowed people to make far more food than before, freeing up some of the members of society for other roles, such as carpenter, blacksmith, artist, performer, philosopher and eventually a merchant class.

3000 BCE

FIRST RURAL MARKETS



1200 BCE

THE FIRST MONEY

Cowrie shell - a precious shell commonly used as currency by many early cultures.



PEASANT MASSES AND A SMALL URBAN ELITE

Year 0

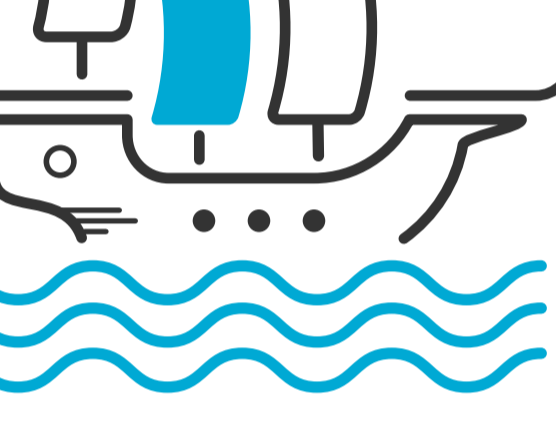
100

The modern market concept was likely established in 100-110 when Rome's Trajan Market was build.



The cities become enterprise market places and trade hubs.

1500



THE FULL-RIGGED SHIP
Important for long-distance trade and exploring the world.

1455

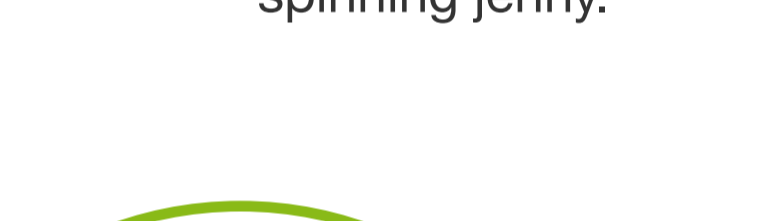
THE GRAND BAZAAR OF ISTANBUL



Consumption for pleasure

3%
of the world's population lives in urban areas.

UK INDUSTRIALIZATION
The invention of the "spinning jenny."



1780

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION!



THE INDUSTRIAL CONSUMER

From 1780 - 1995

The Industrial Revolution marks a major turning point in history; almost every aspect of daily life was influenced in some way. In particular, average income and population began to exhibit unprecedented sustained growth.

MASS CONSUMPTION



1850
More people live in the cities than in rural areas.



MASS PRODUCTION ENABLES MASS CONSUMPTION



1913

Separation between the home and the workplace.



"KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES"

The mentality is commonly thought to be the beginning of the American consumer culture. When GM introduced the yearly automobile model change in 1925, people began to want the latest model.

1919

AUTHORITY-INFLUENCED CONSUMPTION

In 1919 General Motors began to promote giving loans to people who bought cars. Americans started using the new credit plans on just about everything.

BUY NOW, PAY LATER!

WE CAN DO IT!
Women enter the workforce and become new powerful consumers.

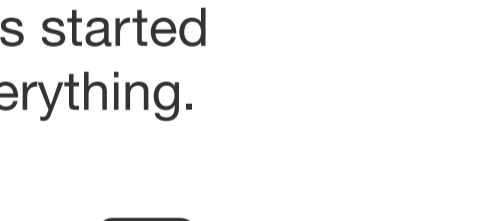


1960

1987

"I SHOP THEREFORE I AM"

Phrase coined by conceptual artist, Barbara Kruger, regarding American consumerism.



WORLD WIDE WEB

1990

THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION!



THE NETWORKED CONSUMER

From 1995...

CONSUMPTION AS WORK

As we enter the networked era, we can see that the age of industrialization has perhaps been an anomaly. Now that technology allows it, people are turning away from the industrial and modernistic way of life and seeking a meaning and belonging in structures and organizations that resemble pre-industrial ages: in collectives, in communities, in networks.

Technological automation is eliminating traditional jobs as we know them. People take part in society as consumers rather than workers.



Consumption becomes a continuous activity as consumers go mobile.

FIRST SMARTPHONE

THE INTERNET AS GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

1995

EBAY

2007

SHARING IS THE NEW BUYING
In the sharing economy, focus begins to shift from the goods you own to possibilities available to you.



2009

CAR SHARING

Thanks to large scale networked access, barter trade is coming back.



FROM AUTHORITY-INFLUENCED TO PEER-INFLUENCED CONSUMPTION
When consumers are increasingly empowered influence shifts to consumers themselves.

2012

Yerdle

DO IT YOURSELF
Specialist consumers consume to produce new value and meaning, which other people can then consume. In many cases the consumer as producer reaches skills where she's actually competing with traditional commercial providers on the market (e.g. makers and urban farmers).



Read more about consumption in the Networked Society on:
www.ericsson.com/thinkingahead/networked_society/commerce_reports

- SOURCES:
- Disruption of the old consumption logic
<http://www.ericsson.com/res/thinkingahead/networked-society/consumption-reports/docs/disruption-of-the-old-consumption-logic.pdf>
 - The sharing economy
<http://www.ericsson.com/res/thinkingahead/networked-society/consumption-reports/docs/the-sharing-economy.pdf>
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 - The consumer in the Networked Society
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 - A tale of two transforming cities
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