

MKT 7X0 Research Seminar FSS 2025 – Topics

Area Marketing & Sales

Below is a list of **69 topics** for seminar theses in the Area Marketing & Sales. The topics are clustered into **ten categories**. For details on the **application process**, please refer to our websites and the provided documents.

- I. Marketing Strategy and Management
- II. Consumer Behavior and Psychology
- III. Price Management
- IV. Product and Innovation Management
- V. Brand and Communications Management
- VI. Sales Management
- VII. Digital Marketing
- VIII. Customer Relationship Management
- IX. Marketing Theory and Research Methods
- X. Marketing Analytics

I. Marketing Strategy and Management

1. Brand Design in Sustainability Contexts *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

This research topic examines the role of branding in shaping consumer perceptions and decisions when sustainability is a key factor. It focuses on aspects such as sustainable product ingredients, eco-friendly packaging, transparent sourcing, or the impact of visual identity elements like colors and logos. By conducting a literature review, students can explore how these branding elements influence consumer trust, brand credibility, and purchase behavior in sustainability-driven markets. Key questions include whether brands should prioritize sustainable ingredients or packaging and how design choices enhance consumer trust in sustainability claims.

2. Bridging the Divide: Exploring the Gender Gap in High-Attention Contexts Through Theoretical Frameworks *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

The gender gap in high-attention contexts—such as leadership roles, media visibility, and competitive industries—remains a significant challenge despite progress in gender equality. Various psychological, sociological, and economic theories offer insights into the systemic barriers and biases that contribute to this disparity. This seminar thesis examines the gender gap in high-visibility environments by exploring key theoretical frameworks and psychological effects.

3. CEO Reputation Management and Its Impact on Organizational Purpose* *(Chair Prof. Kraus)*

This seminar paper explores how a CEO's reputation shapes an organization's internal culture and external perception. Through a review of existing literature, you will examine the mechanisms by which a CEO's leadership style, public image, and personal values influence workplace norms, employee behavior, and corporate identity. The research could also delve into the challenges of managing a CEO's reputation in the face of crises or controversies and how this impacts organizational stability. Your research aims to understand CEO reputation and organizational characteristics, offering opportunities to analyze strategies that safeguard or enhance the organizational purpose.

4. From Automation to Innovation: How Generative AI is Revolutionizing Business Processes *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

Generative AI is transforming the way companies operate by not only automating repetitive tasks but also enabling creativity and strategic decision-making. From marketing communications and product development to customer service and internal organization, the possibilities are virtually limitless. This

paper aims to explore how businesses can leverage generative AI to boost efficiency, unlock new opportunities, and gain competitive advantages.

5. Replaced by AI? Redefining the Role of Human Marketers in the Age of AI *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

As AI technologies become increasingly sophisticated, they are transforming the marketing landscape by automating tasks, generating content, and analyzing consumer data with unprecedented efficiency. This raises critical questions about the future role of human marketers in an AI-driven industry. Will humans be sidelined by automation, or will they take on new, strategic roles that complement AI capabilities? What will be the role of human input in AI creativity and innovation, and how do consumers judge the results? This seminar paper aims to explore how AI is reshaping the responsibilities of human marketers, focusing on areas such as creativity, emotional intelligence, ethical oversight, and strategic decision-making. The paper will assess the challenges and opportunities for marketers in maintaining their relevance and value in the AI-dominated future.

6. Strategic Market Exits: Navigating the Non-Economic Challenges of Leaving a Market *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

In today's complex international landscape, multinational companies face increasing pressure to navigate market exits for non-economic reasons, such as geopolitical tensions or ethical considerations. This seminar paper aims to explore the role of effective market exit strategies in maintaining organizational integrity and minimizing disruptions when faced with such challenges. By reviewing recent cases and existing literature, this study will evaluate the short- and long-term impacts of strategic market exits on a company's reputation, operations, and stakeholder relationships. The paper will provide practical recommendations for companies preparing to make such critical decisions in an increasingly polarized global environment.

7. Sustainable Sports Sponsorship: Driving Environmental and Social Impact Through Collaborative Partnerships *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

As sustainability becomes a core value for organizations worldwide, sports sponsorship is evolving to prioritize environmental responsibility and social impact. By integrating sustainable practices into sponsorship strategies, brands and sports organizations can foster positive change while strengthening their market position. This seminar thesis explores how sustainable sports sponsorship initiatives

contribute to environmental conservation, community engagement, and corporate social responsibility.

8. Theoretical Foundations of Employer Branding: Strategies for Attracting and Retaining Talent *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

This paper focuses on the key theoretical concepts and frameworks that underpin employer branding. It explores how companies develop and implement strategies to position themselves as attractive employers, highlighting the importance of organizational culture, employee value propositions, and leadership. The goal is to analyze how effective employer branding can drive talent acquisition, employee retention, and organizational growth.

II. Consumer Behavior and Psychology

9. Consumer Autonomy and Digital Product Passports: Understanding Behavioral Impacts Through Self-Determination Theory* *(Chair Prof. Homburg)*

Digital product passports (DPPs) are transforming how consumers interact with supply chain information by offering transparency in an accessible way. The degree of autonomy consumers experience when navigating DPPs and when exploring the supply chain information provided may significantly shape their behavior, as suggested by Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This seminar thesis examines how varying levels of consumer autonomy in using DPPs influence key behavioral outcomes, such as trust, purchase intentions, or willingness to pay. Specifically, it aims to (1) define and contextualize autonomy within the framework of SDT as it applies to navigating DPPs, (2) investigate how different levels of navigational autonomy affect consumer behavior, and (3) provide actionable recommendations for designing DPPs that enhance autonomy to drive positive consumer reactions.

10. From Insights to Impact: Understanding Effective Online Reviews* *(Chair Prof. Homburg)*

In today's digital marketplace, online reviews serve as critical decision-making tools for consumers navigating purchase decisions. Beyond simplistic star ratings and textual descriptions, the effectiveness of an online review is increasingly defined by its ability to provide valuable insights and guidance. Factors such as detailed product descriptions, personal experiences, authenticity, and relevance to potential buyers play pivotal roles in shaping a review's helpfulness.

Against this backdrop, the objectives of the seminar paper are: 1) to review the relevant academic literature on the topic, 2) to analyze which factors elevate online reviews from mere critiques to influential resources, and 3) to outline areas for further research.

11. Gender and Sustainability: Do Men and Women Differ in Environmental Attitudes and Behavior?* (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

Do men and women think and act differently when it comes to sustainability? Research suggests that gender plays a significant role in shaping pro-environmental attitudes and behavior, influencing everything from consumer choices to policy support. Understanding these differences is essential for businesses, policymakers, and educators. This seminar thesis will (1) define and conceptualize pro-environmental behavior and attitude, (2) explore gender differences in sustainable decision-making, (3) investigate psychological factors, such as social norms, values, and identity, that drive potential differences, and (4) derive implications for marketing practice. Finally, (5) this thesis shall outline future directions for marketing research.

12. Self-Optimization Through Consumption: Understanding the Psychological and Societal Drivers* (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

From fitness trackers and wellness apps to productivity tools and biohacking products, self-optimization has become a powerful force in modern consumer culture. Individuals increasingly seek out products and services that promise personal growth, efficiency, and well-being, reflecting a growing focus on self-optimization. But what drives this growing demand? This seminar thesis aims to explore the key drivers behind consumption decisions related to self-optimization, focusing on both macro-level and micro-level influences. To this end, the thesis should first (1) introduce the theoretical foundations related to self-concept, identity, and consumer behavior that provide a framework for understanding self-optimization through consumption. Next, (2) it should systematically review literature on drivers of the trend, identifying macro-level influences such as societal norms and cultural trends, as well as micro-level influences such as psychological needs, self-identity, and motivational triggers. Finally, (3) the seminar thesis should identify research gaps and practical implications for marketing, offering insights into how companies can effectively position products and services within the self-optimization trend.

13. Spreading the Word: Transparency and Word-of-Mouth Dynamics* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

As transparency initiatives increasingly provide consumers with detailed insights into company practices, their role in shaping consumer perceptions and behavior warrants closer examination. This seminar thesis investigates the influence of transparency initiatives on the dynamics of word-of-mouth (WOM). Specifically, it seeks to (1) investigate if and how consumers' WOM behavior is influenced by transparency initiatives, (2) explore the mechanisms through which transparency stimulates or suppresses WOM among different consumer segments, and (3) provide actionable recommendations for leveraging transparency to encourage positive WOM.

14. Tailored by AI: The Impact of GenAI on Personalization in Marketing (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

Over the past decades, AI has revolutionized the way companies conduct business. A recent advancement in the field of AI is the emergence of Generative AI. When considering the whole range of human tasks that AI is capable of performing, GenAI focuses on the subset of creative tasks and the generation of novel content. Academics and practitioners have long acknowledged the great potential that GenAI bears for businesses. Especially in a marketing context, contemporary applications of GenAI include the generation of marketing copy, social media content, or improved customer service through chatbots. Unlike traditional methods that rely heavily on human creativity and manual effort, GenAI enables companies to produce unique, context-specific content in real-time. This seminar paper aims to (1) explore how GenAI can be utilized for personalization, and (2) assess the effectiveness of such personalization attempts as well as its impact on consumer attitudes, perceptions, and evaluations.

15. The Power of Stories: Gendered Perceptions in Online Reviews (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

This research explores how the storytelling nature of online reviews influences consumer engagement and perceptions, with a focus on gender differences. It investigates whether positive or negative reviews are more effective in transporting readers into the narrative and how gender moderates this effect. Through a literature review, students can examine the psychological and emotional mechanisms at play, as well as the implications for marketing strategies that leverage consumer reviews. Key questions include whether narrative transportation leads to stronger perceived credibility and if gender biases shape the interpretation of review content.

16. The Psychological Impact of CEO Communication During Organizational Change* (*Chair Prof. Kraus*)

Within this seminar thesis, you investigate the marketing implications of CEO communication during periods of organizational change. Through a literature review, you examine how a CEO's messaging strategy influences employee morale, brand perception, and consumer trust. The study explores the psychological effects of communication style, transparency, and tone on stakeholder confidence and customer loyalty during transitions such as mergers, rebranding, or crises. Your thesis aims to offer a framework for integrating leadership communication into marketing strategies for organizational optimization.

17. The Rise of Minimalism: Psychological Drivers of a Counter-Movement to Consumer Culture* (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

Minimalism has emerged as a growing counter-movement to the pervasive culture of materialism, offering a lifestyle focused on intentionality, simplicity, and decluttering. This seminar thesis aims to examine the psychological drivers that motivate individuals to adopt minimalism. The thesis should (1) outline foundational theories from psychology and consumer behavior that provide insights into the appeal of minimalism. Next, (2) it should review existing literature and analyze how factors such as dissatisfaction with materialism, a desire for mental clarity, and environmental concerns contribute to this lifestyle change. Finally, (3) the thesis should identify gaps in current research, propose directions for future studies, and derive practical implications for marketing strategies and broader societal change.

18. The Why behind the Words: Antecedents of Customer Reviews* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Customer reviews are an integral part of modern decision-making processes, significantly influencing consumer choices and business reputations. However, not every experience motivates customers to leave a review. While some individuals are eager to share their thoughts online, others remain silent, even after notable experiences. Consequently, little is known about the specific factors that drive consumers to express themselves on the Internet, highlighting a critical gap in understanding review behavior.

Against this backdrop, the objectives of the seminar paper are: 1) to analyze the underlying theoretical foundation and review the relevant academic literature on the topic, 2) to analyze which factors drive the provision of online reviews, and 3) to outline areas for further research.

19. Understanding and Addressing Public Procurement: An Exploration of Public Buyer Behavior and Its Strategic Sales Implications* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Governments spend approximately \$11 trillion annually on public procurement, representing 13% of the global gross domestic product. Consequently, the public sector offers vast opportunities for private companies. However, selling to public institutions presents unique challenges for firms due to the distinctive characteristics of public procurement, including public buyers who may have different procurement motives and face different conditions than buyers from private companies. This raises questions about the factors driving public buyer behavior and the strategic implications for sellers in addressing these drivers. The aim of this thesis is to (1) review and synthesize relevant academic literature on business-to-government exchanges, (2) to discuss the role and behavior of public buyers within the procurement process, and (3) outline future research directions.

20. When Feedback Stings: The Role of Negative Reviews in Shaping Consumer Behavior* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Negative reviews are a powerful force in shaping consumer behavior, often carrying more weight than their positive counterparts. As such, negative reviews significantly influence perceptions of products and services, swaying purchase decisions and shaping brand reputations. Despite their importance, little is known about how negative reviews influence consumer behavior, highlighting a need for deeper exploration into the dynamics of review valence and its role in decision-making.

Against this backdrop, the objectives of the seminar paper are: 1) to analyze the underlying theoretical foundation, 2) to review the relevant academic literature on the topic, and 3) to outline areas for further research.

21. When Knowledge Pays: Exploring the Link Between Transparency and WTP* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Transparency initiatives, where companies share detailed information with end consumers about their operations and practices, are increasingly influencing consumer behavior. For companies, understanding the impact of transparency on consumers' willingness to pay (WTP) is critical, as increased WTP offers a strong incentive to adopt and enhance such transparency practices.

This seminar thesis investigates how the presence of transparency influences consumers' WTP. Specifically, it encourages a comprehensive exploration of the literature on transparency and WTP, including, but not limited to, transparency about supply chains, costs, production practices, labor

conditions, or sustainability. The thesis aims to (1) examine how WTP is influenced by the availability of transparency-related information across diverse contexts, (2) explore the psychological and behavioral mechanisms that drive changes in WTP, and (3) provide actionable recommendations for businesses to leverage transparency initiatives as a strategic tool to capture additional value.

III. Price Management

22. Decoding Pricing Authority in B2B: A Comprehensive Review of Scope and Stakeholders* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Pricing and decision authority encompass various dimensions, including list prices, standard discounts, and situational adjustments. This study aims to (1) review existing literature on the distinct areas of pricing authority, (2) provide an overview of stakeholders and the scope of delegation, and (3) derive implications for managerial practice and future research directions.

23. Implementing Pricing Authority Delegation: A Review on Stakeholder Interferences* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

While practitioners and scholars often solely discuss the strategic delegation of pricing authority, this seminar thesis explores its implementation, and the actors involved. Specifically, it aims to (1) review existing literature on the practical implementation of pricing and decision authority delegation, (2) identify and delineate interferences by key stakeholders (e.g., companies, managers, sales representatives) and their impact on the delegation's performance implications, and (3) provide practical recommendations for managers while outlining directions for future research.

24. Tailoring Pricing Authority to the B2B Salesforce: A State-of-the-Art Literature Review* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Trends in individualization and the use of digital tools in the workplace are influencing business practices, including the delegation of pricing authority. This seminar thesis aims to (1) systematically review and categorize academic research on tailoring pricing and decision authority delegation to the sales force, (2) explore whether authority is granted at the individual or team level and how it is customized to account for sales representatives' heterogeneity, and (3) derive implications for managerial practice and identify avenues for future research.

IV. Product and Innovation Management

25. Diverse Cultures, Unified Goals: How Team Cultures Within Organizations Influence Innovation and Performance *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

Team culture can differ significantly across departments within the same organization, with each culture shaping how teams approach challenges, solve problems, and achieve outcomes. This seminar thesis explores how these differences in team cultures impact innovation and overall performance. By reviewing empirical research, the paper will highlight the ways in which diverse cultural dynamics within organizations can either enhance or hinder innovation and other business outcomes. The findings aim to provide insights into managing cultural diversity within organizations to foster collaboration, innovation, and sustained success.

26. Driving Innovation Through Marketing: Unveiling the Key Determinants *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

Innovation is often celebrated for its outcomes, yet the role of marketing in shaping and fostering innovation is frequently overlooked. This seminar paper aims to investigate the critical factors that enable marketing to drive innovation within organizations. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, the paper will examine how marketing strategies, customer insights, and communication processes contribute to the development and execution of innovative ideas. The findings will provide valuable insights into the intersection of marketing and innovation, offering practical implications for organizations seeking to maximize their innovative potential.

27. From selling cars to providing mobility? *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

The traditional model of selling cars is rapidly evolving as automotive companies shift gears towards offering comprehensive mobility solutions. This transformation is driven by the rise of ride-sharing, car subscriptions, EV charging networks, and multimodal transportation platforms. These services are reshaping the industry by prioritizing convenience, sustainability, and adaptability over car ownership. How are automakers embracing this paradigm shift, and what does it mean for the future of mobility? This paper aims to reveal the range of innovative services redefining transportation and discover how the industry is moving beyond just selling cars.

28. Price? Range? Charging Networks? Identifying Purchase Criteria in the Transition Phase from ICE to EVs (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

As the automotive world transitions from internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles to electric vehicles (EVs), consumer priorities are shifting too. What drives purchasing decisions in this new era? Is it the affordability of EVs, their driving range, charging infrastructure, or environmental benefits? While early adopters prioritized innovativeness and tech-savvy features, today's buyers are placing increasing emphasis on price and total cost of ownership. This paper focuses on the evolving decision-making criteria as automakers balance affordability with performance and discover how these factors shape the pace of the EV revolution.

29. Turning Complaints into Competitive Advantage: Key Factors in Effective Customer Complaint Management* (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

Customer complaints, while often perceived as negative, hold untapped potential for improving organizational processes and innovation. While previous research has highlighted the benefits of customer complaints, less attention has been given to the key factors that determine whether companies truly leverage complaints for improvement. This seminar thesis aims to (1) provide an overview of the literature on customer complaint management processes, focusing on the factors that influence their effectiveness. Specifically, the thesis shall (2) examine key determinants such as company culture, complaint severity, and cross-departmental collaboration. Furthermore, (3) this thesis will critically analyze the conditions under which complaints can drive innovation and process improvements. Finally, (4) practical implications for marketing, customer service, and innovation management, and (5) future research directions shall be outlined.

V. Brand and Communications Management

30. Corporate Sustainability Reputation: Drivers and Impact on Consumer Perceptions and Behavior (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

As sustainability becomes an essential pillar of corporate strategy, its impact on a company's reputation has garnered significant attention. Consumers and other company stakeholders increasingly expect businesses to prioritize environmental responsibility, which influences corporate sustainability reputation and, consequently, consumer outcomes such as purchase intention, brand perception, and loyalty. This seminar thesis will (1) investigate how sustainability initiatives shape a

company's sustainability reputation. Furthermore, it will (2) examine the impact of corporate sustainability reputation on consumer perceptions and behaviors, including brand trust, engagement, and purchase decisions. Finally, (3) recommendations will be developed for companies seeking to strengthen their reputation through sustainability efforts, and (4) directions for future research shall be discussed.

31. Employer Brand and Customer Brand: A Dynamic Relationship Shaping Business Success (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

This topic explores the two-way relationship between employer branding and customer branding. It investigates how a company's reputation as an employer influences customer perceptions and, conversely, how customer brand image impacts employer attractiveness. The paper aims to analyze how aligning internal and external branding strategies can create a stronger overall brand presence and competitive advantage.

32. Language of Motives: A Comparative Study of Power, Affiliation, and Achievement* (*Chair Prof. Kraus*)

This seminar thesis provides a comparative analysis of the language associated with the motives of power, affiliation, and achievement. Through a literature review, you examine the linguistic markers of these motives and their application in branding. Within your study, you investigate how brands utilize power-related language to assert authority, affiliation-driven language to build community, and achievement-oriented language to inspire success. By comparing these approaches, you will define boundary criteria and can give theoretical implications for which organization should use which motive dominantly. Therefore, your thesis aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how language shapes stakeholder perceptions and drives brand value.

33. The AI Experience: Transforming the Customer Journey through GenAI (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

Generative AI is reshaping the customer journey by enabling more personalized, efficient, and engaging interactions at every touchpoint. From creating awareness through AI-generated advertisements to enhancing post-purchase support with virtual assistants, GenAI influences how consumers navigate their interactions with brands. This seminar paper aims to assess how GenAI impacts the different phases of the customer journey, thereby exploring the benefits and challenges that come with the integration of GenAI at various consumer touchpoints.

34. The effect of green- and non-green ESG issues on brand reputation (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Marketing research to date has focused heavily on “green issues” (e.g., CO2 reduction). However, it is questionable whether the environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance of firms can be reduced to “green issues” only, or whether “non-green issues” also influence brand reputation. The aim of this seminar paper is to review the literature on the relationship between ESG performance and brand reputation, while systematically distinguishing between green and non-green issues.

35. The role of marketing in translating ESG performance into firm performance (Chair Prof. Stahl)

While research on the impact of ESG on firm performance provides mixed (and conflicting) evidence (Whelan et al. 2021), ongoing research suggests that the marketing department may have a critical role in this relationship (e.g., Yusuf and Skiera 2024). The goal of this seminar paper is to summarize existing findings on the role of marketing departments in translating ESG performance into firm performance and to shed light on the underlying mechanisms.

36. The Role of Message Consistency in Corporate Communication: Impact on Brand Success and Stakeholder Relationships (Chair Prof. Stahl)

This paper examines the broader role of consistent messaging in corporate communication and how it influences various aspects of brand performance. It explores how aligned and coherent communication strategies affect stakeholder engagement, brand perception, and overall business success. The focus is on understanding how consistency across channels and messages can strengthen brand identity, customer loyalty, and internal alignment.

VI. Sales Management

37. Communicating Sustainability Effectively: Building Customer Trust and Creating Value (Chair Prof. Homburg)

As sustainability becomes a key differentiator for brands, effectively communicating CSR initiatives and product sustainability is vital to influence customer attitudes and behavior. Yet, little is known about which communication strategies resonate most with customers and foster trust and value perception. This seminar thesis aims to (1) review and synthesize academic literature on sustainability communication in both B2C and B2B contexts, (2) provide an overview of how communication techniques (e.g., storytelling, transparency, and certification labels) shape customer perceptions, and

(3) provide managerial implications and outline future research directions for designing impactful sustainability communication strategies.

38. How or Why? The Role of Construal Level in Selling Innovations* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

According to the construal level theory, people mentally construe objects in terms of abstract, high-level characteristics or in terms of detailed, low-level features, depending on the context. Low-level construals focus on the “how” of actions, whereas high-level construals emphasize the “why” of actions. That is, the construal level affects individuals’ understanding of information. In a business context, the construal level of buyers can shape their perception and evaluation of products, especially when sellers present new products. This raises questions regarding how buyers perceive innovations and the strategic implications for sellers in effectively addressing and leveraging these perceptions. The aim of this thesis is to review relevant literature on the role of construal levels in sales and outline future research directions.

VII. Digital Marketing

39. Crafting the Future: How Will Generative AI Affect Social Media and Content Creation? (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

Generative AI tools enable consumers and businesses to create content easier than ever by simply prompting ChatGPT, Gemini and other tools for text, image, and video creation. Is GenAI thus good for businesses, consumers, and the society at large interacting with social media? Where does it potentially create problems and how can they be mitigated? This seminar thesis should summarize the fundamentals of generative AI and discuss whether and when these tools succeed or fail for social media (marketing).

40. Embracing or Resisting AI: Understanding Consumer Acceptance of AI Technologies (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

As AI technologies become embedded in everyday life, consumer receptivity and resistance to these innovations are critical areas of inquiry. Yet, little is known about the factors driving acceptance or resistance to AI in consumer contexts. This seminar thesis aims to (1) review and synthesize academic literature on consumer attitudes and behaviors toward AI technologies, (2) explore the antecedents

and contingency factors influencing AI acceptance or resistance, and (3) derive managerial implications and outline future research directions to foster consumer trust and engagement with AI.

41. How Question Format Affects Online Feedback* (*Chair Prof. Kraus*)

Online reviews heavily influence consumer decisions. The way feedback is collected—using rating scales, question types, or survey length—affects if and what people share and how they express their opinions. The format or presentation of online reviews also influences how these reviews are understood. This seminar thesis explores how review design choices influence both the content shared and how it is received.

42. Insights from Online Employer Reviews using Text Mining (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

Online employee reviews published anonymously on platforms such as Kununu, Glassdoor, or Indeed are increasingly used in research as a data source to measure employee perception constructs (e.g. satisfaction, identification, pride). The aim of this seminar paper is to provide an overview of (1) text mining methods (2) employee perception constructs that have been investigated in this context and (3) the research opportunities that arise from using this data source.

43. Literature Review on the Effect of AI Recommendation Systems on Consumer Metrics (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

AI-based recommendation systems have become integral tools in consumer-facing industries, such as e-commerce, entertainment, and digital media. These systems use algorithms to analyze user behavior, preferences, and interactions to offer personalized product suggestions. As AI-powered recommendations become more prevalent, it is crucial for businesses to understand how these systems affect critical consumer metrics, including customer satisfaction, engagement, conversion rates, purchase behavior, and retention. In this regard, this seminar thesis aims to explore the influence of AI recommendation systems on these consumer metrics, synthesizing key findings from relevant research.

44. Minorities in Digital Spaces* (*Chair Prof. Kraus*)

Minorities often face discrimination in various areas, such as the workplace, hiring processes, and the sharing economy. This thesis examines their experiences in digital spaces, focusing on how minorities and their content are perceived and how they express themselves online.

45. Personalization vs. Hyperpersonalization: What Works Best for Different Industries?* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Personalization and hyperpersonalization are two critical strategies in modern marketing, aimed at delivering tailored experiences to consumers. While personalization typically involves segmenting customers based on broader characteristics, hyperpersonalization takes this approach further by leveraging advanced data analytics and artificial intelligence to create unique, individual experiences for each customer. Depending on their market dynamics, customer expectations, and available technologies, different industries may benefit from these strategies. This seminar thesis aims to (1) review and synthesize relevant academic literature on personalization and hyperpersonalization in marketing and sales, (2) compare the effectiveness of these strategies across various industries such as retail, healthcare, finance, and hospitality, and (3) derive managerial implications for businesses to determine which approach works best for their specific industry, customer base, and marketing objectives.

46. Personalized Digital Nudging: Leveraging AI for Socially Beneficial Decision-Making* (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

Nudging refers to the use of subtle interventions that steer individuals toward choices that are beneficial for themselves and society without restricting their freedom of choice. In an increasingly digitalized world, digital nudging—the application of nudging principles in online environments—has gained growing relevance. The advancement of Artificial Intelligence (AI) enables the creation of highly personalized nudges by leveraging consumer data, including their preferences, intentions, and situational context. This seminar thesis aims to (1) provide an overview of AI-driven nudging, (2) examine the challenges and opportunities associated with this approach, and (3) identify existing research gaps, particularly concerning the implementation of AI-driven nudging. Additionally, the thesis shall (4) explore the implications for marketing, offering insights into how AI can be effectively harnessed to shape consumer behavior.

47. The Art of Influence: Creativity in Influencer Marketing (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

This research examines the role of creativity in influencer marketing and its impact on consumer perceptions and engagement. It explores whether influencers who employ creative and innovative approaches perform better and how consumers respond to such content. Additionally, the study investigates whether brands encourage influencers to embrace creativity or prioritize conformity, and

the driving forces behind these strategies. A literature review on this topic could shed light on the balance between brand guidelines and creative freedom in influencer collaborations.

48. The Double-Edged Sword: Exploring Societal Effects of Generative AI (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

Like any transformative technology, generative AI may have far-reaching effects on society, e.g., by shaping communication, creativity, or the labor market. This seminar thesis should explore both the potential positive and negative societal effects of generative AI, e.g., by also drawing comparisons to the impact of past technological advancements.

49. The Evolution of Hyperpersonalization in Marketing: From Segmentation to Individualization*
(*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

The concept of hyperpersonalization in marketing has evolved significantly, moving beyond traditional segmentation strategies to a more individualized approach that tailors marketing efforts to each consumer's unique preferences, behaviors, and needs. This shift is driven by advancements in data analytics, artificial intelligence, and customer behavior tracking, enabling brands to create deeply personalized experiences at scale. Despite the potential of hyperpersonalization, many organizations face challenges in effectively implementing these strategies while maintaining privacy and ethical standards. The objectives of this seminar thesis are (1) to review and analyze the academic literature on the evolution of hyperpersonalization in marketing, (2) to explore the technological advancements and strategies that have facilitated the shift from segmentation to individualization, and (3) to derive actionable managerial insights on how businesses can successfully adopt and leverage hyperpersonalization to improve customer engagement, loyalty, and overall marketing effectiveness.

50. The role of Retail Media in the Digital Transformation of Retail* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

Retail Media is an innovative advertising strategy that positions retailers as central players in the digital advertising market. It leverages retailers' customer data to enable personalized, efficient, and measurable advertising across both online and physical stores.

The aim of this seminar paper is twofold: (1) to examine the role of Retail Media in bridging online and offline channels through a literature review, and (2) to demonstrate its practical relevance using appropriate use cases.

51. Understanding Customer-Chatbot Interactions: A Review of Key Influencing Factors (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

This study aims to conduct a comprehensive literature review on the factors influencing customer interaction with chatbots. The review will explore technological, psychological, and cultural determinants, as well as the role of chatbot design in shaping user experiences. By synthesizing existing research, the study aims to highlight the key findings related to the impact of each factor and offer future directions for enhancing the understanding of customer-chatbot interactions.

52. Understanding FOMO: The Psychological Drivers Behind Fear of Missing Out (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) has become one of the forces shaping consumer behavior, particularly in the digital age. Constant exposure to curated online experiences and scarcity-driven marketing tactics can heighten this fear, leading to increased engagement, urgency, and impulsive purchasing decisions. This seminar thesis aims to (1) explore the psychological foundations of FOMO. Building on these insights, the thesis will (2) analyze how digital marketing strategies—such as scarcity appeals, urgency tactics, and targeted social media campaigns—impact FOMO and, thus, consumer behavior. By synthesizing these findings, the thesis will (3) outline future research directions and practical implications for digital marketing strategies.

53. Virtual vs. Human Influencers: Exploring Similarities, Differences, and Marketing Implications (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

This research examines the emerging phenomenon of virtual influencers and compares them with human influencers in terms of their characteristics, audience engagement, and perceived authenticity. By analyzing the similarities and differences, the study aims to uncover how each type influences consumer behavior and decision-making. Additionally, the research will explore the implications of using virtual influencers for brands, focusing on their potential advantages, limitations, and ethical considerations. The findings will contribute to the growing body of knowledge in digital marketing and provide practical insights for firms seeking to optimize their influencer strategies.

VIII. Customer Relationship Management

54. Emotional Loyalty Campaigns in B2B* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Emotional loyalty campaigns have gained increasing attention in Business-to-Business (B2B) contexts to enhance customer relationships and foster long-term commitment. While traditional loyalty strategies often focus on transactional incentives, emotional loyalty campaigns aim to create deep, meaningful connections between businesses and their clients. These campaigns can significantly influence customer satisfaction, retention, and overall relationship quality. However, challenges remain in understanding how to effectively implement and measure the impact of emotional loyalty initiatives in B2B environments. The objectives of this seminar thesis are (1) to review and analyze relevant academic literature on emotional loyalty in B2B contexts, (2) to explore the effect of emotional loyalty campaigns on customer relationships, and (3) to provide actionable managerial recommendations for designing and executing successful emotional loyalty strategies in B2B settings.

55. From Cards to Clicks: Understanding What Drives Customer Engagement in Retailer Loyalty Apps* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Loyalty programs have undergone significant evolution, transitioning from traditional physical customer cards to sophisticated digital retailer apps. With more retailers establishing their own mobile apps, strategies to drive repeat purchases have become increasingly prominent. The goal of this seminar paper is to explore this evolution and analyze the factors influencing the acceptance and use of loyalty apps through an extensive literature review. The focus will be on identifying the features and incentives that motivate customers to engage with these apps regularly.

56. Revolutionizing Engagement and Decision-Making? Leveraging AI in the B2B Customer Journey (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Artificial intelligence is transforming the B2B customer journey by enabling smarter lead generation, predictive insights, and personalized engagement. Yet, little is known about how AI impacts critical stages of the B2B buying process, from awareness to post-purchase evaluation. This seminar thesis aims to (1) review and synthesize academic literature on the integration of AI in the B2B customer journey, (2) analyze how AI-driven tools influence decision-making, trust-building, and relationship management in B2B contexts, and (3) provide managerial implications and outline future research directions for leveraging AI to optimize the B2B customer experience.

IX. Marketing Theory and Research Methods

57. A Literature Review on Measures of Salesperson Performance* *(Chair Prof. Homburg)*

It is widely recognized that the measurement of salesperson performance is one of the most important variables for researchers and practitioners. However, the definition of salesperson performance and how to measure it still remains a contested issue. Beyond, recent trends (e.g., new sales technologies) affect salespeople's activities, the availability of data, and ultimately the measurement of salesperson performance. Against this background, the aim of this thesis is to review salesperson performance measures.

58. Attribution Theory and its Impact on Green Products and Green Marketing *(Chair Prof. Kuester)*

Why do consumers trust some companies' green initiatives but remain skeptical of others? As consumer demand for green products rises, understanding how individuals attribute responsibility to companies engaging in green initiatives and green marketing becomes paramount. Marketing researchers have already emphasized the relevance of attribution theory, which explains how individuals attribute feelings and intentions to others to understand their behavior, for green marketing. Despite its importance, there is still no comprehensive overview of how attribution theory applies to green products and marketing strategies. This seminar thesis seeks to bridge this gap by (1) synthesizing existing research on attribution theory and its relevance to green marketing and consumer perceptions of sustainable products, and (2) deriving managerial insights for companies aiming to navigate the complexities of green consumer behavior. Based on these insights, (3) implications for theory and future research avenues shall be derived.

59. Eye-Tracking: Applications in Marketing Research* *(Chair Prof. Kraus)*

Eye tracking is a technology that records eye movements to understand where people look, what they focus on, and how they pay attention. It uses devices like eye trackers with infrared light to track these movements. By studying eye patterns, researchers learn about visual perception, cognitive processes, and user experience. This seminar thesis explores eye-tracking technology and its applications in marketing research.

60. Methods and Frameworks for Longitudinal Studies in Marketing Research *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

The seminar thesis will focus on the methodologies and frameworks essential for conducting longitudinal studies in marketing research. It will examine the advantages of longitudinal approaches

in understanding consumer behavior, brand loyalty, and other metrics over extended periods. The study will cover various research designs and analytical tools, highlighting best practices and addressing common challenges in maintaining consistency and reliability throughout the research timeline.

61. Mirror vs. Mold Debate in Advertising (*Chair Prof. Stahl*)

The seminar thesis will examine the "Mirror vs. Mold" debate in marketing research. It will investigate the theoretical frameworks that underpin the notion of advertising either reflecting existing societal values and consumer behaviors ("mirror") or actively shaping and influencing them ("mold"). The study will conduct a literature review of scholarly articles and theoretical models, analyze empirical research findings related to each perspective, and evaluate the methodologies used to study the impact of advertising on societal norms and consumer psychology.

62. Predictive Evaluation in Marketing: Leveraging the power of Graph Network Analysis (*Chair Prof. Kraus*)

Graph theory is a branch of mathematics examining the structures modeling the relationship between objects. It is a powerful tool for discovering valuable information about relationships in complex data, representing significant business opportunity. In the social sciences, graph analysis has been applied within predictive analytics frameworks, in contexts ranging from predicting advertising response or product adoption to forecasting corporate default. This thesis investigates how marketing professionals might benefit from integration of graph analytics into the decision-making process.

63. Resource-Based View vs. Knowledge-Based View in Marketing Research – Understanding Competitive Advantage Through Two Key Theories* (*Chair Prof. Kuester*)

What makes a company truly competitive? Two major theoretical perspectives—the Resource-Based View (RBV) and the Knowledge-Based View (KBV)—offer different answers. While RBV focuses on a firm's tangible and intangible resources as sources of competitive advantage, KBV emphasizes knowledge as the key driver of sustained success. This seminar thesis will take a deep dive into both perspectives through a systematic literature review, aiming to (1) provide an overview of the origins, core principles, and key mechanisms of RBV and KBV in marketing research, (2) compare these theories across multiple dimensions, using real-world marketing cases to illustrate their applications, and (3)

critically assess the strengths, limitations, practical relevance of both approaches, offering insights into their implications for marketing research and strategy.

64. Time Series Analysis Methods in Marketing Research *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

This seminar thesis will delve into the application of time series analysis methods in marketing research, which is often used for short- to medium-term planning, such as adjusting marketing tactics based on predicted sales trends. It will explore various techniques used to analyze and forecast marketing trends, consumer behavior patterns, and other metrics. In this thesis the student will discuss and compare the models that have been used in the most impactful marketing research papers.

X. Marketing Analytics

65. A Review of State-of-the-Art Large Language Modelling *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

Large Language Models (LLMs) like GPT-4 and beyond have revolutionized the field of AI, enabling applications in areas ranging from content generation to customer support. But how exactly do they work, and what developments can businesses and society expect in the near future? This seminar thesis should provide a comprehensive overview of the technical foundations of state-of-the-art LLMs and critically assess their anticipated advancements and potential impacts in the coming years.

66. Beyond the Headlines: Uncovering Gender Bias in Media *(Chair Prof. Stahl)*

The way media portrays gender can significantly influence societal perceptions and reinforce stereotypes. Utilizing Natural Language Processing (NLP) and text analysis, researchers can systematically examine language patterns, topic emphasis, and representation in articles to identify subtle and overt gender biases. This seminar thesis delves into how these analytical methods reveal disparities in media narratives, authorship dynamics, and framing strategies related to gender. The goal is to uncover hidden biases in media content and contribute to the development of more equitable and inclusive reporting practices.

67. Customer Journey Mapping in Omnichannel Retailing: Leveraging Data to Unify Online and Offline Touchpoints for a Seamless Customer Experience* (*Chair Prof. Homburg*)

In today's retail landscape, customers demand seamless experiences across online and offline channels, making omnichannel strategies and customer journey analytics essential for success. This paper explores how retailers leverage customer journey mapping and analytics to optimize omnichannel strategies, with a focus on unifying interactions across digital and physical platforms. The aim of this paper is to examine the role of data collection in enhancing engagement across channels, the integration of touchpoints, and best practices for delivering seamless customer experiences.

68. Innovative Approaches to Marketing Using Recommender Systems (*Chair Prof. Kraus*)

Recommender Systems are used in marketing to personalize consumer interactions. By leveraging advanced algorithms, it's possible to enhance marketing strategies, improve consumer engagement, and optimize campaign effectiveness through tailored recommendations. This thesis investigates the use of recommender systems in the marketing domain, as well as the different types and use cases of these models.

69. Machine Learning Approaches to Predicting Consumer and Retail Metrics (*Chair Prof. Kraus*)

Marketing analytics frequently utilize multiple machine learning models, each possessing unique properties that make them suitable for specific scenarios. Fine-tuning these models is a crucial aspect of data mining processes. In data-driven marketing, the approach involves fitting several models to a given case, tuning their hyperparameters, and evaluating their performance. This seminar thesis dives into the properties of different machine learning models and examines the strengths and weaknesses of each, while optimizing business performance using data-driven methods.