

MKT 710 Research Seminar in Fall 2019 (HWS 2019)

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

Boas Bamberger, M. Sc.

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. Multichannel Marketing – Blessing or Curse?

Due to recent developments, many new sales channels emerged, opening up novel ways to approach consumers. In response, developing successful multichannel strategies has become a crucial success factor in marketing practice. However, apart from new opportunities, multichannel marketing also involves numerous challenges for practitioners. The aim of this work is (1) to review existing literature on Multichannel Marketing, (2) to demonstrate the influence of multichannel marketing on consumer behavior and to (3) derive implications for the practice of companies.

3. Creating and Capturing Value through Digital Platforms

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 digital platforms, which enable new forms of value creation and capture through rich interactions between engaging actors and organizing actors. Against this background, the goals of this seminar paper are (1) to provide a systematic overview of academic results on digital platforms and (2) to identify related trends and research gaps.

4. How and When does the Chief Marketing Officer matter?

Chief Marketing Officers are relevant for firms' marketing strategy and capabilities. However, it remains open to research how and when CMOs' relative wages and power affect relationships with other top-management team (TMT) members and performance of the firm's market-based assets, e.g. customer equity, brand equity, and customer satisfaction. The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on TMT power and TMT wage dispersion with a focus on CMOs, (2) identify contingency factors and consequences of TMT wage dispersion on top managers' (i.e., CMO's) power and relationships within the TMT, and (3) outline future research directions.

5. Reward Systems and the Marketing-Sales Interface

The frictions at the interface between marketing and sales departments have garnered substantial interest in research. However, there is little insight on how the reward systems of marketing and sales affect the interface's effectiveness. The goals of this thesis are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on the marketing-sales interface and marketing's versus sales' reward systems, (2) to develop propositions on how reward systems affect the marketing-sales interface, and (3) to derive future research directions.

B. Price Management

6. Trends in Pricing: How Information Technology Systems Boost Price Decisions

Pricing is one of the most important elements of the marketing mix – without creating substantial costs, it ultimately decides about company success or failure. As for every part of the organization, digitalization has also revolutionized the pricing practice: Dynamic or behavior-based pricing are only some of today's manifold possibilities of employing the "right" pricing strategy. Against this background, the superordinate goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on trends in pricing, (2) to identify the consequences of effective usage of information technology in pricing, and (3) to discuss the implications for researchers as well as practitioners.

C. Sales Management

7. Salespeople stereotypes: what they are, why they do exist and why should we bother?

What comes to your mind when you think about salespeople? Is it the *"used car salesman"*, or the *"real estate salesman"*? Is the stereotype you do have in mind male and characterised by personality traits like "pushiness" "competitiveness" and "forcefulness"? Yes? Did you ever think about how these stereotypes influence your career decision (choosing a career in Sales) and your personal interaction with salespeople? Drawing on research in social psychology, the goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant literature on the role of stereotypes in Sales (origin, content, impact), and (2) outline future research directions.

8. The evolving role of the salesperson in a digital world

The role of the salesperson is changing dramatically: In order to succeed in today's highly digitized world salespeople need to develop distinctive knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA), such as data management skills, analytical skills and high customer orientation. However, it remains open to research which specific KSA are crucial in a digitized world and how those capabilities differ in a B2B and a B2C context. Against this background, the objectives of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on current and future challenges in Sales and (2) to identify how the required salesperson capabilities have changed throughout digitization, both in a B2B and a B2C context.

9. Mind the gap: Is social network analysis relevant for sales research?

Not least because of its interdisciplinary, marketing research always make use of existing approaches and methods also from other research areas. It is therefore understandable that methods such as social network analysis, derived from empirical social research, are highly relevant and interesting for marketing research areas, such as sales. However, although there are some recent studies including social network analyses, its use represents a gap, especially in sales research. In order to explore this gap through a comprehensive state-of-the-art review of the academic literature the main objectives of this term paper are to (1) give an overview of sales studies including social network analysis, (2) classify the investigated topics within the related studies, (3) evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of the study's methodology, and (4) give an outlook for potential further studies.

10. Freedom, support, collegial behavior - What really makes good team work?

In times of networking and empowerment of working teams within the business environment on the one hand and buzzwords and strongly individual approaches like “new work” on the other hand, it is highly relevant to examine suitable forms of modern teamwork in order to achieve desired management goals. While previous research found that the support of a leader is important, team colleagues are increasingly moving into the foreground. Or is the independence and freedom of the individual essential for team success in the future? 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 of the most important aspects in research regarding team work, (2) classify the aspects and thus process an evaluation of the current state of research (explored vs. gaps), and (3) derive suggestions for future research and implications for practice.

11. Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence in Sales – A State-of-the-Art Review

Experts predict that Machine Learning (ML) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) will revolutionize the way companies so far operated. Hence, the sales practice in general and the role of the salespeople in particular (will) find themselves in a perpetual state of change. Whereas many employees fear – due to these technological developments – that many jobs might become obsolete, researchers and practitioners agree on its chances to boost productivity by streamlining everyday tasks. The superordinate goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on ML and AI in sales, (2) to identify the consequences these changes have on the tasks as well as on the needed competencies of a salesperson, (3) to outline a roadmap for future research, and (4) to highlight both the threats and opportunities these changes bear for managerial practice.

D. Customer Relationship Management**12. The essence of B2B Customer Relationship Management: Current research and future developments**

The management of key customer relationships is core in B2B markets. Therefore, the objectives of this seminar work are (1) the elaboration of the specifics of B2B customer relationships, (2) the systematic review of the current research in the field of B2B CRM, and (3) the identification of future developments of CRM in the context of B2B markets.

13. Customer knowledge value: how firms benefit from what customers know and share

Products and services are created for customers. However, it seems that not all firms always listen to their customers as they should. But what is the value of customers' shared knowledge, e.g., through feedback or as part of a co-creation process? This thesis aims to answer the question what this knowledge about products and services can be worth to firms. This seminar thesis consists of a systematic literature review on the state of the art of research on customer knowledge value and related areas.

14. Customer referrals: gaining new customers from existing customers

The internet has created endless ways for customers to influence other customers and prospects. From a firm perspective, one of the most assessable and goal-oriented ways of this influence is referral behavior, where customers actively refer new customers for an incentive. The goal of this seminar thesis is to summarize existing literature on customer referrals with an outlook on possible future developments and implications for business practice.

E. Consumer Behavior**15. Spoilt for Choice? The application of choice-tactics to simplify purchasing decisions**

People make countless decisions every day - many of which are purchasing decisions. However, it is not always easy to make a decision, especially in light of the immense and ever-growing range of consumer products. How do people find their way in this world flooded with offers? Which strategies do they use to make satisfactory decisions? The aim of this work is to answer these and related questions by (1) reviewing existing literature on consumer choice tactics and (2) providing a systematic overview of different tactics consumers apply when making purchase decisions.

16. 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.

17. Consumers Self-Construal as a Perspective for Cross-Cultural Consumer Research

Self-construal represents the extent to which an individual is viewed as being separate from or interconnected with others. Cross-cultural evidence suggests that these two aspects of self vary across cultures – namely, Westerners tend to focus on the personal self, whereas Easterners tend to focus on how the self is related to other people. This finding can be especially useful for explaining cultural differences in consumer behavior. Therefore, the goal of this seminar paper is to deliver an overview of existing cross-cultural research on the role of individual's self-construal in consumer behavior.

F. Market Research Methods**18. 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.