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Validation of the template matching technique for personality classification

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Keywords:
personality, classification, behavior, Q set, continuum

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:
The results of the validation of the template matching technique for personality classification based on the 1990 California Adult Q Set (CAQ-90) will be presented. The CAQ-90 consists of 100 descriptive personality characteristics printed on cards, which are sorted into nine categories, from extremely characteristic or salient to extremely uncharacteristic or negatively salient, with a fixed number of cards sorted into each category forming a forced symmetric distribution. The specific adaptation of the CAQ-90 that I am using to classify an individual's personality is the template matching technique. A template is an ideal type, or prototype, in this case, a prototypical personality. Theoretical personality templates have been constructed for seven personality organizations representing three qualitatively different levels of personality development. The procedure for using the CAQ-90 to classify an individual's personality is relatively straightforward: A comparison is made between a subject sort and the seven personality templates by calculating a product-moment correlation coefficient across all 100 items, item-by-item, thereby expressing directly and quantitatively the degree of similarity between the two. The classification of a subject's personality organization is based on the pattern of correlations between his or her sort and the seven personality templates. The heart of this approach is the Personality Continuum, an integrative framework for the interdisciplinary study of consumer behavior brought to fruition in *The Personality Continuum and Consumer Behavior* (2002). The Personality Continuum is divided into four discrete ranges representing qualitatively different levels of personality development that are hierarchically arranged in descending order from a higher to lower level: normal, neurotic, primitive, and psychotic. The importance of the Personality Continuum for the study of consumer behavior is that each level of personality development is reflected in a qualitatively different pattern of consumer behavior. Four methodological approaches for connecting the personality organization to a particular pattern of consumer behavior, each utilizing a variation on the CAQ-90, will be outlined.

Measurement of brand central core and brand personality: Comparison of first results on predictive validity towards brand engagement and buying intention

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Keywords:

brand perception, brand personality, brand central core, brand engagement, hierarchical regression

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

First, this research aims to clarify concepts and terminology referring to consumer's perception of brands. Language used to define brands is always renewed; words like territory, ADN, core, personality... are now usual to speak about brands. However, these expressions are not always clearly defined. It thus appears important to clarify concepts and vocabulary dealing with brands. This aim being very consequent, we concentrate on specifying words attached to the consumer's perception of brands. Actually, the concept of brand image is fundamental in brand management. However, it appears that several researchers and experts are focused now on more precise concepts, in particular the core personality of brands. Measurement of brand's core and peripheral system makes it possible to identify precisely the organization of brand's associations in the memory of individuals (according to this approach, it is not sufficient to know which are associations of the brand, but it's still necessary to measure their force and their centrality in the brand's representation). In addition, some researches concentrated on psychological and anthropological role of brands in consumer life and culture. This new approach allows apprehending brand's perception while focusing on brand/consumer relationship; relation based specifically on the concept of brand personality.

Secondly, the present study aims to compare two measuring instruments of brand perception (brand's core and peripheral scale and barometer of brand personality) and their respective predictive power on consumer behaviour. First results on predictive validity of the two scales with respect to brand engagement and buying intention are presented. Predictive measurement of validity was carried out by means of simple linear regressions. Moreover hierarchical regressions allowed comparing respective contributions of the different measuring instruments. Results suggest the mediator role of brand's core and peripheral system between brand personality and brand attachment or purchase intention.

Beyond conceptual contributions, this study underlines also methodological results. Concerning the brand's personality barometer, results confirm a first order structure including 9 facets as well as they suggest a second order structure gathering 5 dimensions near to the dominant model of human personality (near on a structural and semantic scheme).

Linking consumer innovativeness, expertise, and information search for new products: A theoretical and empirical exploration

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Keywords:

consumer innovativeness, consumer expertise, new product, information search, gender differences

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The high failure rate of new products is one of the most obvious phenomena in marketing. The lack of knowledge about consumers who face new products seems one of main reasons of their failure (Hoeffler, 2003). In particular, the way consumers feel they need more or less information about a product remains unclear. Nevertheless, many studies highlighted the importance of some variables, such as consumer innovativeness and expertise, in the analysis of consumer information search needs (Gregan-Paxton, 2001; Maheswaran and Sternthal, 1990; Roehrich, 2004; Schmidt and Spreng, 1996). However, no study presents an integrative framework of those variables. Accordingly, our contribution aims at clarifying the relationships between consumer innovativeness (attractiveness for newness and autonomy in decision-making), consumer expertise, perceived need of information search, and information search effort in the case of a new product. It was hypothesized that innovativeness had a positive effect on expertise which, in turn, had a negative effect on information perceived needs. Likewise, a particular emphasis was put on the possible impact of gender differences.

The methodology of the study relied on a questionnaire survey whereby a new software program was presented to 255 students. The validity and reliability of the measurement scales were assessed. Then, hypotheses were tested through structural equation modeling, bringing several results of note. First, consistent with our predictions, the dimension attractiveness for newness (part of innovativeness) has a strong positive effect on consumer expertise, which, in turn, has a strong negative effect on perceived information, needs. Contrary to hypotheses, autonomy in decision-making is not directly linked with consumer expertise but has a negative effect on perceived information need. In parallel, one of the most significant results is the influence of gender differences for the consumer expertise variable. Albeit the general framework of relationships between variables is not affected by gender; men declare themselves much more expert than women.

This topic is of particular interest not only for researchers but also for marketers. Beyond the consumer buying action, it seems essential to bring out the salient factors, which could explain his/her information need, especially, when facing a new product.

Overcoming the Babylonian confusion of tongues: Conceptual congruence between customer needs and product features

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Keywords:
person-product congruence, matching, profiling, segmentation,

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Consumer's difficulties in deciding between product options are sometimes due to unstable preferences, framing effects, only superficially elaborated or conflicting individual needs. However, even if consumers know exactly what they want, decisions often do not become easier because of the product-centered language used to describe and differentiate product options. Often customers do not know how the product features translate into the satisfaction of their individual needs. Hence, even though the product description might be technically correct and exhaustive, the implications and their fit to the customer personality or profile remain unclear. Customers are not able to select the product option promising the highest expected utility, simply because their personal product conceptualization is different from the one the producer or provider is employing. Frequently, the consequence of this confusion is a cautious and inhibited buying behavior that is prominent in industries like financial services, telecommunications, information technology or tourism, from which the case study for this presentation is taken.

We present a theoretical framework and a pragmatic implementation of an online matching algorithm that overcomes this "Babylonian Confusion of Tongues" between individual needs and product features in the case of an international travel agency. Based on this case study, we will discuss the methodology how to develop a "common language" that is understood by consumers and that is flexible enough to sufficiently portray the product complexity and differentiation between available options. Furthermore, we will discuss the prerequisites and consequences such a common language will have for the providing company, and we will show how the matching algorithm based on that common language can be the foundation of a strongly customer focused marketing strategy – e.g. we will demonstrate how this matching process is building the straightforward foundation for an efficient, and self-correcting customer profiling technique that can be superior to many other customer segmentation approaches. Finally, we will present empirical evidence, that the effort to develop such a common language is paid off in terms of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and conversion rates.

The impact of brand personality on consumer behavior: A model and empirical application to supermarket store names in France and Tunisia

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Keywords:

branding, personality, consumer behavior, commitment, supermarkets

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The main objective of this paper is to test the explanatory power of brand personality on consumer behavior. We explore the impact of the brand personality on store names and particularly on two well-known supermarket chains. A measurement model of brand and store personality is applied to two French supermarket store names and to one supermarket store name in Tunisia. Results show that store personalities do vary across competing supermarket chains. An explanatory model estimated through regression analysis and structural equation modeling shows that store personality does affect both attitude and commitment toward the store name. However, personality traits that do have an impact differ when explaining attitude or commitment toward the brand.

Consumer relationship orientation towards a brand (CROB): Concept definition and construct dimensions exploration

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Keywords:

consumer-brand relationship, consumer relationship orientation, consumer personality, consumer motives, in-depth exploratory interviews

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Authors have devoted a lot of interest to the definition and development of the Relationship Marketing Paradigm, since the 80's within the sphere of BtoB and Services, and since the 90's within the scope of consumer goods, with the emergence of the Consumer-Brand Relationship paradigm. Recently, authors pointed out the fact that many of the researches adopted firm-centric view of the relationship, and called for taking more attention to the consumer himself, and specifically to the individual differences affecting brand-relationship activity.

Different concepts emerged, like Consumer Relationship Proneness, assessing the individual predisposition to engage in a relationship with a retailer or a brand, or the Customer sensitivity to relationship maintenance. These constructs are mainly one-dimensional and their measure relies on declarative consumer behaviors. The originality of the present research consists in the deep investigation of the literature in Psychology of Interpersonal Relationships. We carefully scrutinized different personality traits, generic to personality theory or specific to the psychology of relationships such as friendship styles or attachment styles. We also examined relationship motives in the same literature to develop a robust construct of Consumer Relationship Orientation towards a Brand (CROB).

We propose and justify a multidimensional construct based on consumer motives and preferences regarding the relationship with a brand. Dimensions comprise both formal aspects of interactions (temporality, symmetry and diversity of interactions) and cognitive and affective aspects of the bond (relationship motive, intensity and direction).

In addition, we conduct an exploratory qualitative study based on four in-depth interviews with consumers of Nespresso to have a preliminary assessment of the relevance of our proposed dimensions.

The present research can be a robust base for researchers to develop a quantitative scale to measure consumer relationship orientation or can be used as a framework analysis for managers and CRM agencies strategic planners.

A forecasting and simulation model for predicting movies performance using audience and box office revenues data

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Keywords:
marketing model, simulation model, movie performance

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:
The movie market is one of the most irregular and difficult to be predicted because there is a random component in the performance of the movies which is much higher than for other typologies of products (like FMCG or durables).

In spite of these difficulties, we have implemented a forecasting and simulation model (and a software program) for predicting the performance of a new movie; with this model we have been able to reach a good reliability in terms of variance explanation and in terms of capabilities of anticipating the real behaviour.

The model works by estimating the performance of the movies in the movie theatres first, but also subsequently, when the movie is broadcast on television.

The model, which is a crucial tool in a marketing information system, has already been applied from an important Italian producer. The four steps of the model estimate

1. the total box office revenue before the launch;
2. the total box office revenue after having observed the initial period of box office sales (1, 2 or 3 weeks);
3. the television ratings in the first release;
4. the television ratings in the replies.

In step 1 an original model formulation has been found: the main independent variable is the number of movie theatres where the movie is programmed during the first 3 weeks; the influence of several categorical variables (seasonality, movie typology, country of production) has been removed.

In step 2 the model has been identified and the parameter estimation is carried out based on the outcomes of the initial weeks. In step 3 and 4 two regression models have been estimated. The most innovative content here is the inclusion, as an independent variable for step 3, of the distance between the viewer profile in the movie theatres respect to the profile of the TV station where the movie is programmed.

Data sources have been:

- o Cinetel (Italian system which measures box office revenues);
- o Auditel (Italian Television Audience Measurement system);
- o a panel based survey carried out by the producer measuring satisfaction indexes and profile of the viewers.

What does Aaker's brand personality scale actually measure?

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Keywords:
brand personality, scale, validity

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Brand personality is defined by Aaker (1997) as “the set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (p. 347). According to Aaker (1997, p. 348), brand personalities are formed in two different ways: through person-related attributes and product-feature-related attributes. With person-related attributes, the perceived personality traits of people associated with a brand come to describe the brand's personality. For example, person-related attributes assigned to the typical user of the brand, the employees and CEO of the respective company, and celebrities endorsing the product or service become associated with the brand. When personality traits come to be associated with the brand through product-feature-related attributes, product-related attributes are derived from personal or others' experiences while using the brand, product category associations and associations induced by the brand name, symbol or logo, the advertising style, the price, and the distribution channel.

The Brand Personality Scale (BPS) proposed by Aaker (1997) is assumed to cover both aspects, person-related and product-feature related, across different product categories. In this study, we ask ‘Does the scale adequately cover both attribute sources as consumers make judgments about a brand's personality?’. A recent neuroeconomic study conducted by Yoon, Gutchess, Feinberg, and Polk (in press) suggests that consumers do not process the personality of brands in the same manner as that of human personality. Different cortical regions are activated when self-congruence judgments are made about products than those activated when making judgments about persons. Based on that work, it is possible that the BPS is primarily assessing product-feature-related judgmental processes, and to a much lesser degree person-related ones.

To test this assumption, we conducted an experiment which manipulated the judgmental object subjects referred to while assessing a brand using BPS attributes. In addition to applying the BPS in its standard form to evaluate a highly salient brand (here: Mercedes-Benz), we presented the same BPS attributes under two additional instructions: an instruction focusing on the typical user of the brand as the judgmental object (person-judgment condition) and another instruction focusing on the typical product of the brand (product-judgment condition).

Consistent with our assumptions, the results, based on N= 309 subjects and using Mahalanobis distances, indicate that the five-factorial BPS profile proposed by Aaker (1997) converges considerably more to the profile in the product-judgment condition than to the one resulting from the person-judgment condition.

Given these results, we conclude that the judgmental processes underlying brand-related judgments are indeed distinct from those in human personality impression formation, even if the same attributes are used. By challenging the view that brand personality is akin to human personality, the nomological and terminological basis of the BPS should, in our view, be refined.

Individual factors' loyalty in the context of an experiential consumption.

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Keywords:

loyalty, experiential consumption, need for stimulation, intrinsic and extrinsic orientation, tourism

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The aim of our research is to account for loyalty as a dynamic process developing throughout consumption experiences considering a field which has not been thoroughly studied to date, i.e. experiential consumption in the context of tourism. The developed approach primarily emphasizes concepts which are contrary to loyalty, like variety seeking, in order to better understand factors that favor loyalty. The need for stimulation proves to be a fundamental key process. Complementary to cognitive paradigm, the experiential model offers an original approach of loyalty signifying that it depends on a satisfied need for stimulation. This loyalty dimension is more pertinent because of the influence of numerous situational factors on customer behavior. Results obtained via a structural equation modeling technique confirm the existence of a process evolving on a continuum that matches loyalty with variety seeking; and in which the need for stimulation has a negative moderating effect between optimal stimulation level (OSL) and loyalty. Other key-variables make it possible to distinguish loyal-by-desire vs. loyal-by-need consumers. In the first case, loyalty is more clearly defined as a strategy to reduce a perceived risk for example. In the second case, pleasure or hedonism experienced by the consumer leads to more variety seeking and the moderating effect of the satisfied need for stimulation generates more loyalty. A conceptual and methodological solution to measure the need for a stimulation factor is developed through situational variables tourist experience stimulation. A managerial paradox is hereby revealed: in response to the individual's need for stimulation, it is possible to influence his loyalty. The management of both experience consumption and the inter-organizational networks prove to be fundamental.

The impact of satisfaction and image on loyalty concerning customers with varying degrees of service experience

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Keywords:

satisfaction, image, loyalty, repurchase intentions, intentions to recommend

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Customer satisfaction and image are important factors for service companies because of their impact on loyalty. Although there is plenty of research that has looked at the relationship of some of these factors, only little is known about them when they are combined in one model. This research, with data from one of Europe's most modern night-train companies, uses structural equation modelling to explore the effects of satisfaction with the most recent encounter and image on loyalty (measured by intentions of repurchase and recommendation). Differentiating new customers from experienced ones, the results show that for new customers satisfaction is crucial while image plays a much smaller role for loyalty. For experienced customers, however, the impact of satisfaction decreases while the one of image increases. Therefore, experience with the service moderates the impact of satisfaction and image on loyalty. The findings and their implications for future research are discussed.

Metaphor as research method in marketing: An application to brand personality

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Keywords:

metaphor, brand personality, metaphor's aptness, metaphor's validity

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Using metaphor is widespread in management and marketing because it provides creativity. However the question of its validity is seldom investigated. This article offers an analysis of metaphor's validity using three stages:

1 Analysis of the concept, source of the metaphor

2 Investigation of the metaphor's aptness

3 Analysis of the process of metaphor generation

To illustrate, the metaphor of brand personality has been selected for application. The conclusion is that brand personality possesses a weak validity and calls for more research on a theoretical level.

Measuring involvement in ecology using a 5-Factor Scale : EIS

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Keywords:

ecology, involvement, scale

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Involvement was measured in the past by way of attitude and behavioral scales. Zaichkowsky's (1985) 10-item Personal Involvement Inventory (PII), later adapted to advertising, is a major reference, as is Laurent & Kapferer's (1985) 16-item Consumer Involvement Profile. Other more limited scales were also developed, such as Schuhwerk & Lefkoff-Hagius' (1995) 4-item scale. Although valuable, these developments do not exclusively focus on involvement dimensions, often combining cognitive, affective, conative and behavioral aspects. Further, they often focus on products/brands or their communication, making it difficult to apply them to issues such as ecology. This paper introduces a new scale specifically aimed at measuring involvement toward ecology.

A focus group and depth interviews were used to generate statements about ecology. 147 items were identified. A few scale items from Schuhwerk & Lefkoff-Hagius (1995) and Maloney et al. (1975) were added for their pertinence. The resulting set was rated by experts for content validity. A preliminary 60-item Likert scale was developed.

An exploratory factor analysis (principle components) was run. The salient loading criterion was set at 0.65 to be parsimonious. The resulting 16-item scale cleared 5 factors after rotation, explaining 69.22% of variance. The factors were identified as taking concrete actions, degree of interest, disobedience, personal sacrifice and financial sacrifice.

Reliability was estimated with a new sample, clearing a Cronbach $\alpha = 0.88$. A confirmatory factor analysis generated satisfactory goodness of fit indices: $\text{Chi}^2/\text{df} = 1.43 (< 3)$, $\text{RMSEA} = 0.07 (< 0.08)$ and $\text{CFI} = .935 (> .90)$ (Brown & Cudeck, 1993). Convergent validity was confirmed ($\rho_{\text{cv}} > 0.50$) for all factors except one ($\rho_{\text{cv}} = 0.30$). Discriminant validity was confirmed at $p < .05$ ($\Delta\chi^2 = 37, \Delta\text{df} = 10, p < .05$).

The resulting 5-factor EIS reveals highly pertinent dimensions which do not appear in the literature (Broderick & Mueller, 1999). Involvement dimensions derived in past studies (enduring, normative, situation, brand commitment, hedonic, risk probability, risk importance, utility) typically reflect product/brand concerns rather than issues such as ecology. With some adaptation, EIS dimensions could be extended to other fields such as donations, child protection, discriminatory practices, and other social issues.

Research limitations include the use of convenience samples of limited sizes, and self-reporting. The latter could be corrected by using cross-reporting.

Online data collection: Strengths, challenges and future directions

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Keywords:

online data collection

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Since its birth, the Internet has been believed to provide innovative ways for collecting data in remarkably efficient and effective manners. The Internet has been believed to offer such great possibilities in the field of data collection since it is faster, easier, and cheaper to communicate with respondents, as compared to using the conventional methods. Based on this belief, online data collection methods have been broadly used in diverse academic research as well as practical research. A number of empirical studies employing online data collection methods have been conducted and published in diverse academic journals. Also, online audience measurement has grown as a major business on the Internet, as advertisers' needs for more accurate planning and positioning of online advertising increase (Coffey 2000). Despite the popularity of online data collection, however, many unresolved issues regarding the quality of data collected through the Internet remain (Sheehan 2002).

This paper addresses how researchers have used the Internet as a tool for data collection, and what are the pros and cons of online data collection. Future directions of online data collection are also briefly discussed.

Accessibility of subjective ease of retrieval and its effects on evaluation in subjects high and low on experiential and rational processing style

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Keywords:

judgments, experiential processing style, subjective ease

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

There is now strong evidence that evaluative judgments are affected by both content and the subjective ease with which content is retrieved. Here, we examine the effects of subjective ease of retrieval accessibility on the contributions of both content and subjective ease to evaluation. This was done by comparing evaluations in a task requiring self generated content, when subjective ease of content generation was probed either before evaluation (increasing its accessibility), or after. We compared the effects of the accessibility manipulation for participants high and low in experiential and rational processing styles. For subjects low in experiential processing style, subjective ease primarily affected performance when probed before evaluation. For subjects high in experiential processing style, the contribution of subjective ease was similar in the two conditions. These findings demonstrate that the accessibility of subjective ease of retrieval impacts evaluation and that accessibility of this information varies as a function of personality and task characteristics.

Consumers' trust in unfamiliar high-tech products

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Keywords:

trust, system trust, information-processing, direct information, indirect information

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Consumers are rarely knowledgeable about the technologically advanced products they encounter in daily life. Few, for example, know how their car navigation sets work. Trust is a mechanism that enables people to deal with such situations of uncertainty, and as such, is crucial in a consumer's decision to adopt products. It is, therefore, important to understand the formation of system trust, and how trust-relevant information is processed.

The role of direct experiences has dominated research in the field of system trust. Consumers on the verge of buying a high-tech product, however, are forced to resort to other trust-relevant information than personal experience, such as the opinions of others or analyses in consumers' magazines (indirect information).

These experiments used route planners as examples of high-tech products. After exposure to indirect information, the consumer's trust in the system's capabilities was measured, as well as its behavioral consequences, i.e. the decision to use automatic instead of manual route-planning mode, or to view more alternative suggestions before making a choice.

The first experiment pitted positive or negative evaluations against consensus cues, i.e., favorable opinions concerning the system expressed by a few others (minority cues) versus the same opinions endorsed by many others (majority cues). A considerable effect of evaluations was found; a negative evaluation caused trust to decrease, compared to a positive evaluation, and led participants to view more alternative suggestions before making a choice. No effect of the supplied consensus cue was found, however. A follow-up experiment showed the provided consensus cues to affect trust and the use of the automatic mode; minority cues had a negative influence on both trust as well as the use of the product's automatic function, compared to majority cues.

In conclusion, trust-relevant information may be processed heuristically and systematically. Activation and application of the "consensus opinions are correct"-heuristic caused participants to believe opinions endorsed by a majority, rather than opinions endorsed by a minority. Information-processing modes are, therefore, important for understanding trust and trusting behaviors; they determine which of the available sources of indirect information influences the adoption and use of high-tech products.

Toward a theory of the relationship between consumer personality and coping: The trait of coping flexibility

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Keywords:
coping, consumer personality, process

Type of contribution:
Poster presentation

Abstract:

In recent years, consumer researchers have begun to direct their efforts toward an understanding of the multitude of ways consumers cope with stress (Mick & Fournier, 1998; Yi & Baumgartner, 2004). Much of this emerging body of research has emphasized situational influences on the coping process, focusing relatively scant attention on the nature of consumer personality influences on these processes. In the current research, data from two studies is presented that explores the role of consumer personality traits on the coping process.

The present research builds on the coping literature in psychology. In this literature, there has been considerable disagreement as to the exact nature of personality influences on the stress and coping process. The current research addresses this debate directly, testing several competing processes using consumer personality variables, using the influential cognitive appraisal framework (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

In study 1, several competing process models are tested using the established consumer trait of assertiveness. The data support a moderated model wherein consumer traits influence both cognitive appraisal and coping processes, in contrast to the prevailing view in the literature suggesting trait influences coping directly and exert no effect on appraisal.

Study 2 builds on these findings and develops a theoretical rationale for a new consumer personality trait, coping flexibility. This flexibility conceptualization captures the extent to which consumers are able to flexibly employ multiple coping strategies when confronted with stressful circumstances. This new trait is theorized to not only affect coping, but also appraisal, thereby replicating the findings demonstrated in study 1. The results support the theorized relationships and not only suggest that the interactive model may be more broadly applicable, they also shed light on the underlying mechanisms responsible for the influence of personality on coping. The research concludes by discussing several potential implications of the new trait conceptualization, offering several new directions for subsequent consumer research.

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You are what you wear: The impact of brand attributes on consumer impression formation.

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Keywords:

brand personality, impression formation, continuum model, experimental methods

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Are brands used to signal to others and ourselves who we are? Research increasingly suggests they are. Previous studies have shown that exposure to brand personality traits (e.g., a brand's competence, sincerity or ruggedness, see Aaker, 1997) can affect consumer self-assessments of their personality traits (Fennis, Pruyn & Maasland, in press). The present study extended this line of research. In an experiment we examined the extent to which brand personality traits (i.e. a brand's perceived competence) can transfer from brand to owner and affect consumer impression formation processes. Based on the continuum model of impression formation (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990; Fiske, Lin & Neuberg, 1999), we hypothesized that a brand's perceived competence (established through a pilot test) may affect the perception of competence of its owner by an observer, especially when the situational context in which the brand and owner are displayed is consistent with the key association the brand evokes. Furthermore, the continuum model would posit this latter interaction effect to be more pronounced when the observer can devote considerable attention to the impression formation process (for instance when he/she has ample time to do so).

We tested our assumptions in a 2 (brand competence: high/low) * 2 (situational context: consistent/inconsistent) * 2 (time constraint: present/absent) between-subjects factorial design (N = 314). The results confirmed our expectations. A full factorial ANOVA revealed a main effect of brand competence indicating that a competent brand indeed induced a higher perception of competence of its owner than an incompetent brand. In addition, a significant interaction effect between brand competence and situational context showed that this effect was stronger when the situation matched the association of the brand than when there was a mismatch. Finally, consistent with the continuum model, a significant three-way interaction indicated that the aforementioned interaction effect was more pronounced when subjects were given ample time to devote to the impression formation task. The theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

Contribution of personal and cultural variables to social influence. Age as a moderator variable.

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Keywords:

symbolic consumption, social influence

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Consumers acquire and use products that allow them to identify with or enhance their own image, that is, carry out a symbolic consumption to appropriate themselves of the meaningful properties of goods for building and maintaining social relationships. In the social side of consumption (Bagozzi 2000), people judge the value of things through the prism of interpersonal relationships (McGraw et al. 2003). In this sense, consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence (CSII) is a general trait that varies across individuals in their responsiveness to social influence. Both social interplay and cultural environment may exert influence on consumers, but it is also interesting to compare susceptibility to influence across different social others or sources of influence (Murphy 2000; Mangleburg et al. 2004). More specifically, Bagozzi (2000) asserts that three aspects of social consumer behavior might be scrutinized: the effects of societal forces on intra-individual process, interpersonal behavior, and relationships among social collectivities. Our conceptual model posits that personal variables (public self-consciousness and hedonism) and cultural environment or societal forces (television and fashion) influence consumer susceptibility to interpersonal influence. To our knowledge, this is the first attempt to simultaneously analyze these variables. Additionally, following research that asserts that age is a relevant variable in symbolic product evaluation (Noble and Walker 1997; Maldonado and Tansuhaj 1999), subject's age is also introduced in the model as a moderator. In order to test the hypotheses, SEM analysis is applied to data obtained from a sample of 302 people. Results confirm that both personal and cultural variables exert a positive direct influence on CSII, although personal variables show higher coefficients. The findings also show that the relationship between TV and CSII presents different results for young individuals and adults, since adults are more exposed to TV, they are more affected by social pressure. Additionally, the relationship between public self-consciousness and TV exposure is also affected by age. Young subjects with more public self-consciousness are more exposed to TV. Implications and future research guidelines are provided.

Does brand personality extend to retail shopping environments? An empirical experiment using D'Astous store personality scale in a Web-based CD music shop

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Keywords:

online, retail, store, personality, web, atmospherics, experiment

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Marketing researchers and practitioners have long been interested in achieving a deeper appreciation of the way in which their target consumers perceive and relate to a company's brand and the physical outlet where these can be purchased. Scholars have recently been attracted to the processes by which consumers attribute human characteristics to various commercial objects. This paper aims to extend current research in the area of store personality into an online setting and examine some antecedents of store personality.

Psychological Impact of Colour

Physiological tests have shown that warm colours, such as red and yellow, are arousing, whereas cooler colours, such as blue and green, are soothing. Both physiological (Gerard, 1957) and brain activity (Gerard, 1957; Clynes and Kohn, 1968; Clynes, 1977) have been found to be affected by exposure to colour. Bellizzi et al (1983) carried out research into the effects of colour in retail store design and displays. More specifically, it is hypothesised that the warm colour combination will be more positively related to the Unpleasantness and Enthusiasm factors of the d'Astous and Levesque personality scale than the cooler colour combination. In addition, it is hypothesised that cooler colours will be more positively related to the Solidness, Sophistication and Genuineness.

Social Presence and Use of a Persona

In addition to testing the effects of colour on perceived website personality, the effect of the inclusion of different personas in the website was also tested. It was hypothesised that the personality of a character included in the website might be processed and imputed onto the website's personality.

Methodology

Experimental design

A 2 x 3 between-subjects factorial design was used to manipulate 2 levels of colour (warm and cold) with 3 levels of persona (control, sophisticated, scruffy) in the website. The following dependent measures were recorded: general attitude toward the website, online purchase intention, website personality, internet use and experience, gender, age and respondent personality. A total of 237 usable questionnaires were collected online.

Discussion

While colour was found to significantly affect store personality, the hypothesis that the presence of a persona in an online setting has an effect on the perceived store personality is not supported. However, it does highlight the fact that subtle changes in the interface design are likely to generate attitude changes from the user's perspective. The implications of the findings in relation to the effect of colour in online store personality are that in general, predominantly cool colours should be used in the design of websites. The positive personality factors of solidity, enthusiasm and sophistication, are all more highly associated with cool colours than warm colours. Alternatively, warm colours are related to the negative personality factor, unpleasantness.

Brand personality in an intercultural context

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Keywords:
brand personality, cultural differences

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

As a result of globalization, it is becoming more and more important for companies to stand out from their competitors, who are constantly increasing in number. This differentiation is frequently made by using brand names that not only have a consumer value, but also an ideological or symbolic value, thus allowing the consumer of the particular brand to identify with it. In this situation, global companies must consider the extent to which brands with an identical position are perceived in an identical manner, as well as the extent to which a different cultural background influences the way in which brands are perceived. This question is particularly significant because it also determines the success of a brand in a particular country or cultural sphere. Despite the importance of this influence, relatively little is known about the process by which the culture affects attitude and behavior.

The present paper deals with the different perceptions of the Red Bull brand personality in three countries - the UK, Singapore, and Austria. The investigation also looks at the extent to which culture can be used to explain perception of a brand personality. This is analyzed using Hofstede's cultural dimensions. The third question examined in this paper is the extent to which a brand personality influences actual consumption. The results show that there are differences in perception of the brand personality between the individual countries. These differences, however, do not spread to all dimensions to the same extent. In addition, influences of the culture can also be detected in the brand personality.

The energy drink brand Red Bull was selected for this investigation because it is very well known worldwide within its target group and because the manufacturer has tried to position this brand in the same way all round the globe. Nevertheless, the results can only be applied generally to a limited extent because of the size of the sample and the fact that only three countries were covered by the investigation. In order to obtain generally applicable answers to the questions, it would be wise to conduct a more extensive investigation on this topic, both in terms of the size of the random samples taken in each case and also in terms of the countries investigated.

Congruence of personality and brand personality and its implications for brand management - A case study in the snowboard industry

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Keywords:
brand personality, brand management

Type of contribution:
Poster presentation

Abstract:
The significance of brand names has continued to increase over the past few years. Particularly in those branches where consumers show a high level of involvement, brand names place a special role – relationships form with brands at an emotional level.

In order to characterize brands, the concept of brand personality was developed based on personality concepts. If there is substantial involvement and an intensive relationship with a brand, it is assumed that there is a certain congruence between the consumer's own personality and the personality characteristics associated with the brand in question. The fit between these two constructs can lead to real identification with the brand and thus, intensify customers' brand loyalty.

One object of the present contribution is to conduct an analysis in the snowboard sector to establish the extent to which any congruence between the consumer's own personality and the brand's personality can affect attitudes (e.g. loyalty) and behavioral intentions (e.g. repeat purchase). The snowboard sector was selected because product involvement on the part of snowboarders – mainly young people – can be rated as very high.

The empirical investigation in the form of an online survey was conducted in cooperation with a snowboard dealer. A total of 664 snowboarders took part in the survey. Since the target group mainly comprises young people, but particularly in view of the special language features used by the target group, the items used to measure the brand personality were not only translated into German and validated, but also into the language used by snowboarders.

Finally, conclusions are drawn for management of brand names based on the findings obtained and these conclusions are then discussed.

Brands of death? Excessive spending as a consequence of brand-based mortality salience

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Keywords:

automatic consumer behavior, brand associations, terror management theory, unconsciously

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Earlier research has shown that brands can induce a host of associations. Aaker (1997) for example suggested that we spontaneously associate brands with human personality traits, such as competence or sophistication. But are these brand associations powerful enough to affect human behavior, such as spending patterns or other types of consumer behavior? In this study we investigated whether brands can evoke mortality-related associations, and whether this mortality salience can automatically instigate consumption behaviors associated with terror management. According to terror management theory (Solomon, Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 1991) people have various ways to deal with the terror they experience when confronted with their mortality. One way consists of creating and living up to a cultural worldview that gives meaning to the self and universe. In our western society, where consumerism is deeply interwoven with cultural beliefs, spending money is a sign that we are doing well and meeting the standards of our society (see Solomon, Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 2004). Therefore we hypothesized that participants confronted with a death-related brand have more death-related thoughts, which, in turn yield the intention to spend more money in order to meet the social standards and hereby bolster one's self-esteem. We tested our hypotheses in a uni-factorial between-subjects (brand manipulation: death-related brand vs. no brand) design (N = 45). As expected, we found that participants in the death-related brand condition completed significantly more death-related words than participants in the control condition, as measured by a Dutch version of the word-stem completion task (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon & Simon, 1997). This suggests that death related thoughts can be activated automatically by stimuli in the environment. In addition, we found that participants in the death-related brand condition intended to spend significantly more money on food and entertainment items in the near future than participants in the control condition. Regression analysis (cf. Baron & Kenny, 1986) revealed that the relation between the death-related brand manipulation and spending behavior was mediated by accessibility of death-related thoughts. The theoretical and practical implications will be discussed.

Consumer loyalty behavior towards typical food products: Analysis of French consumer panel data

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Keywords:

panel data, brand loyalty, quality labels, typicality, food product

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

For more than 15 years the European Community has been interested in supporting typical food products. Typical products are highly linked with their region of origin. For the protection of those products regulations introducing quality labels have been introduced in order to provide better information to consumers and gaining a competitive advantage towards other categories of food products.

The main aim of this strategy was typical products gain a respective market share while increasing consumer loyalty towards them. Although the results from many studies show highly involvement and commitment from consumers towards typical products, the main question which still exists is which attributes influence the actual purchase behavior and, moreover, behavioral loyalty towards them.

For measuring loyalty we applied the Dirichlet model as through the years of its application has been proved to provide useful benchmarks in many product categories. We used panel data, collected over one year in French supermarkets, to measure behavioral loyalty on two typical product categories (red wine and dry-cured ham).

As a first approach to this matter, the results show that quality labels is not the most important attribute influencing behavioral loyalty. For most of consumers, behavioral loyalty seems to be still under the influence of price hierarchy. However, some of the observed panelists are not price sensitive, but still have various preferences and variety seeking behavior. We improve the predictive power of model and accuracy of classification by using individual traits as basement of consumer types, respectively: connoisseur, sensitive to food quality labels; brand prone, more market-oriented and advertising sensitive; rational, mainly loyal to the store; thrifty, always looking for lowest price; and open type, without any salient preference. Finally, food quality labels seem to be influent for a small but loyal and stable cluster of consumers.

Mood induction via the World Wide Web

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Keywords:

mood induction, procedure, online, WWW, experiment

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Although Web-based data collection has now been established, experimental mood research via the WWW is still in its infancy. If consumer psychology wants to study the influence of mood on consumers' behavior and attitudes towards online shops and services, we need reliable mood induction procedures that work in an online environment. This presentation illuminates the methodology of Web-based mood manipulation. It presents evidence for its feasibility and for its limits.

Several online mood induction procedures were tested in three experiments. Experiment 1 examined the effectiveness of the Velten method and of mood-suggestive photographs to induce a positive and negative mood, each in a long and a short version. Long versions induced negative mood more effectively than short versions. However, neither version was successful in inducing a positive mood. In Experiment 2, cartoons and jokes were tested to induce a positive mood. Cartoons turned out to be effective, whereas jokes did not. Experiment 3 examined two methods in which participants were asked to bring up associations to affectively-valenced words. Both association tasks were not suitable to call forth a positive or negative mood.

Temperament and information processing in perception of print advertisement

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Keywords:

advertisement, information processing, temperament, individual differences

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

To date, the body of research dealt mostly with efficiency of advertisement but psychological mechanisms that underlie processes of brand or advertisement memory, brand attitudes and purchase intentions also seem to be well worth exploring. In the present study the early stages of advertisement perception are examined. Perception of advertisement is considered here as information processing. Received information after being processed on a neural level can be viewed both as uncontrolled, preconscious processes (physiological reactions) and as controlled, conscious processes (cognitive representations). In two studies the specificity of relationship between physiological reactions and cognitive representations in setting of temperamental traits and advertisement appeals was examined. The influence of sensation seeking by Zuckerman (Study 1; N=104) on the perception of controversial advertisement was measured. Then, the perception of erotic advertisement was correlated with Extraversion, Neuroticism, Psychoticism by Eysenck (Study 2; N=80). The Sensation Seeking Scale and EPQ-R were distributed to participants. The series of controversial and erotic print ads were used. Physiological reactions (EDA, cardiac reactions, and respiration) were registered and analyzed by the computer polygraph system Lafayette LX-3000W. Cognitive representations were measured by the semantic differentials. It was hypothesized that strong physiological reactions and positive cognitive assessments of controversial ads would correlate with the variable of sensation seeking. Introverts were expected to manifest strong physiological reactions and positive cognitive assessments of erotic ads. Neuroticism would be associated with negative cognitive assessments of the erotic ad. Weak physiological reactions and positive cognitive assessments were expected to be observed in persons displaying high psychoticism. The results were discussed in the light of information processing, cognitive representations, personality processes and their application potential. Presented research provides data which could satisfy both advertisers and consumers: advertisers could learn from it how to better aim their messages at their target, and consumers could become more conscious of advertisement influences.

Shopping motives and the hedonic/utilitarian shopping value: A factorial study

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Keywords:

shopping motives, utilitarian/hedonistic consumption, personality, values and beliefs, factor analysis

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The present study, conducted on a sample of roughly 700 customers of two different shopping centers, focuses on verifying the existence of two stable high-order dimensions – i.e., Hedonic and Utilitarian meta-traits (Babin, Darden and Griffin 1994) – over the Big Five factors of human personality, which were extracted (cf. Mooradian and Olver 1996) from enduring individual differences in 11 shopping motives indicated in the seminal work by Tauber (1972) – namely, Diversion, Sensory stimulation, Self-gratification, Learning about new trends, Physical activity, Social experiences outside the home, Communication with others having similar interest, Peer group attraction, Status and authority, Pleasure in bargaining, and Pleasure in bargains. Results showed that, Openness to Experience ($r = .694$, $p = .000$), Agreeableness ($r = .535$, $p = .000$), and Extroversion ($r = .346$, $p = .000$) traits are correlated to the Hedonic (i.e., ludic, aesthetic, and epicurean) shopping value; whereas, Emotional Stability ($r = .897$, $p = .000$), and Conscientiousness ($r = .185$, $p = .000$) traits are correlated to the Utilitarian (i.e., functional, task-related, and rational) shopping value. Findings confirmed the existence of two high-order factors among the Big Fives, as maintained by Digman (1997) in his meta-analysis of social psychology studies, but with the transfer – at this domain-specific level of personality analysis – of the Agreeableness factor from one meta-dimension to the other. Three more differences with past categories were found: the first difference is the dissolving of class A of motives (that is, shopping as a Diversion), which can be explained according to consumers' hedonic tone and level of stimulation (Apter 1989). The second difference with the shopping motives originally indicated by Tauber (1972) is in the collapsing of Factor G (Communication with others having similar interests) and Factor F (Social experience outside the home) in one dimension (G/F) which represents Communication in general, coming from any shopping activity. Finally, the third difference comes from the proved existence of two other classes of motives which push to shop, based on new items and the reaggregation of past ones, which we defined Enjoying to be on one's own (Y) and Freedom to decide (X). Results should urge firms to classify key customers mainly on searched shopping goals, thus setting, in turn, satisfactory communication strategies able to influence customers' perception of the shopping center image and, in general, their purchasing experience.

Experimental analysis of consumers' stimulation and motivational states in the shopping experience

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Keywords:

optimal stimulation level, OSL, personality, aesthetic/hedonistic consumption, reversal theory, factor analysis

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The present study examined the roles of individual stimulation (in the form of either optimal stimulation levels and trait arousability), personality traits, and dominant motivational states on hedonic and/or utilitarian shopping values.

OLS and trait arousability describe consumers in relation to their answer to the environmental stimulation. OSL is defined as the level of stimulation that an individual considers optimal and it is characterized in terms of the individual's behavioural response to the environmental stimuli. Trait arousability, on the other hand, refers to the individual's arousal fluctuations in response to sudden increases of environmental stimulation, given that individual arousal varies greatly in the normal course of daily events. A main questionnaire was administered to a sample of 240 subjects to measure the OSL by the Arousal Seeking Tendency scale (Mehrabian and Russell 1974); the trait arousability by the Trait Arousability Scale (Mehrabian 1994); and to assess the hedonic and utilitarian shopping values by the Guido and Pellegrino's (2003) scale based on Tauber's (1972) and Mooradian and Olver's (1996) shopping motives. Firstly, results showed that optimal stimulation level (OSL) and trait arousability are positively correlated with the Agreeableness and the Openness to Experience personality traits (according to the Big Five factor model) and with the hedonic shopping value. On the contrary, the utilitarian shopping value showed no relationship either with the OSL and with the trait arousability.

Secondly, results indicated that individuals dominated by a paratelic motivational state, according to the Reversal theory (Apter 1989), have higher OSL and traits arousability than individuals dominated by a telic motivational state; and, in turn, these motivational states are related to different shopping values (i.e., hedonic vs. utilitarian). Apter's (1989) Reversal Theory proposes that the individuals' subjective experience is bi-stable, rather than homeostatic. Therefore, in relation to a stimulus, individuals (e.g., consumers) can be in one out of two meta-motivational states – either a telic state, directed to the achievement of a goal, or a paratelic state, related to the behavior itself. According to Apter (1989), although the two states are alternative, a state can be dominant in a individual's personality. Therefore, adequate marketing strategies should consider that providing shopping incentives not corresponding to both customers' dimensions of personality and contingent motivational states could lower, rather than increase, consumers' degree of stimulation and hinder the matching of their level of arousability, with detrimental effects on their shopping experience.

The propensity to self-reference: An individual difference measure of processing style with implications for attitude change and source memory

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Keywords:
self-referencing, persuasion, personality, elaboration

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

This work focused on developing and testing a measure to assess the degree to which individuals might differ in their natural propensity to think about one's own prior experiences when exposed to persuasive materials. The starting point for this individual difference measure was the manipulation check items used in the Burnkrant and Unnava (1989) and Sujan et al. (1993) studies. Additional items were generated and a pool of 28 potential items was included in a questionnaire containing other individual difference measures and general questions focusing on attitudes toward a variety of products and issues. From the initial set of 28 items, 8 items loaded on a single factor thought to capture the extent to which persons draw on and integrate their own experiences when encountering persuasive messages. Further scale development testing was conducted in which the contents of thoughts were examined for greater degrees of self-related experiences. Persons completing the PSR measure are asked to respond on a 1 (extremely uncharacteristic of me) to 5 (to extremely characteristic of me) scale to statements such as "I find that thinking back to my own experiences always helps me understand things better in new and unfamiliar situations". Separate psychometric work reveals that the PSR scale is uncorrelated with Need for Cognition and other scales used in persuasion research.

The stimulus materials used the indirect method of addressing participants (i.e., "people", as in Burnkrant and Unnava, 1989). Strong- and weak-argument versions of the calculator advertisement were also created and pre-tested. The PSR measure was completed by students in a separate session. Participants were categorized as low, moderate, or high in PSR based on a tercile split their scores from the questionnaire. The 2 (Argument Strength: strong vs. weak) x 3 (PSR: low, medium, high) interaction effect was significant, $F(2,73) = 7.34$, $p = .001$. Results reveal the most extensive elaboration under moderate levels of self-referencing. Elaboration was reduced under extreme low and extreme high self-referencing. This work helps resolve the apparent inconsistency between existing self-referencing studies. Additional implications of the use of this variable in persuasion research will be discussed.

From luxury to necessity: America's obsession with transformation and the commodification of interior design

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Keywords:

consumer motives, consumer behaviors, consumer needs, television, design

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

American's fascination with the idea of "transformation" has long been manifested in the consumption of fashion and beauty products. In the past few years a new "transformational" product has crept subtly into the foreground of the American imagination: interior design. The latest vehicle for this promotion is not so much the shelter magazines that have long been available, but the new profusion of television programming about interior design.

On a given day one can view over 10-15 programs about design such as *While You were Out*, *Trading Spaces*, or *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, that broadcast practically hourly, day and night. While at first these programs were limited to specialty cable channels about design like *Home and Garden TV*, other more general channels like *The Learning Channel*, the *Discovery Channel* and *Bravo* soon came on board.

Recently this programming has expanded to prime time national networks with ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*.

Not surprisingly, these programs have sponsors such as *Sears*, *Home Depot*, and *Lowe's*. Ty Pennington, who is the host of ABC's latest edition to the genre, *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, for example, has just signed an exclusive multi-year agreement to partner with *Sears* in a broad range of activities, including product design and development, merchandising and advertising, and is their ambassador for the *Sears American Dream Campaign*.

This paper will examine how T.V. has transformed the idea of interior design from a luxury item, available only to those with enough disposable income to consider hiring a designer, to a human necessity that is required for health, wholeness, and a "better life." It will analyze how T.V. media uses images, narrative, and editing to construct a very accessible and desirable concept of interior design and examine what motives, needs and behaviors of the American public are being tapped into in to create these constructions.

Type differences in consumer satisfaction: Some evidence from France

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Keywords:

satisfaction, relationship, Jungian psychological types, Myers-Briggs type indicator, narratives, phenomenology

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Although the last decades have witnessed an explosion in our understanding of satisfaction, there is still a lack of consensus upon various aspects of the satisfaction process, especially on a long-term perspective. A question remains: is satisfaction cognitively driven or affectively driven? The first approach is embodied in the disconfirmation paradigm. And the second position is defended by K.Hunt (1994) among others.

The aim of this research is to investigate the dynamic of consumer's evaluation with their cars, from the first one they owned to the actual one. The whole lived experiences, involving buying decision, usage, car dealer encounters, the global evaluation, and the behavioral consequences are taken into account. Mainly the focus is to understand the satisfaction process through their personality preferences as described by Carl Gustav Jung (1921) and operationalized through the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). To our knowledge, the MBTI has never been used by academicians in consumer research. Neither has the link been made between personality types and the satisfaction process. This is the most used indicator in the world, principally in management and personal development. Its psychometric properties are recognized and it is translated in 30 languages.

Our research question is : can individual differences explain some apories in satisfaction research ? The Jungian framework is especially relevant because of the differences Jung made between thinking types and feeling types in an evaluation process. So, the satisfaction process might differ according to the consumer's psychological types.

Life stories, a method adapted from studies in ethnosociology, were used to interview in depth 48 consumers (16 psychological types x 3 narrators). They passed the MBTI followed by an interview to validate their type. In terms of analysis, the consumer's speeches were transcribed and an empirical hermeneutic approach was adopted to identify common thematic patterns.

The results suggest four types mode when consumers realize an introspection about their evaluation process. According to their psychological posture, relationship satisfaction styles are drawn. Limitations and managerial implications are highlighted, namely for Consumer Relationship Management. A research agenda is proposed, opening avenues for other consumption contexts.

Categories of nostalgia in post-socialist Russia: Exploring applications to advertising strategy

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Keywords:

nostalgia, Russia, transition, advertising

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Nostalgia --- a painful yearning to return home --- is considered by social scientists to be a coping mechanism as an individual is faced with major life transitions. Nostalgia may also be experienced collectively by members of a group or population. Three orders of nostalgia (simple, reflexive, and interpreted) appear in the sociology and consumer behavior literature. Marketing researchers have noted and analyzed the use of product names, design, advertising imagery, and music to evoke nostalgic feelings across a broad array of American consumer products.

This study investigates the nostalgia sentiment in post-socialist Russia using qualitative and quantitative approaches. Given the tumultuous changes in Russian society in recent years, Russians may experience nostalgia at both the personal and cultural levels. Nostalgia is becoming more pervasive in Russia as individuals and businesses hark back to Soviet and Tsarist times in terms of the marketing of old brands, restaurant themes, and even some public sentiment.

In other research on nostalgia in Russia, the authors collected data from 80 respondents in five locations who were asked to describe nostalgic experiences related to objects, people, and events. Previous research on these data has analyzed themes within nostalgic experience and the nature of nostalgia-proneness. Simple first-order (or personal) nostalgia appeared most frequently in the descriptions. Factor analysis of nostalgia-proneness among these Russian consumers identified four factors: personal nostalgia, interpersonal, cultural, and virtual. Of the four factors, personal nostalgia was the strongest determinant of nostalgia-proneness.

This paper presents an analysis of advertising and product identity in post-socialist Russia and relates the results to the data collected from Russian consumers. Examples of products and messages designed to evoke personal and cultural nostalgia are discussed. Nostalgic advertising appeals and imagery have been used in a variety of product categories, including cigarettes (Prima Nostalgia), tea (That Very Same Indian Tea), biscuits (Yublieninoe Traditsionnoye) and dairy (That Little House in the Village). These appeals and products are analyzed in the context of the kinds of nostalgia and nostalgia-proneness exhibited by Russian consumers in a transitional economy. The paper also discusses the implications of consumer nostalgia for marketing and advertising strategy in the current Russian economy. The results provide insight into the role of nostalgia and the past in post-socialist societies.

Dimensions of brand personality in Germany: The German brand personality scale 'DEMASK'

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Keywords:

brand personality, scale construction, German brand perception

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

In times of highly competitive and glutted markets, functional product benefits are rarely sufficient to differentiate products from their competitors. In contrast, symbolic attributes are becoming increasingly important to create unique brand perceptions and evaluations in an environment of largely homogeneous products. Previous work on the symbolic use of brands indicates that attributes associated with human characteristics, constituting 'the brands' personality', proved to be successful in predicting and explaining brand-related evaluations, choice, and satisfaction. This line of research suggests that brand personalities are - contrary to the big five factors in human personality research - culture-specific. Surprisingly, little academic research on brand personality has been conducted in Germany, one of Europe's largest markets. To fill this gap, the purpose of this research was to explore the factorial structure of the brand personality concept in the German market and to develop a measurement instrument. Essentially based on Aaker's (1997) procedure in constructing her (uniquely American) Brand Personality Scale, two consecutive studies were conducted. In Study 1, N = 88 participants generated brand personality attributes for 21 brands in a free association task, yielding an initial item pool. In Study 2, N = 169 participants rated eight brands on a preliminary scale of 84 items, which were carefully selected from the initial item pool as most appropriate and relevant for the description of brand personalities. Principal components analysis with varimax rotation resulted in a four-dimensional solution: Drive (Antrieb/Aktivität), Emotion (Gefühl), Superficiality/Annoyance (Oberflächlichkeit), and Robustness/Ruggedness (Robustheit). Moreover, three facets were identified for the factor Drive and named Excitement (Erregung/Spannung), Innovation/Creativity (Innovation/Kreativität) and Boredom (Langeweile). The identified structure proved to be robust on the second-order factorial level in a series of sensitivity analyses. Based on factor loadings, 24 brand personality items were selected into the final instrument, the German Brand Personality Scale (GBPS). Preliminary investigations in validating the GBPS resulted in satisfying reliability scores.

Given these promising results, we will finally discuss the limitations, implications, and opportunities for future research on brand personality in a cross-cultural context.

Sex, gender and self-concept: Understanding Internet usage rates for relationship-building applications

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Keywords:

sex, self-concept, agentic, communal, Internet

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Research concerning sex differences in Internet usage suggests greater interest among females in applications with relationship implications, and commonly refers to gender roles to explain such behaviors. However, we propose that a better understanding of sex differences in Internet usage can be achieved if agentic and communal traits were measured rather than assumed from biological sex. Here, the “male” agentic role is concerned with self, whereas the “female” communal role encompasses concern for others as well as the self.

To test this proposition, we conducted a Web-based survey of approximately 400 business school respondents, and collected self-reports of usage frequency for Internet applications with relational implications. These included e-mailing close or more casual acquaintances, using instant messaging or chat, finding new friends and relationships, and using greeting card applications. In addition to respondent sex, we collected two scales that measured gender-related self-concept traits. Self-Orientation tapped agency (independent, self-reliant, self-sufficient, am my own person and make my own choices), while Other-Orientation reflected concern for others (understanding, compassionate, nurturing, sensitive to needs of others, and sympathetic).

For each usage frequency variable, we conducted regression analyses that included parameters for sex and the polynomial mean function for Self- and Other-Orientation. With the exception of instant messaging, where neither sex nor self-concept predicted usage frequency, we found that the trait scales augmented or superseded sex as a predictor. Speaking generally, we found that higher levels of Other-Orientation were associated with higher use rates. The relationships among self-concept, sex and using the Web to form new relationships were the most complex among those observed. Higher levels of Other-Orientation were associated with higher use frequency while the opposite was true of Self-Orientation. Furthermore, a marginal interaction between Self- and Other-Orientation indicated that Self-Orientation had a greater impact when respondents had lower or moderate levels of Other-Orientation. Although in its preliminary stages, this research indicates that agentic and communal trait measures may add greater insight to our understanding of Internet usage behavior than sex alone.

Individual differences on responses to advertising: Advertising avoidance on the Internet

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Keywords:

cognitive styles, advertising perception, Internet, structural equation analysis

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

This study is organized as a model that is believed to portray the manner in which individual differences influence ad perception and avoidance in the Internet. The basic elements of the model and their relationship are critically examined in this study. Individual differences amplifying limitations in human information processing or decision behavior, which is likely to help both advertising scholars and practitioners suggest alternative ad creative design through the conceptual model or develop various tools to decrease consumer ad avoidance on the Internet.

The purpose of this paper is to identify how individual differences impact ad perceptions and avoidance on the Internet. Individual difference variables to determine their role in affecting ad perception and avoidance are examined in a conceptual model. The main purposes of this study are to understand different types of consumer's characteristics as well as to provide the information about the individual differences in responses to advertising under online environment (e.g., ad perceptions and avoidance).

The empirical study will be conducted through tests of the relationship between individual differences and a response to ad. A pretest will be conducted to ensure that the directions and questions were clear and unambiguous as well as to check the dimension of independent and dependent variables selected for this study before the actual survey. After the pretest, this will be completed by compiling a list of unfamiliar words used in the questionnaire form and by making clearly a direction of survey. The measurement tools will be used in the study based on the literature review related to individual differences as independent variables. Those are cognitive styles, personality, communication problems, and negative experiences variables. And ad perceptions and avoidance also will be measured as dependent variables.

The findings will indicate that cognitive styles and personality are critical predictors of ad perceptions and avoidance. Situation variables such as communication problems, negative experiences and personal involvement of the findings will be discussed in the study.

Personality as a predictor of appearance management behavior

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Keywords:

five factor model, appearance management, appearance emphasis, fashion

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Appearance management has been defined as “activities and thought processes leading to the purchase and wear of clothing items, as well as processes of body modification” (Kaiser, 1997, p. 5). Studies investigating appearance management variables have found that individuals possessing certain personality traits were concerned about their dress and appearance, interested in their dress and appearance, conscientious about their dress and appearance, or were appearance oriented. Concern, interest, conscientiousness, and an orientation toward dress and appearance each relate to emphasizing one’s appearance. The purpose of the present research was to investigate the relationship between personality and appearance emphasis as related to Brannon’s (1993) discussion of the behavioral and self theoretical orientations of appearance management. The core of the behavioral theoretical orientation is impression management and the core of the self theoretical orientation is self presentation.

Subjects were 277 undergraduate college students enrolled in introductory psychology courses or design and human environment courses. Students completed two questionnaires: 1) the NEO PI-R, an instrument designed to measure the five personality factors of the Five Factor Model and their facets; and 2) The Appearance Management and Dress Questionnaire, developed to measure the appearance management and dress variables of interest in this study.

Data were analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results revealed significant relationships among certain personality factors and the appearance emphasis variables. The facets of the factors provided greater differentiation and detail of the nature of the relationship between personality and appearance emphasis. Based on the results of the present study, a relationship exists between personality and appearance emphasis. The findings of this investigation have theoretical implications regarding the social/psychological aspects of appearance and dress, personality research, and the marketing and retailing of appearance management products.

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Kaiser, S.B. (1997). *The Social Psychology of Clothing: Symbolic Appearances in Context* (2nd ed. Revised). New York: Fairchild Publications.

Branded style: The relationship between personality and dress

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Keywords:
five factor model, style of dress, fashion, brand

Type of contribution:
Poster presentation

Abstract:

A dress style is a created appearance that results from appearance management activities. According to Brannon's (2000) Fashion Forecasting, when a consumer adopts a specific dress style he/she becomes a member of a style tribe. A style tribe is a group of individuals who dress in a similar manner and have a like mind-set. Designers, brands, and specific retailers act as style tribe leaders when they are associated with a signature style that appeals to consumers. Each individual consumer may have his/her own interpretation of a specific style and that individual's personal dress style may reflect that interpretation. Personality may be one variable related to consumers' personal style of dress. The purpose of the present research was to investigate the relationship between personality and dress style.

Fifty-nine students in a fashion trend analysis course identified and described eleven style tribes on a university campus in the United States. Eight of the eleven style tribe descriptions' were associated with designer names, brands, and/or specific retailers. The style tribe data were used to develop the Appearance Management and Dress Questionnaire for the present study.

Data were collected from 277 undergraduate college students enrolled in introductory psychology courses or design and human environment courses. Students completed two questionnaires: 1) the NEO PI-R, an instrument designed to measure the five personality factors of the Five Factor Model and their facets; and 2) The Appearance Management and Dress Questionnaire.

Data were analyzed using canonical correlation. The results revealed significant relationships among certain personality factors and specific dress styles. The facets of the factors provided greater differentiation and detail of the nature of the relationship between personality and style of dress. The major finding from the present study was that although personality was related to dress style, consumers reportedly adopted multiple dress styles. The findings of this investigation have theoretical implications regarding the social/psychological aspects of appearance and dress, personality research, and the marketing and retailing of appearance management products associated with designer names, brands, and/or retailers.

Measuring differences in consumers' perception: A new attention-based approach

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Keywords:

perception, attention, eye tracking

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Most information that consumers process is visual in nature. It has been long acknowledged that our visual perception is highly intra- and interindividually variable. Since individual perception is not directly observable from the outside (3d person perspective) it has been particularly difficult to analyze these differences. One emerging exception to this fundamental limitation is analysis of visual scanning patterns of consumers by contemporary eye-tracking devices. Unfortunately individual scanpaths vary considerably and it has been hard to find distinguishable scanpath templates. Therefore we developed an attentional landscape methodology (Velichkovsky, Pomplun & Rieser, 1996), which was based on the fundamental fact of a narrow (nearly Gaussian) distribution of visual acuity around the center of fixation. Our idea was to process visual scenes in terms of relocating this visual-attention window.

In the present report, we demonstrate that attentional landscapes have the potential to objectively measure subjective individual perception. In addition attentional landscapes can easily be pooled and subtracted over many subjects with a resulting consequence of representing the homogeneity in preferences of target groups. When applied to the original visual scenes, attentional landscapes produce images that by their very properties automatically draw third persons' attention to areas of attention differences (Zones of Joint Attention or Attention to Attention). Thus individual differences in visual information processing between either individuals or groups of consumers are immediately obvious. In addition to explicating our new measurement method, we present results from advertisement studies that show differences between target-groups (gender, age) in their subjective preferences.

References:

Velichkovsky, B.M., Pomplun, M. & Rieser, H. (1996). Attention and communication: Eye-movement-based research paradigms. In W.H.Zangemeister, S.Stiel & C.Freksa (Eds.). Visual attention and cognition. pp. 125-154. Amsterdam/ NY: Elsevier Science Publisher.

Idealized and realistic testimonials in advertising for cosmetics

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Keywords:

testimonials, elaboration likelihood, social comparison, involvement, advertising

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Traditionally, advertising mostly used idealized models for testimonials. In recent years, however, an alternative form of using natural, realistic models gained importance. The traditional form with idealized presenters - typically celebrities or supermodels - aims at consumers' desire to be as good-looking and attractive as the perfectly styled model in the advertisement, whilst the product profits from the emotional effects of glamour and beauty. However, the idealized models can also evoke negative feelings as a consequence of upward comparison, or a derogation of the advertisement as artificial. The alternative form with realistic presenters - the girl or boy from next door - aims mainly at identification with the presenter and at perceived authenticity of the advertising claims. However, this form of advertising lacks the positive effects ascribed to idealized testimonials.

The question whether to use one form or the other has often been discussed in terms of a match-up-hypothesis between product and presenter. The current paper combines concepts from social comparison theory and from the elaboration-likelihood model and suggests that involvement is a crucial factor for the effectiveness of different testimonials. In an empirical study, advertisements for cosmetic products are presented to female respondents (n=240, age between 20 and 30 years), and evaluation of the advertisement and the product are elicited by the use of a Semantic Differential (Osgood 1957; Hofstätter, 1977). Respondents are randomly assigned to one of four conditions (type of testimonial x involvement). Self-concept (Frankfurter Selbstkonzept Skalen: Deusinger, 1986; Frankfurter Körperkonzept Skalen: Deusinger, 1998) and social comparison orientation (Gibbons & Buunk, 1999) are recorded as additional moderating variables.

Results are discussed in the framework of the elaboration likelihood model and social comparison theory.

Conceptual and methodological issues: Consumer personality, source credibility, and online shopping

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Keywords:

consumer personality, source credibility, perceived risk, online shopping, methodology

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The marketing and social persuasion literature contains an abundance of research on various aspects of the three constructs of source credibility, consumer personality traits, and shopping channels, but very few researchers have conceptually and methodologically examined these constructs jointly. Still fewer have studied any of the three constructs in the context of online shopping. Almost no studies have used representative shoppers as participants, preferring to use students, whose actual shopping experiences and habits are unknown. This article develops a conceptual model for exploring the linkages among these three constructs in the case of a representative sample of those UK non-conventional shoppers who have known experience of and loyalty to online shopping (Internet or TV). It develops propositions about how the above constructs may be related to consumers' self-reported perceptions of risk. Besides this, the article also attempts to identify relevant literatures on source credibility, perceived risk, consumer personality, and the home shopping medium. I conclude by raising some questions and defining research approach to the issue of measuring the dimensionalities of perceived source credibility (such as trustworthiness, attractiveness, and believability) and perceived risk (such as social, psychological, time, and performance) whilst utilising inter-individual differences of habitual shoppers.

Temporal pattern discovery in consumer behavior with REFII model

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Keywords:

temporal data mining, data mining, pattern recognition, prediction, consumer behavior

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

This paper represents advantages of REFII model of time series data mining in the area of consumer behavior. REF II model is based on the matrix of time series data transformation consisted from three elements: curve segment trend mark, curve segment coefficient and area beneath curve segment. REFII model is particularly suitable for combination with other data mining methods (decision trees, association rules, Bayesian networks, cluster analysis). The advantage of REFII model is illustrated on empirical data taken from textile related point-of-sale spots with the purpose of finding consumer behavior and category patterns, seasonal fluctuations and future sales projections. Complex nature of textile products and consumer influences over time, aggravate that prediction accuracy. Seasonal oscillation, day of week influence, specific month period represents simple segmentation points which pointed out useful patterns. Analysis area include sales data, statistical weather and household data in order to improve in-store supply quality together with better understanding of customer personality and specific characteristics of consumer behavior related to textile products. Crucial importance was included in time dimension. Supply and demand of textile products are very sensitive over time and dependent on many social and cultural changes. It is possible to identify related products from specific textile categories suitable for further cross-selling and market basket analysis, and to define marketing base for customer card initiation. Result received from this analysis gives significant moment for improving traditional business practice and offer different point of view on many specific occasions. Interdependence of observing textile categories and weather influence implications presents very useful decision making point for further references.

Multimodal method for data collection in complex marketing research and business intelligence

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Keywords:

marketing research methods, business intelligence, data collection, web survey, SMS survey

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

This article describes a new method of complex research which is using multimodal technologies for data collection and communication channels in the field of marketing and social sciences as well to reach large and versatile survey sample. This method is also some specific form of information collection particularly suited for business intelligence. An overview and design principles are given how to implement this complex method from simpler present methods. General principles are how to reach all the necessary profiles, in prompt manner and in different circumstances. Also, the article is concentrated with the data correctness and proper profile sampling, as the promotion and motivation of survey persons. This method is illustrated with the Green patrol, an ecological action with the mass public participation, organized as a part of E!2584 Ulixes – Intelligent Tourist Organization project. This pilot project researches the present state of environment and particular incidents as well. This action was performed in a local community City of Varazdin in duration of two months at the end of year 2004. Satisfaction with the state and environmental protection is surveyed with web, SMS and MMS, newspaper and classic paper survey questionnaire. Environmental incidents (red points) and positive examples (green points) are collected thru Web, SMS, MMS and thru interactive ecological maps. Article also gives an architecture facility necessary to obtain this function and ideas for further improvement of proposed method.

Consumer impulsive purchase behavior: Comparing online and offline experiences

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Keywords:
impulsivity, shopping environment, qualitative research, phenomenology,

Type of contribution:
Poster presentation

Abstract:

The phenomenon of consumer impulse purchasing has been studied in consumer research since the 1950s. At first, it was suggested that the product bought on impulse triggered off an impulse purchase. Later, a more psychological model of impulse buying was offered, putting the consumer more in the focus of research. However, with the current prevalence and growth of online retailing, the importance of shopping environment in influencing impulsive purchases has lately received more attention. A comprehensive review and analysis of the literature suggests that the research area still has many unresolved issues.

As almost all previous studies on impulse purchasing have been conducted in the context of offline retailing, and as the online shopping experience differs from offline shopping experience (e.g. the online shopping environment cannot appeal to all five senses), it is necessary to examine differences in impulsive purchase behavior between online and offline shopping environments. The purpose of this paper is to explore what factors trigger and what factors restrain the occurrence of impulse purchase behavior in online versus offline shopping environment.

Impulse buying has been previously examined using mainly quantitative methods, e.g. to develop scales to measure impulse buying tendency, or to model different variables' relation to each other. Purely qualitative research has remained few. Due to the explorative nature of the research, a qualitative research approach is used. This study uses consumer phenomenological, in-depth interviews to give first-person descriptions of impulse buying episodes in online and offline environments. Consumers that were interviewed have made impulse purchases both online and offline.

The results of the study offer some interesting implications for future direction in consumer impulsivity research as well as for managers working in either online or offline retailing. Theoretically, the research contributes to give a better understanding of impulsive purchase behavior by taking into account the environmental aspect of the phenomenon.

The subjective perception of website complexity from an individual differences perspective - Is more always better?

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Keywords:

psychometric, cognitive, E-commerce, individual, complexity

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

This research study aims to explore how individual differences among internet users both in psychometric measures and cognitive abilities, can alter the way in which website complexity, efficiency, liking, and satisfaction are determined for those users.

In our first study (59 subjects), we gathered the psychometric measures of style of processing and need for cognition prior to administering four websites with corresponding tasks. Our second study (95 subjects) measured the subject's cognitive capabilities of visual-spatial, working memory and flexibility of closure (disembedding information) and how they translated into his/her satisfaction with a complex versus simple website. Our main question, then, is how consumer satisfaction, or alternatively, website effectiveness, is a function of four key factors: consumer psychometric abilities, consumer cognitive abilities, website complexity, and website context.

There were two levels of manipulation in each experiment – imagery/context of each website and complexity level of websites. Each subject was presented with four different websites (in random order) in a within-subject design – yielding a 2 x 2 factorial involving website imagery/context of 2 levels and website complexity of 2 levels. Prior learning or experience levels were ascertained in order to factor in any learning effects per website. We conducted a pretest in order to define two levels of websites – high versus low complexity. The pretest subjects were presented with twelve websites and asked to judge their complexity levels. We used the pretest to narrow down our website complexity manipulation to four websites.

Thus, we hypothesized that:

H1: The perception of high website complexity and high satisfaction with a website will be more highly correlated for individuals with higher cognitive abilities than for those with lower cognitive abilities.

H2: Individual differences among our subject's psychometric measures will differentiate their view of complexity and determine whether their corresponding satisfaction is related to their efficiency on that website.

Our findings confirm both of our hypotheses. The most important aspect of this research is in the view of complexity not as an objective measure of a website, but as an individual differences measure, which, depending on the user, can readily create either more or less satisfaction.

Revising Segments - From commonness to distinctiveness

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Keywords:

segmentation, selection of indicators, multi-method approach, alternatives, lifestyles

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Beyond any doubt of usefulness of nation wide lifestyle segmentations in marketing research, accomplished segments more and more often appear too general and thus need to be revised in a way that enables more detailed and individually focused inferences.

This paper deals with possibilities of revising clusters to stress personality and individual characteristics of units, e.g. consumers. Revision could be performed in various ways: variable-wise, method-wise and approach-wise.

When indicators are concerned, the theory-based selection of meaningful indicators plays crucial role. The selection of indicators establishes the value of the segmentation, including the level of generality. Therefore, in the first place we must always carefully select and balance indicators anticipated for clustering and thus try to obtain the desired results without revision. If in spite of our effort revision becomes necessary, there are various ways to accomplish desired results: if there are no additional indicators available, we can search for basically the same but more individualized clusters inside already obtained clusters (perform fine tuning if variability allows); if additional indicators are available, we can add them to the basic set and re-cluster units (establish new typology), we can simply split the obtained clusters according to additional criteria (force new powerful divisions) or we can use additional indicators to find new clusters inside old clusters (endorse the two stage clustering, the first with general level indicators and the second with individual level indicators). When methods are concerned, it is clear that we can always use certain methods underlying cluster analysis in order to accomplish more personalized clusters. What is more, on different levels of analysis we can use different measures, different methods and recognize different numbers of clusters to present segments as comprehensively and as in-depth as possible.

When approach is concerned, we recognize a great potential of qualitative research methods as complementary methods for clustering, very effective to recognize the need for revision, to determine number of clusters and potential subclusters, to further uncover the underlying meanings of clusters, to add so far overlooked divisions, to lead further segmentation of too general clusters, ... or to initiate completely different segmentation by developing basic cluster indicators through qualitative inquiry.

In the paper all the suggested possibilities will be discussed and some of them illustrated. The data was obtained in year 2001 on a representative sample (N=1200) of the Slovenian population between eighteen and sixty-five years old as a part of the research project Lifestyle and Media.

Consumer Personality & Research Conference

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Assessing your Web site persona

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Keywords:

Internet, Brand, Personality, Measurement,

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

We propose a new construct, Web site persona®, to classify Internet sites and evaluate their dimensions using the factor-analytic approach. We develop and test a multi-item psychometric scale across site categories, brands, and users. Results on the validity, reliability, and generalizability of the scale are reported. The antecedents of Web site personas® are discussed. This proposal has won awards from the Marketing Science Institute and e-Business Research Center dissertation competitions.

Values and sexual outlook influencing consumption of sexual imagery in alcohol advertising: A study of British and German consumers

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Keywords:

values, sexual outlook, ethical judgement, attitude towards ad, sexual imagery

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The literature on consumption of sexual imagery in advertising is characterized by a distinct lack of research on exploring consumer-level attributes influencing response to such imagery. This paper combines the psychological constructs of individual values and sexual outlook with consumption of sexual imagery in advertising in terms of consumers' ethical judgement of the use of sexual imagery and their attitude towards the ad. Past research has shown sexual appeals to be attention getting, arousing, and memorable (Belch, Belch, & Villarreal 1987), but not necessarily eliciting positive consumer attitudes towards such ads (c.f. LaTour & Henthorne 1993). Furthermore, overt sexual appeals are frequently contested on grounds of ethics and morality (Gould 1994). However, there is little or no research on how consumers' values and overall sexual outlook, which affect perception of morality (Finegan 1994), affect their ethical judgement and attitude towards the ad.

A framework of consumer-level attributes affecting consumption of sexual imagery has been tested in the United Kingdom and Germany, using alcohol as a product. Values "as the guiding principles in one's life" (Schwartz 1994) are posited to affect a person's sexual outlook of conservatism or liberalism. Sexual outlook is expected to be related to consumers' ethical judgement of the use of sexual imagery in advertising, i.e. the more conservative a respondent is, the more ethically objectionable he/she will find the sexual imagery. Moreover, it is expected that gender will play a moderating role affecting the strength of the relationship between sexual outlook and ethical judgement. Ethical judgement and attitude towards the ad are posited to be positively correlated. A strong and a mild sexual imagery were used to create two experiment groups where 125 respondents were randomly assigned. Results generally lend support to the hypotheses, especially when seen for the strong sexual imagery. German respondents are more accepting of the use of sexual imagery than the British but the use of a mild sexual imagery is much better received by both nationalities than a strong one. Results show that consumption of sexual imagery depends on consumers' values and sexual outlook. Finally, managerial and future research implications are drawn.

The effect of individual differences on a multidimensional structure of attitude toward the advertisement and purchase intention across product types: Utilitarian, hedonic and interestingness dimensions

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Keywords:

attitude toward the ad, individual differences, product type, conceptual definition of Aad, attitudinal dimensions of Aad

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Although researchers have suggested that individual differences should be considered as important antecedents of attitude toward the ad (Muehling & McCann 1993), only a few studies have actually examined the relationships. Self-monitoring and need for cognition are the most frequently studied individual difference variables in advertising research (Haugtvedt, Petty & Cacioppo 1992; Shavitt, Lowery & Han 1992). The present study examined the effect of these two well-known individual differences on attitude toward the ad and purchase intention. In particular, the present study examined attitude toward the ad as multidimensional construct (i.e., utilitarian, hedonic and interestingness). Further, it examined if these relationships would be consistent across three product types (i.e., feel, think, and neutral products).

The study did not find the expected relationships between two individual differences and three attitudinal dimensions. However, a series of structural equation modelling analyses showed interesting relationships among two individual differences, three attitudinal dimensions, and purchase intention across different product types. The results indicated that need for cognition had no significant relationship with all three attitudinal dimensions regardless product type. On the other hand, self-monitoring was significantly related to interestedness dimension in both think and feel products. In think product, there was also a positive relationship between self-monitoring and utilitarian dimension. The results also showed that most of the paths from each dimension to purchase intention were positively significant across all product types, except the relationship between the hedonic dimension and purchase intention in feel product. However, the effect sizes for each path from the three attitudinal dimensions to purchase intention varied across product types. The implication of the findings is further discussed.

The role of personality in response to ads using violent images to promote consumption of sports entertainment

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Keywords:

sensation seeking, advertisement, violence, sport program, curiosity about morbid event

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Television networks have been criticized in recent years for their use of controversial imagery, such as violence, in promoting their programming (Tyler-Eastman, 2000). One prevalent example of this practice can be found in the promotion of televised sporting events, such as American football or ice hockey (Tyler-Eastman, 2000). However, despite the popular use of violent imagery in ads promoting sports coverage, little research has been conducted on this controversial practice. Existing research on preferences for violent (sports) programming suggests that they might be a function of both gender and personality, such as the sensation-seeking (SS) trait (Krcmar & Greene, 1999; McDaniel, 2004; Zuckerman & Litle, 1986). Consequently, it is possible that some audience segments might be predisposed to respond favorably to media promotions that utilize violent imagery; although, this issue has been examined to date. A better understanding of audience psychology in the above area could benefit the marketing and promotion of sports programming, as well as inform public policy concerning this controversial practice. The current study extends existing research on personality, advertising and (sport media) violence by utilizing a 3(SS) X 3 (Ad) X 2 (Gender) factorial design. Subjects (n=200) were randomized to treatments based on their reported levels of the SS trait and their gender. Each participant viewed one of three print ad manipulations promoting sports coverage for a fictional regional cable network, where the ad treatments were based on contrasting levels of violence and/or physical contact in the sports depicted. The experiment utilized a computer-based data collection program, which controlled ad exposure time and allowed the capture of subjects' real-time responses to the ads during viewing. In addition to the advertisement promoting the sports network, study participants were also exposed to and queried about dummy ads promoting other types of television programming, to help mask the purpose of the study. Subjects responses to the ad conditions were gauged using established measures from the consumer behavior literature: attitude-towards-the-ad (Aad), attitude-towards-the-brand (Abr) and behavioral (i.e., viewing) intentions. Hypotheses were built around existing research in this area and tested using Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANCOVA). The applied and theoretical implications of the results are discussed, along with future directions for policy and research in this area.

What price do you ask for the “extra one”? : A social value orientations perspective

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Keywords:

social value orientation, asking price, reference price

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

This study employed the concept of social value orientation to explore consumers' thoughts and decisions in asking price when consumers have an “extra one” in which someone wants to buy it. Results from an experimental study indicated that competitors' asking price was higher than those of individualists, and who in turn was higher than those of prosocials. Regardless of the social value orientation, participants charged significantly lower price for the “extra one” if the buyer was a friend than an unknown person. In addition, only for prosocials, market price was not carefully considered when they decided the asking price, and they exhibited cooperative behavior only under the situation of no lost.

Wayfinding in the city

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Keywords:

wayfinding, signage, communication

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The goal of the research is to investigate a comprehensive public signage and digital information of wayfinding system to make it easy for users to travel around and find destinations throughout the physical or virtual city. This design research project will explore strategies for wayfinding into the contemporary urban social space. It will employ elements of communication design, including typography, visual imagery, color coding, visual identity environmental graphic and signage systems, and multimedia applications as a strategy for information delivery.

This project is to dispense with the immediate need for print and multimedia screen in moving around the city and accessing its heritage and cultural offerings. The information system will integrate descriptive information about the immediate area, as well as subsequent possible destinations of interest, with full information on public transport. Walking paths through the city from one destination to another will also be visually marked, along with indications of distance and time from one point to another.

My aim will seek to use communication design to support a complex representation of the city as body of practical cultural information and experience, and of possible pathways through it. The role of design will be to make complex information accessible to a diverse user groups. The project has the scope to both define and direct city's social and cultural identity, while shaping communication and interaction between the material fabric of the urban environment, its cultural life and individuals visiting or inhabiting the city. The system of information and the formulation of design strategy are therefore vitally concerned with the study of how people understand and use information and the use of design as a branding strategy to add value and tangibility to diffuse and diverse cultural experiences.

The asymmetrical process of regret responses following positive and negative outcomes

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Keywords:

regret, satisfaction, counterfactual thinking

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Regret is a common type of emotion in our daily life. It affects a series of human behavior judgments. Previous research regarding regret emotion emphasizes more on the regret emotion caused by negative events and ignores that regret emotion can also be caused by positive events. This research takes a further look at regret emotion caused by either positive or negative events to understand the process of how regret emotion is triggered and makes the following discoveries: (1) Confirming existence of regret emotion after positive event: This study measures regret emotion after positive or negative events to confirm existence of regret emotion after positive event and to compare the regret emotion with that after negative event by measuring results of gain against loss. (2) Exploring relationship between regret emotion and satisfaction: Regret emotion is the emotion after comparison. On the other hand, satisfaction can be either a direct reaction towards positive and negative outcomes or a type of emotion after comparison. Therefore, this study further classifies satisfaction into absolute satisfaction (satisfaction towards result) and relative satisfaction (satisfaction measure of chosen decision or forgone decision) to compare relationship between regret emotion and absolute or relative satisfactions. This study also proves the inconsistency between different levels of satisfaction after positive or negative events. (3) The process of how regret emotion is triggered and verification of secondary mediation effect. Counterfactual thinking is an important variable that causes regret emotion. This study classifies counterfactual thinking into upward counterfactual thinking and downward counterfactual thinking, and proves that only when upward counterfactual thinking exists will relative satisfaction be affected and regret emotion emerge. The major contribution of this research is to examine the process of how regret emotion is caused after positive and negative events, and also to examine relationship between regret emotion and absolute or relative satisfactions.

Exploring the relationship between personality and participation in promotional games

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Keywords:

promotional, games, personality, sensation, seeking

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

According to a 2004 Special Report by PromoXtra, marketers spent almost \$2 billion on promotional games during 2003. Despite their prevalence, little scholarly research exists as to the consumer psychology behind participation in these games. Research has identified two personality traits—impulsive sensation seeking (ImpSS) and Belief in Good Luck (BIGL)—to be related to participation in games involving chance or risk (c.f. McDaniel, 2002; Watt & Nagtegaal, 2000). Ward and Hill (1991) proposed that fantasy may play a role in the participation decision. Promotional games have been categorized into games of chance (i.e., sweepstakes) and skill (i.e., contests) (Ward & Hill, 1991). The purpose of the current research was to explore the relationships among personality (i.e., ImpSS, BIGL and fantasy-proneness), demographics, and different types of promotional games.

Using a quasi-experimental design, participants (N=368) were assigned to groups according to age and gender. A questionnaire including personality and demographic items was filled out prior to evaluating the game. Participants next viewed a black-and-white image of a promotional game (scratch-off, sweepstakes, or trivia contest) and then completed three behavioral intention items regarding that particular promotional game type. These three items were later summed and averaged to create a behavioral intentions variable.

Hypotheses were generated based on existing research on personality and promotional games. Hierarchical regression models were run for each type of game in the study, looking at the positive additive effects of demographics, experience with a specific game and personality traits on their behavioral intentions to participate in such games in the future. However, none of the traits were found to have statistically significant ($p < .05$) effects. In an effort to investigate the possibility that personality traits interact to influence promotional game participation, variables were created to reflect interactions among the traits in the study. Results suggest that behavioral intentions, for participating in both games of chance and games of skill, are a multiplicative function of certain traits, when accounting for demographics and previous participation in promotional games. The applied and theoretical implications of the results are discussed, along with future directions for policy and research in this area.

Data-mining in direct marketing: A comparison of RFM, CHAID, and logistic regression

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Keywords:
data-mining, statistical techniques, RFM

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The field of direct marketing has become more efficient in recent years because of the development of database marketing techniques. These data-mining approaches have allowed the direct marketer to better segment their current customers and develop marketing strategies tailored to particular segments and/or individuals. Over the recent years, database marketing techniques have evolved from simple RFM (recency, frequency, and monetary value) models to statistical techniques such as chi-square automatic interaction detection (CHAID) and logistic regression.

In spite of recent statistical advances in data-mining, marketers continue to employ RFM, primarily because of its ease of implementation and the ability of managers to understand the results of the RFM analysis. Therefore, it has been argued that the simplicity of RFM has been emphasized and its efficiency, relative to statistical techniques, has not been considered to the extent that it should be.

Although the efficiency of RFM has been questioned, little research has documented its ability relative to newer statistical techniques. The current study evaluates RFM, comparing it to CHAID and logistic regression, in an effort to understand its capabilities as a database marketing analytical tool. The analysis involves two customer data sets, both with approximately 100,000 customer records.

We test one RFM procedure, which involves dividing the customers into cells (or nodes) as a function of their recency of purchase, frequency of purchase, and monetary value (amount of money they have spent). These variables are evaluated in terms of their ability to predict customer response. The study compares the lift in customer response using RFM to the lift provided by CHAID and logistic regression.

Using a catalog marketer's database and a nonprofit marketer's database, the study shows that RFM performed well, compared to the statistical techniques. The results are considered in light of the distribution free nature of RFM, while statistical techniques assume linearity of recency, frequency, and monetary value to response.

Brand personality and human personality: Findings from ratings of familiar Croatian brands

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Keywords:

brand personality, personality structure, lexical approach, Big-Five model, AB5C model

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The paper describes the personality ratings of familiar Croatian brands and the relations of those dimensions with self-ratings of personality. After the seminal study of Aaker (1997) that tried to identify the dimensions of brand personality, an attempt was made to relate the brand personality to the personality dimensions derived from the natural language.

In the first study, a sample of students rated the familiarity of 111 brands from the categories of Croatian creation and Croatian quality and 10 brands were selected on the basis of mean familiarity and representing various product categories (food, beverages, medicine and cleaning products).

In the second study, an exhaustive Croatian taxonomy of personality descriptive-terms (Mlacic and Ostendorf, 2005) served as a basis for the construction of a 90-item inventory that covered the 45 facets from the AB5C model (Goldberg, 2005). A large sample of students (300) rated the personality of 10 selected brands using the 90-item inventory and, in addition the students rated their own personality using the 50-item International Personality Item Pool (Goldberg, 1999).

The results of exploratory factor analyses of brand personality are discussed in the light of the previous research, the lexical approach, brand differences and the frequency of product use. Also discussed are the relations of brand personality and self-rated human personality.

Attitudes toward non-traditional branding campaigns

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Keywords:

branding, non-traditional families, retailing

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Retail organizations are interested in increasing the loyalty of their customer base to ensure continued success in the marketplace. While past marketing research has identified cues and determinants of success in traditional families and heterosexual single individuals, minimal research has been completed using non-traditional families and gays and lesbians as the consumers in question. The first goal of this research was to test the uniformity of customer loyalty to various low cost retail organizations without cues to the social behavior of the organization itself. The second goal was to determine whether loyalty and customer satisfaction would change when cues regarding the social behavior of the organization were added.

A major marketing organization surveyed over 100 individuals to illicit the responses regarding brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. Responses indicate that there were significant differences in the brand loyalty, commitment to shopping and benefit of shopping at the various retail organizations depending upon sexual orientation. Implications suggest that marketing may need to be directed to individuals affiliated with different groups in order to have the desired levels of customer loyalty by the retail organization.

Prenotification in online access panel surveys: E-mail versus mobile text messaging (SMS)

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Keywords:

Web-based data collection, mobile technology, response rates, nonresponse, prenotification

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Ample empirical evidence suggests that prenotification is an important method to increase response rates in mail surveys. However, for Web-based surveys, the results on prenotification appear to be mixed. One explanation may be the lack of awareness of the initial e-mail contacts. For instance, automatic spam filters and unidentified senders of the prenotifications could lower the chance of the e-mail being noticed. To increase awareness when contacting participants for Web-based surveys, it might be more effective to send the invitations directly to the respondents' cellular phones. This method seems most promising with younger persons in Germany, because this segment has near-universal cellular phone coverage.

To compare the effectiveness of different prenotification procedures, we experimentally varied the initial contact mode in a fully crossed two-factorial design with (1) three different prenotification conditions and (2) two 'invitation and reminder' conditions. University freshmen were recruited for a Web-based access panel by completing a short paper and pencil questionnaire in a classroom setting consisting of basic demographics, psychographics, and questions about lifestyles. A total of 560 students were randomly assigned to one of the following experimental conditions: On the prenotification factor, one group received no prenotification at all, a second was contacted by mobile messaging (SMS) on their mobile phone, and a third group was contacted by e-mail, both announcing the prospective survey. For the survey invitation and reminder, respondents were randomly contacted either by e-mail or by SMS.

Our paper will point out the influences of the experimental manipulations on various measures related to data quality. For example, response rates varied between 50% and 84% across the experimental conditions, with the combination of SMS prenotification and e-mail invitation performing the best. However, the use of SMS invitations led to quicker responses. Besides further elaborating on these results, we will also point out the influences of the experimental manipulations on sample composition and the responses to the substantive questions. Finally, practical implications for contacting participants of Web-based access panels in marketing and social research will be discussed.

LIFE: Personality as conceived by everyday behaviors and its relationship with brand preference

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Keywords:

consumer personality, behavior, time-use, brand preference,

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The present research examined individual differences in everyday behaviors as a means of gaining a comprehensive picture of a person at a level that implicitly incorporates the individual's values, attitudes and means of expression. The Large Inventory of Frequent Experience (LIFE), described below, was designed to merge traditional personality research with consumer behavior and market research. More specifically, the main objective of LIFE was to segment the population based on clusters of everyday behaviors as a proxy for traditional personality traits.

LIFE was constructed and validated in a series of 3 studies. Items on the inventory were generated via factor analyses of the American Time Use database (US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics) and elaborated with empirically derived items that capture the basic, but fundamental aspects of the totality of the day's experiences. The inventory, which assesses the frequency with which individuals participate in the activities (e.g. reading, eating, cleaning, socializing) was administered online, along with two traditional measures of personality (NEO Five Factor Inventory; Myers Briggs Type Indicator) to 2 student samples (Ns = 625, 767), and a community sample (N = 200). Items on the predictive battery were obtained via factor analyses of the national Consumer Expenditure Survey data (also from Bureau of Labor Statistics). Estimates of purchase intent were sought as a proxy for brand preference within three categories of relevance to the sample: coffee shops, news source and automobile preference.

The paper examines the structure of everyday behaviors, the psychometric properties of the inventory, its relationship with traditional measures of personality and the ability of LIFE scores to predict a variety of consumer behavior outcomes. The results indicate high stability in the structure of everyday behaviors, cross sample generalizability, and LIFE's unique ability to predict complex criterion variables.

Results are discussed in the context of the recent movement in personality psychology to study the individual more in the context of their daily lives (e.g. Mehl & Pennebaker, 2003; Paunoneon, 2003; Gosling, Ko, Manarelli, & Morris, 2002) and the implications for this type of information in interactive, customized communications and collaborative filtering.

Categories of loyalty. Toward meaning-based theory of customer loyalty.

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Keywords:

customer loyalty, consumer behavior, qualitative research, discourse analysis

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Customer loyalty lies at the heart of marketing science. Although loyalty research has a long tradition dating back to almost a hundred years, customer loyalty is still a very contemporary research topic. As marketing is redefined in relationship terms the need for understanding customer loyalty becomes paramount once again. Loyal customers have become especially critical asset in a marketplace characterized by increasing unpredictability, diminishing product differentiation, and heightened competitive pressures.

Although loyalty research has evolved considerably since its inception, most of this research utilizes logical empiricist paradigm. Explanations of loyalty formation have been drawn primarily from cognitive psychology, with theories of attitude formation guiding most of the work. This has contributed to the limitations to understanding that current theoretical frameworks impose and indicates a need for alternative theoretical perspectives that may potentially breath new life into loyalty research.

The research utilizes social constructionism paradigm that has had no prior influence on empirical or theoretical work in the loyalty field to critically examine, reposition, and extend the notion of customer loyalty. The data comprises of thirteen verbal loyalty narratives of loyal customers in the Finnish retailing context. Discourse analysis of the data resulted in five loyalty metadiscourses that portray socially shared meanings of customer loyalty: loyalty as a prison, loyalty as a habit, loyalty as a game, social loyalty and reasoned loyalty. Based on these five loyalty metadiscourses nine meaning-based categories of loyalty are presented: compulsive loyalty, routine loyalty, reasoned loyalty, suspicious loyalty, loyalty as a game, herited loyalty, image-based loyalty, social loyalty and ethical/political loyalty. Categorization of loyalty provides a basis for meaning-based loyalty theory that contradicts premises of traditional loyalty theory.

Meaning-based loyalty theory emphasizes non-hierarchical, non-deterministic, non-linear character of customer loyalty. Loyalty is not seen dividable into discrete development phases nor through division between repeat buying behaviour and attitude. Instead, loyalty is seen as a social phenomenon based on consumers' socially shared meanings.

Customer loyalty is presented as fundamentally social action embedded in consumer culture.

The influence of product design on brand personality: The moderating roles of need for cognition and optimal level of stimulation

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Keywords:

brand personality, product design, need for cognition, optimal level of stimulation

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

This paper considers the relationship between product design and brand personality. More particularly, it aims at investigating the influence of color and shape on the formation of the brand personality traits, based on the assumption that the personality of a brand may be based on the physical characteristics of the product (Aaker, 1996; Aaker, 1997). Our empirical model also introduces two moderating variables: need for cognition (Cacioppo, Petty and Kao, 1984) and optimal level of stimulation (Short CSI, Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1995).

This paper reviews extant literature on the physiological, psychological and symbolic dimensions of color and shape (Veryzer, 1987 ; Crowley, 1993 ; Valdez, 1993; Bloch, 1995). The concepts and processes of product congruence, brand personality and personality traits are examined (Sirgy, 1982; Plummer, 1984 ; Keller, 1993 ; Aaker, 1997 ; Fournier, 1998). We also study the role of the moderating variables on the perception of the peripheral characteristics of the product.

In order to test the model hypotheses, 2x2 experimental designs have been set up for two products: a bottle of mineral water (red versus blue, and tall and tight versus small and wide) and a coffee tin (violet versus yellow, and rectangular versus cylindrical). The experiment was carried out with 361 subjects for the first product and 277 subjects for the second one.

Results confirm the contribution of color and shape to the development of brand personality and indicate that the sensitivity of the consumer to the visual characteristics of the product varies according to his/her personality. For example, when need for cognition is high, the tall and tight bottle looks more exciting than the small and wide bottle and when the optimal level of stimulation is low, the coffee in the violet rectangular tin looks stronger.

In conclusion, the physical aspects of the product are useful variables in order to convey particular personality traits to their brands. Findings suggest taking into account consumer personality when brand managers and designers use color and shape in order to develop positioning strategies and to communicate appropriate messages through the brand personality they help to create.

Processes of brand loyalty habituation in FMCG purchases: Cognitive-affective, socio-demographic and process time correlates of behavioral brand shifting and loyalty

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Keywords:

brand loyalty, habituation, fast moving consumer goods, purchase histories, cognitive-affective sociodemographic correlates

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

This paper is focused on examining in detail the process of how behavioral brand loyalty is developed over time and over the (nearly) total diversity of products in the area of fast moving consumer goods.

Utilizing complete, one year purchase event history data of a consumer panel from 1995 (combined with attitudinal and socio-demographic survey data) we first will use several indicators in measuring behavioral brand loyalty and brand shifting as used in literature. Additionally we will expand brand loyalty perspective by considering also duration time and sequential order competing risks in re-purchasing products in specific product categories.

The second step is aimed at refining the process patterns of product loyalty habituation by regression its features on cognitive-affective characteristics of the purchasing person like variety-seeking vs. inertia dispositions, innovation proneness, brand orientation, innovation wariness and price consciousness. Further respondent's socio-structural situation (age, gender, income, household size, household equipment, educational and occupational status, type of retailer) is examined for posing opportunity and restraint milieus, which shape cognitive-affective and behavioral brand loyalty habituation.

As this research design is to be applied on the totality of 156 available product categories and anonymized specific product items, the external validity of brand loyalty process measures and correlates will be broadened. This will be a basis for separating the regulation of brand orientated habituation into situational product specific, socio-structural, cognitive-affective and self-regulating, maybe personality factors.

Surrogate advertising and brand equity

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Keywords:

surrogate advertising, brand equity, associations, awareness, image

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The Government of India banned advertising of alcoholic beverages and cigarettes vide Rule 7(2) of the Cable Television Networks Rules 1999. In response, marketers of alcohol brands resorted to advertising of non-alcoholic beverages, sports gear, bottled water and a host of other alcohol-unrelated products as extensions of their alcohol brands. This form of advertising is now referred to as "surrogate advertising". This paper examines the impact of surrogate advertising of alcohol brands on their brand equity (as defined by Keller 1993).

H 1 Whilst surrogate advertising will make more salient the name of the brand being advertised, it will not result in enhanced brand awareness as it will dilute the relationship between the brand name and the product category.

H 2 Surrogate advertising will result in a change (addition and/ or deletion) in the set of associations consumers have of the brand being advertised.

H 3 In consumers who have consumed a particular alcohol brand or have been exposed to ads of that brand, or possess high brand knowledge levels for the brand; there will be a lesser impact of the surrogate ad on brand equity.

A pre-test was done on a sample of 163 respondents to find existing brand knowledge levels of each subject, of the various alcohol brands to be used in the study. The purpose of the study was masked through the experimental design in order to minimize manipulation effects. This was done by including a list of 14 brands from various non-alcoholic products in addition to 6 alcohol brands being tested.

In the main study, subjects were sequentially exposed to television ads, one ad at a time, of the 20 brands used in the pre-test. After viewing each individual advertisement, the questionnaire used in the pre-test was once again administered on the subjects to measure the impact of the 'surrogate' advertisement on brand equity/ knowledge.

The findings support the notion that brand equity will be least affected in consumers with prior consumption experience, ad exposure or brand knowledge of the alcohol brand. This would be especially true in the short run and it would be interesting to observe the effect of surrogate advertising on brand equity in the long run. A significant negative impact on the brand awareness level and brand association set was found for 4 out of the 6 alcohol brands evaluated. The common factor for these 4 brands was that they were non-beverage extensions. The author concludes that the extent of dilution of brand equity is a function of prior brand exposure, the surrogate category chosen and articulation of advertising for the surrogate product.

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Affective conditioning of brand attitudes: About the moderating impact of consumers' personality and contingency awareness

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Keywords:

attitude formation, conditioning, advertising, personality, alexithymia

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Evaluative conditioning (EC) is one of the major affective processes of attitude formation. This robust phenomenon refers to changes in the liking of a stimulus (namely, the conditioned stimulus, or «CS») that are due to the fact that the stimulus has been paired with other, positive or negative stimuli (namely, the unconditioned stimuli, or «US»). Typically, a stimulus that initially evokes a neutral affective response will then evoke either a positive or a negative affective response, as a result of contiguous presentation with a different stimulus of strong affective value. The EC paradigm has been widely applied to advertising, since EC is a process through which affect can be effortlessly transferred from an advertisement to a brand, even if the affective stimuli associated with the brand does not provide any product information.

We carried out a set of three experiments that used different EC paradigms to shape participants' brand attitudes by associating fictitious or realistic products (CSs) with visual stimuli (USs) which in some case were just briefly presented (28 milliseconds).

Firstly, our paradigms successfully yielded EC effects since participants' ratings toward the products (CSs) switched according to the visual stimuli (USs) they were associated with. Moreover, it seems that participants' awareness of the CS-US associations is necessary for the EC effect to occur.

Secondly, whereas the impact of personality on EC had never been taken into account, we showed that the individuals' ability to identify and to describe their feelings (i.e., alexithymia) have a moderating impact on the EC effect. In other words, our results suggest that some people (i.e., high alexithymia scores) are less prone to conditioning attempts.

These results provide new perspectives about the way to design efficient advertising campaigns that use EC, taking into account the individuals' ability to process emotional information. A better understanding of the processes that underlie conditioning and of personality variables that can moderate these effects will thus be beneficial when applied to the problem of choosing and arranging the visual imagery that will be featured in marketing communications.

Changing roles, changing preferences? The impact of gender identity on primary affective reactions to sex-specific advertising stimuli.

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Keywords:
primary affective reactions, gender identity, sex-roles, advertising

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

For advertisers in many different industries, sex is an important and easy accessible demographic segmentation variable. However, sex-roles have changed dramatically in the last decades. Nowadays, it is common for women to fulfill masculine roles in the workplace or for men to fulfill feminine roles at home. We explore whether these changes moderate the influence of sex on primary affective reactions (PAR) to sex-oriented advertising stimuli. We approximate the extent to which an individual adopted the cultural changes in sex-roles by the gender identity measure. Gender identity indicates how much an individual identifies with male or female characteristics prevalent in a specific culture. Therefore, gender identity should reflect the blurring sex-role patterns and consequently, we expect it to have an impact on how men and women react to typical sex-oriented advertising stimuli. However, sex differences vary in their immunity to cultural changes. We could state that, irrespective of cultural changes, men prefer young, seductive women and women prefer babies and children (= basic stimuli). On the other hand, cultural changes might affect men's preference for feminine activities like indoor socializing, and women's preferences for masculine activities like competition sports (= cultural stimuli). Gender identity should have a smaller impact on PAR to basic advertising stimuli compared to cultural advertising stimuli. In the first study we measured PAR to basic and cultural stimuli. As expected, gender identity affected both men's and women's PAR to cultural stimuli. For men, gender identity indeed did not affect their PAR to basic stimuli. However, for women -surprisingly- it did. Young women generally preferred female-oriented to male-oriented stimuli, but this preference became weaker as masculinity increased. Study 2 revealed that identification may explain this unexpected result. Masculine women identified more with the women used as male-oriented stimuli in Study 1 than feminine women. We conclude that PAR to sex-specific advertising stimuli have survived the changing sex-roles with two qualifications. First, basic stimuli have survived sex-role changes better than cultural stimuli. Second, young women also prefer male-oriented stimuli (e.g. seductive women in advertisements) to the extent that they identify with the women depicted in the advertisement.

Should I stay or should I go? Affect-congruence and purchase venue choice

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affect, consumer experience, services

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

As markets grow increasingly fragmented, it becomes critical to understand the most effective channels of distribution to the customer. In a series of three experiments we examined how consumer affect might interact with decision context to affect purchase venue choice. Specifically, do consumers prefer affect-congruent purchase venues?

Imagine that at the end of a particularly bad week you remember the gift you need to buy your nephew and consider stopping at the toy store on the way home. However, upon remembering the positive, upbeat atmosphere of the store you anticipate the contrast between your negative affect and the positive atmosphere of the store and decide to go home and buy online. A series of three studies found that affect leads to preference for affect-congruent contexts and purchase venues. It is suggested that affect-incongruent contexts make consumers' affect distinctive and leads consumers to prefer affect congruent contexts.

Considerable evidence suggests that affect influences consumer decision-making and preference (Adaval 2001; Puccinelli and Moon 2002). It is suggested that individuals may choose alternatives that make their affect less distinctive (Deshpande and Stayman 1994; Stayman and Deshpande 1989; Wenzlaff and Prohaska 1989).

Study 1 found that participants assigned to an affect-congruent context were more willing to pay for products described in this context ($F(2, 22) = 2.19; p < .15; r = .41$). Study 2 found some evidence for preference for affect-congruent contexts (Contrast $F(2, 26) = 1.47; p < .27; r = .43$) and preference for contexts devoid of affect (i.e. shopping on the Internet) $F(2, 26) = 3.50; p < .07; r = .59$). Study 3 extended this work and found a preference for an affect-congruent purchase venue such that negative affect led to preference for shopping online ($F(2, 67) = 1.69; p < .20; r = .22$) and led to a dislike for promotions and special events ($F(2, 67) = 2.07; p < .15; r = .24$). This research has important implications for the design and management of distribution channels.

Personality measurement in extremely time-limited settings: The BFI-10, a ten-item instrument for assessment of the Big Five

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Keywords:
personality, assessment, big five

Type of contribution:
Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

With the increasing acceptance of the five factor model of personality, the need to assess the Big Five in many different contexts arises. As subject time is severely limited in many of these settings, such as national survey research, all the established Big Five inventories are much too lengthy. For such settings, an extremely brief measure is the only possible way to include a personality assessment. The BFI-10, an abbreviated version of the well-established Big Five Inventory (BFI) was developed to address this problem. It measures the Big Five using ten items adopted from the BFI, two for each of the five Big Five dimensions, namely Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experiences. To facilitate cross-language applications, the BFI-10 was developed simultaneously in German and English, yielding parallel forms in the two languages. The psychometric properties of the BFI-10 are presented; evidence for construct validity of the BFI-10 involves the factor structure of the ten items and convergent and discriminant correlations with the scales and facets of the NEO-PI-R, a commonly used measure of the Five-Factor Model. To evaluate the findings, retest reliability and validity coefficients for the BFI-10 are compared (a) to those of the full-length BFI scales and (b) across the two languages. Given its brevity, the BFI-10 proved a surprisingly reliable and valid instrument to measure the Big Five. Possibilities for applications are discussed.

An evaluation of cultural values in consumer personality: Etic involvement and etic emotions

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Keywords:

etic consumer personality, etic consumer behavior, involvement, emotions,

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Globalization often drives marketers to promote and sell their products and services among consumers from foreign cultures. Although cultural differences seem to be obvious when operating in a different culture, many marketers still use the same marketing mix when going abroad. Thus, marketers apparently seem to assume that consumers with a different cultural background react to the marketing mix in similar ways than consumers from their home market. However, this assumption appears to be flawed as discovered in current research. A study among 376 US-American, German, and Japanese buyers found that cultural values are highly relevant in consumers' personality. Two cultural value constructs were related to two behavioral constructs, using structural equation models to assess these relationships. First, a strong relationship was discovered between the degree of context (cultural value construct) and involvement towards several marketing stimuli (behavioral construct). It was found that in high-context cultures, where information is transported implicitly, marketing stimuli with direct feedback possibilities from the buyer to the marketer are preferred over stimuli without direct feedback channel. Second, the degree of neutrality (cultural value construct) and emotions (behavioral construct) were found to be linked strongly as well. In this regard, it was discovered that in cultures with high degree of neutrality marketing stimuli should avoid overstating emotions. In the discussion part of the study, managerial as well as research implications for the intercultural marketing mix are derived. In general, it is argued that marketers as well as marketing researchers should take cultural values as part of consumers' personality into account. This postulation was then put into advice on how the marketing mix can be differentiated successfully when promoting and selling products and services in different cultures.

To know what I listen to is to know who I am: Examining the information conveyed through music preferences

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Keywords:

music, personality, interpersonal-perception, stereotypes, branding

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Music is a ubiquitous phenomenon: Individuals listen to it frequently and derive considerable satisfaction from it. Yet, the enjoyment derived from listening to music is only one of the reasons people listen to it. Many people also use music in the service of self-expression, explicitly associating themselves (e.g., with t-shirts and posters) with certain artists or genres. And people use others' music preferences in the service of learning about others; music preferences are a common topic in getting acquainted contexts such as parties and dating websites. Yet little is known about what information, if any, is conveyed through music preferences. Do music preferences convey valid information about what a person is like? Do observers form similar impressions of people on the basis of their music preferences? This presentation describes a program of research designed to examine these questions. In a series of studies, we examined the links between music preferences and personality, the stereotypes associated with fans of various musical genres, and the accuracy of those stereotypes. Analyses of multiple samples, styles of music, age groups and geographic regions converged to reveal several links between music preferences, personality, and consumption habits. For example, country music fans tend to be more conventional and consume more beer than do fans of jazz. We also identified genre-specific stereotypes and showed that these stereotypes often have some accuracy. Taken together, the results suggest that music preferences can provide an effective medium for self-expression and a fruitful path for branding research. By pairing brands with styles of music that adequately reflect the brand's personality, advertisers can enhance the music equity of that brand. Furthermore, incorporating research on the psychology of music has the potential to increase the fit between brand personality and consumer personality. Ultimately, such endeavors will shed light on devising effective strategies for increasing brand awareness and loyalty.

Investigating impulse buying and variety seeking: Towards a general theory of hedonic purchase behaviors

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Keywords:

impulse buying, variety seeking, consumer impulsiveness, optimum stimulation level, self-monitoring

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Most consumers indulge in impulse buying and variety seeking behaviors at one time or another and both these behaviors have attracted significant attention from consumer researchers (Raju 1980, 1984, Rook 1985, 1987). Both these behaviors are described as low-effort feelings-based behaviors with similar underlying psycho-social processes (Hoyer and Macinnis 2001, Arnould et al. 2004). However, there is no general theory to explain such hedonic purchase behaviors using a common conceptual framework (Baumgartner 2002).

This paper is an attempt to move towards such a theory by exploring similarities and differences between these two behaviors using a conceptual framework incorporating three relevant consumer traits – consumer impulsiveness, optimum stimulation level and self-monitoring. In the process, the authors integrate important learnings from the impulse buying and variety seeking areas and provide fresh insights into the complex psychological processes underlying both these behaviors.

Drawing on the work of Raju (1980, 1984), McAlister and Pessemer (1982), Steenkamp and Baumgartner (1995, 1996) and Inman (2001) the authors argue that individuals with high need for stimulation are likely to satisfy this need by indulging in exploratory and risky behaviors, which may manifest as variety seeking or impulse buying in their purchase behavior. Based on Rook and Fisher (1995) and Ratner and Kahn (2002) it is also argued that the normative influences on both these behaviors are exactly opposite i.e. negative for impulse buying and positive for variety seeking. Several hypotheses are developed using this conceptual framework and tested using two studies, one among student participants and another with retail consumers.

The hypotheses were tested using moderated multiple regression and ANOVA with median-split on the trait variables. Level of variety seeking and impulse buying were used as dependent variables and the average scores on the three trait variables as independent variables. All the hypotheses were supported. Specifically, it is shown that consumer impulsiveness and optimum stimulation level influence both these behaviors positively, whereas self-monitoring influences impulse buying negatively and variety seeking positively. Self-monitoring is also shown to moderate the influence of consumer impulsiveness and optimum stimulation level on purchase decisions, negatively for impulse buying and positively for variety seeking.

Multi-modal deep-web data-mining (MMDD)

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Keywords:

MMDD, cyberspace, consumption in CME, data-mining,

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The Computer Mediated Environment (CME) has emerged as a new consumption space, inhabited by consumers in trans-global social spaces. It now offers increasingly immersive hedonic, aesthetic, semiotic and functional consumables and consumption spaces for an individual, study of which necessitates development of new techniques.

Until recently research into consumption in/of CME has used either statistical or Netnographic means.

Although statistical methods have been a mainstay of market research on the internet, but by failing to keep pace with the dynamic nature of the cyberspace, they offer very limited predictive ability. On the other hand netnography; grounded in the notion that in CME individual's physical and phenomenological worlds are isolated and independent of each other, is more of an observational than predictive tool.

This paper introduces a fresh research technique named Multi-modal Deep-web Data-mining (MMDD).

MMDD uses multiple modes of enquiry and verification to yield chronologically interwoven and thematically focused observational and historical data, which can be used to create analytical as well as predictive models of consumption behaviour.

The web of internet may appear to be a superficial and dynamic entity representing transient acts of consumption and consumers, but at a deeper level, it is a stable and everlasting chronology and record of events in cyberspace. Each individual consumer leaves a trail of his activities, rendering the cyberspace as a collection of extended phenotypes, study of which reveals many aspects of both consumers and consumables. Deep-web data-mining offers opportunities of tracking and linking of communications, social interactions, commercial transactions as well as fantasies and role play of an individual. As the web deepens, it creates an explicit nexus between both the physical and phenomenological worlds, thus enhancing the ability of a researcher to create a long term holistic picture of an individual's consumption activities both in real as well as virtual worlds.

MMDD as a technique empowers the researcher to create hierarchical models of prediction of emergent consumer behaviour through mapping of consumers, consumables and consumption in the cyberspace. Useable either as interpretive or predictive technique, it provides crossovers and continuities between differing modes of consumer research.

Ambient scents and service satisfaction: Moderating role of personality and situational variables

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Keywords:
ambient-scent, service satisfaction, personality, service complexity

Type of contribution:
Poster presentation

Abstract:

Ambient scents are widely used in a variety of service establishments such as hotels, casinos, and retail stores. Their sales are estimated to be in excess of \$1.8 billion. Yet considerable uncertainty remains about how and under what circumstances do ambient scents influence perception of a service. Extant studies have all relied on the approach-avoidance framework, which posits that pleasant ambient scents work by creating positively-valenced arousal, which leads to approach behaviors (e.g., a desire to explore and spend more time in the environment, and higher levels of satisfaction with the environment). Unfortunately, this framework predicts only an undifferentiated, congruent effect of scents on consumer behavior, and does not allow for contingencies such as individual differences, or product/service differences.

We propose to use scent-induced feeling states or moods as the primary explanatory variable, which enables us to include individual personality and task-specific differences for a fuller understanding of ambient scent effects. Personality literature has documented that people may have emotional dispositions, making them differentially susceptible to positive or negative moods. Our thesis is that individuals will vary in their experience of feelings induced by a pleasant scent. Specifically, we hypothesize a stronger effect of pleasant ambient scents on individuals high in affect intensity, because these individuals are predisposed to experience stronger emotional reactions to affective stimuli than those who are low in affect intensity. Further, these individual differences are hypothesized to interact with the nature of the situation (e.g., the nature of the service being consumed).

In the main, we report findings from a controlled laboratory study that found varying effects of ambient pleasant scents on service satisfaction, depending upon the type of individual (high vs. low in affect intensity) and the nature of the service (high, moderate, or low complexity-- operationalized via various service scenarios). While it has been long recognized that ambient scent effects may be contingent on other factors, ours is the only study that demonstrates these contingent effects. Given the widespread application of ambient scents, and the staggering amount of industry expenditure on it, the study has important theoretical as well as managerial applications.

Brand relationship quality: Why relationships between customers and their brands differ

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Keywords:

brand-consumer relationships, brand personality, brand attitude, consumer behavior

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The idea that consumers and brands can relate to each other is widely accepted. Some brands, however, are more suited for a relationship than others, for instance because of the importance of the brand for the consumer or because of the brand's personality. Brand Relationship Quality reflects this idea of bonding, and was studied in two comprehensive field studies. In the first study (2003), 1,972 respondents (i.e. brand users) were questioned online about ten brands (one brand each). In the second study (2004), 938 users were interviewed online about one of eight brands. Our studies showed that some brands stand out in terms of relationship quality. Especially 'expressive' brands (beer and car brands) were qualified as partners. Differences in brand relation quality could be best explained by brand related factors, such as brand personality. This was especially the case for the 'functional tools'. For 'expressive toys' satisfaction and future brand choice were important as well. Our findings implicate that it may be useful to adjust marketing strategies to perceived brand personalities and to distinguish between types of brands and products. As with people, some brands possess certain traits that make relationships with them –as friends or as lovers- much more easy. Another implication of our findings is that it is worth the effort to invest in consumers who use your brand more frequently than others (esp. shampoo and beer) and in customers who have been your relationship partner for a longer period (your 'old friends'). Loyal consumers should be rewarded, not only in words but also in action (such as special discount). Qualitative good relationships can result in active consumers who love to be in contact with their brands, and who are willing to invest in the relationship. These advantages were especially found for the car brands Volvo and Ford.

Four sides of print advertising exposure

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Keywords:

perception, comprehension, retention, personal relevance

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The mind of an advertising audience is a complex network where perceptions, memory, affects, opinions and attitudes are connected and evolve together. This is what determines the complexity and the challenge of understanding what happens in the peoples' mind when exposed to visual and audio stimuli in general, and in this particular case, to advertising materials.

This paper deals with the short-term reflection of the advertising message in consumers' mind in terms of perception, comprehension, retention (short memory) and personal relevance.

The theoretical content of the paper is following four interdependent directions:

- Evaluation of the degree in which each element of the ad (headline, illustration and slogan) is being perceived, understood and retained (from the point of view of the intended message).
- Description of the effect of print ads from two points of view: likelihood and opinion.
- Analysis of the measure in which the print ad reaches the intended target audience in terms of self relevance.
- Determination of the correlations existing between the elements presented previously.

All these elements are being analyzed considering the past experience of the target audience in terms of consumer/non-consumer of a generic product and its effects as background for the development of new representations.

The sample used for the empirical part of the paper contained a number of 104 respondents. The print ad, addressed to women with the age of 18 to 26, has been tested on a sample formed from female students.

The experiment describes and measures the reactions of the subjects exposed to the advertising message following different degrees of processing: the simple understanding of the message, associations made with other information already part of the respondents' background and connections made with their selves.

As a conclusion, the results show differences in the quality of the message reception for the different levels of processing analyzed in the experiment with influences determined by the intensity of the two sides of the attitude: likelihood and opinion.

Effect of personality traits, working memory capacity, and cognitive burden on yea-saying

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Keywords:

acquiescence, working memory, personality traits, Web surveys

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Acquiescence is considered to be one of the forms of weak satisficing, related to respondents' personality traits, cognitive abilities, and motivation (Krosnick, 1999; Schaeffer & Presser, 2003). Although there are numerous studies on various correlates of yea-saying, experimental studies of acquiescence are rare. In this experiment, 160 subjects completed the questionnaire in ACASI setting. Pace of the interview and position of critical items in the questionnaire were varied within a completely randomized design. All subjects completed a working memory test including measures of computational, listening, and reading span; several personality traits were also assessed. In our paper, we will review basic findings on acquiescence, as well as theoretical approaches such as biased information search and dual-process model of understanding (Gilbert, 1991; Snyder & Swann, 1978). Our results will be compared with previous findings and interpreted in light of relevant theoretical approaches to yea-saying.

Can the Internet lead to consumer empowerment? A conceptual model and research propositions

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Keywords:

consumer empowerment, Internet, motivation, consumer behaviour, self-efficacy

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

Recently the empowering potential of the Internet is gradually being acknowledged in marketing and consumer behaviour literature. The Internet is proposed to provide consumers with an environment and resource that enable them to make better-informed decisions by increasing their awareness and knowledge of the marketplace. This is then argued to have the potential to lead into a change of consumer behaviour, which in turn is expected to have other repercussions like the change of the power balance between buyers and sellers, increase of competition between sellers and satisfaction of consumers. While the claims regarding the Internet's potential of empowering consumers have been compelling, yet, no research study to authors' knowledge has been undertaken to investigate these claims.

On the other hand, despite the proposition that the Internet is empowering consumers, recent academic research and mainstream statistics suggest that this may not be as straightforward as suggested. Research from TNS and TRUSTe show that due to concerns over privacy and identity theft, almost 58 % consumers reported that they may reduce their online spending this holiday season, as compared to 49% of a year ago . Moreover, the results of another recent study from BIGresearch have shown that consumers are finding the Internet influential in their decisions for some product categories (e.g. electronics), but not in others (e.g. home improvement products) . These results may well suggest that the consumers are not feeling empowered by what the Internet is providing them with. Given the important potential implications of consumer empowerment for the marketplace as outlined above, there is a substantial need to develop an understanding of the impact of consumer Internet use on consumer behaviour.

Identifying this gap, in the first part of this article the author presents a conceptualisation of consumer empowerment in consumer behaviour from an individual psychological perspective. Based on the premise that psychological experience of power underlies feelings of empowerment, consumer empowerment is conceptualised as an intrinsic task motivation. In the second part of the article, drawing from social cognitive psychology and previous work in psychological empowerment, the antecedent factors that are influential in consumer's experience of empowerment and the consequences of this experience are discussed the context of Internet use and a model of the process of empowerment and research propositions are provided.

Need for closure and leisure of youngsters

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Keywords:

Need for Closure, leisure, needs

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

Youngsters nowadays can engage in a variety of leisure activities to spend their free time. Previous research identified some general needs and personality characteristics that could help explain differences in leisure motivation. In addition, a preference for similar types of leisure has been suggested (cfr. Self-to-prototype matching). People gravitate to particular kinds of leisure because they have particular characteristics, capabilities, feelings and/or needs that are satisfied by the leisure activity. We introduce Need for Closure as a potential individual characteristic that can help explain and predict individual differences in engagement in leisure activities.

One thousand thirty five young adults completed a leisure engagement inventory and a NFCL questionnaire. Results show that high (versus low) NFCL youngsters engage more often in leisure activities like fun shopping, while low versus high NFCL youngsters are more likely to frequent pubs & parties, visit or host friends and practice sports. Concerning television viewing behavior and reading habits, high NFCL youngsters prefer commercial TV programs, light entertainment and reading (e.g. women's lifestyle magazines, TV guides, popular and straightforward newspapers), while low NFCL youngsters prefer intellectual TV programs and reading (e.g. general news & science magazines, intellectual, alternative & intelligible newspapers).

Low NFCL individuals probably embrace the unpredictability, the lack of structure and organization, the possibility to encounter new, alternative ideas or opinion deviates or the exciting, energetic challenge or sensation-seeking associated with going to a party or a pub, visiting/hosting friends and playing sports. In addition, the intellectually challenging and non-conformists character of their preferred TV programs and reading material provides them with alternative, complex ideas and lines of reasoning that help postponing closure. On the other hand, the possible linearity of a known sequence of shops (in a known shopping mall or street) in addition to the relative cognitive effortless and mainstream character of shopping could provide high NFCL individuals with a clear-cut non-ambiguous heuristic manner to pass their time. In addition, high NFCL youngsters might prefer light media because these facilitate closure by providing quick, easy, common and unchallenged programs that help them engage in uncomplicated, convenient entertainment.

The influence of need for closure and need for cognition on consumers' importance of product attributes

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Keywords:

Need for Closure, Need for Cognition, attributes

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The notion that motivation can strongly influence cognition has gained popularity. One viewpoint holds that stable individual differences can be identified that determine a person's motivation and influence the importance of concrete and abstract product attributes in choice situations, where both abstract and concrete attributes can be used during decision making (e.g. non-comparables). So, identifying individual differences that correlate with or originate in the use of specific attribute types can predict which attribute type is most likely to be used by specific individuals. We investigated the influence of Need for Closure and Need for Cognition on the importance consumers attach to concrete and abstract product attributes. In addition to reaching a deeper understanding of the consumer's evaluation process, we try to further demonstrate the distinction between NFCL and NFC by revealing their differential impact on the importance of product attributes.

High NFCL individuals are intolerant for the ambiguous and insecure character of a non-closure situation and therefore feel the urge to reach closure quickly and try to keep closure once they have attained it. As concrete attributes are more easily available in memory, can act as heuristic cues and require less cognitive effort to process and because abstract attributes are more subjective, and therefore more ambiguous, high (versus low) NFCL individuals are expected to attach more importance to concrete attributes. High (versus low) NFC individuals experience a highly effortful cognitive task as pleasant and are more inclined to engage in this task spontaneously. Consequently, they are expected to find abstract attributes more important. One hundred fifty respondents (either high or low NFCL/NFC) rated the importance of twenty-seven product attributes (identified in preliminary research). In line with our expectations, MANOVA and regression analyses showed that high (versus low) NFCL respondents attached more importance to concrete attributes, while high (versus low) NFC respondents found abstract attributes more important. In general, all respondents attached more importance to abstract compared to concrete attributes (cfr. Means-end chain and Behaviour Guidance theory). The results of this study could have significant implications for segmentation and positioning strategies and can add to the practice of target group marketing.

Self-orientation and group-orientation: Intercultural differences in attitudes toward personalized Web sites

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Keywords:

individualism, collectivism, personalization, cross-cultural research, internet research

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

User- and customer-centered Web sites often feature design elements incorporating individualization and personalization. This is often accomplished with the aid of personal user data and "recommender systems", e.g., in e-Commerce. Examples of personalization elements are individual- or group-based product recommendation lists (i.e., lists tailored to individual user tastes or, respectively, group-based lists such as "bestsellers" or "hit parades") as well as personally addressing the users by name while they are visiting a Web site.

Within the framework of a research project in the field of "cross-cultural internet research" conducted at the Department of Psychology at the University of Freiburg, personal attitudes and behavioral tendencies associated with personalization elements were analyzed for users from different cultural backgrounds.

The study was aimed at revealing the possible presence of a "Western ethnocentrism." Particularly, it was examined whether gearing design principles (such as elements of personalization) toward North American or Western European maxims (such as emphasizing individuality) were universally accepted and appreciated. The specific question was whether members of Western, individualistic cultures with a predominant self-orientation would have a more positive attitude toward explicitly individual-based elements on a Web site than would members of non-Western, collectivist cultures with a prevailing group-orientation. Furthermore, culture-specific preferences concerning the type of product recommendation lists (individual- vs. group-based) were investigated.

The research instrument was an online questionnaire about "music preferences" which was completed by 149 US-Americans (individualistic culture group) and 116 Japanese (collectivist culture group). Additionally, 230 Germans took part in the survey. The questionnaire was designed in all three languages. It comprised several personalization elements, attitude ratings, a cultural orientation scale, and a situation in which the participants had to make a decision between two product recommendation lists (individual- vs. group-based).

According to the results, the Americans had a more positive attitude toward personalization elements than their Japanese counterparts. With regard to the preference for individual- or group-based product recommendation lists, no differences between the two culture groups could be detected. An additional content analysis of the participants' explanatory statements concerning their list decisions yielded interesting clues about the motivations underlying those decisions.

The influence of culture difference on the display of brand personality and self concept

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Keywords:

brand personality, self concept, cultural difference, content analysis

Type of contribution:

Talk / Paper presentation

Abstract:

The focus of this study is to explore the brand personality and self concept in the newspaper advertisement in two Chinese societies: China and Taiwan, in order to investigate the culture influences on these two concepts. Brand personality has become the focus of brand research since the 1970s. Aaker (1997) conducted a rigorous investigation in USA to develop the dimensions and a scale of brand personality. Her personality dimensions were applied in this study. Since the brand personality revealed in an advertisement may reflect the value that consumers in the society respect or desire, culture issues were included too. Tse, Belk, & Zhou (1989), explained the cultural effects by the differences shown in the newspaper advertisements. Besides, brand personality plays an important role to connect product image and consumer's self concept, and then the relationship between brand personality and self concept was also discussed. The cultural dimensions used in this study were based on Hofstede's (1980) power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism (vs. collectivism), and masculinity (vs. femininity). Pollay's (1983) 42 advertisement appeals were recoded into these four dimensions by an expert panel of doctoral students in management. Then, 6 judges coded 432 advertisements systematically selected from two major newspaper in China and Taiwan from 1999 to 2001.

The measurement suitability is checked by Confirmative Factor Analysis, and the model fitness is analyzed by LISEREL. In addition, discrimination analysis is employed to confirm the relationship between brand personality and self concept. The results also provide implications to the practices that the firms can set diverse brand strategies and modify brand personality according to cultural values.

The "we concept" and product choice congruency

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Keywords:

self concept, brand choice

Type of contribution:

Poster presentation

Abstract:

The self concept congruence theory is one of the main explanations of brand choice. For example, many authors showed that the choice of a make of car was significantly influenced by the idea that the individual has of his own personality. Not being able to disregard influence of others on the individual choices and thus of a certain social influence, certain researchers developed the collective self. It views the other members of the group through an inclusive and subjective prism. Thus the choice of the brand will be also influenced by certain ideas and opinions of the people of the intimate circle which one accepted and integrated like forming part of the self from now on. That reveals the transformation of the self according to certain influences of the group. However, this article defends the idea that purchases can be influenced by a more global image of the group going further than the collective self, because there is a cognitive and individual construction personality of the group within each individual. It is the "We concept", which is based on Kaës' works in psychoanalysis and research on the social identity carried out in social psychology. The "We concept" is defined as the global image that an individual attributed to his reference group. Just as the self-concept influences the choice of the brands through the idea the individual has of his own personality, the "we concept" may explain also this choice through the idea an individual has developed of his group as a whole. The two empirical studies presented explore one the three facets of the "we concept", the "ideal we concept" defined as the ideal image that individual attributes to its main group taken as a whole (in this research, the family). A four dimensional structure is proposed and validated in two cultures (France and Tunisia) : discovery, intellectualism, others' respect and cooperation. A congruency relationship is tested between the "We concept" and preferred car brands. The results show links between the "ideal we concept" and the product dimensions such innovativeness.