

MKT 710 Research Seminar in Spring 2018 (FSS 2018)

Administration of Seminar: Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Christian Homburg

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Basic Literature for all Topics:

Homburg, Ch. (2017), Marketingmanagement: Strategie – Instrumente – Umsetzung – Unternehmensführung, 5th Ed., Wiesbaden.

Homburg, Ch., Kuester, S., Krohmer, H. (2012), Marketing Management: A Contemporary Perspective, 2nd Ed., Maidenhead.

Please note:

Seminar papers can be prepared in **English or in German**. You can choose the language of your seminar paper after the topics have been assigned.

A. Marketing Strategy and Management

1. The evolution of interactions in business-to-business markets

The digitalization is changing business markets fundamentally. The way companies interact and communicate with each other has changed. Many conditions, such as the developments in information technology and e-commerce, globalization of markets or changing customer expectations are challenging for established companies. Therefore, the objectives of this seminar paper are (1) a systematic literature review of the interaction approach in the context of B2B markets, and (2) the identification of critical success factors for the future relationship and network management.

2. The effects of digitalization on relationship value in business-to-business markets

Business relationships have been a key focus of marketing for decades. However, change processes such as the digital transformation have deeply changed the supplier behavior as well as the customer needs and expectations. Therefore, the objectives of this seminar paper are (1) a systematic literature review on the topic of relationship value in B2B markets, and (2) the identification of how relationship value within buyer-seller relationships has changed through digitalization.

3. Money, Power, and Love: Relevance of Chief Marketing Officers in Top-Management Teams

Chief Marketing Officers are relevant for firms' marketing strategy and capabilities. However, it remains open to research how CMOs relative power to, and relationship with other top-management team (TMT) members moderates the link between CMO presence and performance of the firm's market-based assets, e.g. customer equity, brand equity, and market knowledge. The goal of this seminar paper is to conceptualize the consequences of CMO to TMT wage ratios on CMOs' power and relationships within the TMT, and subsequently the performance of firms' market-based assets.

4. An investigation, classification, and evaluation of team structures

In times of increasing cooperation within the business environment as well as the empowerment of internal working teams it is highly relevant, to examine the underlying structure of these teams. The resulting knowledge may help to improve the working climate up to an increase of the overall company performance. Therefore, the objectives of this term paper are to (1) identify different types of team structures in the current research literature, (2) classify these structures, and (3) deduce some possible team steering strategies for the different structure types.

5. Marketing in the Digital Age

The digital transformation results in significant changes of the business landscape. Over the past decade, firms and customers have adopted digital technologies, whereby novel market behaviors, interactions and experiences emerged. Against this background, firms face the challenge to keep pace with these dynamic developments in the marketplace. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to provide a systematic overview of present academic results in the research area of digital marketing strategy and (2) to identify related trends and research gaps.

6. Customer-Centric Marketing

Over the past decade the marketing function gradually shifted from product-centric to customer-centric marketing. The digital transformation enables companies to create a “digital relationship” with customers and thus accelerates this development. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to provide a systematic overview of academic results in the research area of customer-centric marketing and (2) to identify related trends and research gaps.

7. The Role of Marketing in Financial Reporting

Firms both voluntarily and obligatory disclose financial and non-financial information about important firm value drivers to its shareholders and other stakeholders in the financial markets. In the course of this communication with financial markets, firms increasingly provide marketing-related information and data that investors can use to calculate important performance indicators for future firm performance, such as brand value, customer equity, or other marketing metrics. Aim of this seminar paper at the marketing-finance interface is to (1) identify research dealing with how and what firms disclose regarding their marketing-related information and (2) analyze how investors and other financial stakeholders evaluate and use these information.

B. Consumer Behavior**8. From Google to Amazon: A state of the art review on information search and purchase decisions in the digital age**

Google, Amazon and co. seem to be all over the Internet. When thinking about purchasing e.g. a new smartphone one of the first things people nowadays normally do is search for the product on google or amazon. Therefore, the goal of this seminar paper is to show how Google, Amazon and co. have changed the way we search for and buy products in the digital age. The seminar paper should give an overview of recent research in this area and identify areas for future research as well as implications for practice.

9. Consumers' Social Identity: How Is It Important for a Company?

Being highly social, people belong to many social groups, each with a particular identity. When it comes to consumption, the group one identifies with at the time of the transaction has a significant influence on one's purchase decision. The goal of this seminar paper is to deliver an overview of existing research and conceptualize the relationship of social group identity on purchase decision.

10. Saving Money or Prestige: When Do Consumers Refuse Buying at the Low Price?

Low prices offered by retailers often become the main motivation for some consumers to do a purchase. However, this is not the case for individuals who are less price-oriented. The goal of this seminar paper is to deliver an overview of existing research and identify which factors influence the relationship between price-orientation and purchase decision of low priced products.

C. Sales Management**11. Multi-Channel Management: An Overview**

Firms increasingly use various channels (e.g. own offline-shops, own online-shops, wholesalers, or retailers) to sell their products. Therefore, for firms and researchers, it is important to know how the integration of these channels can be managed successfully. The goal of this seminar thesis is to deliver an overview of existing literature in the area of multi-channel management.

12. Success factors of Group Incentives in the sales context

Due to high competition and persistent innovation pressure every firm nowadays needs to think about appropriate ways of motivating their workforce. For some years, group incentives seem to be effective, however still have its criticism. In order to find the success factors for group incentives the main objectives of this term paper are to (1) give an overview of the current state of research on group incentives in the sales context and (2) identify areas for future research.

D. Communication Management**13. Unconscious Retribution? Impact of Differential Pay on Employees B2B Brand Perceptions**

Inequality is soaring and people become less trusting in return. Recent research reports that trust in B2C brands declines as earnings inequality increases. Does (intra-firm) earnings inequality also reduce employees' trust in their own firm's and other firms' B2B brands? The goal of this seminar paper is to conceptualize the relationship between intra-firm earnings inequality and B2B brand perception of employees, and subsequently arising issues for B2B relationships.

14. Social Media and Mobile Marketing: An Overview

Due to the rising usage of digital platforms (e.g., facebook, instagram) and smartphones, a marketing concept with respect to these platforms is getting more important for firms. For instance, firms can use these platforms as an advertising platform or as a marketing intelligence tool. Furthermore, consumers use these platforms as a search and decision support tool. The goal of this seminar thesis is to deliver an overview of existing literature in the area of social media and mobile marketing.

E. Price Management**15. From Bad to Worse: Inequality, Dynamic Pricing and Price-Fairness Perceptions of Consumers**

Inequality is soaring and people grow less trusting and more unrest in return. Trust in B2C brands and willingness-to-pay declines as earnings inequality increases. How does the level of earnings inequality affect consumers' price-fairness perceptions in face of changing prices? The goal of this seminar paper is to conceptualize the effect of earnings inequality on price-fairness perceptions in face of price increases and dynamic pricing practices.

16. What don't we know? Pricing Data in B2B Data Value Chains

Data is the new oil in a digital economy. However, valuation and subsequently pricing of data is much more difficult than it is for tangible resources. Data changes in value as it moves through the data value chain. The goal of this seminar paper is to review current research on pricing models for information goods and pricing strategies in general, to develop a research agenda on pricing models for B2B information goods in data value chains.

17. What's the Real Deal? Value-Based Pricing of Products in Data Value Chains

Data is the new oil in a digital economy. However, valuation and subsequently pricing of data is much more difficult than it is for tangible resources. Data changes in value as it moves through the data value chain. The goal of this seminar paper is to develop a methodology for value-based pricing of data products at various stages of the data value chain based on a structured literature review.

18. Back to the Future: Pricing Models for Immutable Data Value Chains

Data is the new oil in a digital economy. However, valuation and subsequently pricing of data is much more difficult than it is for tangible resources. Data changes in value as it moves through the data value chain. The goal of this seminar paper is to identify and review proof-of-concepts that leverage mutual distributed ledgers (e.g. blockchain) to ensure an immutable data value chain and develop a framework of common themes and pricing models applied.

F. Customer Relationship Management

19. What's Out There? Mapping Business Relationship Networks

Business networks are complex structures of inter-firm relationships that emerge and evolve over time. Mapping firms (nodes) and the performance of their relationships (edges) with suppliers, distributors and customers is relevant for research and practice alike. The goal of this seminar paper is to identify, compare and contrast methods and data sources for creating a business networks map.

20. The “New Oil”: Customer Data as a Resource – Current Research and Future Developments

Companies with business models based on user and customer data are among the most valuable of all, whether it is Google, Facebook or others. In today's reality, data are ubiquitous and available in sheer unlimited amount. With a marketing perspective, this paper reviews recent literature on the value of customer data to firms and draws on future applications of customer data in research and practice.

21. Saving Costs through Customers' Actions: Customer Engagement and Cost Savings

Prior literature has shown that customers create value to the firm in a variety of ways beyond mere purchasing, an idea captured in the construct of 'Customer Engagement'. Engaged customers can also create value by decreasing costs: be it airline passengers checking in on their own (operational costs), customers spreading positive word of mouth (acquisition costs) or customer-to-customer support in online brand communities (customer service costs). The goal of this seminar paper is to provide an overview of recent literature focusing on value through cost savings from customer actions and to depict areas for future research.

G. Market Research Methods

22. Analyzing online chatter – Recent developments in marketing research

The Internet is part of our daily life. With smartphones, laptops, and tablets we are always online and tend to share our thoughts, opinions and experiences more and more online with the help of various channels. The so called “online chatter” is growing and with that the data for researchers and companies to analyze. The goal of this seminar paper is to analyze in which sub-areas of marketing online chatter is used, how it is used and what information can be derived with the help of it. The seminar paper should give an overview of state of the art research, which uses data from online chatter and identify further areas for future research.

23. Machine Learning in Marketing: Its Application, Methods, and Implications for Research

The increasing popularity of social media, online communities, and other communication platforms offers marketers massive opportunities to gather (big) data. Recent applications of machine learning algorithms have been able to deal with such data in order to, e.g., measure consumer sentiment. Aim of this seminar paper is to (1) review existing classifiers and machine learning algorithms that have been applied across disciplines (e.g., marketing, management, and finance), (2) outline its areas of application, and (3) critically discuss the implications and opportunities for future researchers dealing with big data.