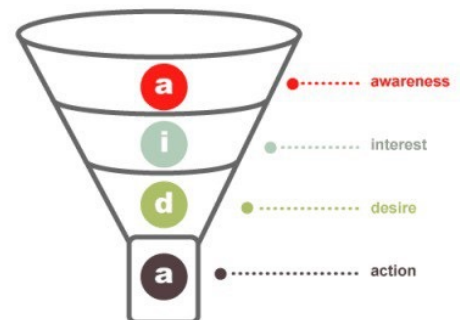


Like muddy water through a market funnel

Like sand through an hourglass, so are the days of our lives. According to the American soap opera *Days of our Lives* at least. According to general marketing strategies it would be more appropriate to talk about sand through a market funnel as a measurement of the days of our lives. The market funnel is a tool for luring in potential customers through a process of initially awareness, secondly interest, then desire and finally action which implies the action of buying a product. If you add loyalty to the model it would result in the customer repeating the process all over and this repetition shows the image of a funnel upon a funnel upon a funnel - and not an hourglass.



The sand of this metaphor might need a substitute as well. The dry and arid associations of sand seem obsolete; from a time of distress and shortage. A suitable alternative could be water as a symbol of abundance and superfluity. Imagine a stream or even a flood of people, consumers and money flowing through the market funnel. This is a day in our life.



Water as a symbol of life is further highlighted by its presence in a city. When aqueducts were finished it would be marked and celebrated by raising a fountain that would stand as a cornucopia, a horn of plenty, on the main square of a town. As long as water is running from the fountains, a city is thriving. Controlling water is one of humanity's (and beavers) many trials of strength.

One could wonder if the fountain is just a European phenomena. But a simple online search shows it to be popular on a global level and throughout history too. An example of an equivalence to the fountain could be the 'Sōzu' - a Japanese scarecrow of some sort. This is a tool rather than decoration and uses the flow of water through a hollow bamboo stick to scare off birds in a garden. The function is the exact opposite of that of the market funnel that seeks to seduce people into its funnel-shaped web of desirable objects and products.



The Sōzu does not escape the capitalist metaphors either. Bamboo is one of the fastest growing plants in the world and it has an extremely flexible yet strong structure making it an indispensable asset to an ever growing market. It might stand as the ultimate symbol of growth in the future, this strong, flexible and fast-growing resource - this brilliant asset!

Oh, the assets, the *liquid assets*, *liquidity* in general, is praised and valued. And the *channeling* of money, the free *flow* of capital, the *cash flow*. And the revenue *streams*, dark *pools* and *buoyant* growth. And governments *pouring* money into the economy. And it seems one can only stop this stream of fluid associations by clogging the funnel with sand and hereby halting its infinite flow of water, exhausting its ambition of endless resources and impeding its promise of eternal growth.

The ideal of a life in constant motion stems from the demand for constant efficiency and high performance from the employee. In a time of precariousness the employee additionally needs to be as flexible as the bamboo stick and as adaptable as bacteria - an organism able to survive in radioactive waste and that says a whole lot about today's expectations. What are possible escape strategies from the continuous motion of profitable flow?

Along with the possibility of clogging the funnel with sand there are chances to deviate from these expectations by *stirring up* things. The word motion has its etymological similarities to emotion that comes from *emovere*: To stir up. By adding an 'e' to the demand for motion the result is emotions that cannot and should not be commodified.

So we stirred up the compliant motion with an excess of emotions, we clogged the amenable market funnel with dirt and sand and we scared off the demand for eternal growth with a bamboo fountain. And like mud through an irregular watercourse so might be the days of our deviating lives.