

Current Topics for Master Theses at the Department of Sales & Services Marketing

Advisor: Ann-Kathrin Polenz, M. Sc.

Topic	Exploring Minority Experiences Online: An Eye Tracking Study
Abstract	This thesis investigates minorities and perceptions of minorities in user-generated content using eye tracking technology. By focusing on attention patterns, it aims to uncover the challenges and opportunities faced by minorities online. The study will be conducted at least partly in Mannheim.
Topic	The Impact of Review Platform Design Choices on Consumer Decision-Making
Abstract	Online reviews play a pivotal role in shaping consumer decisions. This study investigates how the design of online review systems influences consumer perceptions and subsequent consumer decision making. To do so, empirical research in form of online experiments is conducted.
Topic	User Profile Information in User-Generated Content
Abstract	The influence of user profile information, including elements such as name, profile photo, age, and other demographic details, plays a pivotal role in shaping perceptions of user-generated content. This master thesis explores the ways in which these elements impact the interpretation and reception of digital content by conducting an empirical study.
Topic	How Survey Design Impacts Online Reviews
Abstract	The design of surveys holds a key role in shaping the quality and authenticity of consumer reviews. This study delves into the impact of survey design on

	<p>online reviews, exploring how the structure, wording, and methodology of surveys influence the nature and depth of customer feedback. This master thesis uses an empirical approach to test various survey designs.</p>
	<p>Please contact Ann-Kathrin Polenz, M.Sc. (ann-kathrin.polenz@uni-mannheim.de) for further information.</p>

Advisor: Giuliana Francesca Manganaro, M.A.

Topic	Effective Communication of Organizational Purpose to Shareholders: Best Practices and Pitfalls
Abstract	In your empirical master thesis, you explore the effective communication of organizational purpose to shareholders using 10-K files or (annual/biannual) reports. You can employ quantitative and/or qualitative method(s) to analyze communication strategies by controlling for sector and communicative style. Findings contribute empirical evidence and practical recommendations for enhancing shareholder engagement.
Topic	How can companies effectively increase their “purpose”?
Abstract	Embark on a research journey to uncover the optimal ESG criteria that fuel organizational purpose. In this study, aim to identify the key factors that effectively drive organizational purpose, focusing on ESG criteria and the UN goals. By delving into the question, “Which criteria feeds Purpose optimally?” – we pave the way for transformative insights that can reshape organizations. This research opportunity is tailor-made for those committed to enhancing organizational performance through a deep understanding of purpose-driven strategies. By addressing the crucial link between ESG criteria and organizational purpose, this study holds the potential to redefine the landscape of organizational strategy and societal contribution.
Topic	What effect does “purpose” have on organizational stakeholders?
Abstract	Undertake a strict exploration of how organizational purpose impacts diverse stakeholder groups. Investigate the impact on each stakeholder group with a nuanced approach combining analytical rigor and qualitative depth. The study aims to unveil the multifaceted dynamics at play and untangle the intricate relationships between corporate purpose and stakeholders’ perceptions, engagements, and expectations — from employees and customers to investors and communities. Understanding stakeholders’ different expectations, you contribute to understanding how purpose resonates across diverse stakeholder landscapes.

Topic	Connecting Brand Identity and Purpose: Effective Strategies and Pitfalls
Abstract	<p>In your empirical research, you are delving into the relationship between brand identity, following Aaker's model, and different orientations of organizational purpose. Through an analysis of various brands, the study aims to identify which specific brand identities align with which particular purpose orientations. The findings shed light on effective synergies and potential discrepancies, providing valuable guidance for crafting brand strategies that resonate authentically with organizational purpose.</p>
	<p>Please contact Giuliana F. Manganaro, M.A. (Giuliana.manganaro@uni-mannheim.de) for further information.</p>