

## MKT 710 Research Seminar in Fall 2018 (HWS 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, 6th 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 role of supply chain management in marketing**

Supply chain management has been researched for a long time in research fields such as logistics or information systems. However, there is also a strong link between supply chain management and marketing. Therefore, the objectives of this seminar paper are (1) a systematic review of how supply chain management and marketing are interrelated, and (2) an evaluation of a stronger supply chain integration into marketing.

#### **2. Behind the scenes: Theoretical approaches regarding social networks**

More than ever it becomes clear: Social networks are everywhere. Accordingly, research focuses more and more on studies and knowledge about the structure of teams in different working contexts in order to find useful steering strategies for managers. However, since it was stated that there is not one underlying Network Theory, a lack of theory in that field of research has been revealed.

Therefore, the objectives of this seminar paper are to (1) identify different theoretical approaches within the current research literature regarding social networks, (2) allocate these approaches within a literature table that contains related studies, and (3) deduce some conclusions about the appropriate application of the approaches within research.

#### **3. Customer Segmentation: How to do it and what to expect from it?**

Building meaningful segments that firms can address profitably has long been a key challenge in marketing strategy making. With today's access to data on customers' behaviors and insights on needs, finding novel customer segmentation approaches holds fruitful opportunities for researchers and practitioners. The aim of this seminar paper is to (1) review the state-of-the-art literature on the process and outcomes of customer segmentation, (2) systematize the findings, and (3) critically discuss opportunities and threats for the future of customer segmentation.

#### **4. Value exchange within B2B networks**

Nowadays, complex B2B products and services are often delivered through multiple companies, which are referred to as business networks. However, one major question is: How do companies organize value exchange within networks? Therefore, the objectives of this seminar paper are (1) a systematic literature review on B2B networks and (2) an identification of critical success factors for running B2B networks.

**5. Dynamic Capabilities in Marketing Research**

As a result of digital transformation, firms face nowadays severe challenges to keep up with increasingly complex and fast changing market environments. These developments give rise to the concept of dynamic capabilities, which recently received increasing attention in the marketing literature. Against this background, the goals of this seminar paper are (1) to provide a systematic overview of academic results on dynamic capabilities in marketing and (2) to identify related trends and research gaps.

**6. How can pharmaceutical companies successfully adapt to the increasing deregulation of the health care sector?**

Due to facing tremendous cost pressure, the health care sector around the globe is undergoing processes of deregulation. Among others, one of the results is the increasing number of drugs that are regulated less strictly. The status of these drugs is switched from being available on prescription-only towards being offered over-the-counter. Apart from aiming to contribute to a reduction of health care costs, these deregulation processes also affect the pharmaceutical industry. This raises the question how pharmaceutical companies should design their marketing strategies to remain successful. It is the aim of this seminar paper to find answers to this question by providing a comprehensive overview of current research on health care marketing and by outlining future research directions.

**B. Consumer Behavior****7. Consumer Information Seeking Behavior on the Internet– State of the Art**

The rise of the internet drastically changed the consumer's role in the marketplace. Due to the vast amount of available and easily accessible information, consumers are evermore empowered to search for information, evaluate information and to finally make purchase decisions. These changes are of importance to the marketing discipline since they produce a number of challenges for practitioners. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to provide a systematic overview of research on consumer information search behavior on the internet (2) to compare and contrast health information seeking and general information seeking in this regard, and (3) to outline future research directions.

**8. Normative Social Influence on Individual's Price Perceptions**

Consumers are very heterogeneous in terms of perceptions of price in its negative and positive roles. Price plays a negative role for a consumer when the higher it is, the less likely a consumer will conduct a purchase. In contrast, for other consumers, the higher price may be perceived as a positive cue. These price perceptions are largely defined by consumer's individual characteristics. Nevertheless, an individual might adjust his price perceptions to the expectations of significant others. Therefore, the goal of this seminar paper is to conduct an overview of the existing research on how individual's price perceptions are influenced by other consumers.

**9. Counter-Stereotypical Products and Consumer Social Identity Threat**

Counter-stereotypical products are the ones that are stereotypically associated with a specific group of consumers, while they are considered to be atypical for the opposing out-group. Good examples would be a high-status consumer purchasing clothes in Primark or a low-status consumer wearing a Prada shirt. But choosing a counter-stereotypical product may often lead to the social identity threat of a consumer who wants to be associated with a specific consumer group. The goal of this seminar paper is to provide an overview of the existing research on this issue.

**10. Data Privacy Issues Influencing Consumer Behavior – Overview of Recent Developments in Marketing Research**

Especially with the introduction of the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, in German: DSGVO) data privacy is again a hot topic in politics as well as in research. More and more people use online services, shop online and are increasingly online during work and their leisure time. Therefore huge amounts of data are stored about consumers. Some of us are more concerned about data privacy than others and attention on data privacy increases with data breaches or scandals such as voter manipulation as in the case of Cambridge Analytica. The goal of this seminar paper is therefore to give an overview on how data privacy issues might influence the various facets of consumer behavior and furthermore identify areas for future research.

## C. Sales Management

### 11. Risk-Taking in Teams: The Roles of Peer-Pressure and Personality

Sports teams need to take risks to achieve the common goal of winning. Sales teams need to take appropriate risks to close deals together. Top management teams need to balance their risk taking to influence their firm's performance positively. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on risk-taking in teams while considering the influences of peer-pressure and personality, (2) identify commonalities of risk-taking in teams across situations, and (3) outline future research directions.

### 12. Group incentives in the sales context – have we found the best type yet?

Due to the extensive use of group incentives within the sales context it is interesting for researchers to investigate this topic in order to derive valuable findings and strategic advice for company managers nowadays. However initially, before the implementation of an incentive system, the right choices regarding the appropriate types have to be made (e.g. financial, financial-equivalent, non-financial). In order to provide a comprehensive state-of-the-art review of the academic literature the main objectives of this term paper are to (1) give an overview and classification of the different possible types in the context of incentives, (2) discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the different types by consulting current studies in that field of research, and (3) derive suggestions for further studies in future research.

### 13. Individual Differences in Networking Behaviors

Top managers, sales people and business students differ in their approaches to build and maintain their personal and professional networks. The list of benefits of a strong network is long. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on individual differences in networking behaviors, (2) find commonalities and differences with regard to personal and professional networks, and (3) outline future research directions.

## D. Communication Management

### 14. Marketing Communication in an Omni-Channel World

Individuals and firms interact through many channels, on multiple screens and devices, across a myriad of touchpoints and over time. Given these ample possibilities to interact with customers and consumers, the way firms communicate (e.g. via social media) and formulate strategies on how to communicate is changing rapidly. Therefore, aims of this seminar paper are to (1) review the state-of-the-art literature on antecedents and consequences of firm's marketing communication, (2) systematize the findings, and (3) critically discuss opportunities and threats for the future of marketing communication.

## E. Price Management

### 15. Data Pricing: The Value of Data

Data is the new oil in a digital economy. Value-based pricing appears to be the most appropriate strategy for data pricing. Yet: Do data create value and how does one measure the value of data? The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on approaches to determine the value of data, (2) propose a framework of data valuation methods and their usefulness in different business contexts, and (3) outline future research directions.

### 16. “Do you match the Amazon price?” – (When) Should companies match competitors' prices?

Never has it been so easy for consumers to compare prices between competitors. This constitutes an important challenge for companies leading to the question whether they should match competitor prices or stick to their posted prices?

## F. Brand Management

### 17. Beyond customers – leveraging brands to different stakeholders

The notion “brands matter” has been demonstrated in various consumer markets. However, besides effects on consumers, brands may do more. First, brands may affect employees. Employees may perceive working for a strong brand a sign of prestige. Second, brands may also affect investors. The

financial literature shows a familiarity bias indicating that private investors may favor known over less known companies. The goal of this seminar paper is to identify how brands affect different stakeholders. Which components of brand equity become relevant for different groups?

## **G. Customer Relationship Management**

### **18. Customer retention in the digital age – a state of the art review**

Prior literature has shown that customer retention is a highly profitable part of customer relationship management. In the digital age, however, customers have become empowered in many ways and are exposed to nearly endless options and almost complete transparency with regard to products and services. The digitalization therefore provides both opportunities and challenges to businesses. This seminar paper consists of a systematic literature review on the state of the art of customer retention management with a focus on customer relationships in the digital age.

### **19. Customer defection – when your customers stop being your customers**

There can be a whole range of reasons why customers decide to quit a business relationship with firms: price, performance, variety seeking, or just simply not needing the offer anymore. As customers are the heart of any business, however, systematically analyzing customer defection represents a critical aspect of customer relationship management. The goal of this seminar paper is to provide a systematic overview of marketing research on customer defection and to provide implications for business practice and research.

### **20. Multiplex Business Networks: The Many-Faced Relationship**

Inter-firm relationships can occur simultaneously through multiple types of ties. For example, at the same time two firms might be supplier and customer, collaborate on R&D, have intertwined managerial and supervisory boards and compete for the same customers. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on multiplex business relationships, (2) identify sources to collect data on multiplex business networks, and (3) outline future research directions.

## **H. Market Research Methods**

### **21. Diffusion Models: Then and Now**

Diffusion models are amongst the widest used models in sales forecasting. The most popular example is the Bass Diffusion Model, which was introduced by Bass 1969 and cited over 8000 times. The Bass Model still serves as foundation for many of today's diffusion models. The seminar paper should therefore analyze, why this is the case, give an overview of the development of diffusion models over time, categorize them and identify the most current and influential diffusion models today. Moreover, the seminar paper should give an outlook on future developments in diffusion model research.

### **22. Endogeneity in Marketing Survey Research**

Empirical research in marketing often is interested in the decisions and behaviors of firms, their employees, their interactions with customers, and the impact of such decisions on various performance outcomes. However, marketing researchers may arrive to flawed conclusions and offer poor advice to managers, if they do not apply endogeneity checks in survey-based empirical research. Against this background, the goals of this seminar paper are (1) to point out how past research has dealt with endogeneity and (2) to provide a systematic overview on best-practices to account for endogeneity in marketing survey research.

### **23. Neuroscientific Advances in Marketing and Organization Sciences**

There has always been a fascination on how the brain works and how it might affect decision making of customers and managers. Neuroimaging methods hold promise for advancing marketing and organization sciences. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on consumer neuroscience, neuromarketing and organizational neuroscience, (2) identify current research streams, and (3) outline future research directions.

## **I. Marketing Theory**

### **24. Towards a General Theory of Marketing**

Marketing research relies on a multitude of theories that sometimes are marketing-specific and other times shared with other disciplines. Scholars have long been intrigued to formulate an overarching General Theory of Marketing. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on developments towards a General Theory of Marketing, (2) give an overview of theories applied in marketing research, and (3) outline future research directions.

### **25. (Automatic) Topic Detection in Marketing Research**

Scientists and managers are constantly on the outlook for current and emerging trends in marketing research topics. Advances in machine learning and data mining methods may help to accelerate the detection of such topics. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on (automatic) topic detection, (2) propose a framework for (automatic) detection of current and emerging topics in marketing, and (3) outline future research directions.