Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

Bachelorseminar Marketing & Vertrieb

Themen und Auswahlprozess

Zielgruppe und Bewerbungsprozess

- Zielgruppe:
  - Interessenten an einer Bachelorarbeit im Marketing
  - Die Teilnahme vor dem Verfassen der Bachelorarbeit wird dringend empfohlen
- Anzahl Plätze:
  - Es stehen 12 Seminarplätze zur Verfügung
  - Platzbeschränkung macht Bewerbungsprozess nötig
- Die Bewerbung für das Seminar erfolgt über die Plattform https://portal.wiwi.kit.edu
- Auswahlmechanismus:
  - Modifiziertes Bestenprinzip, d.h. die leistungsstärksten Bewerber werden – unter Berücksichtigung von Studienplanung u. Schwerpunktsetzung – zuerst berücksichtigt.
- Fragen zum Bewerbungsprozess bitte an saskia.jacob@kit.edu

Termine

Themen online:	ab 02. Juli 2024
Bewerbungsfrist:	bis zum 14. Juli 2024, 23:59 Uhr
Bekanntgabe der ersten Zusagen:	15. Juli 2024
Frist zur Annahme zugesagter Plätze:	bis zum 18. Juli 2024, 23:59 Uhr
Kickoff (Anwesenheitspflicht!) & Bearbeitungsstart:	31. Juli 2024, 14:00 – 15:30 Uhr, vor Ort
Abgabe der Seminararbeit:	20. November 2024, 12:00 Uhr
Präsentationstraining	zwischen Abgabe und Präsentation
Präsentation (Anwesenheitspflicht!):	5. und 6. Dezember 2024, vor Ort, vorauss. 09:00-16:00 Uhr

(Grobe) Form der Seminararbeit (1/2)

- **Zielsetzung**
  Im Rahmen des Seminars sollen die Teilnehmer lernen, mit wissenschaftlichen Arbeiten im Marketing umzugehen. Konkret besteht ihre Aufgabe darin, sich mit einer aktuellen Forschungsarbeit intensiv vertraut zu machen und die zitierte Literatur zu beschaffen und zu lesen. Zudem sollen sie die empirischen und statistischen Verfahren nachvollziehen und die Ergebnisse sicher interpretieren. Abschließend sollen die Teilnehmer die betrachtete Studie in Beziehung setzen zu aus dem Studium bekannten Inhalten und den Beitrag der analysierten Studie kritisch würdigen.

- **Umfang**
  Schriftliche Arbeit: nicht mehr als 15 Seiten
  Präsentation im Seminar: 15 Minuten + 15 Minuten Diskussion

(Grobe) Form der Seminararbeit (2/2)

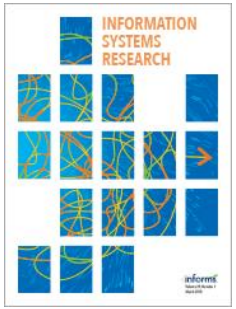
- **Bewertung der Leistung**
  50 Punkte Seminararbeit
  40 Punkte Präsentation
  10 Punkte Beteiligung am Seminar
- **Konkretisierung**
  Genauere Hinweise zur konkreten Ausgestaltung werden in der Vorbesprechung (Kick-Off) am 31. Juli 2024 gegeben

Zu den Themen

- Gemäß der vorgestellten Zielsetzung (Folie 4), beziehen sich die einzelnen Themen des Seminars auf aktuelle Forschungsarbeiten im Marketing
- Eine Liste der aktuellen Themen finden Sie auf den Folien 7 bis 12
- Die Präferenzen können im Seminarmodul angegeben werden. Die Zuteilung der Themen erfolgt nach einem modifizierten Bestenprinzip (siehe Folie 2)
- Themen werden nicht doppelt vergeben, d.h. es kann einem Teilnehmer auch ein Thema zugeteilt werden, das er oder sie nicht explizit als Themenwunsch genannt hat
- Eigene Themenvorschläge durch Studierende sind nicht möglich

Themenliste (1/6)

1. **Deng, C., & Ravichandran, T. (2023). Managerial Response to Online Positive Reviews: Helpful or Harmful?. Information Systems Research.**



Managerial responses to negative reviews could be easily understood as a brand-safeguarding strategy by firms because negative reviews can damage a company's reputation. However, it is unclear if managers should respond to positive reviews and if so, if such action helps or hurts the firm. We develop a theoretical framework to explicate the mechanisms underlying the effects of managerial responses to positive reviews on user reviewing behaviors in online platforms. We classify positive reviews into four types: one-sided affective reviews, two-sided affective reviews, one-sided instrumental reviews, and two-sided instrumental reviews. We classify managerial responses as tailored and template responses. Using natural language processing and deep learning algorithms, we extract information presented in the texts in the reviews and responses. We theorize and test which kinds of managerial responses to positive reviews are helpful and which of them are harmful. Overall, we find that a tailored response is more appropriate when responding to two-sided instrumental positive reviews and one-sided affective positive reviews, whereas template responses work for one-sided instrumental positive reviews and two-sided affective positive reviews. Not responding would be an effective strategy for mixed positive reviews. We interpret and discuss the theoretical and practical implications of our findings and lay out guidelines for future research.

2. **Varga, M., & Albuquerque, P. (2023). The impact of negative reviews on online search and purchase decisions. Journal of Marketing Research.**

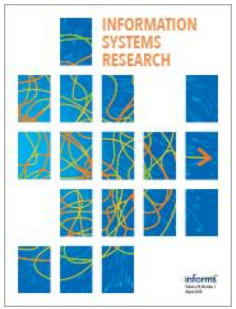
Despite evidence indicating the significant influence of online reviews on purchase decisions, even after considering a product's average rating (Vana and Lambrecht 2021), the underlying factors behind this effect and the broader impact of reviews on consumer decision making remain uncertain. This study uses clickstream data from a major online retailer to explore how negative reviews affect consumer search and purchase decisions. Leveraging exogenous variation created by the display of online reviews sorted by recency, the authors find that negative reviews significantly reduce a product's purchase probability because they (1) contrast with the often-high average product rating, (2) decrease the probability that consumers continue browsing for information about the focal product, (3) increase the probability of visiting the page of substitute products, and (4) increase the probability of viewing reviews about substitute products. Importantly, these effects apply to utilitarian products but not hedonic products and when reviews pertain to product functionality or customer service but not to taste-related factors. The authors estimate a product's vulnerability to negative reviews along two dimensions—purchase and search probability for substitutes—and display these effects on a two-dimensional map.

Themenliste (2/6)

3. **Lu, J., & Hutchinson, J. W. (2024). Information Search Within a Web Page: Modeling the Full Sequence of Eye Movement Decisions, Subjective Value Updating, and First Clicks. Management Science.**

Online retail settings often present shoppers with large, complex choice sets where they need to quickly and dynamically weigh the benefits and costs of search within each web page. We build a model of information search within a web page using eye-tracking data collected during two incentive-compatible online shopping experiments, in which participants browsed the websites of two different clothing retailers (Experiments 1 and 2), as well as previously reported data from a laboratory experiment involving choices among snack food assortments (Experiment 3). Our model incorporates features that build upon recent advances in descriptive and normative models of information sampling and search in psychology and economics. First, our model captures how people decide where to look by treating eye fixations on clickable options as a series of “split-second” decisions that depend on estimates of option attractiveness and navigation effort. Second, our model assumes that the value of each option is learned via Bayesian updating. Third, the choice to end search on the web page depends on a dynamic decision threshold. Our model outperforms benchmarks that assume random search, instant learning, fixed thresholds, non-heterogeneous thresholds, and stochastic accumulator stopping rules. Explicitly modeling the sequence of eye fixation decisions results in accurate counterfactual simulations of the effects of hypothetical product orderings on search duration and quality as verified using experimental manipulation, and it can be applied flexibly to a wide range of web-page layouts. Systematic differences across experiments highlight the importance of accounting for product familiarity, choice-set size, and the role of category outside options.

4. **Zhou, M., Abhishek, V., Kennedy, E. H., Srinivasan, K., & Sinha, R. (2024). Linking Clicks to Bricks: Understanding the Effects of Email Advertising on Multichannel Sales. Information Systems Research.**



Businesses have widely used email ads to directly send promotional information to consumers. Whereas email ads serve as a convenient tool to allow firms to target consumers online, there is little evidence of their multichannel impact on consumer spending in both online and brick-and-mortar stores. In this paper, we utilize a unique high-dimensional data set from one of the world’s largest office supplies retailers to link each consumer’s online behaviors to item-level purchase records in physical stores. We employ a doubly robust estimator that incorporates nonparametric machine learning methods for causal estimation on observational data. Our results show that email ads significantly increase the retailer’s sales across different channels. We also investigate the effects of email ads on diverse consumer behaviors along the purchase funnel and find that increased sales result from increased purchase probability and a wider variety of products purchased by consumers. Further, we examine several moderating factors, such as product types and consumer segments, that influence the multichannel effects of email advertising. Overall, our study provides empirical evidence for the economic impact of email ads on consumer behavior across different channels and the underlying mechanisms thereof. Our findings offer direct implications for multichannel retailers seeking to improve their digital marketing strategies, as well as for policymakers interested in evaluating the economic impact of prevalent email advertising.

Themenliste (3/6)

5. **Aparicio, D., Metzman, Z., & Rigobon, R. (2024). The pricing strategies of online grocery retailers. Quantitative Marketing and Economics.**

This paper documents the differences in pricing strategies between online and offline (brick-and-mortar) channels. We collect price data for identical products from leading online grocery retailers in the United States and complement it with offline data for the same products from scanner data. Our findings reveal a consistent pattern: online retailers exhibit higher price dispersion than their offline counterparts. More specifically, online grocers employ price algorithms that amplify price discrimination in three key dimensions: (1) over time (through frequent price changes), (2) across locations (by charging varying prices based on delivery zipcodes), and (3) across sellers (by setting dispersed prices for identical products across rival retailers).

6. **Angelucci, C., & Prat, A. (2024). Is Journalistic Truth Dead? Measuring How Informed Voters Are about Political News. American Economic Review.**

To investigate general patterns in news information in the United States, we combine a protocol for identifying major political news stories, 11 monthly surveys with 15,000 participants, and a model of news discernment. When confronted with a true and a fake news story, 47 percent of subjects confidently choose the true story, 3 percent confidently choose the fake story, and the remaining half are uncertain. Socioeconomic differences are associated with large variations in the probability of selecting the true news story. Partisan congruence between an individual and a news story matters, but its impact is up to an order of magnitude smaller.

Themenliste (4/6)

7. **Ruan, B., Polman, E., & Tanner, R. J. (2024). The one-away effect: The pursuit of mere completion. Journal of Consumer Research.**

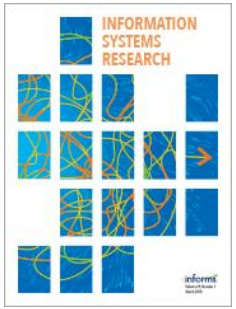
A series of controlled studies found that consumers counter-normatively prefer something nearly complete over something complete. We call this phenomenon the “one-away effect” because we find that when consumers are, for example, one stamp away from completing a punch card loyalty program, they value the card more than a completed card. This is because their valuation of the one-away card is influenced by their anticipation of merely completing the card, which generates its own utility, apart from the card’s end-reward (a free coffee). To wit, the prospective utility of performing the final action that fulfills completion increases consumers’ valuation of the one-away card. Our findings suggest that consumers are motivated to complete goals, tasks, and sets not only to obtain their end-rewards, but also because merely completing things is intrinsically motivating and can be a goal in and of itself. We discuss the theoretical and practical implications of the one-away effect, as well as the general notion of mere completion.

8. **Yinghao Wu, A., & Morwitz, V. G. (2024). Digital Therapy for Negative Consumption Experiences: The Impact of Emotional and Rational Reviews on Review Writers. Journal of Consumer Research.**

This research tests a solution for consumers to recover faster from negative experiences. We identify this solution by examining how the manner in which review writers express their emotions and rational thoughts in their reviews causally influences review writers. The results of five studies (field data and experiments) show that, similar to writing about traumatic life events, when review writers express both emotional and rational aspects in reviews about negative consumption experiences, they feel better afterwards (ie, they recover affectively), and are more likely to purchase again (ie, they recover cognitively). We further examine why writing integrated reviews has positive effects on review writers by collecting biophysiological response data, which provides support for an account related to affective recovery, and by analyzing thought listing data, which provides support for an account related to cognitive recovery. This research shows that writing online reviews can serve as a digital therapy tool that helps consumers recover from negative experiences.

Themenliste (5/6)

9. **Hwang, E. H., & Lee, S. (2024). A nudge to credible information as a countermeasure to misinformation: Evidence from twitter. Information Systems Research.**



Fueled by social media, health misinformation is spreading rapidly across online platforms. Myths, rumors, and false information on vaccines are flourishing, and the aftermath can be disastrous. A more concerning trend is that people are increasingly relying on social media to obtain healthcare information and tending to believe what they read on social media. Given the serious consequences of misinformation, this study aims to explore the efficacy of a potential cure for the infodemic we face. Specifically, we focus on a countermeasure that Twitter used, which is to nudge users toward credible information when users search topics for which erroneous information is rampant. This Twitter's policy is unique, in that the intervention is not about censorship but about redirecting users away from false information and toward facts. Our analysis uses 1,468 news articles that contain misinformation about health topics such as measles, vaccines, and cancer. Our analysis reveals that Twitter's nudging policy reduces misinformation diffusion. After the policy introduction, a news article that contains misinformation is less likely to start a diffusion process on Twitter. In addition, tweets that contain a link to misinformation articles are less likely to be retweeted, quoted, or replied to, which leads to a significant reduction in the aggregated number of tweets each misinformation article attracts. We further uncover that the observed reduction is driven by the decrease both in original tweet posts—those that first introduce misinformation news articles to the Twitter platform—and in those resharing the misinformation, although the reduction is more significant in resharing posts. Last, we find that the effect is driven primarily by a decrease in human-like accounts that share links to unverified claims but not by a decrease in activities by bot-like accounts. Our findings suggest that a misinformation policy that relies on a nudge to a credible source rather than on censorship can suppress misinformation diffusion.

10. **Bell, J. J., Pescher, C., Tellis, G. J., & Füller, J. (2024). Can AI help in ideation? A theory-based model for idea screening in crowdsourcing contests. Marketing Science.**

Crowdsourcing generates up to thousands of ideas per contest. The selection of best ideas is costly because of the limited number, objectivity, and attention of experts. Using a data set of 21 crowdsourcing contests that include 4,191 ideas, we test how artificial intelligence can assist experts in screening ideas. The authors have three major findings. First, whereas even the best previously published theory-based models cannot mimic human experts in choosing the best ideas, a simple model using the least average shrinkage and selection operator can efficiently screen out ideas considered bad by experts. In an additional 22nd hold-out contest with internal and external experts, the simple model does better than external experts in predicting the ideas selected by internal experts. Second, the authors develop an idea screening efficiency curve that trades off the false negative rate against the total ideas screened. Managers can choose the desired point on this curve given their loss function. The best model specification can screen out 44% of ideas, sacrificing only 14% of good ideas. Alternatively, for those unwilling to lose any winners, a novel two-step approach screens out 21% of ideas without sacrificing a single first place winner. Third, a new predictor, word atypicality, is simple and efficient in screening. Theoretically, this predictor screens out atypical ideas and keeps inclusive and rich ideas.

Themenliste (6/6)

11. Lambrecht, A., & Tucker, C. E. (2020). Apparent algorithmic discrimination and real-time algorithmic learning.

An important concern is that algorithms can inadvertently discriminate against minority groups and reinforce existing inequality. Typically, the worry is that when classification algorithms are trained on a dataset that itself reflects bias this may reinforce bias. However, in the world of digital content many algorithms are making judgements in real time to determine what content will be engaging. We revisit the context of a classic study which documents that searches on Google for black names were more likely to return ads that highlighted the need for a criminal background check than searches for white names. We document that one explanation for this finding is that if an algorithm receives in real time less data about one group, it will learn at different speeds. Since black names are less common, the algorithm learns about the quality of the underlying ad more slowly, and as a result an ad, including an undesirable ad, is more likely to persist for searches next to black names even if the algorithm judges the ad to be of low-quality. We extend this result by presenting evidence that ads targeted towards searches for religious groups persist for longer for religious groups that are less searched for. This suggests that the process of real-time algorithmic learning can lead to differential outcomes across those whose characteristics are more common and those who are rarer in society.

12. Clegg, M., Hofstetter, R., de Bellis, E., & Schmitt, B. H. (2023). Unveiling the Mind of the Machine. Journal of Consumer Research.

Previous research has shown that consumers respond differently to decisions made by humans versus algorithms. Many tasks, however, are not performed by humans anymore but entirely by algorithms. In fact, consumers increasingly encounter algorithm-controlled products, such as robotic vacuum cleaners or smart refrigerators, which are steered by different types of algorithms. Building on insights from computer science and consumer research on algorithm perception, this research investigates how consumers respond to different types of algorithms within these products. This research compares high-adaptivity algorithms, which can learn and adapt, versus low-adaptivity algorithms, which are entirely pre-programmed, and explore their impact on consumers' product preferences. Six empirical studies show that, in general, consumers prefer products with high-adaptivity algorithms. However, this preference depends on the desired level of product outcome range—the number of solutions a product is expected to provide within a task or across tasks. The findings also demonstrate that perceived algorithm creativity and predictability drive the observed effects. This research highlights the distinctive role of algorithm types in the perception of consumer goods and reveals the consequences of unveiling the mind of the machine to consumers.