

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

Advisor: Gökhan Gecer, M.Sc.

Topic	The Number of Products to Be Sold over Different Sales Channels for Luxury Brands (English only)
Abstract	The companies could develop different marketing strategies for their sales channels in time. Some companies offer the same products for different prices over different channels. They could offer coupons or gift cards as well. However, this kind of price differentiating strategies may not be a good idea for luxury brands. As a result, luxury brands offer different number of products over different channels. For example, they sell certain products over only the mobile channel. The aim of this project is to figure out product number over sales channels strategy, its reasons and consequences; to develop an analytical model to calculate the optimal products numbers for the sales channels. The student who wish to work on this project should have a good analytical background.
Advisor	Please contact Gökhan Gecer, M.Sc. (gkhngcr@gmail.com) for further information.

Topic	New Product Preannouncement Content over Time (English only)
Abstract	New products preannouncement is a difficult and important process for the companies. New product preannouncement prepares the customers to the new product but it cannibalizes the demand for the existing product. It could be a good advantage against the competitors if the product is preannounced properly and could be a disaster the other way. The company could give more or less information to the customers. More information could affect the customers dramatically but the competitors learn about the new product in this case. The aim of this project is to figure out how much and

	what kind of information the company should share about its new product from the start of new product development until its launch.
Advisor	Please contact Gökhan Gecer, M.Sc. (gkhngcr@gmail.com) for further information.

Topic	How Do Customer Segments Value Hardware and Software? (English only)
Abstract	Smart phones and tablet PCs include hardware and software. They could advertise one or both of these components while promoting the new products. Different customer segments could value hardware and software differently. The aim of this project is to determine which customer groups value hardware and software in which ways, how the company should promote these components, and how big innovations in hardware and software affect the customers. The student who wish to do this project should have knowledge in experiment design.
Advisor	Please contact Gökhan Gecer, M.Sc. (gkhngcr@gmail.com) for further information.

Topic	Mobilization (English only)
Abstract	The Internet had changed the retail world dramatically. Companies had to adapt this new era that they changed their organizational schema as well as their sales and marketing strategies. Since then, mobile devices have been the new big change for the retail companies. For an interaction to be mobile, at least one of the companies (the firm or the customer) should be mobile which means the company isn't at a fixed location. Mobile devices have been used within the last decade. The scholars working on this stream have mainly focused on the customers. However, mobilization of the companies has been poorly studied. The aim of this project is to focus on mobile retailing from the company's window.
Advisor	Please contact Gökhan Gecer, M.Sc. (gkhngcr@gmail.com) for further information.

Advisor: Yasid Soufi, M.Sc.

Topic	Textual Analysis in Marketing-Finance: Creating A Dictionary
Abstract	The incorporation of soft information, i.e., text in Financial Analysis is playing an increasingly important role. Various studies examine the effect of such information on investor reactions to financial filings in the context of annual reports or IPO prospectuses. For this thesis it is of interest to further examine the intersection of Marketing and Finance in regard to textual analysis of aforesaid filings. The goal is to propose and implement an approach, based on deductive and inductive dictionary development techniques, to create a sufficient dictionary in order to capture the concept of marketing and respective sub-concepts in textual data as well as derive possible implications for financial values (returns, underpricing etc.).
Advisor	Please contact Yasid Soufi, M.Sc. (soufi@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.

Topic	Predicting Stock Returns With Textual Data: Which words matter?
Abstract	The global Natural Language Processing (NLP) market is growing rapidly. Applications of textual analysis are found across industries and research disciplines. The same holds true for the realm of Finance. This thesis should identify, discuss and implement possible methodologies to predict financial values (Buy and Hold Returns, Underpricing, Cash Shortfall etc.) based on textual data, e.g. from SEC filings, and further explore techniques to identify important English textual words/tokens alongside this prediction process.
Advisor	Please contact Yasid Soufi, M.Sc. (soufi@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.

Advisor: Mengmeng Niu, M.Sc.

Topic	Fake Label and Misinformation: Does The Position of Fake Label Matter? (English only)
Abstract	Fake news spreads very fast on social media and in real life. For example, Facebook has been using third-party fact checking website to rate the news published on Facebook. Fake news (or misinformation) will be rated as “fake” if it is proved not true and a “fake label” will be put after the headlines. Interestingly, different fact checker use different ways to label fake news: Some put a “fake” or “false” sign in front of the headlines, some put the label or a so-called “fake rating” after the articles. Combined with the “order effect”, this thesis investigates whether the position of a fake label effects people’s perception on the misinformation. Empirical data is required for a completion of the thesis.
Advisor	Please contact Mengmeng Niu, M.Sc. (mengmeng.niu@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.

Topic	Depletion in monetary resource and participation in reward program (English only)
Abstract	Previous researches have investigated the impact of financial constraints on people’s sharing behavior. They argued that people with financial constraints generally don’t want to remind of their previous purchasing and therefore they are reluctant to share their purchasing experiences on social media. In this master thesis, we would argue that since financially constrained people don’t want to remind of previous purchasing, they are less likely to participate in reward program offered by companies, since reward program encourages frequent purchasing and this can lead to ruminative thinking of previous consumption.
Advisor	Please contact Mengmeng Niu, M.Sc. (mengmeng.niu@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.

Topic	Framing Effect (English only)
Abstract	According to prospect theory, positive and negative framed messages could influence people's perception on gains and losses. In consumer behavior context, framing the same situation in opposite ways could lead to different behaviors. The purpose of this topic is to investigate the impacts of framing effect on consumer behavior with logical hypotheses and empirical evidence.
Advisor	Please contact Mengmeng Niu, M.Sc. (mengmeng.niu@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.

Advisor: Maximilian Gärth, M.Sc.

Topic	The Impact of Decision Framing on Online Ratings: An Empirical Investigation
Abstract	While the majority of online sellers ask customers to rate products/services by selecting the number of stars they want to give, whether changing the task to rejecting stars would result in different evaluations of the same product/service remains an open question. Thus, the goal of this master thesis is to summarize existing literature on decision strategies and framing and design an experimental study in collaboration with his or her advisor.
Advisor	Please contact Maximilian Gärth, M.Sc. (mgaerth@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.

Topic	When the Same Boring Task Feels Less Boring: A Case of Managing Expectations?
Abstract	Consumer boredom is a ubiquitous experience that can result in serious problems for consumers' health. Thus, recent research has begun to develop an understanding of strategies to reduce the experience of boredom. Yet, it remains unanswered whether expectations could help consumers prepare for an upcoming boring task, which could make the same boring task feel less boring. Thus, the goal of this master thesis is to summarize existing literature on boredom and to shed light on the underlying mechanism that could make expectations an effective tool to reduce the experience of boredom.
Advisor	Please contact Maximilian Gärth, M.Sc. (mgaerth@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.

Topic	Boredom as a Status Signal: An Empirical Investigation
Abstract	Why do consumers display boredom in situations that are not boring at all? The current research examines (1) as to whether consumers strategically use signals of boredom and (2) whether observers infer certain characteristics from signals of boredom. The

	master candidate will be instructed to design an experimental study to test derived hypotheses.
Advisor	Please contact Maximilian Gärth, M.Sc. (mgaerth@bwl.uni-mannheim.de) for further information.