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Maslow's model of needs: application to Cunard and White Star marketing communications between 1900 and the 1950s

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Abstract

Purpose The purpose of this paper is to analyse Cunard's marketing communications during a period of significant social and economic change. The intention is to show firstly how the company sought to meet and influence potential passengers understanding of their needs and secondly, how these would be met.

Design/methodology/approach Maslow's model of needs is used as the analytical methodology.

Findings Beyond a description and review of Cunard's marketing communications, Maslow's model of needs is shown to provide a rationale to the company's approach. In particular, it gives an understanding of the continued, though changing, use of images of the ship to meet the needs of different cohorts of passengers. It shows how carefully constructed images in both word and picture assuaged passengers concerns over social needs and how the company promised to meet the highest needs, whether that be for the holiday maker or the emigrant.

Research Limitations During much of the period under discussion much of the advertising design work was done in house. Whilst none of these files have survived, other sources of information (for example, house magazines and internal correspondence) provide an understanding of Cunard's attitude to its customers and the business opportunities it saw in a changing market. Where specific dates for documents are not available, a chronology of shipbuilding and use has been applied.

Practical implications The paper shows how a well-established model can be used in a different way, adding to our understanding of a company adapting to changing social and economic conditions.

Originality/Value As far as the author is aware this is the first time that Maslow's model has been used explicitly as a tool to analyse marketing communication. Whilst the existing literature includes some discussion of shipping line posters visual content, there is little further discussion of their

content or purpose in a changing social context. This paper provides a more structured analytical view.

Key Words Cunard, Maslow, advertising, marketing, travel.

Paper type Research Paper

Introduction

Communicating an understanding of, and indeed, influencing the needs and aspirations of potential customers is key to a business' future. Murray laid the academic foundations of this understanding in 1930s when he developed a complex listing of over forty physiological and psychological needs and traits (1938, pp. 142ff). There have been other proposals, but Maslow developed the most well-known descriptor of human needs (1943, pp. 370-396). Discussed in more detail in Appendix 1, it has a simplicity and a certain resonance with everyday behaviour that encourages its continued use. Whilst there is no evidence that, in later years, Cunard used Maslow's model to support their interactions with customers, it provides a useful framework to analyse the development their communications approach. Using this, a delineation will be made between needs such as safety, common to all passengers, and the more nuanced demands and opportunities across the spectrum of the company's passengers.

The period under discussion was one of social change, impacting the very structure of Cunard's business. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, passengers crossing the Atlantic were predominantly an elite maintaining a long-established practice of travel and the mass of emigrants seeking a new life in North America (Butler, 2001, p. 54). Political decisions in the 1920s dramatically reduced the numbers of migrants (Coons and Varias, 2003, p. 13) and companies like Cunard were faced with a serious financial challenge. The 1920s also witnessed the emergence of a middle class with greater spending power (Cross, 1993, p. 12). The shipping companies' challenge was to encourage these to travel whilst at the same time retaining their appeal to established customers of businessmen and elite classes. The 1930s can be seen as the zenith of passenger shipping. Post World War II, with the growth of the airlines, trans Atlantic passengers could, for the first time, choose their mode of travel.

This paper, using examples from a wide range of media, will illustrate how Maslow's hierarchy allows a deeper understanding of the company communication of its ability to meet and, indeed, influence the changing needs of the full complement of its passengers. There is relatively little published analysis of shipping line marketing communications. In the early part of the period under consideration, Coons and Varias suggest there is a focus on the "awe-inspiring exteriors" of the ship as exemplars of technology whilst later posters, advertising cruises, focussed on destinations and the promise of exotic locations (2003, pp 149 and xxii). Whilst the range poster designs widened, Clampin and White, in a comprehensive analysis, show how Cunard and their competitors remained wedded to the vessels and a belief in their power to influence potential customers (2017, p. 390). Maxtone-Graham suggested (1989, p. 27) that the early promotion of safety became replaced by images of grandeur and elegance. In contrast, Gladden (2014, p. 59) has suggested the company used these images, not for their own sake but to construct a context within which the passenger experience took place.

The changing demographics of Cunard's potential customers

Before WW1, during a period described by Branchick as characterised by 'immigration and luxury' (2013, pp. 237), Cunard centred its business around two groups of customers: an elite who travelled from choice or business and emigrants hoping to build new lives (Gladden, 2014, p. 60). These passengers represented, on the one hand, prestige ('... being able to travel ... for non-work reasons, was only available to a narrow elite and was itself a mark of status' (Urry, 1995, p. 130)) and, on the other, need (food, employment, refuge or resources). During this period the well-to-do were living 'at the acme of comfort and well-being' (Petrie, 1965, p. 30) and well able to afford the price of a trans-Atlantic ticket. Upper-middle-class families with incomes in the range £700-1000 could employ a cook, parlour maid and house maid for £64 a year (Petrie, 1965, p. 43). In comparison, a First Class transatlantic ticket cost about £24 and a Second Class about half that amount (Cunard, 1908). After WWI there remained wealthy, influential upper class in the UK (Branson, 1976, pp. 92, 93). In North America the 1920s were a 'golden period for a privileged segment of the population' with 50% of all expenditure on recreation being spent by the richest 24% (Cashman, 1989, pp. 43, 44). The top 1% of the population received 15% of all earned income.

However, most passengers did not come from such a background. In the first quarter of the 20th century over eight million migrants arrived in the USA (Nugent, 1992, p. 150) and two million entered Canada (Nugent, 1992, p. 139). Cunard and the White Star Line (two of the three biggest carriers prior to WWI), carried about 35% of the total number. Overall their fares represented 50% of shipping line revenues – 2.5 times that derived from non-migrant travellers (Keeling, 2017, p. 120). In the mid-1920s radical changes to American immigration laws resulted in pre-war annual figures of 750,000 to 1,000,000 steerage passengers dropping to 150,000 (Coons and Varias, 2003, p. 13). By the 1930s immigration was just over 10% of that in the previous decade (Harvard University, 2009). Even though the Canadian authorities continued to encourage immigration, these numbers also declined from over one and a half million in the decade to 1911 to 1.2 million in the 1920s and 149,000 in the following decade (Statistics Canada, 2009). Just as these changes were occurring, middle classes on both sides of the Atlantic were increasing in numbers. Overall, during the first half of the 20th century these people became wealthier and their incomes more reliable. In the USA, newly salaried workers gained greater security of income and an increasing disposable element of that income (Goodman and Gatell, 1972, p. 13). Alongside this increasing wealth, attitudes to work and leisure changed, with a shift from 'hard work and self-denial [equals] capitalism to living "not in a world of scarcity but of abundance"'. This shift led to a new set of values with pleasure being regarded at least the ethical equal of work (Susman, 2003, p. 111). In an interwar Britain, described as a 'golden age for the middle classes' (Glynn and Oxborrow, 1976, p. 49), the proportion of salaried employees nearly doubled (Benson, 1994, pp. 25). Many of these desired to emulate (Voase, 2007, p. 544) those perceived as more prosperous and of higher social standing. This had a consequent impact on people's spending decisions (Benson, 1994, p. 27).

These changes presented shipping companies with a significant challenge. Unlike the migrant who paid a low fare just to be able to escape to a new life, this emergent middle-class could choose how to spend its money. Companies like Cunard had to compete with other goods and services. To meet this opportunity Cunard (and its competitors) introduced a new class, Tourist Third Class (TTC), with improvements in both accommodation and service compared to the traditional Third Class. The companies hoped the attraction of now-affordable travel would encourage passengers to

visit destinations previously restricted to the upper classes (Coons and Varias, 2003, p. 29). ‘Ocean Liners [provided] New Vistas for Interwar Society’ (Coons and Varias, 2003, p. 1) and ‘spending on...holidays provided nearly ideal ways of both conforming and being distinctive...the dreamlike affluence of holiday-making would eventually create a fullness of time realised in a fullness of spending’ (Cross, 1993, p. 12). Shipping line marketeers now operated in a market characterised by ‘tourism and luxury travel’ (Branchik, 2013, p. 241).

As the shipping lines recovered from the effects of WWII there was a hope that they would be able to return to “business as usual”, but this was not to be. For the first time, potential passengers had a choice, not between shipping lines but between ships and planes. Now they could, at least in principle, decide how much of their holiday time was spent travelling and how much at their chosen destination.

Marketing communications and meeting the needs of ship-board passengers

Some of the following discussion has been rehearsed in an earlier article (Gladden, 2014). However, where this article departs from that is in the explicit use of a theoretical model, Maslow’s model of needs, as a lens through which to view the company’s marketing communications. The use of this model adds to and enhances the discussion that previously used other methods. As such, it not only casts new light on much of the same material but demonstrates how Maslow’s model can be used as a method for analysing historical marketing material.

The model will be applied to four areas of Cunard’s marketing communications as laid out in the table below. Using the sources listed in Appendix 2, an analysis of advertisements, brochures and film indicates the relative importance, as percentages, of each area. As might be expected with the higher levels of esteem and self-actualisation – where the company is seeking to portray an experience of the highest standards to meet a passenger’s greatest aspirations – there is an integration of the various areas of communication. Consequently, service and ship-board life are discussed together with travel in the final section. Structuring the discussion in this way shows more clearly the different approach to each market segment.

Area of Communication Focus	Needs		
	Safety	Social	Esteem and Self-Actualisation
The ship	13.6	19.9	16.7
Service and expertise	4.5		7.8
Ship-board life		14.9	8.6
Travel			14.0

Table 1. Maslow and marketing communication

The ship

Meeting safety needs

For over a hundred years from the 1840s, Cunard carried passengers across the Atlantic and to other destinations for every reason imaginable. Some were emigrating, hoping for a new and better life,

others travelled for business and for pleasure. Whatever reason they may have had for boarding the ship, it was clearly their expectation to disembark at their destination. Safety concerns affected all social classes. Even though the risks and discomforts of the early years had been ameliorated, the memories of sail and more dangerous times were not so distant. Fletcher, in *Travelling Palaces*, devotes two whole chapters to ‘Safety at Sea’ (1913, pp. 173-234). Cunard had a remarkable reputation in this regard, having never lost a passenger through neglect or accident (Butler, 2001, p. 246). Not surprisingly, the company positively asserted its position on safety (Cunard Magazine, 1924a, p. 19): ‘One branch of the ship with which the company has been more associated than any other is that of navigation and safety at sea’. So strong was this commitment to safety that one advertisement (Cunard, 1930sa) suggests the company believed just use of the brand name was sufficient to connote a sense of safety. A ship is displayed sailing into port from the protection of a huge tunnel formed from the word “Cunard”. Moreover, the tunnel is further emblazoned with the caption “The Connecting Dock”. When you travel with Cunard, suggests the company, you are as safe at sea as you were in the harbour.

The physical presence of the ship was at the heart of much of Cunard’s communication approach. Whilst this has been argued to be the outcome of a static and perhaps, moribund approach (Clampin and White, 2017, pp. 418-422) this analysis provides at least a rationale for its continued use. The ships of the first half of the twentieth century were the engineering wonders of their time with the public’s attention being drawn to the ‘triumphant aspects of engineering [when] first exposed to the overpowering sight of a colossal new liner’ (Rieger, 2005, p. 158). The company used comparisons with well-known sights to embed the ship’s bulk in the minds of potential passengers (for example, Churchman, “*The Queen Mary*”). Here the size of the ship is clearly denoted as it dwarfs a familiar landmark – Nelson’s Column – and stretches well beyond the boundaries of Trafalgar Square. By setting the ship amongst buildings the image gives an impression of solidity to the ship and thus suggests a sense of safety comparable with being on dry land.

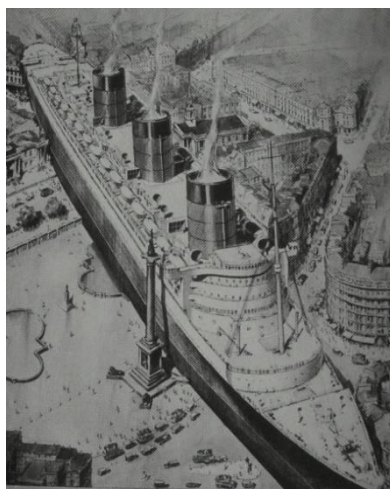


Figure 1. “*The Queen Mary*” cigarette card, W.A. & A.C. Churchman, 1934

Source: University of Liverpool, Cunard Archive, D1169/1/4/1

Suggesting safety through images of size and power is a common theme in Cunard's marketing communication. The Book of Comparisons, published to coincide with the launch of the *Queen Mary* (Cunard, 1936), again uses comparisons with building to indicate size. Images comparing the ship with railroad locomotives are used to connote power. Other examples include a poster of the *Mauretania* with its vast hull and huge, smoking funnels contrasted with the size of tugs, dockside building and the hordes of people watching the departure (Flounders and Gallagher, 2016, p. 56). In another, tiny but clearly happy and relaxed passengers are set against the bulk of three huge red and black funnels (Cunard, 1930sb). Further these ships – 'the largest, finest and fastest ships in the world' according to the company (Cunard, 1907) – were frequently shown with their bows driving through the wild waves of the North Atlantic. No matter what the power of the sea or the height of the storms, these ships, declared the company were big and powerful enough to assure the passenger of a safe passage.

Meeting Social Needs

The very unfamiliarity of the sea for travellers, especially those experiencing it for the first time could give much cause for concern and anxiety. Not only was there the prospect of physical danger associated with a stormy crossing but people of different classes, who would, on shore, only meet as a consequence of need (work to be done, wages to be earned) would be in close proximity and all as "passengers". Cunard had to 'deal with [the] hazards and insecurities induced and introduced' by this environment (Beck, 1992, p. 21).

Ship design was at the heart of the shipping lines' approach; (Votolato, 2007, p. 108). Troy (1991, p. 209.) takes the argument farther than most, suggesting that the essence of the interior design (comfort, entertainment) was to deny the physical reality of the ship. He quotes a French designer, Rosenthal who, writing in 1921, paid particular attention to meeting the psychological needs of the passenger.

"In order to make the empty days [of the transatlantic voyage] bearable, it is necessary to make him [the passenger] forget the voyage itself. In a necessarily limited space, he must not feel constrained, imprisoned; he must have the illusion of being free. A lodging that one only wants to leave behind should be arranged as if it would always be inhabited, and the appearance of the home should be given to something that is by nature provisional".

The link between life ashore and life aboard ship very much featured in Cunard's communication to potential passengers. Once embarked, the passengers (most obviously for the wealthier passengers in First or Cabin Class) would find themselves in an environment bearing similarities with their onshore existence. Often the designers of the houses and hotels with which they were familiar were also used to design the ships. For example, Harold Peto, famous for his patrician country houses, designed some of the interior of the *Mauretania* (Fox, 2003, p. 409.). Images of the liner (as in Fig 2) focus on this comparison between the ship and the grand hotels occupied by the wealthy and influential when taking their holidays. Further, the placing of elegant people within the image emphasises the sense of grace and sophistication associated with the such locations. This combination of surroundings and people could only reinforce the promise of social familiarity.



Figure 2. *Cabin Class Hall and Stairway, Mauretania brochure, Cunard, 1938*

Source: National Museums on Merseyside, Merseyside Maritime Museum, SAS 29/7/16

Having established the physical similarity between ship and shore, the company reinforced the connection in people's minds by reminding people how they could spend their time. The modern liner the company claimed (Cunard Magazine, 1924b p. 188) provided 'practically everything ashore ... papers, gymnasium, swimming pool, shops, bakers, hairdresser, theatre, kinema (sic), ...'. Other parallels to living on land appear from time to time in brochures and company published magazines. In an article on "The Art of Dining", the quality of food persuades the author '... that I was in Paris or even London' (Cunard Magazine 1927a, p 78.) The links to life ashore strengthened as ships became larger. Shops became an established feature with Cunard's marketing highlighting the famous stores with '... counterpart[s] in the *Queen Mary*'s shopping center'. This arcade became known colloquially as Regent Street. It features in the *Book of Comparisons* published to promote the ship (Cunard, 1936). The choice of retailers was critical in maintaining the artifice. Austin Reed opened an independent shop (fitted out as a West End store – a familiar haunt for many passengers) on the *Aquitania*, describing it as 'a trade outpost in the mid-Atlantic' (Morning Post, 1929), thus providing a linkage with another prestige brand.

Meeting esteem and self-actualisation needs

In the 1920s and later, poster design repositioned the ship as a symbol of pleasure and style, a place where highest needs would be met. There would be nothing ordinary about travelling by liner, suggested the company, as a ship is portrayed sailing on a calm sea with the smoke from the funnel lazily forming the word "Cunard" in a golden sky (Cunard, c. 1920). In another poster (Figure 3), the low angle perspective view once used to emphasis size and suggest strength, now presents the ship as an icon of the age of art deco. Both the image and the typeface connote modernity. The journeys advertised are from Cherbourg and Le Havre and this sense of period would have a resonance in a country which saw itself at the epicentre of fashion. It also made clear the competitive position of the company towards its French rival, Compagnie Générale Transatlantique and its reputation for luxury.

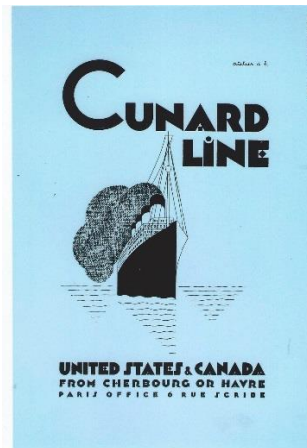


Figure 3. *Cunard Line: United States and Canada*, Cunard, 1927

Source: The Land of Lost Content Collection / Mary Evans Picture Library, ref. 11985757, available at <https://www.maryevans.com/search.php> (accessed 25 March 2019)

Further, the quayside image was transformed. As Figure 4 shows, instead of tiny figures dominated by the ship (Flounders and Gallagher, 2016, p. 56) the scene is one of celebration where passengers and well-wishers are more prominent as they participate in the rituals of departure and the prospect of new destinations.

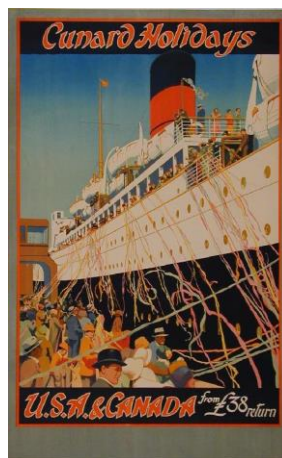


Figure 4. *Cunard Holidays: USA & Canada*, Cunard, 1935

Source: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/512988213778120847> (accessed 5 March 2018)

This redefining of the ship continued into the 1950s. In another poster for the French market (Cunard c. 1950) a ship sits quietly by the dock, the bright lights of its cabins reflected in the water; the caption reads “Cunard: votre route sur Atlantique”. It as if the company is presenting the ship as a place of anticipation for the passenger. Somewhere where **their** journey across the ocean would be a special occasion.

Images of the ship had a relevance to Cunard’s communication of meeting all a passenger’s needs. This analysis goes some way to explaining the shipping lines continued use of such images even in the face of criticism from the industry press (Clampin and White, 2017, pp. 400, 403).

Service and expertise

Meeting safety needs

Cunard promoted to its customers the professionalism of their staff throughout the business, especially in relation to safety. It reminded them of the historical depth of these skills. For example, the *Mauretania* launch brochure (Cunard White Star, 1938a) makes much of Cunard's traditions and knowledge,

thus in 1839 was formed the Cunard Line, whose subsequent enterprise has been practically the history of steamship advance, accepting every improvement and unceasingly adopting any novel device likely to guarantee human comfort or safety on the high seas ... You will appreciate that when a corporation for almost a century has been ordering liners to be built, maintaining them to the highest efficiency through millions of voyages, [its] amassed knowledge becomes something extraordinary ...

However, this was not abstract activity; the brochure goes on to emphasise that the knowledge stored in the company's files and the heads of its senior staff would be carried through to the minutia of construction. To today's eye it is strange to find, in a promotional brochure (Cunard, 1948), the picture of a caulker working to seal the deck joints juxtaposed with the image of the *Caronia*'s cocktail bar. The company clearly felt that this was a detail worthy of a potential passenger's consideration. This combination of images provides a rationale for on-board enjoyment and relaxation: the ships were well designed and well built. The accompanying caption quotes the chairman, F A Bates, "so many in the team to whom we owe ... so much ...".

Even with a well-built ship, safety at sea depended the skills and knowledge of the crew. Images of vigilance promote an assurance of safety. An advertisement, published in a 1930s' magazine, features an officer, binoculars in hand. The caption "'On Watch" for nearly a century', reminds potential passengers of the company's long-standing attention to such matters. Another poster, the Cunard Ocean Line Express Service (Cunard, 1937), shows the commanding and watchful presence of the captain set against a background of huge red and black funnels contrasting with happy passengers in the background. These passengers could relax, suggests the advertisement, because of the presence of a watchful, expert crew on a powerful and large ship. Images connoting safety resulting from the skill of the crew appeared in other media. Cunard was an early user of film as a marketing medium (Gladden, 2014, p. 66). One of these, *Cunard from Canada*, includes a sequence showing the reading of sextants and taking depth readings (Cunard, 1927, stills at 9 min. 39 sec. and 8 min. 15 sec.). The same film shows a group of passengers taking a tour of the engine room (Cunard, 1927, still at 4min. 13 sec.). The company saw these tours, as a 'valuable advertising medium for future business' (Cunard, 1935a).

Passengers, from the time they first considered the possibility of travel by ocean liner through to their journey, continued to be reassured of their basic safety needs.

Ship-board life

Meeting social needs

When promoting life aboard ship, Cunard sought to promote, through both text and images, a sense of well-being and a reassurance of the social company aboard ship. Passengers would be surrounded by the same kind of people as they mixed with ashore. First Class passengers embarking on a world cruise would find that (Cunard, 1934)

ship mates have become acquaintances, even friends. The ... austere, shy young man [is found to be] the scion of a famous house and anything but retiring ... your bridge partner is an eminent engineer who has built bridges round the globe but never [had] the chance to make the world his playground. In the lazy, un-routine days, diversions pile upon you ... Meanwhile the social life has become both more animated and more lazy ... more friends, a lot of intensive loafing ... You know most of the officers – you feel as if the ship were yours anyway

Throughout the brochures the illustrations allude to the maintenance of the social mores of the time. For example, a formally dressed family, apparently in a room in a grand house, spend a relaxed evening .in conversation and playing cards (Cunard, 1939a). The company promoted this view of society into early 1950s. The brochure for the newly launched *Ivernia* contrasts the dining in First and Tourist Classes (Figures 5 and 6). Whilst black tie and formal women’s wear appear de rigeur in First Class, lounge suits for men and smart but less formal dresses for women are the order of the day in Tourist Class. How people dress for dinner is used to signify the difference between the Classes; a subtle reminder of what were still the class norms.



Figure 5. First Class dining, *Ivernia* brochure, Cunard, 1950s

Source: University of Liverpool, Cunard Archive, D42/PR4/19/1/8



Figure 6 Tourist Class dining, *Ivernia* brochure, Cunard, 1950s

Source: University of Liverpool, Cunard Archive, D42/PR4/19/1/8

Passengers in Tourist Class were given a comparable promise to that described earlier for passengers cruising First Class on the *Franconia*. The prospective passenger would enjoy a journey to Canada ‘... with people just like yourself ...’ having similar objectives for their journey and passing their time in ways akin to life at home (Cunard 1925).

For passengers in Steerage or Third Class, conditions in the period under consideration were far improved from the communal sleeping areas and poor food of the previous century. Passenger comments were used to reinforce the expectations of new customers (Gladden, 2014, p. 71) with a cabin on the *Andania* being described as ‘more spacious than ... in a higher class on other boats’ and the food to be ‘the acme of ... nourishment and satisfaction’ (Cunard Magazine, 1923b, p. 50). However, for these passengers, the stark reality of the ship’s physical structure could not be disguised (Cunard, 1920s). Rivets and girders are well in evidence as a passenger unpacks in a “hotel” (Cunard’s word) bedroom) or a group play a quiet game of cards. To overcome this, Cunard marketing communications focussed more on life aboard ship. For example, a promotional film (Cunard, 1923, still at 11 min. 30 sec.) shows a group of passengers making impromptu entertainment: an on-deck dance to the music of an accordion played by one of the passengers. The image would be instantly recognisable, suggesting the social life of the towns and villages from whence they had come, something familiar in the unfamiliar surroundings of the ship. This is the real-life version of an earlier fictitious account in which couples are described ‘twirling to the sound of an accordion in one of the stirring dances ... from the country of the Magyars’ (Cunard, 1902, p. 66).

Travel

Meeting esteem and self-actualisation needs

As already discussed, Cunard took a more nuanced approach to communicating its ability to meet these higher needs and, as a consequence, this section considers three groups of passengers, each with its own ambitions, expectations and hopes.

Emigrants

These passengers, no matter from which country they came (there was a well-established market from the European continent with its own advertising (Cunard, 1882)) all had their aspirations and hopes. They had overcome the biggest hurdle to migration – psychological (Keeling, 2017, p. 116) – and decided that the costs and risks of leaving their home countries were outweighed by the perceived benefits of a new life. Early settlement had been concerned with land but, at least in the USA after 1900, most workers came to non-agricultural work (Nugent, 1992, p 152). Canada, in contrast, continued to have a focus on immigrants with agricultural expertise well into the 1920s. It encouraged migration through to the 1950s (Cunard, 1956). Figure 7 is an example of the approach to emigrants. The poster’s emphasis is on the headline and image rather than the almost insignificant text at its base. The prospective migrant was encouraged to draw his or her conclusions from the welcome on the face and the open hand of the horse rider. The horse and the hint in the background of homestead and wide-open country both suggest new opportunities for the immigrant.

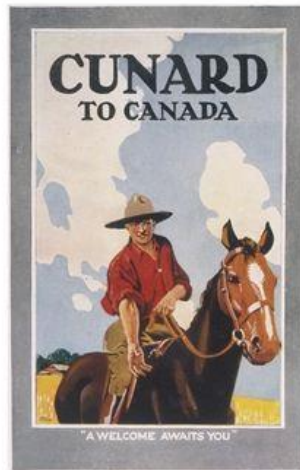


Figure 7. *Cunard to Canada: A Welcome Awaits You* Cunard c. 1924

Source Mary Evans Picture Library, ref. 10091562, available at <https://www.maryevans.com/search.php> (accessed 25 March 2019)

Cunard, often in co-operation with other agencies such as Canadian Pacific Railway, constructed an image of a destination well suited to the needs of esteem and self-actualisation. Advertising campaigns just before the start of the period under discussion encouraged emigrants to take advantage of ‘ready-made farms’ providing new homes and new opportunities (Canadian Pacific Railway, 1893). These continued into the first quarter of the twentieth century with Western Canada described as the ‘New Eldorado’ with ‘rich virgin soil’ There was ‘nothing to fear’ as the new farmer would be ‘protected by the government’ (Canadian Department of Immigration, c.1910). A government scheme (so called Dominion Lands) ran until 1930 (Nugent, 1992, p. 148) by which time over 80% had been allocated.

Women formed a significant proportion of the migrant market (Keeling, 2017, p. 156) and the *Cunard Magazine* (1924c, p. 98) carried an article ‘Canada’s call for Women’ encouraging them to consider emigration. ‘Innumerable opportunities’ existed and a wide range of domestic and related service jobs were suggested. Besides these less skilled jobs, the article goes on, ‘the woman of education ... who adapts herself ... will ... find employment in her own sphere’. ‘Women of the middle classes ... who bring something of the culture of the old country, in the home, in the school and in other stations of life’ will be welcomed. A White Star Line advertisement (c.1920) takes a more nuanced approach to potential migrant passengers, trading on the fact that women had always played an important role, especially in working-class families, in managing the patterns of family expenditure (Roberts, 1984, p. 43). This advertisement shows a woman at work in the kitchen sharing in the fruits of the family-owned farm. In the background a man works in the fields. The woman is encouraged to use her influence to ensure a better family life in a new country – one that would enable them to completely fulfil their potential.

Tourist Third Class

Cunard’s approach to this market for the emerging middle class of the 1920s has been discussed by Gladden (2014, pp. 71-74). The first proposals for this new class came from the shipping lines’ agents. They saw the opportunity to attract ‘... sub-debs, younger members of the smart set, college

professors and students, men and women of the business world ... to travel to the edge of a new world and back again' (Brinnen, 1986, p. 433).

Cunard saw Tourist Third Class making people's holiday aspirations a reality and their appeal was very direct. In 1927, an article entitled 'The New Holiday' opened with the following paragraph

There was once a man whose greatest wish was to travel. But because he was just an ordinary fellow ... the realisation ... was exceedingly remote. Indeed [all he could do] was [to] read from cover to cover ... guidebooks and travel folders. Until one night as he put down ... the "Glories of Greece" the [next] thing he read was a notice [that] a new class of travel made it possible to cross the Atlantic and back for the remarkable sum of £35 (Cunard, 1927b, p. 123).

Passengers' highest needs would be met not only in the destination but on the journey itself. A brochure promoting TTC travel from Canada focusses on life aboard ship (Cunard, 1925). It suggests (using a passenger's testimonial), the voyage to be one where '... land is looming and people [are] getting excited ...' and overall, '... [it was] the most thrilling holiday of my life ...'. The journeys, implies a White Star advertisement of relaxed passengers whiling away their time dancing on deck, are something more akin to First Class than the traditionally closely monitored life of the Third Class passenger (White Star Magazine 1931, p. 188).

Cruising and Holidaymaking

Pleasure cruising began around 1890 when Ballin (of the Hamburg-Amerika Line) used spare winter capacity from the Atlantic fleet for a tour of the Mediterranean (Brinnen, 1986, p. 494.). It was not until 1921 that Cunard dispatched the *Scythia* (Lobley, 1969, p. 115) to cruise the West Indies. A year later the *Laconia* went on the first of what would now be recognised as a world cruise (Coons and Varias, p. 55). Within five years Cunard advertised both cruise holidays (Cunard Magazine, 1926a, p. 215) and holidays incorporating sea voyages and inland tours (Cunard Magazine, 1926b, p. 120). Although the business suffered during the Depression, it grew throughout the 1930s, becoming profitable in its own right. By 1933, thirteen companies were running cruises with a capacity for 175,000 passengers on 250 trips compared with only 68 cruises in 1930 with space for 24,000 people (White Star Magazine, 1933, p. 225). F. Bustard, the White Star Line Traffic Manager, reflected this growing interest in cruising. He described how those of 'moderate means', not just the very rich, benefited from 'the most enjoyable of all things, a voyage at sea on a large liner ... with all the diversions and opportunities of relaxation ... without additional expense' (White Star Magazine, 1934, p. 224). The *Cunard Magazine* carried an article describing trips for just these passengers (Cunard Magazine, 1926b, pp. 120, 121). Having spent a couple of days sight-seeing in New York after arrival they could make the 'interesting trip ... to Albany' by train and thence to the Niagara Falls. A steamer would take them to Toronto, more sightseeing and finally home via Montreal. The author describes other places as possible tour destinations: Detroit, Washington, Philadelphia, and 'parts of historic New England'. The article concludes by listing the special sailings linked to the tours. Another brochure for a *Carinthia* cruise to Norway promises that 'no reasonable demand ... cannot be met' on a ship 'representative of all that is luxurious ... in modern ocean travel' as they 'voyage to an old world country ... representative of all the ... glories of Nature herself' (Cunard, 1930sc).

Taking passengers on cruises and holidays is very different from conveying them from A to B no matter how luxurious or fast the ship. On a cruise the ship becomes part of both destination and voyage. It provides ‘... entertainment and instruction ...’ (Quartermaine and Peter, 2006, p. 33). The journey could no longer be a precursor to the holiday but an integral part of the whole experience. Those joining the *Franconia* for a World Cruise, mostly wealthy Americans, were encouraged to don their holiday clothes and enjoy the exotic nature of the ports to be visited on a ship built expressly for comfort (Cunard, 1934). As it sought to meet passengers’ needs for esteem and self-actualisation so Cunard also, in a gentle way, promoted a certain way of life and behaviour when aboard ship. Nothing could be worse than to reveal a lack of awareness of the norms of behaviour. Not only did passengers receive information on dress codes (‘bathing attire at the pool side only’) but, even into the 1950s were given suggestions on how to appear a much-experienced traveller. When waiting to go ashore “Neophytes” on the *Caronia* were advised that ‘travel-wise cruisers know it is not “smart” to be first on the tender, [better to] stay topside and watch the antics of the native vendors’ (Cunard, 1951). Cunard did not want its newest passengers to lose the esteem of their fellow travellers!

In the USA, where the cruise market had first developed, Cunard launched, in the mid 1920s, the *Cunarder Magazine*. Described as ‘a travel magazine’, it was designed to increase people’s interest in faraway places. One issue (Cunarder Magazine, 1926, pp. 6-8, 14-16, 17, 22-24) included articles on Switzerland, South America (‘the new playground’), Assisi and Havana (with a cruise to take you there advertised alongside the article). Similarly, promotional films included destination material (with the North American market in mind) emphasising countryside, ‘scenery unmatched in Europe’ (Anchor Line, c. 1925) and heritage including images of royalty, Windsor, Oxford and Chester (Cunard, c. 1925).

Far flung destinations on every continent appeared on posters. In one, a woman in local costume suggests the exotic nature of the holiday. Alongside her is a schematic map showing the locations to be visited (Cunard White Star, 1938b). ‘Atlantic Holidays’ would take the passengers to the ‘City in the Sky’ (Cunard, 1930sd) – a place of aspiration. Another Atlantic Holidays publication featured the opportunity to visit New England and World Fair in New York (Cunard, 1939b). It was a trip to ‘the playgrounds of the New World’ and a chance to make this journey in a ‘memorable’ year since the King and Queen would be doing the same.

Post WWII, as Cunard sought to rebuild its business. Cruises and holidays became increasingly important with the announcement in 1950 of “the greatest dollar cruise programme since 1939” (Cunard News 1950, p. 7). By the end of the decade Atlantic Holidays had been relaunched and the very title of the “Travel the BIG WAY” brochure connoted a very special journey. The company highlighted the intention to meet needs of esteem and self-actualisation (Cunard News, 1959, p. 1). Recipients of the brochure (Cunard, 1950sa) also received a letter promoting Atlantic Holidays. This assured a satisfying holiday with both entertainments and days of rest and relaxation. It was critical for Cunard that the trip aboard was not perceived as “dead time” but an integral part of an aspirational holiday. To encourage this Cunard launched a campaign entitled ‘Getting there is half the fun’ (for example, Cunard, 1950sb). In this, a series of magazine advertisements present life aboard as time for films, games, dancing and fine food. A brochure (Cunard, 1950sc) brought these two themes together, emphasising the aspirational nature of the onboard experience with world

premier films, food prepared by top chefs, shops with famous Regent Street names and a stateroom exceeding all a passenger's expectations.

The holidays and cruising of this period are exemplified by the brochure for a 'Sunshine Cruise to West Indies and South America' (see Figure 8). The pictures on the cover promote an expectation of exotic locations and customs. Further, the woman's hat with the colour and form of a hot sun with rays of light bursting from its centre suggests the climate to be expected.

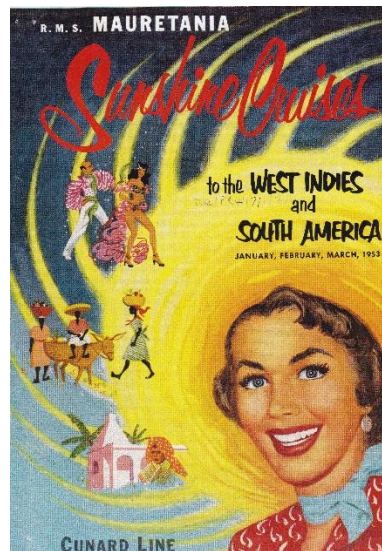


Figure 8. *Sunshine Cruise to the West Indies and South America*, Cunard, 1953

Source: University of Liverpool, Cunard Archive, D42/PR4/17/1/7/1

Within this brochure the trope of safety which set passengers against the enormity of the ship's funnels is replaced. Instead the focus is on contented passengers. The funnels are merely a reference to the ship as the context to their enjoyment. Further, suggests Cunard, social needs should not be a concern. There will be 'plenty of charming company ... to share your carefree moments [and] to join you in friendly conversation'. All this would be underpinned by the 'Cunard "know how" [of] more than a century' provided 'by men and women who take pride in doing their job supremely well'. All, declared Cunard, 'would combine so that Life is wonderful when you go cruising in the magnificent *Mauretania*'. Finally, the text promises 'cares will be gone', 'dining ... is a truly royal experience' and, particularly meeting higher needs, the passenger is promised 'everything they could wish for'.

One insight into a passenger's perspective from the period of this paper comes from a film made by the Warburton family of their holiday cruise entitled '*Sunshine, Sea Breezes and Strange Places – a Cruising Holiday*'. An inter-title (Warburton, c. 1933), declares '... the passengers enjoyed all the pleasures of cruising'. This and the film title give a sense of needs met, of Cunard's success in matching marketing claims with, at least for this family, reality.

In summary, from the mid-1920s onward, Cunard recognised a growing market for cruising and for organised holidays. New products and new potential customers gave them the opportunity to promote new destinations. With the provision of a widened range of accommodation, the company encouraged a broader public to fulfil their highest needs. How successful was this approach? There is very little direct evidence other than the continued existence of the brand and its present-day

promotion. Although different in style, much of the imagery discussed in this paper is retained. The website (Cunard, 2019) is redolent with images akin to those from the period under study. Relaxed and elegant passengers pass their time against the backdrop of the ship which is itself moored by a brightly lit dock or set in exotic locations. Often the vessel is viewed from a high angle to emphasize the setting. The connotation of all these images is that the ship itself, the service received and the locations visited will all meet a passenger's highest needs.

Conclusions

Maslow's hierarchy provides a mechanism for the analysis of Cunard's marketing communications. In particular it gives, at least in part, an explanation for the continued but criticised central position of the ship in the company's (and indeed, its competitors') approach. In one way or another the ship contributed to meeting all the prospective passenger's needs. Its design and the competence of its crew were key to safety. The interior design and the management of the class structure made an important contribution to meeting passengers' social needs. Finally, as cruising developed and, perhaps even more importantly as airline competition appeared, the ship, an integral part of a holiday, was the foundation for meeting higher needs of esteem and self actualisation.

Especially in the earlier years of the period under discussion, the ship is used to reassure passengers of their safety. By portraying it as very large and very powerful (sometimes with comparisons to more familiar forms of transport), Cunard assured the passenger the vessel was more than capable of dealing with the uncertainties of the ocean. Further the safety of the physical environment is guaranteed by the professionalism of the company's employees and its contractors from design and construction through to the sea passage.

Once aboard the vessel, passengers will, promised Cunard, experience a life that fits completely with their social needs in terms of the physical context and the activities on offer. They would find familiarity (especially in First Class) in both physical and social surroundings. It provided a certainty over the people they would – and, by implication, would not – encounter. They could rest assured that the social mores of the period will be maintained.

Cunard's communications with respect to the higher needs were carefully targeted to specific groups of passengers. For emigrants, the focus was not so much on the ship, but on the opportunities of a new life on another continent. Cunard and its ships would provide the means to an escape their present existence. For holiday makers, the ship increasingly became represented as a place where higher needs would be met. Everything – cabins, food, service, entertainment, indeed the whole voyage experience – would be to the highest possible standard. And this applied not just to First Class – those in Tourist Third Class could also be assured of 'the most thrilling holiday of [their lives]'. To achieve this, Cunard paid great attention to every detail of the passenger experience – to the point where targeted advice was offered to the inexperienced passenger. Nothing could be worse for someone's self esteem than being seen behaving inappropriately.

Overall, Cunard's marketing communications were pervaded by two themes. Firstly, that it understood passengers' needs and, secondly, it had the ships, crews and destinations to meet those needs. It is to be remarked that nearly fifty years later, many of the concepts discussed in this paper can still be seen in the company's modern advertisements.

Appendix 1 – Methodology and approach

Understanding needs

Often depicted as a pyramid, the levels of Maslow’s model are shown in Table 2 (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007, p. 99). For the purposes of this paper the lowest level is considered not relevant to the discussion (people would not starve on a Cunard ship).

Self Actualisation
Esteem Needs
Social Needs
Safety Needs
Physiological Needs

Table 2 Maslow’s Hierarchy

Although described as a hierarchy (Maslow, 1943, p. 370) there is no implication that the needs of each level must be met fully before the individual is motivated at a higher level. In fact, both Maslow and other authors (Schiffman and Kanuk, 2007, p. 97) have pointed out that individuals ‘progress’ when any level is met to an acceptable degree. Indeed, the dominant need can be an ever-shifting priority depending on an individual’s situation at any point in time (Clarke *et al.*, 2007, p. 936). For example, in a crisis the immediate need is for safety no matter what process or aspiration had brought the individual to the particular circumstance.

Several authors have built on Maslow’s original concepts to take account of research dealing with concerns over a focus on innate individual needs and a consequent downgrading of questions of social interaction and culture (Trigg, 2004, p. 393), the distinction between self-esteem and esteem for others (Rowan, 1998, p. 82) and the relatedness between individuals implicit in self-actualisation (Handley and Abell, 2002, p. 52). Maslow himself came to distinguish between esteem for oneself (characterised by attributes such as dignity, achievement, independence) and the desire for reputation or respect from others (for example, status and prestige).

Self-actualisation is a more abstract concept and perhaps the hardest of the needs to define. Maslow associated it with the realisation of potential and personal growth: a desire ‘to become everything one is capable of becoming’ (1987, p. 64). Winston (2016, p. 142) differentiates self-actualisation from the other needs, describing it as a ‘growth’ need rather than a ‘deficit or deficiency’ need. Whilst people are driven to fulfill the former they are drawn to the latter with ‘... the desire to become a more self-actualising individual’ (Winston, 2016, p. 143), one who is capable of managing the paradoxes or the ‘discrepancies between one’s real self and one’s ideal self’ (Winston, 2018, p. 163). This differential is particularly apposite to Cunard’s marketing position regarding emigrants and passengers from the emergent middle class.

Pearce and co-workers used the Maslow model as a basis for their approach to tourist motivation. The travel career ladder, and subsequently, travel career pattern (Pearce and Lee, 2005), show how motivations change as a tourist becomes more experienced (for example, experiencing local culture becomes more important whilst security is seen as less of an issue). A core of motivations, including

relationship enhancement and self-development, seem to remain throughout a tourist's experience. This approach, whilst useful in considering the motivations of individuals or groups (for example Song and Bae, 2018), has a level of detail that goes beyond the scope of the current study.

Alongside this discussion of needs and motivations has been the development of an understanding of consumption. In *'Consumerism in Twentieth Century Britain'*, Hilton outlines three categories of goods (and by extension, services): those 'associated with luxury, with necessity and with affluence' (2003, p. 19). An individual's allocation of any good or service to any one of these categories will be affected by personal circumstances and influenced by social patterns, class and gender. What is exciting to one maybe part of ordinary life to another and today's luxury can become tomorrow's norm. This was certainly the case for Cunard from the late 1800s to the end of the 1930s as 'luxury' spread down through the classes of accommodation: what had once been appropriate in First Class became the norm in Third (McCart, 1990, p. 72 and p. 185). In Hilton's terminology, 'luxury' had become 'necessitous', a concept having a contextual categorisation in itself (Trentmann, 2004, p. 377). Owning a car may be a luxury for the city dweller but in rural England, lack of public transport makes car ownership a necessity. Slater, reviewing the differences between luxury and basic needs, extends these concepts by defining 'basic needs' as those 'necessary for cultural participation' (1997, p. 135). Once these are attained, 'luxury' takes on a symbolic meaning defined by the cultural context, providing some measure of social status. Increasing 'luxury' consumption can be linked to greater individual aspiration (Karlsson *et al.*, 2004, p. 764), suggesting, at least for some individuals, a self-reinforcing cycle of consumption.

Appendix 2

The following sources have been used to provide a semi-quantitative view of the importance of each area of communication. The two collections both have a significant number of advertisement images. The ship brochures cover a span of time and include a wider range of images than found in advertising posters. The film material adds a further medium. The total number of images is 221.

Mary Evans Picture Library (<https://www.maryevans.com/search.php>)

The Advertising Archives (http://www.advertisingarchives.co.uk/en/page/show_home_page.html)

Cunard Archive, University of Liverpool, Liverpool

- Cunard (1923), *Franconia* brochure, D42/PR4/33/1
- Cunard (1936), *Queen Mary, A Book of Comparisons*, D42/PR12/1/27
- Cunard (1947), *Caronia*, D42/PR4/18/1/9/2
- Cunard (c1954), *Ivernia*, D42/PR4/19/18
- Cunard (1950s), Cabin at its best, D1072/5
- Cunard (1950s), "Getting there is half the fun", D854/6/2

North West Film Archive, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester

- Cunard from Canada, Cunard (1927), Film 56

Library and Archive of Canada

- Cunard (1920s), See Cunard en route to Europe, AMICUS 1488318
- Cunard (1925), *Your Ship is in!*, AMICUS 6329871

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