

List of seminar topics

Area Marketing & Sales

Below you will find a list of 98 topics for your seminar thesis. The topics are clustered into 10 overarching categories. Please inform yourself about how to apply in the uploaded 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. Market Theory and Research Methods**
- X. Marketing Analytics**

I. Marketing Strategy and Management

1. #trending - The Interplay between Society and Marketing (Chair Prof. Stahl)

The use of more rainbow colors during June, including home athletes during big international tournaments or even solidarizing a brand with specific movements are all examples of marketing managers associating their campaigns with current societal topics. Do firms following this approach manage to attract new consumers or are such methods without effect (at best)? For instance, does using more green tones and pledging lower emissions convince consumers of a firm's sustainability efforts? In this seminar thesis, the student will explore how marketing efforts and the general society are intertwined, reviewing existing research that targets this link and explaining how such topics perhaps change in the marketing context over time.

2. Strategic Firm Orientation and Text Analysis* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

A firm's market orientation and entrepreneurial orientation will determine its strategic orientation. Strategic orientation influences the most fundamental strategy decisions of managers and its impact on firm outcomes has been investigated in the prior literature. However, during recent years more objective measurements of strategic orientation based on text have gained popularity. You should summarize the literature on text analysis and the strategic orientation of firms.

3. Prints of Purpose: Sustainability and Ethical Branding in Advertisements (Chair Prof. Stahl)

In an increasingly conscious world, sustainability has emerged as more than just a buzzword – it has become a vital compass guiding businesses towards a brighter and greener future. This literature review explores ethical and sustainable branding in (print) advertisements. The research focuses on understanding how sustainability claims and practices are incorporated into advertising strategies. By analyzing existing academic studies and industry reports, this review aims to explore the representation of sustainability in advertisements and how brands communicate their environmental responsibility and social consciousness. The review seeks to uncover trends and patterns in how sustainability is portrayed, including eco-friendly product claims, environmental initiatives, and social impact messaging. By providing insights into the strategies employed by brands to promote sustainability in advertisements, this review aims to contribute to a broader understanding of ethical marketing practices and the evolving role of sustainability in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors.

4. The Impact of Chief Marketing Officers on Firm Performance* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

The Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) is a member of a firm's top management, responsible for providing strategic leadership regarding the marketing activities of the firm. In the past, researchers have particularly investigated the performance implications of a CMO's general

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

presence. Besides that, other factors affect the impact of a CMO. For example, this might include the characteristics of the top management team. Against this background, the aim of this thesis is to examine the relationship between Chief Marketing Officers and firm performance.

5. Should I Invest in Marketing or my Employees? (Chair Prof. Vomberg)

Research has shown that brands can attract employees, make them accept lower salaries, and fulfill similar functions as Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM). On the one hand, managers can consider improving brand equity by investing in marketing initiatives to improve brand awareness and public perception, which is also valued by its employees. On the other hand, managers can "invest directly" in their human capital by implementing numerous High-Performance Work Practices and improve employee motivation. The goal of this seminar paper is to summarize the current state of research on the role of brand equity in the "war for talents" and to evaluate these two alternatives in terms of their effectiveness and efficiency to improve employees' motivation and to ensure the long-term success of the company.

6. Supply Chain Visibility and Traceability in the Fashion Industry – Barriers to Implementation and How Companies Can Still Reap the Benefits* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

The fashion industry is characterized by complex and geographically dispersed supply chains with multiple actors involved. Consumers increasingly want to know where their clothes are coming from and under what conditions they have been produced. However, before fashion companies can transparently share such information with consumers, they must first gain insights into their supply chains themselves. Therefore, the objectives of this seminar paper are to (1) explain supply chain visibility and traceability in the fashion industry, (2) outline barriers to visibility and traceability and suggest potential remedies, and (3) delineate the resulting benefits for fashion companies.

7. Unraveling the Link between Job Happiness and Effective Marketing: A Comprehensive Literature Review (Chair Prof. Vomberg)

In today's competitive business landscape, job happiness and employee satisfaction have emerged as crucial factors impacting marketing outcomes and overall organizational success. This seminar paper aims to conduct a state-of-the-art literature review, analyzing empirical research studies that explore the influence of varying levels of job happiness and satisfaction on marketing efforts. By delving into the interplay between employee well-being and marketing effectiveness, this study seeks to uncover valuable insights for businesses striving to optimize their marketing strategies and enhance their organizational performance.

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8. Value Co-Creation in the Innovation Process: A Collaborative Approach* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

In any thriving economy, innovation plays a central role, as it involves developing enhanced or novel solutions to address customer problems, thus posing as an imperative for the success of any company. To mitigate uncertainty in a company's innovative endeavors, businesses are increasingly turning to co-creation as a means to collaborate and foster shared innovation. Against this background, the objectives of the seminar paper are: 1) Review relevant academic literature on the topic, 2) outline its advantages and possible disadvantages, and 3) outline further research directions.

9. Looking Beyond Profit-Maximization: Marketing of Company's Purpose* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

The need for companies to serve stakeholders is becoming increasingly crucial. Thereby, companies need to consider shareholders' interests (i.e., profit maximization) and more intangible, interpersonal concerns. Out of this perspective company's purpose as a means to overcome different perceptions of stakeholders comes into focus. However, how can companies address this task best: How can companies align different perspectives for one purpose? And how can they market their purpose most profitable?

10. Exploring the Landscape of eWOM in the B2B Context: A Systematic Literature Review, Taxonomy of Forms, and Future Research Directions* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

In today's digitally connected world, the power of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has transcended traditional boundaries, becoming more influential than ever before. Especially in the realm of B2B markets, eWOM holds paramount importance, driving credibility and business success; however, detailed research on eWOM remains scarce. Against this background, research should be guided by three questions: 1) What is the current state of research concerning eWOM and its conceptualization in the B2B context? 2) What are the different forms of eWOM? 3) What are promising further research directions in this area?

11. Regulatory Disclosure of Marketing Metrics and Information* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

The SEC mandates the disclosure of "material" information of public companies in their regulatory filings. You should focus on the regulatory disclosure of public companies that is related to marketing. You should answer the following questions based on the marketing-finance and interdisciplinary literature: What types of marketing metrics and information is/must be disclosed? What are the effects of these disclosures on company stakeholders? What role do alternative data sources play in this context, e.g., YouGov, Compustat, etc.?

12. Safeguarding Corporate Reputation in the Digital Age (Chair Prof. Stahl)

In today's hyper-connected digital landscape, corporate scandals have the potential to spread like wildfire across social media, news outlets, and online platforms. These scandals can severely damage the internal and external perception and reputation of a firm, which is a crucial asset for attracting and retaining top talent. Notable companies like Uber, Amazon, and Volkswagen have faced such challenges in the past, affecting their appeal to potential hires. This seminar thesis explores the interplay between corporate scandals and the attractiveness of a firm and how firms should react to such scandals to protect their “employer brand” in times of crisis.

13. The Antecedents and Consequences of Corporate Misconduct (Chair Prof. Stahl)

On their way towards profit maximization, several companies resort to unethical practices, causing harm to the environment (e.g., local pollution), society (e.g., child labor), and governance standards (e.g., tax evasion). Such misconduct can deeply affect stakeholders, particularly employees and local communities. In this seminar thesis, the focus lies on better understanding when such corporate misconducts are more likely to come up and what their subsequent impact on marketing- and other firm-related performance metrics are. The goal is to create an encompassing framework that can subsequently be used for an empirical task in a master thesis.

14. The Role of Chat GPT in Marketing – Friend or Foe for Marketers? (Chair Prof. Homburg)

The role of Chat GPT in marketing is a double-edged sword, acting as both a friend and a potential foe for marketers. On the one hand, Chat GPT can streamline customer interactions, provide personalized recommendations, and boost engagement, but on the other, its automated nature may raise concerns about authenticity and the potential to replace genuine human connections in marketing efforts. The objectives of this seminar paper are threefold. (1) You should conduct a systematic literature overview on artificial intelligence usage in marketing (with reference to Chat GPT, but also other forms of AI) and (2) identify where AI (Chat GPT) aids marketers and where it harms them and 3) finally infer suggestions for future research as well as marketing strategy formation.

II. Consumer Behavior and Psychology

15. Construal Level Theory and Green Marketing: Influencing Sustainable Consumer Choices (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Construal Level Theory (CLT), which explores how individuals interpret and interact with the world around them based on psychological distance, has considerable implications for consumer behavior. Psychological distance refers to how close or far you feel from an event, object, or person. Depending on whether they perceive the environmental consequences of their actions as

psychologically close or far, individuals may engage differently in sustainable practices. This seminar paper aims to (1) explore the application of CLT in green marketing, (2) provide an overview of theories and research findings that connect CLT and sustainable consumer choices, (3) propose potential strategies for companies to effectively use CLT in promoting sustainable consumer choices, and (4) discuss future research directions. This topic blends aspects of psychology, consumer behavior, and green marketing, offering a rich ground for an interdisciplinary discussion.

16. Distance Matters: The Impact of Psychological Distance on Consumer Perception and Behavior (Chair Prof. Homburg)

According to the construal level theory, psychological distance plays a vital role in individuals' mental representation and systematically affects human judgment and behavior. What implications does this bring for consumer research? How can psychological distance be leveraged to shape consumer perception and behavior? The aims of this seminar thesis are (1) to review and systematize relevant academic literature on psychological distance in the consumer context, (2) to discuss the antecedents and consequences of psychological distance on consumer behavior, and (3) to derive managerial implications and outline future research directions.

17. Showing Emotions – An Overview of Image Sentiment (Chair Prof. Stahl)

A common phrase suggests that an image is able to convey complex information more easily than a verbal description ("A picture is worth a thousand words"). Currently, text analysis is often used to assess consumer sentiment. However, according to this idea, analyzing pictures should allow for much more precise conclusions. The complexity of this data type provides the opportunity for multiple emotion metrics, for instance the colors used or facial expressions shown. In this seminar thesis, the student will explore how emotions are shown in images by reviewing existing research that uses visual rather than textual data and understanding how different image components can convey certain emotional meaning.

18. Sustainable Consumption: Trend, Self-Initiative, or Normality?* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Sustainable consumption needs more than sustainable products - consumers need to be aware of the product's existence and need incentives to buy it, or is it enough to nudge them towards the choice? If you are interested in consumers' decision to choose a sustainable product or a product that maximizes overall welfare (like an ethical product), you should choose this topic.

19. The Gentle Push towards Green: Nudging Consumers towards Sustainable Consumption (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Nudging is a concept in behavioral economics that proposes positive reinforcement and indirect suggestions to influence behavior and decision-making. This seminar thesis aims to (1) review and synthesize academic literature on the use of nudging to promote sustainable consumption,

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

(2) discuss the effectiveness of various nudging strategies in the context of sustainable consumption, and (3) derive managerial implications and outline future research directions.

20. Option Framing in Consumer Behavior (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Option framing is a type of framing effect in psychology. It manipulates the valence of the choice task by asking decision makers to either accept/add or reject/remove certain options. This seminar topic investigates whether adding or removing certain ingredients for purchasing a healthy food (e.g., salad) or an unhealthy food (e.g., pizza) would impact consumers' behaviors.

21. The Language of Consumption: Understanding Identity Signaling in Choosing Sustainable Products (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Consumers choose sustainable products for a variety of reasons. One of the factors that drive sustainable consumption could be identity signaling. For instance, do consumers primarily buy sustainable products to signal their identity, values, and attitudes? Based on an extensive literature review, this seminar paper shall (1) provide a systematic overview of theories and research findings on the relationship between identity signaling and sustainable consumer behavior. These findings shall be used to (2) derive contributions and future research avenues for marketing theory and (3) provide insights for marketing practitioners.

22. The Impact of Spending vs. Saving Intentions on Donation Appeals (Chair Prof. Kraus)

It is common that donation appeals appear during purchase, e.g., at the cashier. Normally, consumers donate small changes after the payment with cash. However, there are some donation appeals aiming to ask people to donate after "saving" or "earning" money. An example is a donation box at the return of the deposit machines. When people return the deposit of the bottles, they have a feeling of "earning" or "saving" money. Would the differences between spending money after purchasing and saving or earning money after getting money back impact the likelihood of consumers' donation behavior? This seminar topic is aiming to summarize existing research on donation behavior and the position of donation appeals. Based on the extant literature, students should make a sound assumption.

23. Investigating the Link Between Political Ideology and Sustainable Consumption Through a Social Identity Lens: A Research Agenda (Chair Prof. Kuester)

A growing body of marketing research suggests that political ideology can influence consumer behavior. In light of global climate change and rising levels of political polarization, the consumption of sustainable products has become a highly politicized issue. Since individuals typically identify with their political ideology or group, social identity theory, which posits that individuals derive their beliefs and attitudes from their group membership, gains importance. This seminar thesis aims to develop a research agenda that focuses on the relationship between political ideology and sustainable consumer behavior, building on social identity theory. To this

end, (1) social identity theory should be introduced, and (2) related sustainability and political psychology research shall be reviewed. Based on this review, the thesis shall (3) synthesize the findings to identify research gaps in extant research. Finally, (4) a research agenda that outlines specific research questions relevant to advancing this area of consumer research shall be developed.

24. Bridging the Gap: Tailoring Nudges to Political Ideologies for Effective Change (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Recent marketing research increasingly points to the strong impact of political ideology on consumer behavior. In the context of political ideology, sustainable consumption has yet to receive more attention. Research on “green” nudges shows promising results in giving consumers a soft push towards more sustainable choices. The basic idea of nudging is to use subtle and non-coercive interventions to influence people’s choices. This seminar thesis aims to develop nudging strategies based on political ideology (liberal vs. conservative) by drawing on existing theories and findings from (political) psychology and marketing. Based on (1) a systematic review of the relevant literature on political ideology and sustainable consumption, (2) a set of nudging strategies shall be developed. Based on identified nudging strategies, (3) avenues for future research shall be identified. Finally, (4) implications for marketing practice shall be derived.

25. Navigating Social Canvas: Gender Differences in Impression Management (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Impression management, the art of shaping how others perceive us, holds significant relevance in understanding human behavior and social interactions. This research explores the intricacies of impression management, with a specific focus on gender differences in self-presentation. By analyzing existing studies, this paper investigates how men and women employ distinct impression management strategies to create favorable impressions in various social settings.

26. Minorities in a Marketing Context* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

In the realm of marketing, the perception of minorities holds substantial implications for businesses aiming to foster inclusivity and cultural sensitivity. The way minorities are perceived by others is influenced by various factors, including psychological effects such as minority salience and homophily. Minority salience refers to the degree to which a person's minority identity stands out in a given context and therefore it is remembered more strongly, while homophily relates to the natural tendency of individuals to gravitate towards others who share similar characteristics. This seminar thesis aims to explore the intricate interplay between minority salience, homophily, and the perception of minorities in the marketing landscape.

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27. The Easier, The Better? The Effect of Processing (Dis)Fluency On Consumer Decisions
(Chair Prof. Homburg)

Prior research suggests that fluent information is generally preferred by consumers and has positive effects on consumer's product evaluation. However, more recent work also provides support for positive impact of disfluent price information on purchase decisions. Against this paradoxical background, the aims of this seminar thesis are (1) to review and systematize relevant academic literature on processing (dis)fluency, (2) to discuss how processing (dis)fluency could influence consumer's product evaluation and behavioral intentions, and (3) to derive managerial implications and outline future research directions.

28. How Consumers Perceive Variance in Online Product Ratings (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Are bad product ratings always bad or do consumers seek for negative information as part of their purchasing process? If so, when, and how is this negative information assessed and used? How does it differ among product categories? This work should give a comprehensive overview on recent findings in A and A+ journals regarding the beneficial and detrimental effects of variance in online product ratings. A theoretical framework involving prospect theory and literature findings is the key outcome and result.

29. Negativity Bias: Why Does Bad Experience Hurt Overall Satisfaction So Much? (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Negativity bias refers to the stronger impacts of negative events than positive events. According to previous research, people would expect negative events to be more likely to happen and think negative events have stronger impact than positive ones. Therefore, the purpose of this topic is to review relevant literature on negativity bias and develop own hypotheses.

30. Self-Other Differences in Attributing Positive and Negative Events (Chair Prof. Kraus)

When people experience an event, they try to find a reason for it. Previous research shows that people attribute differently when they experience positive and negative events. The purpose of this seminar topic is to review relevant literature and describe the phenomenon with previous studies.

31. Useful or Useless? Exploring Consumer Acceptance of Digital Product Passports in the Fashion Industry Using the Technology Acceptance Model* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

In response to growing social and legal requirements in the fashion industry, more and more companies engage in transparency efforts and also pour investment into so-called 'digital product passports' to provide consumers with information about their supply chain and sustainability. The question arises of how fashion consumers react to such digital product passports. The objectives of this seminar paper are, therefore, to (1) review relevant literature on the technology

acceptance model, (2) apply the technology acceptance model to the new technology of digital product passports, and (3) illustrate what fashion companies must pay attention to in order to achieve a broad acceptance of digital product passports among consumers.

32. The Impact of Personal Control on Consumer Behavior and Marketing Strategies (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Personal control is the extent to which individuals believe they can influence events in their environment. Personal control can be understood either as a stable personality characteristic, or as a temporary state. The global warming, the war in Ukraine, as well as the associated global inflation, are examples of events that may decrease the sense of personal control for many individuals. Through a systematic literature review, this seminar thesis aims to (1) explore how personal control affects consumer behavior, (2) derive managerial implications regarding the use of personal control in marketing, and (3) discuss future research directions.

33. Biases in a Transformation Phase (Chair Prof. Kraus)

A change is always difficult to accept. Especially when it comes to a big decision such a sales model or knowledge management system, decision makers tend to prefer the old solution that they are used to use. There are many potential reasons why individuals are reluctant to accept the change. Maybe they simply prefer the old solution and do not consider the new one (status quo bias). Maybe they think they evaluate the current situation more optimistic than it really is (Optimism bias). This paper aims to investigate what kind of biases might slow down the transformation process.

34. Training and Status Quo Bias (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Status quo bias is one of the most frequent biases to be found in a transformation process. Therefore, a so called “change management” is necessary to make the transformation possible. One of the most used methods in the change management is training. This paper aims to focus on the impact of training to solve/debias the status quo bias.

35. What Causes Status Quo Bias among Car Dealers? (Chair Prof. Kraus)

It has been proven that the direct sales model provides a better fit for the future and advantages to all related stakeholders – OEMs, customers, and dealers. Lately, the profit structure of dealers was fluctuating because of the unstable economy of the world. The shortage of semi-conductor did not secure as much sales margin as they have received before. Delays in shipping and shortage in stock increased their costs as well. In the direct sales model, the dealers’ profit will be mainly from remuneration and therefore a certain amount of profit is secured in the new model. However, every individual has “status quo bias” and dealers are no exception from it. No matter what kind of advantages they receive from the new model, they still prefer the old model because they are used to it. Status quo bias is caused by many different factors – dealers are

maybe too optimistic about the future with the current model and do not see any reason to have a change. Or dealers are just too scared if they can perform as well as now with the new model. This thesis focuses on what can be the underlying reason for status quo bias in car dealers.

36. Identifying Past, Present and Future Purchasing Criteria in the Case of the Automotive Industry Transition from ICE to EVs (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Purchasing criteria for a product category can change dramatically over time. Especially as consumer priorities shift in light of innovation, traditional perspectives on product benefits can become obsolete and potentially even harm product attractiveness. This work should provide an overview on approaches to identify key purchasing criteria and deep-dive on the automotive industry to reflect past, present and future purchasing criteria in light of the transition from internal combustion engines to electric vehicle technology. Optimally, this work should be approached by students with experience or strong interest in the automotive industry with the motivation to continue this topic for a master thesis.

37. The Power of Expectations in Shaping Customer Evaluations of Their Experiences (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Customer experience (CE) is a multidimensional construct consisting of cognitive, emotional, social, sensorial, and behavioral customer responses across their entire journey with a company. Thus, managing CE is challenging, but it has become one of the leading management objectives of successful companies. So far, little attention in the CE literature has been devoted to the role of customer expectations in shaping the evaluations and the subsequent remembering of CEs. For example, does negative anticipation of a dental visit shape how this experience is perceived and recalled? Does positive anticipation of a music festival or a vacation influence how such experiences are stored in one's memory? This seminar thesis aims to (1) provide a systematic literature review on positive and negative customer expectations of CEs and (2) explore how such expectations shape customer experience evaluations and subsequent remembering. Based on these findings, the thesis shall (3) discuss future research directions and potential managerial implications.

38. How Loyalty Programs Impact Consumers after Purchasing Behavior (Chair Prof. Kraus)

There are many different types of loyalty programs, for example the point-based and cashback loyalty programs. It has been found that whether consumers join loyalty programs impacts their choice between hedonic (e.g., Coke) vs. utilitarian (e.g., water) items after a certain purchasing behavior. The topic aims to summarize the existing literature and investigate the logic behind it.

III. Price Management

39. Delegation of Pricing Authority in Dynamic Markets: Unveiling the Negative Side* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

In the context of dynamic markets, the delegation of pricing authority is a prevalent strategy employed by businesses to navigate competitive landscapes and boost profitability. This practice involves empowering lower-level employees to make real-time pricing decisions. However, while delegation offers benefits, it also carries potential drawbacks that must be carefully considered. Therefore, this study aims to shed light on the negative aspects of pricing authority delegation by (1) thoroughly reviewing and categorizing relevant scholarly literature on the delegation of pricing authority, (2) identifying relevant theories for pricing authority delegation, (3) identifying critical moderators that contribute to both positive and negative outcomes in this context, and (4) to provide practical insights for managerial decision-making and future research directions.

IV. Product and Innovation Management

40. Sustainability and Innovation: A Literature Review on Radical and Incremental “Green” Products (Chair Prof. Kuester)

In the past decade, concerns about the development of the natural environment and resources have positioned sustainability in the spotlight. Businesses face mounting pressure to develop and implement sustainable practices, and sustainability-driven or “green” innovation has gained significant attention in the academic literature and managerial discourse. Some businesses come up with incremental “green” innovations, which refer to modifications of their existing products. In contrast, others come up with radical “green” innovations, referring to products that involve breakthrough technologies. This seminar thesis seeks to investigate the interplay between sustainability and types of innovation. By examining the existing literature, this thesis should (1) provide an overview of the drivers of the two types of “green” innovations and (2) develop managerial implications on how innovation managers should plan their sustainable innovation activities.

41. Fostering Innovation from Within: Exploring Internal Antecedents of Organizational Ingenuity (Chair Prof. Vomberg)

Innovation lies at the heart of sustained business growth and adaptability in a dynamic market environment. This seminar thesis endeavors to present a comprehensive literature review, synthesizing empirical research studies that examine the company-internal factors driving innovation and their impact on organizational outcomes. By investigating various aspects, including organizational culture, leadership styles, and resource allocation, this paper aims to shed light on the key drivers that foster innovation and pave the way for long-term success in today's rapidly evolving business landscape.

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

42. Factors Influencing Customer Perception of Innovative Products (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Innovation plays a pivotal role in driving the success and competitiveness of businesses across various industries. However, the ultimate success of an innovative product relies not only on its technological advancements but also on how customers perceive and embrace it. Factors that influence customers' perception of innovations could be product-specific or marketing-specific. A product-specific factor is, for example, the degree of innovativeness, while a marketing-specific factor is, for instance, customers' awareness of the innovation. This seminar thesis aims to (1) review the existing literature to identify the key drivers that shape customer perception of innovations, and (2) provide managerial implications for organizations on how to develop successful innovations.

V. Brand and Communications Management

43. Personal Branding and your USP* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

In our times, individuals do not need to work if they do not want to. We are in this luxury situation where we can find the best job and opportunity to realize ourselves. At the same time, there is immense pressure to appear in the best possible light - especially since all individual actions are observable. Thus, it becomes increasingly important to establish your unique selling proposition by keeping an eye on your image. However, which pitfalls one needs to be aware of and what is the best way to approve this image-building process still need to be investigated. Working out your way to success is the first way of making your dream come true.

44. The Impact of Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) on Firms' Financial Performance (Chair Prof. Vomberg)

SHRM encompasses various elements such as HR practices as well as culture and values. While research highlights the positive effects of SHRM on employees' motivation, it is unclear why many firms do not make targeted use of it. In this seminar paper, the student will gather knowledge on existing SHRM practices, cluster them based on their effect (e.g., skill-, motivation-, or opportunity-enhancing), and discuss their respective influence on firms' financial outcomes.

45. Unveiling Corporate Practices: The Signaling Theory Perspective on Supply Chain Transparency and Sustainability Disclosures and Their Influence on Consumer Behavior* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Amid growing consumer demand and legal requirements, corporate transparency is becoming increasingly important, and many companies are starting to engage in supply chain transparency or disclose their sustainability credentials. Thereby, companies reduce information asymmetries by allowing external stakeholders insight into their business practices. The aim of this seminar thesis is to (1) review relevant literature on the signaling theory, (2) apply the signaling theory to

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the topic of companies' transparency about their supply chain and sustainability, and (3) delineate what companies should pay attention to when signaling in order to produce favorable consumer responses.

VI. Sales Management

46. Unleashing the Power of Social Selling: A Game-Changing Strategy for B2B Success* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Due to the rising trend of digitalization and the consequent shift in buying behaviors, business markets are undergoing significant changes. Due to the emerging opportunities and challenges that these changes create, both practitioners and academics have begun to underscore social selling as a strategic approach. Against this background, the objectives of this seminar paper are threefold: 1) Conduct a systematic review of the existing literature on this topic, 2) identify the main drivers of social selling, and 3) outline the possible outcomes of social selling in the B2B context.

47. Buyer-Seller Relationships in Tender Contexts* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Competitive tenders refer to a purchasing model in which a customer requests suppliers to submit a proposal regarding a product or service that meets predefined requirements. Next to the definition of product or service specifications, the buying firm establishes selection criteria in the request for proposal (RFP). Due to that, the buyer can, for example, better compare different offerings. The question arises how the characteristics of competitive tenders affect the relationship between the buying firm and the supplier. In particular, the presence of (objective) buying criteria might have an impact on the role of salespeople. Against this background, the aim of this thesis is to examine buyer-seller relationships in tender contexts.

48. Customer Advantages of the Direct Sales Model in the Automotive Industry (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Traditional OEMs (automotive companies) have been selling their cars by using an indirect sales model with dealers as independent entrepreneurs (The cars are sold from an OEM to dealers, and then from dealers to end-customers). However, because dealers are independent of OEMs, the OEMs were lacking customer relationships and data. Since TESLA appeared in the automotive markets with its innovative business model (direct sales model with an eCommerce platform), the traditional OEMs are looking for ways to survive in the new competition. The direct Sales Model (or agent model) has been mentioned as the solution for traditional OEMs to survive this competition. In the new model, dealers will be directly hired by OEMs as “agents” and deal with customers on behalf of OEMs. This paper aims to evaluate if the direct sales model fits better with new customers' demands and journeys.

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49. Dealer Advantages of the Direct Sales Model in the Automotive Industry (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Traditional OEMs (automotive companies) have been selling their cars by using an indirect sales model with dealers as independent entrepreneurs (The cars are sold from an OEM to dealers, and then from dealers to end-customers). However, because dealers are independent of OEMs, the OEMs were lacking customer relationships and data. Since TESLA appeared in the automotive markets with its innovative business model (direct sales model with an eCommerce platform), the traditional OEMs are looking for ways to survive in the new competition. The direct Sales Model (or agent model) has been mentioned as the solution for traditional OEMs to survive this competition. In the new model, dealers will be directly hired by OEMs as “agents” and deal with customers on behalf of OEMs. This paper aims to evaluate if & how dealers are better off in the direct sales model.

50. The Impact of the Digital Transformation on B2B Sales Forces* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

The rise of new digital technologies has fundamentally changed companies, including sales processes and the way salespeople operate. The benefits of new technology to increase sales performance have already been shown in numerous studies. Nevertheless, the digital transformation in sales involves challenges for the sales organization and salespeople. In particular, the question arises how it affects and is affected by sales forces. Consequently, the aim of this thesis is to provide a comprehensive literature overview of the impact of the digital transformation on the sales forces of B2B companies.

51. Leading by Example: The Role of Leadership for Salesforce Behavior and Performance (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Sales managers are responsible for driving the sales team’s performance and accomplishing organizational objectives. Thereby, the leader’s role is to motivate the salesforce and create an environment where employees are driven to give their utmost effort and can achieve superior performance. Against this background, the goals of this seminar thesis are (1) to review and systematize relevant academic literature on leadership styles in the sales context, (2) to discuss how different leadership styles affect salespeople’s behavioral intentions and performance, and (3) to derive managerial implications and outline future research directions.

52. Sales in Turbulent Markets: Challenges and Success Factors (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Increasingly competitive and dynamic environments challenge business-to-business sales and, thus, firms’ salesforce. This dynamism can lead to opportunities but also problems for sales departments. Against this background, the goals of this seminar thesis are (1) to review and systematize relevant academic literature on the impact of environmental turbulence on the salesforce, (2) to discuss how firms successfully manage these consequences, and (3) to derive managerial implications and outline future research directions.

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

53. Stand by Me: Managing Salespeople's Turnover (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Understanding and managing a salesperson's turnover intentions and behavior is essential for firm performance. Salespeople do not only negotiate the final prices for products and services but also tie close bonds with their customers. Thus, firms do not only lose a potentially skillful and experienced employee but also a key link to their customer when a salesperson leaves the company. Salespeople's turnover behavior thus constitutes a major challenge for the firm's sales function. Against this background, the goals of this seminar thesis are (1) to systemize the drivers of salesperson's turnover behavior, (2) to identify managerial levers firms can take to prevent salespeople's turnover, and (3) to discuss the role of environmental factors in salespeople's turnover.

54. Successful Cross-Selling: Finding the Balance between Customer-orientation and Sales-orientation (Chair Prof. Homburg)

In today's competitive business landscape, salespeople face increasing pressure to achieve high sales numbers while simultaneously providing exceptional customer experiences. This raises the question of whether sales professionals need to make a trade-off between maximizing sales and delivering customer-focused advice to enhance customer lifetime value or if there exists a symbiotic relationship between sales performance and a customer-oriented mindset. This research task focuses on exploring the delicate balance between customer-orientation and sales-orientation in the context of successful cross-selling. The primary objectives of this task are (1) to conduct a comprehensive review and systematization of relevant academic literature on sales performance and customer orientation, (2) to analyze and discuss the challenges and potential synergies associated with aligning customer-orientation and sales-orientation, and (3) identify and outline future research directions to further investigate the intricate relationship between these two domains.

55. Supervisory-related versus Organization-related Influences: Which Are More Important for the Cross-Selling Performance of Salespeople? (Chair Prof. Homburg)

The sale of additional products is very important in both B2B and B2C sales. Many studies have examined various supervisory- and organization-related influences on the Cross-Selling performance of salespeople. Some of them are easier to adjust than others, yet which ones have the biggest impact on the actual performance? The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on cross-selling and its supervisory- and organization-related success factors, (2) to discuss the pros and cons of the different influences, and (3) to outline future research directions.

56. Variable or Fixed Compensation in Direct Sales - What Is the Best Option for Employees and Companies?* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Since variable compensation mostly goes hand in hand with variable time spent on the job, this approach has some benefits over casual, fixed salary as, exemplarily, the employee can mostly work when he wants. On the other hand, there might be disadvantages, such as stress due to not having a fixed salary. Thus, the question is: What is the best compensation default for sales companies? May there be differences in the default settings depending on the area? If you are interested in these questions, this is your topic!

57. You Get What You Pay For: The Consequences of Compensation Structures on Sales' Short- vs. Long-term Orientation* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

To create competitive advantages and better serve customers, companies need to shift their mindset to long-term thinking, not short-term monetary targets. But is this true? You find various remuneration structures that serve as a basis for several “right” selling goals, i.e., distinct organizational targets require varying compensation systems. Currently, most companies dispose of traditional salary structures with limited transparency on the potentials these bear for their employees in the sales area, especially when adapted. Hence, the superordinate goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on sales and key account management compensation structures, (2) to draw and discuss linkages among compensation systems and appropriate selling behaviors, and (3) to derive the implications these linkages bear for managerial practice and future research.

58. B2B Sales versus B2C Sales – Differences and Similarities along the Customer Journey (Chair Prof. Homburg)

In the realm of B2B sales versus B2C sales, both share common stages along the customer journey, such as awareness, consideration, and purchase, yet differ significantly in their complexity and target audience. While B2C sales often focus on impulse buying and mass marketing, B2B sales involve longer decision-making cycles, personalized solutions, and building enduring relationships with key stakeholders. The objectives of this seminar paper are threefold. (1) You should conduct a systematic literature overview on B2B vs. B2C sales & purchasing processes and (2) identify where similarities are and where differences could be detected, and (3) finally, infer suggestions for future research as well as managerial implications.

59. B2C Purchasing Experiences within the Metaverse – Implication for the Customer-Seller Relationship (Chair Prof. Homburg)

As B2C purchasing experiences transcend into the metaverse, the customer-seller relationship evolves into a more immersive and interactive journey. The metaverse's virtual environments enable brands to engage customers on a deeper level, fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty through personalized interactions, virtual try-ons, and experiential marketing, ultimately

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

redefining the traditional dynamics of the customer-seller relationship. The objectives of this seminar paper are threefold. (1) You should conduct a systematic literature overview of the metaverse and new arising forms of B2C purchasing experiences (e.g., joint platforms, etc.) (2) and identify how this can change B2C customer journeys as well as the customer-seller relationship and (3) finally, infer suggestions for future research as well as implications for sales managers.

VII. Digital Marketing

60. AI-enabled Marketing (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Artificial Intelligence enabled marketing today accounts for nearly half of all advertising revenue globally and since ChatGPT introduced Generative AI to the mainstream, the interest by companies and researchers has increased even more. In this seminar thesis you will choose your topic of interest in the broader field of AI in marketing and review the scientific literature that explores this space.

61. Should Siri and Alexa Combat Profanities and Abusive Language?* (Chair Prof. Kuester)

AI-based agents, such as Amazon's Alexa or Apple's Siri, have become ubiquitous in consumers' daily lives. Moreover, companies successively adopt AI-based agents to manage customer interactions. However, analyses of user interactions with such agents show that up to 30% of interactions contain consumer antagonisms such as abusive language, profanities, and even sexual harassment. Although the technology can identify such interactions, most assistants are programmed to "overlook" profanities and to remain polite. This tactic prompts the question of how companies employing AI-based agents should cope with consumer antagonism toward AI. Therefore, this seminar paper aims to review the literature on AI and human-computer interactions to investigate users' abuse of AI and its consequences on society. Additionally, potential spill-over effects between AI agents and companies employing AI shall be reviewed. Based on the findings, implications for marketing research and practice shall be derived regarding possible coping strategies in response to consumer antagonism.

62. Generative AI and its Transformative Value for Digital Platforms (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Generative AI is a technology that enables the creation of original digital content based on prompt inputs. With the release of ChatGPT a transformation of digital platforms has begun, that researchers are trying to understand. In your seminar thesis you will explore the state of this novel research space.

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

63. Conversational Breakdowns – When Chatbots Cannot Help the Customer (Chair Prof. Kuester)

With rapid technological development, chatbots have become essential to digital interactions between customers and companies. However, conversations with chatbots do not always work seamlessly. Chatbots may not be able to understand or help customers with their problems. This phenomenon is called a conversational breakdown. The aim of this seminar thesis is (1) to provide a systematic literature review on conversational breakdowns in customer-chatbot interactions and their influence on customer behavior and marketing outcomes. Furthermore, (2) the current state of knowledge on how companies can manage conversational breakdowns shall be discussed. Based on the results, (3) future research directions on the role of conversational breakdowns in digital customer-firm interactions shall be derived.

64. Artificial Intelligence and the Angry Consumer – Consumer Antagonism Towards AI and Robots* (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Companies increasingly deploy Artificial Intelligence (AI) and AI-based robots for consumer service interactions. Yet, multiple reports document incidents where consumers display negative, antagonistic behavior toward robots and AI in the marketplace. Consumer antagonism refers to the adversarial behavior of consumers directed toward others. This seminar paper seeks to review relevant literature on the phenomenon of consumer antagonism toward robots and AI and establish a framework for how companies can mitigate such antagonistic behavior. Based on the findings, future marketing research directions shall be derived.

65. Self-Selection Mechanisms in Online Feedback* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

In the digital age, online ratings and reviews have become indispensable tools for consumers seeking insights into products and services. However, the credibility and accuracy of these reviews may be influenced by self-selection mechanisms, where certain individuals are more inclined to share their opinions than others. Understanding the intricacies of self-selection mechanisms in online ratings and reviews is crucial for comprehending the biases and nuances that may arise in this realm. This seminar thesis shall summarize the factors that drive individuals to contribute online feedback and explore how self-selection mechanisms arise.

66. How Question Format and Design Shapes Online Feedback* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

In today's ever-evolving digital landscape, online opinions and reviews play a pivotal role in shaping consumer decision-making. However, the format utilized to elicit consumer opinions, such as rating scales, question types, and overall length, significantly impacts what and how individuals share their thoughts. Moreover, format shapes the way online opinions are ultimately perceived. This seminar thesis seeks to delve into the dynamic interplay between review formats and consumer perceptions, shedding light on how the design and structure of online reviews influence both the expression and reception of consumer sentiments.

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

67. Spreading the Word about Innovative Products on Social Media (Chair Prof. Kuester)

With the rise of social media worldwide, companies increasingly rely on commercial online content to improve consumer awareness and purchase intention of their products. At the same time, thousands of new products are introduced, with only a fraction of them being adopted, primarily due to a lack of consumer awareness. Therefore, the successful dissemination of innovative products through social media channels has become a critical aspect of contemporary marketing strategies. Some social media campaigns for innovative products are more successful than others, depending on factors such as content characteristics and selected social media platforms. By conducting a comprehensive literature review, this seminar thesis aims to (1) deepen the understanding of the factors that influence the spread of innovative products on social media and (2) derive managerial implications for companies to effectively utilize social media for promoting innovative products.

68. Unveiling the Gender Pay Gap in Influencer Marketing: A Comparative Analysis and Implications for Equality (Chair Prof. Stahl)

In recent years, influencer marketing has become a prominent and influential industry, transforming the way brands engage with their audiences. As this domain continues to grow exponentially, it is crucial to examine the various dimensions that shape its landscape. One of the key issues that demand attention is the gender pay gap in influencer marketing. This research aims to investigate the disparities in earnings between male and female influencers, shedding light on the underlying factors that contribute to this discrepancy. By exploring the root causes and implications of the gender pay gap, this seminar thesis endeavors to foster a deeper understanding of gender equality within the influencer marketing sphere. The findings of this study will provide valuable insights for stakeholders, brands, and policymakers to address this pressing issue and pave the way for a more equitable and inclusive influencer marketing ecosystem.

69. Sharenting and Privacy Constraints of Influencer Parents: Balancing Parenthood and Online Influence (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Influencer parents have carved a niche for themselves within the realm of social media, sharing their parenting experiences with millions of followers worldwide. This emerging trend of "sharenting" raises important questions about the privacy constraints and ethical considerations faced by influencer parents. As they document their children's lives and experiences, concerns about the potential risks to their children's privacy, security, and well-being have arisen. This seminar thesis aims to delve into the complexities surrounding sharenting, exploring the delicate balance between sharing personal moments online and safeguarding the privacy of influencer parents' children. Through a comprehensive examination of existing practices, challenges, and potential solutions, this research seeks to shed light on responsible sharenting practices and the

ethical responsibilities of influencer parents, providing essential insights for both influencers and their audiences alike.

70. Sustainable Influencer Marketing: Nurturing Authenticity, Ethical Partnerships, and Long-Term Impact (Chair Prof. Stahl)

As influencer marketing continues to flourish, so does the need for sustainable and responsible practices within the industry. The exponential growth of this domain has led to concerns regarding authenticity, transparency, and environmental impact. This seminar thesis embarks on a journey to explore the concept of sustainable influencer marketing, encompassing ethical partnerships, genuine content creation, and the promotion of environmentally conscious initiatives. By delving into successful case studies and best practices, this research aims to highlight the potential for positive, long-term impact that sustainable influencer marketing can have on both brands and society at large. Through the lens of sustainability, this study seeks to inspire influencers, brands, and consumers to collaborate in fostering a more meaningful, authentic, and socially responsible influencer marketing ecosystem.

71. “AI Can and Will Err?” – What We Know about AI-induced Errors and How Consumers Respond to Them?* (Chair Prof. Kuester)

“To err is human” is a common saying implying that committing mistakes is normal and can even be expected. But what happens when Artificial Intelligence (AI) commits a mistake? Numerous documented incidents and academic studies have shown that AI algorithms and AI-based robots, so-called embodied AI, commit mistakes. However, it remains unclear how consumers perceive AI or embodied AI that errs, and how errors influence consumers’ subsequent attitudes and behavior toward AI. Thus, this seminar thesis shall (1) review the literature on erroneous AI algorithms and embodied AI within the marketing domain. Further, it should (2) evaluate the impact of AI errors on consumers and, specifically, investigate whether the embodiment of AI affects consumers’ perceptions. Finally, (3) future research directions shall be derived.

72. Malvertising: Online Advertisers under Attack! (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Online advertising platforms have been exploited by cybercriminals for many years. Click fraud, twitter bots and actors masquerading as popular YouTubers are some of the methods these criminals use. In this seminar thesis you will review the scientific literature that explores the field of malvertising and gain insights in the multidisciplinary topic of online advertising and cybersecurity.

73. Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Customer Service (Chair Prof. Kuester)

With the rapid technological development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), marketing executives are increasingly automating customer service with AI. However, using AI comes with

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

challenges, such as customer discrimination and misinformation. Therefore, an active debate is on how to use AI responsibly. The aim of this seminar thesis is (1) to provide a systematic literature review on the potential risks of using AI in customer service and what companies can do to mitigate these risks. Further the thesis shall (2) introduce and delineate the concepts such as “Accountable AI”, “Trustworthy AI”, and “Explainable AI”, and outline how these concepts may help address these risks. Based on the findings, (3) future research directions and managerial implications on the responsible use of AI in customer service shall be derived.

74. From Tales to Triumphs: The Impact of Storytelling in Influencer Marketing (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Social media influencers play a crucial role in collaborating with brands to shape marketing campaigns. Yet, little attention has been drawn to the specific storytelling strategies of influencers and their impact on brand engagement. Stories are an effective way to communicate and engage people. At the same time, storytelling fosters emotional connections and can lend authenticity and relatability, effectively influencing consumers' perceptions and purchase intentions. To date, however, there have been few studies looking at the effectiveness of storytelling in influencer marketing and whether it has an impact on engagement measures such as story click rates or even downstream measures such as sales. Through a literature review, this seminar thesis aims to identify how storytelling works in influencer marketing and in which verticals these narrative structures are beneficial in driving campaign success.

75. Insights from Online Employer Reviews using Text Mining (Chair Prof. Vomberg)

Online employee reviews that are anonymously published on platforms such as Kununu, Glassdoor, or Indeed are increasingly used in research as a data source to measure constructs of employee perception (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 possibilities that arise for research from leveraging this data source.

76. What Makes a Good Review? A Literature Review on Online Review Helpfulness* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

In the digital era, online reviews have become an indispensable resource for consumers seeking guidance in their purchase decisions. Among the vast array of reviews available, the concept of online review helpfulness has emerged as a critical factor influencing consumers' perceptions and choices. Understanding what makes a review helpful is of paramount importance for both consumers and businesses, as it enables the identification of valuable and reliable information amidst the vast sea of online opinions. This seminar thesis shall provide an overview of the key determinants of online review helpfulness.

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

77. “Good for Me, Good for Them?” – A Service Provider Perspective of Two-Sided Rating Systems on Platforms (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Platform-based businesses in the sharing economy, such as Bolt or Couchsurfing, are on everyone’s lips because they are financially attractive for customers, highly convenient, and allow for socialization. These platforms also offer sources of employment and income to service providers, such as Bolt drivers or Couchsurfing hosts. For these platform business models to function well, customers rate service providers and vice versa, referred to as two-sided rating systems. Little is known about service providers’ perceptions of two-sided rating systems and the effects of this rating practice on service providers. Thus, this seminar thesis aims (1) to provide an overview of the literature on platform-based business models in the sharing economy from a service provider point of view. Specifically, this thesis shall explore service providers’ perceptions of two-sided rating systems and the effects of these systems on service providers. Further, (2) implications for marketing research and platform companies shall be derived. The thesis shall conclude with (3) an overview of future research directions.

78. The Interplay between Visual and Verbal Information in User Generated Content (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Consumers consult customer reviews to reduce the risk and the uncertainty in the decision-making process. Review writers can also include photos in their reviews. The existing literature suggests that the greater similarity between the photos and text affect the review’s helpfulness. For example, Amazon claims that reviews with images are perceived as more helpful than reviews with text alone. Further, consumers can come across the visual and verbal information that conveys dissimilar information. The aim of this thesis is to provide a critical overview of the existing literature on this topic and examine how people resolve such a conflict that verbal content differs from the visual content.

79. Contradictions in Online Consumer Reviews (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Online consumer reviews play an important role in customers’ purchase decisions. However, conflicting online reviews can confuse potential customers and therefore consumers are not always clear about the “right” thing to do. For example, consumers often face the challenge of being confronted with conflicting information conveyed by the aggregated rating, individual reviews or product rating. This conflicting information induces uncertainty about which opinion to adopt. The goal of this paper to provide a critical overview of the existing literature on this topic and investigate how consumers evaluate a product and online review when they read conflicting online consumer reviews of evaluations from previous consumers.

80. “Thank You for Rating Us?” – A Literature Review on Rating Literacy on Platforms with Two-Sided Rating Systems (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Platform-based businesses in the sharing economy, such as Uber, Couchsurfing, or Airbnb, ask customers and service providers to rate each other after a service transaction has taken place. It is unclear, however, whether platform users (both customers and service providers) can trust these ratings and use them to adjust their services and behavior accordingly. One factor to consider in this situation is rating literacy, which describes how well users think they understand how the rating system works. This seminar thesis aims (1) to provide an overview of the current state of knowledge on rating literacy. Specifically, this thesis shall explore the impact and consequences of rating literacy on user behavior on two-sided platforms. These findings shall be used (2) to derive implications for marketing research and platform managers, and (4) to provide an outlook for future research.

81. Business-To-Business Online Reviews* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Online reviews have become an integral part of business-to-consumer (B2C) marketing. They offer a valuable insight into customers' minds, current industry and product trends or issues. In recent years, however, an increasing number of reviews has also been published in business-to-business (B2B) contexts. This seminar theses shall summarize current literature on B2B online reviews and underlying publication motives, as well as address the issue of how B2B online reviews differ from B2C online reviews.

82. The Value of Social Media Data for Businesses (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Social media has become an invaluable place for businesses and organizations looking to better understand and engage with their customers and stakeholders. With billions of people using social media platforms every day, these platforms generate massive amounts of data that can provide valuable insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and sentiment. But how do companies leverage such data and turn them into real value? Is there a difference in how firms can use Facebook vs. LinkedIn data? And what drives the value of this data? What are methods to evaluate how valuable the data of a social media platform is? How can generative AI applications like ChatGPT generate additional value here? This seminar thesis should deal with questions like these, exploring the various ways in which social media data is being used by businesses, the benefits it offers, and the challenges and ethical problems that must be considered when working with social media data.

83. The Importance of Social Media in the Context of Sports Marketing (Chair Prof. Stahl)

The world's brands have adapted to changes in advertising, which has led to an increase in overall conversion rates and customer engagement. Sports organizations today rely on social media for their continued success and growth. As more people spend more time online, fans are using social media to engage with sports-related topics and content. Organizations are also

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

developing creative ways to promote their sports teams and foster conversations about sports. Social media acts as an intermediary between brands and audiences. The goal of this seminar thesis is to provide a critical overview of the existing literature on this topic. What impact do game results have on the rate of change of followers on social media? Is there a correlation between social media presence and on-field performance? Based on this overview, the thesis shall derive and identify promising avenues for future research.

84. How to Treat Your Regulars Online? Personalized Conversations in Digital Customer Service (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Many customers have a favorite restaurant, hairdresser, or dentist, where employees know these customers and can talk to them in a personalized manner. However, with advances in digitalization, customers are increasingly interacting with chatbots instead of human employees. In such interactions, customers often perceive that their uniqueness is neglected. A potential solution to this problem is personalization, where chatbots adapt their communication style to the specific preferences of their users (e.g., using formal vs. informal conversational style) and remember customer information (e.g., previous purchases and inquiries). This seminar thesis aims to provide a systematic literature review on personalized customer service conversations with chatbots. Specifically, the thesis shall focus on (1) when and how conversations between customers and chatbots should be personalized and (2) how this affects consumer behavior. The thesis shall also (3) discuss the potential challenges of personalized customer service conversations. Finally, (4) managerial implications on personalizing customer service conversations with chatbots shall be derived.

VIII. Customer Relationship Management

85. Transitioning from “Market to” to “Market with” the Customer: How Agile Sales Teams Foster Value Selling* (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Customer centricity is a buzzword in every company nowadays, but sales organizations still need to incorporate this mindset fully. Sales organizations, especially key account management teams with a solid connection to their customer base, must pay special attention to the dyadic perspective of value selling to avoid exploiting the buyer but co-creating value resulting in a fair share. To support this, agility has moved into focus on servicing the customer in a better way. Against this background, the superordinate goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on sales team agility, (2) to identify its connection to value-based selling, (3) to outline a future path for research, and (4) to deduce areas of improvement and threat for managerial practice.

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

IX. Market Theory and Research Methods

86. Investigating Marketing Constructs throughout the Hierarchical Levels of Companies* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

What does it take to get all employees at the same level? Is there a way to adapt the company's values? Psychological concepts indicate that adjusting values is possible, but how can such a transfer be studied? Especially in large companies, looking at how diffusion of opinions and orientations occurs across the corporate hierarchy is crucial. Therefore, multilevel investigations are a central marketing-theoretical research method. By choosing this topic, you can focus entirely on multilevel analysis and gain insight into exciting research opportunities.

87. "Attention, Please!" – A Literature Review on Attention Checks in Marketing Research (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Marketing researchers frequently use online panels, such as Amazon M-Turk or Prolific, to acquire study participants. However, since participants take part in the studies remotely (i.e., via the Internet), it is challenging for researchers to control the effort of participants and to ensure the quality of their responses. Attention checks are increasingly used to check whether participants have thoroughly read study instructions and provided valid responses. This seminar thesis aims to (1) provide an overview of the literature on attention checks in the context of online survey research. The findings shall be used to (2) critically discuss the use of attention checks in marketing research, (3) derive implications for marketing researchers and panel providers, and (4) provide future research directions.

88. What Is My Worth? The Effects of Generative AI on Our Work (Chair Prof. Stahl)

AI tools can support us in performing common work tasks such as writing coherent and eloquent texts, supervising our productivity, or creating presentations. Even this seminar thesis could be delegated to ChatGPT for an autonomous literature review. But if we can pass on our daily tasks, what remains as our human value at work? In this seminar thesis, the student will explore how the heavily hyped generative AI tools are likely to affect our future work and what skills will characterize successful employees in the future.

89. Using Generative AI in Marketing Research (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Technology has played a crucial role in marketing over the past two decades and the rapid advancement of artificial intelligence (AI) offers exciting opportunities for marketing practice and academic research. From automation to analytics, AI has accelerated marketing performance to a greater extent. The rapid diffusion of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT has also important implications and consequences for practice. In this regard, translating GPT's capabilities into practical tools is of interest to researchers and businesses. In this seminar thesis, the student will focus on investigating the architecture of how organizations can employ

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

ChatGPT models in the existing state of their business. Furthermore, this thesis will explore how generative AI technologies can benefit marketers in marketing research.

90. Attrition in Panel Surveys* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

Dropout of participants in panel surveys can introduce problematic biases and lead to increases in total survey error. The phenomenon of dropping out of repeated surveys of participants, i.e., panels, is called panel attrition. You should give a comprehensive overview of (1) problems that go along with attrition and (2) approaches to deal with attrition. You should base your findings on both the management and social sciences literature.

91. Confirmatory versus Exploratory Factor Analysis: An Overview, Use Cases, and Recent Developments (Chair Prof. Kuester)

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) are two widely used statistical techniques in the field of research methodology and data analysis. CFA is employed to test pre-defined hypotheses and confirm the underlying factor structure of a set of observed variables. EFA allows for the exploration and discovery of latent factors without any prior assumptions. This seminar thesis aims to provide a comprehensive overview of both CFA and EFA, examining their distinct purposes, applications, and recent developments in the field. Through a systematic review of the literature, this thesis will (1) identify the key differences between CFA and EFA, (2) present various use cases and scenarios where each technique is most appropriate, (3) discuss the advantages, limitations, and potential pitfalls associated with CFA and EFA, and (4) highlight recent advancements and emerging trends in factor analysis methodologies.

92. The Role of Self-Monitoring in International B2B-Sales: How Important Are Self-Awareness and Self-Adjustment for Salespeople? (Chair Prof. Homburg)

Self-monitoring describes the degree to which people monitor their own behaviors, cognitions, and affects to control and alter them. This ability can come in very handy for salespeople when it comes to adjusting their behavior to their customer's needs. But is self-monitoring really necessary to become a successful international salesperson, or is adjusting one's sales behavior according to a certain scheme enough? The goals of this seminar paper are (1) to review and systemize relevant academic literature on B2B sales, self-monitoring theory, and adaptive selling, (2) to discuss the importance of self-monitoring skills in international sales and B2B sales in detail, and (3) outline future research directions and practical implications.

93. Demand Sensing and Forecasting Using State of the Art AI and Analytics (method focused) (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Forecasting demand and market appetite for certain products and variants has been a long-standing task and challenge for marketing managers. With the development of advanced

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

analytical methods and AI algorithms, forecasting methods become more powerful. This work should review the key demand forecasting methods and dive into recent developments to arrive at an oversight of state-of-the-art demand forecasting methods for marketing managers.

X. Marketing Analytics

94. Evaluating Employee Online Reviews: Unveiling Validity and Biases for Meaningful Insights (Chair Prof. Vomberg)

In the era of digital connectivity, employee online reviews have emerged as a unique source of information for organizations. However, their validity and potential biases have not been thoroughly explored, setting the stage for this seminar paper's investigation. Drawing on a state-of-the-art literature review, this study will assess the general validity of online reviews and subsequently apply this understanding to examine the credibility of employee online reviews. By addressing these gaps, this research aims to enhance the reliability of employee feedback and provide critical insights for leveraging this valuable resource for organizational improvement.

95. Enhancing Sentiment Analysis for Social Media Data through Advanced Text Analysis Techniques (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Social media platforms have become a ubiquitous means for people to share their opinions, emotions, and experiences. The vast amount of textual data generated on these platforms presents a unique opportunity for sentiment analysis to understand public sentiment and attitudes. However, traditional sentiment analysis approaches often struggle to accurately capture the nuances and complexities of social media data due to its informal nature, varying context, and use of emojis, slang, and abbreviations. This thesis aims to explore and develop advanced text analysis techniques to enhance sentiment analysis for social media data, thereby providing more insightful and accurate sentiment insights.

96. Prediction of Panel Attrition* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

In the context of reducing selection bias and total survey error it is essential to reduce panel dropouts in surveys. To perform outreach at the right moment to the right participant, it is important to estimate the probability of dropout throughout the cross-section of participants. You should summarize the work on the prediction of panel attrition based on the interdisciplinary literature.

97. Data-Driven Approach for Sports Business and Marketing (Chair Prof. Stahl)

Data is ubiquitous in sports. The concept of using data to make decisions in sports was popularized by the book and movie Moneyball. Coaches routinely used data to assess players' talent and potential. On the business side of sports, executives also regularly tracked ratings and broadcast revenue to determine success. Although the basic purpose of data analysis in sports is

* Topics can be prepared either in English or German.

universal - to gain a competitive advantage through statistics and data analysis - different sports use different methods to efficiently collect and analyze data for their sport. The goal of this thesis is to provide an overview of how and why analytics is used in sports management and marketing and how data can be used to make decisions.

98. Estimating Heterogeneous Treatment Effects for Marketing Research* (Chair Prof. Kraus)

The estimation of heterogeneous treatment effects for (marketing) interventions is essential to develop sophisticated personalized strategies. You should discuss approaches to the estimation of heterogeneous treatment effects that were applied in marketing research. Further, you should give an overview of the newest state of the art methods for their estimation in the context of Big Data and discuss whether these methods have already been or could be applied to marketing problems, e.g., causal forests or double machine learning algorithms.