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Consumer Behavior

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All Too Familiar with the Bad: Goal Relevance, Valence, and the Encoding of Information in Consumer Decisions

Michael Hair, Georgia Institute of Technology
Samuel Bond, Georgia Institute of Technology

Keywords: judgment and decision making, elaboration, consumption goals, memory

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Consumer decisions often involve the later retrieval of information that has encoded in memory (Bettman 1979; Lynch Jr 1982). Prior work has shown how encoding and retrieval of attribute information can be affected by (1) active consumption goals, and (2) the valence of the information itself. However, little attention has been given to the interaction of these two important influences. In the present work, we explore whether the effect of goal-relevance on attribute encoding might depend on the valence of the information.

Key Contributions
Beyond its contribution to current understanding of consumer information processing and memory, our research offers straightforward implications regarding the presentation of information (regarding one’s own brand and competing brands) through advertising, packaging, communications, etc. At a broad level, an important conclusion of our work is that it is critical for marketers to understand what goals are active among consumers as they encounter product information. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the extent to which “negative information is more impactful than positive information” may depend heavily on its relevance to active goals.

Summary of Findings
We argue that the diagnostic advantage of negative information is strongest when that information pertains to active consumption goals. Therefore, we expect the memorial advantage of negative over positive information to be strongest for information that is deemed goal-relevant. We present experiments supporting our interactive process model, examine key boundary conditions, and provide recommendations for utilizing our findings in the design of communications.

References are available on request.
How Do You Measure Customer Value Co-Creation?

Arash Hosseinzadeh, University of Texas–Pan American

Keywords: customer value co-creation, measurement, criterion, quality of customer value co-creation, multidimensional measurement

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
The shift from “good-centered” dominant logic of marketing to “service-dominant” logic (S-D logic) has drawn researchers’ attention towards the concept of Customer Value Co-Creation (CVCC; Vargo and Lusch 2004). The interest in CVCC surged after 2008 as more publications appeared in leading Marketing journals and several journals presented special issues on the topic (e.g., Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science in 2008, Marketing Theory in 2011). Previous CVCC research has used diverse measurements to capture the essence of this construct, leading to irregularities in different aspects including the dimensionality of the construct, areas of co-creation activities, essence of customer inputs, and the construct’s labels. In this regard, the author proposes the following five criteria as a framework to qualify the extant measures and indicate principles of CVCC measurement: (1) subjective vs. objective measurement; (2) key co-creation activities; (3) quality and quantity of CVCC; (4) unidimensional vs. multidimensional measurement; and (5) construct diversity. These criteria were applied to 25 quantitative papers published from 1980 to 2014.

Five Criteria for Measuring CVCC
Criterion 1 addresses the subjectivity versus objectivity of CVCC measurement. In order to tap the viewpoint of consumers as a key component in the production process, not only objective measures but also subjective measures are required (Brown et al. 2004). Subjectivity causes a halo effect addressing customer beliefs about their participation. Based on this phenomenon, the level of participation will be overestimated by customers’ subjective rankings (Isham et al., 1995). The present study reveals that most authors have used surveys and sufficed to subjective measures.

Criterion 2 suggests four key co-creation activities as the areas in which customers engage in value creation. The key CVCC activities include customer co-creation within (1) the marketing and sales domain; (2) the service care domain; (3) new product/service development domain; and (4) as partial employee (Zhang and Chen 2008). Three studies have measured CVCC in all these 4 key areas (Cermak et al. 2011; Gustafsson et al. 2012; Yi and Gong 2013); two studies have measured CVCC in 2 of the key areas (Füller 2010; Bettencourt 1997); and the rest (20 studies) have focused on a single area. More specifically, most of the studies have captured CVCC in the service care domain.

The significance of the quality and quantity of customer input in the value co-creation process has been emphasized by previous research (Bitner et al. 1997; Fang et al. 2008; Lehtinen and Lehtinen 1991). Therefore, criterion 3 is about the quality and quantity of customer input as two different foci in extant CVCC research. Findings show that most previous studies (14 studies) have captured the quantity aspect of customer input while some have measured both quantity and quality. Nevertheless, only two of the studies have explicitly acknowledged the quality and quantity of customer input and systematically measured them (Chen et al. 2012; Fang et al. 2008).

The essence of CVCC as a multidimensional construct has been emphasized by previous researchers which forms the fourth criterion (Yi and Gong 2013). The scrutiny of the extant scales reveals the existence and use of both unidimensional and multidimensional measures. Whilst most papers use unidimensional measures (e.g. Gebauer et al. 2013; O’Cass and Ngo, 2012), some utilize multidimensional scales (e.g. Chen et al. 2012; Yi and Gong 2013). However,
the lack of consensus is evident among dimensions of the existing measures.

The terms co-creation, co-production, participation, and involvement have been used interchangeably in the extant literature (e.g. Bendapudi and Leone 2003; Vargo and Lusch 2004, 2008). This diversity establishes the fifth measurement criterion referring to construct diversity and behavioral versus attitudinal traits of co-creation activities. Some authors propose co-production as a “subset” of CVCC while others believe neither of them can be considered superordinate to the other (Akaka and Chandler 2011; Hilton et al. 2012). While participation and co-production address behavioral traits, involvement captures attitudinal facets of customers’ activities. In between, co-creation encompasses both behavioral and attitudinal traits of interactions (Cermak et al. 2011). The present study indicates that customer participation and co-creation are mostly adopted by those with a behavioral approach to CVCC.

Summary of Findings and Key Contributions
Using the five proposed criteria, the present study examines the communalities, differences, strengths, and weaknesses of existing CVCC measurements. While objective measures of CVCC are highly desirable, most studies have developed new subjective measurements, adding to the pool of other subjective measures. A majority of the existing measurements are unidimensional and address the quantity aspect of customer inputs. Finally, different constructs have been used to capture CVCC, indicating the attitudinal or behavioral interests of the empirical studies. By considering the most relevant criterion, future studies can adopt existing CVCC measurements more properly.

References are available on request.
Exceptional consumption experiences are argued to be crucial for a company’s offerings, its value creation and its economic success (Olsson et al. 2012; Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004). Historically, experiences have been at the heart of the entertainment business. Nowadays, companies stage them whenever they engage customers in a personal, memorable way (Pine and Gilmore 1998; Caru and Cova 2003). Many brands such as Nespresso or Starbucks engage their customers in not merely selling products, but deliver memorable brand experiences that provide a kaleidoscope of sensory, bodily, and affective experiences. Others have based their entire business model on a unique experience that sets them apart from competition. The Ogori Café in Japan, for instance, surprises its customers by not serving them with the food they order, but with what was ordered by the patrons before them. In a similar fashion, IKEA invited in 2012 100 lucky Facebook fans to a sleepover event at its London Essex store, offering them apart from snacks and massages, tips on choosing the right mattress and how to get a better night’s sleep.

Notably, consumption experience has attracted a lot of attention in marketing research. A considerable amount of empirical research has addressed the nature of consumption experiences and their impact on consumer response, specifically in the fields of consumer behavior (e.g., Hirschman and Holbrook 1982; Arnould and Price 1993), marketing (e.g., Pine and Gilmore 1998) and services (e.g., Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung 2007). Despite the ongoing movement towards an experience economy, literature has provided a wide-ranging set of definitions for consumption experience. On a basic level, consumption experiences occur whenever consumers search for and/or consume products or services. They represent an internal and subjective response to any direct or indirect contact with a company or brand (Meyer and Schwager 2007). Consumers, however, desire more than just the delivery of products and services. They seek sensory-rich consumption experiences with products or services that create unique memories (Walls et al. 2011). Thus, experiences should represent bundles of sensory memorabilia that engage the customer, deliver a sensory feeling and leave a lasting memory (Joy and Sherry 2003).

Prior investigations attempting to conceptualize consumption experience either use an aggregate measure of subjective

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**Post-Consumptive Experience in Servicescapes: The Impact of Mental Reenactment on Consumers’ Loyalty**

**Bernd Frederik Reitsamer, University of Innsbruck**

**ABSTRACT**

Marketing scholars and practitioners have acknowledged that consumers look for offerings that provide them with unique and memorable experiences. While a large amount of research devoted to experiential consumption has focused on products or brands, this study investigates the impact of sensorimotor perceptions on consumers’ cognitive and behavioral responses in servicescapes. The results of an online survey (N = 334) in the spa and wellness industry reveal that visual and motor perceptions of an experience significantly influence the quality of re-experience (i.e., how well a person can remember a past event), while all sensory modalities, except haptics, positively affect the quantity of re-experience (i.e., how often a recall takes place). Direct effects, however, show that without mental reenactment, only sight impressions impact consumers’ loyalty. The findings thus support the idea that sensorimotor experiences play an important role for knowledge retrieval and loyalty formation, which is in line with recent embodiment literature. Most importantly, this research demonstrates that triggering re-experience by means of easy-to-implement marketing tools provides a powerful instrument to boost consumers’ loyalty in post-consumption stages.

**Keywords:** consumption experience, post-consumption, sensory marketing, embodiment, loyalty

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experience (e.g., Mitchell et al. 1997), or operationalize it as consisting of sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual facets (Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello 2009). Literature on retrospection, however, suggests that consumers’ retrospective responses are strongly correlated with post-consumptive memories of such experiences (Wirtz et al. 2003). In a similar fashion, findings from embodiment confirm that experiential memories draw on mental simulations of sensorimotor components of the actual (on-line) experience (Barsalou 2008). As consumers seek sensory-rich consumption experiences with products and services that create unique memories (Walls et al. 2011), it is remarkable that no study so far has clarified whether post-consumptive memories for sensorimotor (i.e., sensory and motion) experiences predict behavioral intentions.

The current research is thus based on three core premises with corresponding contributions to theory. First, a modality-specific approach is introduced, conceptualizing consumption experience as a set of sensorimotor information originating from six modalities including a motor-component. Latest developments in neuroscience support this notion, confirming the idea that knowledge structures are grounded in sensorimotor representations (Barsalou 2008). Aggregate measures of consumption experience, by contrast, are high in abstraction and do not provide detailed insight if all sensorimotor modalities are equally important for sensory-rich services. Second, measures such as the Brand Experience Scale (Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello 2009) are multidimensional in their nature and link experiences through personality dimensions to behavioral outcomes. Applying such measures to explain real world phenomena, however, carries the potential that process variables, such as the intellectual dimension proposed by Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009), are used as dimensions of the actual experience. Cognitive and behavioral facets of a consumption experience should thus be considered as separate constructs different to the actual experience. Third, this research introduces re-experience, a cognitive measure (equivalent to the aforementioned intellectual dimension) that captures both how well (i.e., quality) and how frequent (i.e., quantity) a person can recall a temporarily distant experience. Hereafter, a causal model is provided that links and empirically tests sensorimotor perceptions via re-experience to consumers’ responses. Results show that visual and motor perceptions of an experience significantly influence the quality of re-experience (i.e., how well a person can remember a past event), while all sensory modalities, except the tactile sense, positively affect the quantity of re-experience (i.e., how often a recall takes place). Direct effects further reveal that without a cognitive reenactment, only visual impressions will impact consumers’ responses. In the final section, implications for marketers include how re-experience can be used to boost long-term impressions and behavioral intentions in post-consumption stages.

Conceptual Background and Theoretical Framework
Marketing scholars and practitioners have acknowledged that consumers look for offerings that provide them with unique and memorable experiences (Zarantonello and Schmitt 2010). While a large amount of research devoted to experiential consumption has focused on products or brands (e.g., Caru and Cova 2003), this study investigates consumers’ sensorimotor perceptions of experiences in service settings. Servicescapes (Bittner 1992) encompass the physical environment in which a service process takes place and are intended to affect both, the customer and the employee, conceptualized as responding holistically to three dimensions of the environment: ambient conditions, functional aspects and signs, symbols and artefacts (Bittner 1992). Similar to product or brand experiences (e.g., Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello 2009), experiences within servicescapes are multidimensional in their nature, that is, they vary in their strength and intensity, valence and time-frame. Moreover, experiences do not only occur during the consumption stage, they may also arise in the post-consumption stage, whenever there is a direct or indirect connection with the service (Olsson et al. 2012). Marketers must thus not only provide the right service setting or environment when the (on-line) experience takes place, they should also take into account that experiences are private, personal events that can arise by means of cognitive reenactment at a later point of time (Schmitt 1999).

Indeed, temporally distant recollections of an experience were found to most accurately predict consumers’ future desire to repeat the experience (Wirtz et al. 2003). More precisely, the best predictor for willingness to repeat, for instance, a holiday, was remembered experience, implying that remembered experience might act as mediating construct between consumers’ on-line experience (i.e., what happens during a stay) and their behavioral intentions. These findings resonate well with the assumption that on-line experiences do not predict consumers’ desire to repeat or not to repeat a trip. It is what people remember that predicts this decision, indicating that memories are superior in predicting consumers’ future behavior. The construction of such sensory-rich memories should thus be the focus in research on experiential consumption (Kahneman 2000). So far, however, no study has investigated how consumers’ retrospective memories of a service experience impact their behavioral responses.

The Multi-sensory Service Experience
Experiences in servicescapes encompass a wide range of sensory and bodily sensations. Academic research has shown that different sensory impressions impact perceptions of both goods and services (e.g., Hultén 2009). Empirical studies addressing sight impressions in services have been discussed,
for instance, by Devlin and Arneill (2003). Vision was found to be the most dominant one in affecting our central nervous system, the cerebral cortex, and activating our memories, thoughts and experiences (Hultén 2009). Apart from light, colors were found to affect consumers’ approach orientation, physical attraction and perceptions of the environment (Crowley 1993). In a similar vein, auditory impressions, that is both atmospheric and ambient sounds, have been studied in servicescapes by using modifications of tempo, type, volume, mode and valence and were found to increase consumers’ arousal levels, expenditures and product evaluations (Yalch and Spangenberg 2000). Olfactory inputs can elicit more emotional and evocative memories than any other sensory cues and thus carry the ability to trigger specific emotional impacting mood and behavior (Herz 2010). Findings demonstrate that olfaction improves evaluations of products and leads to superior recall of brands (Morrin and Ratneshwar 2000). Tactile sensations refer to any form of haptic input and play a major role in product evaluation, can positively affect server evaluation (Hornik 1992) and decrease possible frustration (Peck and Childers 2003). Research in this domain also reveals that people differ in their need for tactile input (Peck and Childers 2003). Gustatory impressions represent a more complex form of sensory impressions since they interact with flavor, smell, temperature, touch, sight, sound and pain. Studies examining the interaction between taste and other modalities, for instance, found that taste perceptions heavily rely on vision, as increasing color intensity strongly impacts taste (Hoegg and Alba 2007).

Ultimately, a multi-sensory service experience is assumed to occur when more than one of the five senses contribute to the perception of sensory experiences (Hultén 2009). Current embodiment literature (e.g., Barsalou 2008), however, underlines that there is a strict interaction between sensory and motor information when people store perceptual symbols in the brain. Further, brain imaging studies have demonstrated that visual stimuli such as photographs automatically evoke motor responses (Borghi 2005). Besides sensations that arise from the five human modalities, a motor component is thus of high relevance in servicescapes, as most sensations in service settings involve motion and physical activity.

**Sensorimotor Stimuli and Consumers’ Re-experience**

When investigating the relationship between consumers’ perceptions of a service experience and their cognitive responses, this research draws on the psychological principle of reinforcement (Passer and Smith 2003). Reinforcement suggests an automatic association between experience and behavior, with consumers showing a tendency to repeat enjoyable experiences and avoid experiences that did not bring enjoyment. Rosy retrospection (Mitchell et al. 1997) advances this concept further by positing that people will more devotedly remember events in the past than they felt about the same event at the time of its occurrence. Consumers thus selectively search, recall and change their interpretation of past events so that they and the event are seen as positive (Mitchell et al. 1997).

Prior research addressing the nature of consumption experience, however, did not provide consistent findings on which factors exactly account for and influence temporally distant recollections of consumption experiences. Wirtz et al. (2003), for example, used an aggregate measure of subjective experience (Mitchell et al., 1997; Klaaren, Hodges, and Wilson 1994) and did not include measures for future behavior. Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009), by contrast, conceptualized experiences as consisting out of sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral dimensions. Their findings, however, do not provide further information on whether all or only some specific modalities are relevant for triggering positive consumer responses. This notion becomes particularly salient when pursuing a retrospective approach, since temporally distant recollections of an experience should primarily depend on mental simulations of sensorimotor experience (Barsalou 2008). This research therefore uses a more fine-grained conceptualization of consumption experience and separately addresses vision, audition, gustation, tactile sense, olfaction and motion. For re-experience, the study draws on the intellectual dimension by Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009), but controls for its quality (i.e., the accuracy and clarity of the retrospection) as well as for its quantity (i.e., how frequent retrospection takes place). As consumers are asked to recollect their experiences at a later point of time, it is hypothesized that sensorimotor impressions influence consumers’ quality and quantity of re-experience. Formally,

\[ H_1: \text{Sensory (i.e., (a) vision, (b) audition, (c) gustation, (d) tactile, (e) olfaction) and (f) motor memories of a service experience positively impact the quality of re-experience.} \]

\[ H_2: \text{Sensory (i.e., (a) vision, (b) audition, (c) gustation, (d) tactile, (e) olfaction, and (f) motor memories of a service experience positively impact the quantity of re-experience.} \]

**Re-experience and Loyalty**

In a second step, this study extends existing research by linking consumers’ re-experience to their loyalty. The quest for consumer loyalty has become a strategic objective in marketing and is of particular importance in the service sector, given that consumers perceive a greater risk in the choice of services than for products (McKercher, Denizci-Guillet, and Ng 2011). Consumer loyalty toward a service experience can
be defined in line with Oliver (1999, p. 34) as: “a deeply held commitment to re-buy or re-patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior.” In accordance with theory of planned behavior (Ajzen 1991), which has been used to study consumers’ cognitive responses and their subsequent behaviors, both cognitive constructs of this study, that is, quality and quantity of re-experience, are supposed to positively impact consumers’ behavioral responses (i.e., their loyalty). The preceding arguments can be formally stated as follows:

\[ H_3: \text{Consumers’ perceived quality and quantity of re-experience will positively impact their loyalty towards the service provider.} \]

**Method and Data Analysis**

**Research design and sample.** To empirically test the proposed model, a self-administered online survey was conducted in the spa and wellness industry. Spa and wellness services fit the purpose of this study well, as they involve an all-encompassing mode of travel that integrates a quest for physical health, beauty or longevity, while providing sensory, bodily, and affective experiences (Bushell and Sheldon 2009). Semantic clarity and content validity of the items have been verified in a pre-study with 26 respondents. For the main study, data from 334 respondents (response rate 5.57%) was obtained. The majority of respondents was 23 years old, female (73.1%) and travelled with family (46.7%) or partners (27.2%) on a regular basis. Respondents visited the spa/wellness provider on average 10.6 times per year, spent 32.2 EUR and did not purchase memorabilia (91.6%). Their last visit was on average 44 days ago.

**Measures.** To operationalize sensorimotor dimensions, sensory and behavioral items were adapted from Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009), resulting in three items for each sensory modality with sufficient reliability scores (vision (\(\alpha = .90\)), audition (\(\alpha = .87\)), gustation (\(\alpha = .91\)), tactile (\(\alpha = .82\)), olfaction (\(\alpha = .89\)) and motion (\(\alpha = .89\))). Quality of re-experience (\(\alpha = .79\)) and quantity of re-experience (\(\alpha = .85\)) were captured by three items adapted from the intellectual experience dimension by Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009). For the operationalization of intended loyalty (\(\alpha = .89\)), items by Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry (1996) were used. All items were measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = “strongly disagree,” and 7 = “strongly agree”). Table 1 provides a complete list of measures.

**Results.** Structural equation modeling using Mplus version 7.0 (Muthén and Muthén 1998-2012) was used to test the hypotheses of the conceptual model. Table 2 presents descriptive statistics for the variables and their correlations. The conventional iterative approach was used to assess reliability and validity, including corrected item-total correlations, Cronbach’s alpha values, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis (e.g., Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Figure 1 shows the estimated structural equation model. All fit indices were within acceptable ranges of global fit criteria (Hair et al., 2010). The model yielded the following fit statistics: \(\chi^2 = 5328.16\) (378, \(p = .00\)), RMSEA = .026, CFI = .99, TLI = .98. Collectively, the indices suggest a good fit of the data to the model.

**Sensorimotor stimuli and consumers’ re-experience.** In line with H1, vision (\(\beta = .16, p \leq .05\)), and motion (\(\beta = .14, p \leq .10\)) positively influence quality of re-experience. Gustation (\(\beta = -.17, p \leq .05\)) was found to have a significant, but negative impact on the quality of re-experience. Auditory (\(\beta = -.05, n.s.\)), tactile (\(\beta = -.11, n.s.\)) and olfactory (\(\beta = -.01, n.s.\)) impressions did not exert any influence on consumers’ quality of retrospection. H1 can thus be partially supported.

**Re-experience and loyalty.** Both quality (\(\beta = .44, p \leq .01\)) and quantity of re-experience (\(\beta = .29, p \leq .01\)) revealed to positively impact consumers’ loyalty towards the service provider. H3 can thus be supported.

**Direct effects.** A bootstrap estimation (Mplus 7.0, Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2012) with 1000 resamples was used to assess the direct effects of sensorimotor stimuli on consumers’ loyalty.

Only vision was found to positively contribute to consumers’ loyalty towards the service provider (\(\beta = .33, p < .01\)). Auditory impressions, by contrast, revealed a negative, significant direct effect on consumers’ loyalty (\(\beta = -.13, p \leq .01\)). All other modalities as well as the motor component did not exert any influence on loyalty.

**General Discussion**

The present study investigates the impact of modality-specific service experiences on consumers’ cognitive and behavioral responses in a post-consumption stage. In summary, re-experience is shown to be an important process variable linking sensorimotor experiences with consumers’ loyalty. The findings thus support the idea that sensorimotor
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<td>X makes me think of visual impressions.</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.74</td>
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<td>I associate visual impressions with visiting X.</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.78</td>
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<td>X is an experience that appeals to my sense of vision.</td>
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<td>X makes me think of auditory impressions.</td>
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<td>I associate auditory impressions with visiting X.</td>
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<td>X is an experience that appeals to my sense of hearing.</td>
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<td>X makes me think of taste impressions.</td>
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<td>I associate taste impressions with visiting X.</td>
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<td>.83</td>
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<td>X is an experience that appeals to my sense of taste.</td>
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<td><strong>Tactile a</strong></td>
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<td>X makes me think of haptic perceptions.</td>
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<td>.67</td>
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<td>I associate haptic impressions with visiting X.</td>
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<td>X is an experience that appeals to my sense of touch.</td>
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<td><strong>Olfaction a</strong></td>
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<td>X makes me think of impressions from scent.</td>
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<td>.75</td>
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<td>I associate scent impressions with visiting X.</td>
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<td>.82</td>
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<td>X is an experience that appeals to my sense of smell.</td>
<td>.89</td>
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<td><strong>Motion a</strong></td>
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<td>X makes me think of bodily sensations from motion and physical activity.</td>
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<td>.81</td>
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<td>.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>I associate bodily impressions with visiting X.</td>
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<tr>
<td>X is an experience that appeals to my sense of motion.</td>
<td>.88</td>
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<td><strong>Re-Experience (Quality) a</strong></td>
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<td>When I think of my visit to X, my memories are very clear.</td>
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<td>.64</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>I can remember my stay at X very well.</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>It is easy for me, to imagine certain moments of my stay at X again.</td>
<td>.83</td>
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<td><strong>Re-Experience (Quantity) a</strong></td>
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<td>I think of my stay at X very often.</td>
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<td>.74</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.83</td>
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<td>I frequently think about how my stay at X was.</td>
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<td>.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I am deep in thought, my stay at X appears very often.</td>
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<td>.71</td>
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<td><strong>Intended Loyalty b</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>I would say positive things about X to other people.</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.73</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would recommend X to someone who seeks my advice.</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.86</td>
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<tr>
<td>I would encourage friends and relatives to visit X.</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.84</td>
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<td>I would consider X as my first choice.</td>
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*a* Items adapted from Brakus et al. (2009).

*b* Items adapted from Zeithaml et al. (1996).
experiences play an important role for knowledge retrieval and future responses, which is in line with recent embodiment literature (Barsalou 2008). Specifically, the results of the structural model reveal that visual and motor perceptions of an experience significantly influence the quality of re-experience (i.e., how well a person can remember a past event), while all sensory modalities, except tactile impressions, positively affect the quantity of re-experience (i.e., how often a recall takes place). Gustatory impressions were found to negatively impact the quality of re-experience (e.g., the clarity of mental simulations may be influenced by a negative or unexpected taste obtained while visiting a servi-
ice provider), but exert a positive influence on the quantity of retrospection (e.g., a negative impression might lead to more frequent retrospection). In a similar fashion, olfactory cues, despite frequently eliciting more emotional and evocative memories than any other sensory cues (e.g., Herz, 2010), did not enhance consumers’ quality of re-experience either. Finally, tactile input showed no significant impact on quality or quantity of retrospection. Even though consumers may strongly rely on tactile information during their experience, it did not cause them to reactivate these knowledge structures at a later point of time, nor did it influence their behavioral responses (i.e., their loyalty).

Most importantly, direct effects reveal that an (aided) recall of the experience (e.g., by the service provider) is crucial for modality specific information to be extended to the post-consumption stage. Without mental reenactment, however, only sight impressions significantly impact consumers’ loyalty, which is in line with the assumed dominance of the visual sense when it comes to (re)activating memories from the past (e.g., Hultén, 2009).

**Managerial Implications**

Although it is well established that sensory (e.g., Krishna 2012) and motor (e.g., Borghi 2005) perceptions impact consumers cognitive and behavioral responses, the current research demonstrates that both the quality and quantity of mental reenactment are of vital importance for sensorimotor sensations to be transferred to the post consumption stage. Findings indicate that there are three important issues for managers to consider when trying to increase consumers’ loyalty: first, if consumers are systematically low in qualitatively re-experiencing a prior event, management should improve visual and motor experiences in its service settings, since experiences are positively linked to desired end states. Second, if consumers are systematically low in frequently re-experiencing a prior visit, management should enhance experiences in modalities that are particularly positively linked to the quantity of re-experience, namely vision, audition, gustation and olfaction. Given that resources are scarce, findings of this research enable service providers to better specify future endowment of financial, technical and personnel resources.

Third, re-experience in post-consumptive stages was found to carry the potential to predict consumers’ loyalty. More specifically, service providers may build on this study’s findings and use visionary, auditory, gustatory and olfactory post-purchase stimuli to enhance frequency of retrospection and thus increase consumers’ loyalty. The more often consumers think of a previous experience, and the more management addresses the sense of sight, hearing, gustation and olfaction by means of post-purchase stimuli, the greater consumers’ loyalty with the service provider should be. By contrast, the findings suggest that quality of re-experience should be of minor importance for service providers, since only vision (as the most dominant modality) and motion enhance consumers’ clarity of retrospection (i.e., how well consumers remember their previous stay). Put differently, quantity of re-experience seems to offer more fruitful (sensorimotor) opportunities for retrospection than quality of re-experience. Firms should thus focus more on increasing the frequency of retrospection than aiming to enhance the quality of sensorimotor recollections from the past. For instance, reminders via postcards or emails that invite to re-experience the most enjoyable moments of the last visit including visionary, auditory and olfactory cues could be an effective, yet underestimated marketing instrument to boost frequency of retrospection and to increase consumers’ loyalty. Re-experience thus offers managers a means for adjusting sensorimotor impressions from the past, can be used to (re)activate sensorimotor impressions and may guide future behavior.

**Limitations and Future Research Directions**

While this study advances our understanding of post-consumptive experiences in servicescapes, it is not without limitations. First, the relative strength with which a certain modality is linked to re-experience may vary among different services and service providers. Individual surveys are thus needed to detect and analyze sector-specific characteristics. Second, this study focused on one specific industry only. Spa and wellness experiences offer per se a relatively high degree of sensory and motor stimulation. Hence, further research is needed to investigate the proposed model in a different industry. Third, specific service settings may trigger different sensorimotor impressions with varying intensity. Tactile sensations, for instance, were not found to exert any significant influence on consumers’ re-experience, nor could a direct effect on consumers’ loyalty be observed. Other servicescapes, however, might rely heavily on tactile input and thus might lead to different results. In a similar fashion, direct effects revealed a positive influence of vision on loyalty, at same time, however, auditory impressions revealed a negative, significant direct effect on consumers’ loyalty. This circumstance calls for closer empirical examination, as the indirect path from auditory cues to quantity of re-experience and subsequently to consumers’ loyalty shows a positive, significant relationship. One could thus argue that without frequent retrospection, auditory cues negatively affect loyalty. Again, this finding might strongly be related to the chosen servicescape, as guests in wellness settings will primarily long for a relaxing atmosphere with a minimum of auditory stimulation. On the other hand, service providers could use frequent retrospection to “smooth out” otherwise negative impressions from particular sensory
modalities, in this case, audition. Future research could thus investigate, whether re-experience can alter negative impressions of past events.

The present research can be regarded as a first endeavor to investigate the effects of sensorimotor impressions on consumers’ quality and quantity retrospection in servicescapes. Considering the fact that servicescapes may vary in their degree of sensorimotor stimulation, and taking into account that retrospection can alter sensorimotor impressions from the past, further research is needed to explore this promising area of experiential consumption.

References


Research Question
Despite the assumed underlying societal mindset shift as a reason for sharing, the motivations for sharing have so far not been investigated systematically. However, a better understanding of these needs would help improve sharing offers and sustain the impressive growth that has taken place over the past years. In order to fill this research gap, the present study pursues four objectives: First, building on a literature review our investigation aims to identify relevant characteristics in order to systematically categorize the different sharing offers that exist and to verify this categorization with the help of a quantitative examination (study 2). Second, in order to examine and compare the underlying individual’s needs, we aim to identify and compile a comprehensive catalogue of the needs individuals seek to satisfy through sharing. For this purpose, we conduct a literature review and a qualitative study (study 1). Our third objective involves a quantitative investigation and comparison of the individuals’ needs with regard to the specific sharing platform, resp. the corresponding sharing category (study 2). The fourth objective aims to investigate the impact that the fulfillment of the identified needs has on psychological and behavioral outcomes for the respective identified sharing categories (study 2).

Method and Data
In order to verify and complement the needs catalogue which we developed within the literature review (study 1), we use the psychological means-end chain approach. The method used most commonly to measure means-end chains is a personal, semi-structured, in-depth interview, called the laddering technique. We conduct our study at a German-speaking University and generate 85 data sets (47% females, $M_{age} = 24.01$). Two independent judges analyze the content of the responses. To validate our categorization approach and in order to examine the underlying needs structures of consumers’ sharing behavior, we conduct a quantitative study generating 657 datasets (29% female, $M_{age} = 24.9$). Participants are assigned to one of the sharing options they have indicated before. All items were assessed using 7-point Likert scales. For the measurement of the constructs, we draw on well-established scales used in the literature and adapted them to our research context. If no established scale is available, the items are derived from the qualitative study and adapted using a pretest. Differences between the needs are investigated using variance analysis. To examine the impact of the most salient needs of the identified four categories on psychological and behavioral outcomes, a regression analysis is conducted.

Summary of Findings
With regard to this study’s four research objectives, we derive the following results: first, we identified a sensible categorization of motives that drive individuals to participate in sharing offers, which was derived from existing research literature and confirmed to be meaningful by the results of both our qualitative and our quantitative studies. Secondly, we developed a comprehensive needs catalogue by building on major theories in social psychology and adapting them to the sharing context. This needs catalogue was then confirmed in a qualitative study and extended by applying a laddering approach to identify additional needs which were subsequently confirmed to be relevant in our quantitative study. Thirdly, our results show that for differ-
ent sharing offers distinct needs are relevant and fulfilled. The findings regarding the different platforms offer first recommendations on how to position these platforms and design their communications strategies. Finally, our results regarding the impact of the most salient needs per sharing category on attitude and WOM offer further insights into the relevance of the different needs and can also provide indications on how to target potential consumers.

**Key Contributions**

First, we identify a sensible categorization of the existing sharing offers. Secondly, we identify the main needs satisfied by the participation in these offers as well as the main differences between the four sharing categories. Thirdly, we show how the satisfaction of needs in the different categories relates to behavioral intentions.

*References are available on request.*
Is “The Bigger the Better” Always True? Big Data and Knowledge Production in Marketing Research

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Jean-Sébastien Vayre, Université de Toulouse II-Le Mirail

Keywords: big data, marketing research, abduction; digital traces

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The amount of data, the speed of data in and out, and the range of data types and sources allow us to differentiate Big Data from analytics and mere data. Imagine scatterplots overflowed with observations added every second to become a rough cloud that masks underlying relationships, or the possibility to predict the success of a book, a bankruptcy, or even a pregnancy. This is Big Data. One can understand pros and cons of big data by taking the example of photographs. Twenty years ago we were taking pictures with only one device and we had to take our film to be developed. Today we use mobile phones, tabs, webcams, cameras or even video cameras. Prices for storage and CPU technologies have been decreasing and let the opportunity for consumers to take thousands of photographs with different devices. Big data starts here; the amount of pictures and the numerous sources:

1. Imply to organize the data, but how?

2. Prevent us from seeing them all, therefore data are not entirely known.

3. Imply to make a selection, but how to be sure we are deleting the right data and on which criteria?

All those questions only just find answers when more data are already involved and start a new process. Lazer et al. (2009) believe this era of “data driven computational social science” has the same potential than the emergence of cognitive science in the 1960s and should not be left to private companies or government agencies. Big data are slowly entering universities and our role, as researchers, is to underline some of the issues considered as relevant to our field and to suggest a research method adapted to Big Data.

This paper contributes to establish a basis for conducting research with Big Data in our field. More precisely, it first underlines ethical and epistemic issues, and introduces the notion of digital traces for a better understanding of Big Data. Second, it suggests the use of abductive reasoning associated with a grounded and constant comparison of data as a first step when conducting research. Finally, an example of such a method is provided through the presentation of archetype-based analysis.

References are available on request.

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Let Your Fingers Do the Shopping: How Touchscreens Are Changing Purchase Behavior

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Keywords: touchscreen technology, consumer behavior, thinking style, hedonic, utilitarian

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Touchscreen technology has existed for more than 30 years, though its use mostly has been limited to ATMs, self-service kiosks, and point-of-sales terminals. However, the launch of affordable, easy-to-use touchscreen technology dramatically altered human–machine interfaces, and consumers have readily accepted this change. The way tactile uses on touchscreens affect consumer behavior and decision making in various activities is uncertain, suggesting the need for advanced tactile research. To address this gap, the current study investigates touchscreen devices and the underlying psychological drivers that contribute to consumers’ responses to products presented on different devices. This study is at the forefront of the research field and develops a deeper understanding of the tactile effect in sensory marketing. Building on the literatures of tactile effects, product nature, and thinking styles, we address the following research questions:

Does consumer behavior differ between using traditional desktops and touchscreen devices? Specifically, does the type of interface affect purchase intentions differently depending on the product nature (i.e., hedonic vs. utilitarian)?

What are the underlying mechanisms that contribute to such differences? Specifically, does each type of interface invoke a different thinking style, and does thinking style mediate the moderated relationship between interface and purchase intention?

Method and Data
Data are collected from three experiments at a North American university. All experiments are conducted in a behavioral research laboratory equipped with desktop computers and handheld touchscreen devices. For all studies, participants first complete a questionnaire with the appropriate scales used in the studies on a desktop computer. Participants were then randomly assigned to a handheld touchscreen device or a desktop computer to complete the rest of the tasks.

Study 1 examined whether product nature moderates the effect of device type on purchase intention using a 2 (device type) x 2 (product nature) between-subjects design. Study 2 investigated if device type affects a person’s situation-specific thinking style. Two regression analyses, one with rational thinking style as the dependent variable and one with experiential thinking style as the dependent variable, are conducted. Independent variables include device type and control variables, such as need for touch and need for cognition. Study 3 demonstrated the moderated mediation process using a 2 (device type) x 2 (product nature) between-subjects design. Using a conditional process analysis, we examine whether the effect of device type on purchase intention is mediated by thinking style, and if the mediation effect is moderated by product nature.

Summary of Findings
The research findings offer a deeper understanding of touch technology in today’s digital age, while simultaneously shedding light on sensory marketing. We demonstrate that the differential effect of device type on consumers’ purchase intentions is dependent on product nature. More specifically, we show that consumers are more likely to purchase hedonic products on touchscreen devices while favoring utilitarian

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products on desktop computers (study 1). The underlying mechanism that contributes to the differences between the devices is consumer’s situation-specific thinking style. Specifically, users of handheld touchscreen devices have higher experiential thinking styles and lower rational thinking styles than do users of desktop PC devices (study 2). We also demonstrate that these situation-specific thinking styles mediate the relationship between device type and purchase intention, and that this mediation is moderated by the product nature (study 3). More specifically, the results show the use of a touchscreen (versus a desktop) evokes a stronger experiential thinking style but a weaker rational thinking style. Stronger experiential thinking style leads to a lower purchase intention for utilitarian products and higher purchase intentions for hedonic products. A weaker rational thinking style leads to a higher purchase intention for hedonic products but has no effect on utilitarian products.

**Key Contributions**
The current research makes several contributions to the sensory marketing literature and to marketing practices. First, while extant sensory marketing literature has shown that touch plays an important role in consumer decision making and judgment, it is silent on the tactile effect associated with the use of touchscreen devices. We extend existing theory on sensory marketing, especially tactile effects, by detailing how device type and product nature interact to affect consumer decisions. Second, while existing marketing literature has offered no explanation on what drives this phenomenon, we offer a clear understanding of the mechanism driving the differential effect by showing that desktops are more likely to evoke a rational thinking style among users, while touchscreens induce an experiential thinking style. Third, despite the substantive literature on how the hedonic and utilitarian nature of products influences consumers’ decisions, research has yet to explore the role of product nature in the context of purchasing on a touchscreen device versus a traditional desktop. Fourth, given the increasing use of touchscreen devices, our research findings provide practical solutions on marketing channel selection such that hedonic products would be better promoted through mobile channels while utilitarian products should be placed using regular online channels.

*References are available on request.*
Material Love in the Digital Age: Comparing Perceived Consumer Value of Digital Versus Physical Products

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Sabrina V. Helm, University of Arizona
Tony Stovall, University of Arizona

Keywords: perceived value, digital consumption, material products

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Understanding consumers’ perceived value of digital vs physical product is warranted due to the ubiquity of digital consumption and its already wide-ranging implications for human society. Indeed, examining the reasons why consumers choose digital over physical formats is not only paramount for marketers in digital-related industries (Magaudda 2011) but also for marketers in general as digital technologies become embedded in more consumer products. Perceived value is an important topic to study insofar as it is considered to be a key antecedent of consumer choice (Woodruff 1997). This study follows Sheth et al. (1991) in categorizing functional, emotional, social, epistemic and conditional value to analyze consumers’ perceived value of physical vs digital books. Extant research provides initial evidence that consumers prefer digital and physical books for different reasons and purposes. However, this research mostly focused on functional differences with emotional and social factors being underexplored. We suggest that a comparative approach may unveil additional insights into consumers’ format preferences.

Method and Data
Due to the dearth of research that addresses consumers’ value perceptions of digital products, we used focus group interviews. Focus groups are collaborative and introduce participants to ideas and thoughts they may not have previously considered (Threlfall 1999). We recruited ‘high users’ of digital technologies (those who regularly used more than two digital devices), specifically e-books, to ensure both similarity and content expertise among our participants (Krueger and Casey 2000; Goulding 2005). We conducted four focus groups, comprised of 31 participants (26 women, 5 men), split along generational lines: 18-24, 25-31 (Millennials); 32-47 (Gen X); 48-66 (Baby Boomers). We sub-divided the Millennial cohort into two groups, college students versus post-college young adults. The participants were students or (non-academic) staff members at a large university in the Southwestern United States. To better understand consumers’ interpretations of the current digital marketplace, we employed a semi-structured approach with a common discussion protocol across sessions in moderating the focus groups (Mazzarol et al. 2007).

Summary of Findings
Our comparative analysis of perceived value categories suggests that digital and physical books differ in their respective value propositions. We found that many participants favored a digitally-enabled reading experience only for certain book genres. In contrast, most preferred ‘special’ books in a physical format. Although the functional features of e-readers were positively viewed by some, the prevailing sense was that digital books lacked social and emotional value. These findings, coupled with the general observation that e-book sales are currently stagnant (Abrams 2013; Milliot 2014), illustrate the vast differences that digital and physical books play in consumers’ lives. Physical and digital books do not just represent two different formats of the same product, but different products altogether.

From a theoretical standpoint, our study reveals that a reexamination of customer value conceptualizations is war-
ranted. We found considerable evidence for hedonic, epistemic and conditional value elements, which are categories often underrepresented in studies of perceived value (e.g., Sweeney and Soutar 2001). Escapism or immersion, and a sensory enrichment of the reading experience were the exclusive realm of physical books. Epistemic value was also present, mostly inspired by ‘the thrill of the hunt’ derived from visiting physical bookstores, enabling an enriched customer experience.

**Key Contributions**

Our findings can help marketers design distinct value propositions for products in physical and digital formats. Marketers should consider heightening the hedonic experience of digital reading. Our study participants did not develop bonds with e-books; however, such utilitarian view of e-books likely stands in the way of developing affective customer loyalty, which is generally seen as a predictor of corporate (financial) success (e.g., Helgesen 2006). Marketers of e-books and e-readers could also investigate how to provide a socially richer consumer experience without violating privacy concerns. Our study shows that since most participants no longer collected books, the material love expressed with regard to favorite books only referred to a very small subset, namely, those with nostalgic properties. Hence, we can foresee a future where the majority of books will fall into a larger zone of substitutability. Consumers will interchangeably buy, rent or loan physical or digital books for one-time reading pleasure while only a select number of books will be kept.

*References are available on request.*
Understanding Responses to Inconsistent CSR Activities: The Role of Dialectic Thinking

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Vanitha Swaminathan, University of Pittsburgh

Keywords: branding, corporate social responsibility, culture

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Recent instances of corporate scandals involving JPMorgan Chase’s questionable recruiting practices in China, to Lance Armstrong’s admission of using performance enhancing drugs, and corruption scandals surrounding HP, companies are having to deal with negative publicity and scandals that are often contrary to acceptable standards of social responsibility. Johnson & Johnson, a brand name strongly associated with gentle, high quality baby care products was asked to pay a $2.2 billion settlement for charges relating to its marketing of drugs for unapproved uses as well as the payment of “kickbacks” to doctors and nursing homes (Ingram & Krasny, 2013). These kinds of inconsistencies in CSR can increase consumers’ perceptions of hypocrisy of brands, and lower their evaluations of the brand (Wagner, Lutz, & Weitz, 2009).

The present research builds on this finding by examining how dialectic thinking—characterized by the tolerance for contradiction—can moderate the response to incongruities in CSR behavior. In this research, we hypothesize that consumers’ reactions to inconsistencies in CSR behavior may vary based on their cultural styles of thinking. Specifically, we focus on dialectic thinking. Dialectic thinking is characterized by the tolerance for contradiction (Peng & Nisbett, 1999; Spencer-Rogers, Peng, Wang, & Hou, 2004) and a preference for dialectical proverbs (e.g., sorrow is born of excessive joy) (Peng and Nisbett 1999). We hypothesize that dialectic thinkers will be more tolerant of incongruities in CSR behavior than non-dialectic thinkers.

Next, we vary the nature of the CSR statement made by the firm. A CSR statement made by a firm could be concrete (e.g., we contribute 5% of our profits to programs that improve the health and well-being of our employees) or abstract (e.g., we care about our employees). When faced with inconsistent CSR information, a concrete statement is likely to reduce perceptions of congruity. In this condition, it is really clear to dialectic thinkers that the firm made very specific CSR statements, but the behavior is inconsistent with the statements. Here, as dialectic thinkers attempt to resolve the incongruity, they are unable to do so. This is likely to cause less favorable evaluations for dialectic thinkers than non-dialectic thinkers. In contrast, when a CSR statement made by a firm is abstract in nature, both dialectic and non-dialectic thinkers are likely to respond similarly because the abstract CSR statement would enable both types of consumers to resolve the contradiction, and have similar perceptions of congruity, leading to similar brand evaluations.

Method and Data
Three experiments were conducted to test our hypotheses. In study 1, we tested our hypothesis by priming dialectic thinking. Dialectic thinking was primed among Asian American participants by adapting a task from Spencer-Rogers et al. (2004). Then, we exposed participants to a news article about a hypothetical oil company Zenata that was both good and bad at environmental responsibility (adapted from Yoon et al., 2006), and measured their responses using various brand evaluation and hypocrisy scales.

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In study 2, we tested our hypothesis using a cultural sample, with Caucasian-Americans (representing non-dialectic thinkers) and Asian-Americans (representing dialectic thinkers). Our stimuli was the same as that used in study 1.

In study 3, we conducted an experiment with a 2 (dialectic, non-dialectic) x 2 (abstract CSR statement, concrete CSR statement) between subjects design. Dialectic thinking was measured. Our stimuli consisted of a hypothetical brand Powermart, which makes a positive CSR statement about employee rights, and subsequently has a scandal about employee rights.

**Summary of Findings**
Consistent with our hypothesis, dialectic thinkers gave more favorable behavioral intentions and brand evaluations than non-dialectic thinkers. Dialectic thinkers perceived lower hypocrisy than non-dialectic thinkers. Importantly, dialectic thinkers reported higher perceptions of congruity than non-dialectic thinkers.

As hypothesized, our results show that for the concrete CSR statement, dialectic thinkers gave less favorable brand evaluations (and social responsibility perceptions for the brand) than non-dialectic thinkers. For the abstract CSR statement, there were no differences between dialectic and non-dialectic thinkers.

**Key Contributions**
Our research is the first to show that cultural styles of thinking can affect responses to CSR activities. We find that dialectic thinkers respond more favorably to inconsistencies in CSR activities. Our findings contribute to a better understanding of the role of dialectic thinking in resolving inconsistencies demonstrated by companies and brands. A second contribution is to show robustness of these findings across various types of inconsistencies and a boundary condition for these effects, demonstrating that concrete CSR statements may reverse the aforementioned effects.

References are available on request.
Abstract Versus Concrete Semantic Cues: Their Impact on Social Coupon Redemption

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Keywords: face value plausibility, redemption, semantic cue concreteness, social coupons

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Spending additional money beyond a social coupon (e.g., Groupon) face value results in a suboptimal decision-making in terms of achieve large savings. This paper aims to investigate when and why consumers behave such a way. Specifically, this paper examines the effects of face value plausibility (i.e., consumers’ perception of the plausibility of a social coupon face value), semantic cue concreteness (i.e., the degree of the detail and specificity about the price comparison in coupon price and redemption value), and neglected mental budget depletion (i.e., the instance in which consumers neglect the fact that budget assigned to a specific mental account as a spending self-control is already depleted) on the amount of money spent beyond a social coupon face value.

Method and Data
Participants recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk online panels participated in the two scenario-based experiments. Experiment 1 employed a 2 (face value plausibility: low-implausible vs. plausible) x 2 controls between-subject design. Participants were 160 individuals who had heard about SCs, had dinner experiences at Italian sit-down restaurant, were 21 years old or older (Age range: 21-67, M Age = 35.39, 50.60% female). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (cell size: 39-42). Experiment 2 employed a 2 (face value plausibility: low-implausible vs. plausible) x 2 (semantic cue concreteness: abstract vs. concrete) between-subject design. Participants were 127 males who had heard about social coupons, had dinner experiences at sport bars, were 21 years old or older, and correctly answered attention check questions (Age range: 21-66, M Age = 31.43). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (cell size: 28-39).

Summary of Findings
The amount of money spent beyond a social coupon face value is greater when consumers redeem social coupons featuring a low-implausible (vs. plausible) face value. Furthermore, such amount of money is greater when consumers redeem social coupons featuring a low-implausible face value and semantic cues are concrete (vs. abstract). In contrast, such amount of money is lower when consumers redeem social coupons featuring a plausible face value and semantic cues are concrete (vs. abstract). Neglected mental budget depletion is an underlying process.

Key Contributions
This paper complements prior research in metal budgeting by showing how malleable mental accounting decreases the effectiveness of mental budgeting as a spending self-control mechanism when redeeming social coupons at a service retailer. This paper is unique because the objective of spending self-control in a social coupon redemption context is to achieve large savings; whereas the objective of spending self-control in typical spending contexts is due to consumer welfare (i.e., monetary resource limitation). This paper also adds to the advertised reference price literature by revealing that abstract (vs. concrete) semantic cues discourage the use of a mental budget as a spending self-control when redeeming social coupons featuring a low-implausible face value. However, concrete (vs. abstract) semantic cues do not encourage the use of a mental budget as a spending self-control when redeeming social coupons featuring a plausible face value. These findings are important because they are contradicted with the premise that abstract semantic cues represent high-level of ambiguity; while concrete semantic cues represent a low-level of ambiguity, which implies that the ambiguity of semantic cues negatively influence the effectiveness of using a mental budget as a spending self-control mechanism.

References are available on request.

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Could Social Currency Lead to Superior Brand Experience?

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Keywords: branding, cosmetics, consumer behavior, brand experience

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Brands today no longer have the sole and dominant control over their images, as customers are continually interacting with each other and are conjointly shaping the image and perceptions of the brand. To better capture this social value of brand consumption, Lobchat et al. (2013) recently introduced the concept of social currency. For a brand, social currency represents the sum of all actual and potential social interactions that are mostly attributable to social media platforms and other online communities. For consumers, social currency consists of social interactions that result in information and knowledge exchange and other social benefits, such as status and recognition within a group of brand users. This study aims to shed some more light on this widely unexplored domain by exploring the potential links between social currency and an important determinant of consumer behavior, i.e. brand experience. We assess whether social currency could act as a brand experience provider, and its impact on the four dimensions of brand experience introduced by Brakus et al. (2009), i.e. sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual experiences. We further examine if certain dimensions of social currency could have a greater impact on brand experience in the context of cosmetic consumption.

Method and Data
We used a structural equation modeling (SEM) method to analyse our data. The sample consisted mostly of undergraduate and graduate students from a large North Eastern university that offers courses in both English and French. In total, 373 participants took part in our study. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed at the end of class time. In exchange for their participation, subjects were entered into a draw for one of five $50 gift cards. Social Currency was measured using the formative measurement construct from Lobschat et al. (2013), and Brand Experience was measured using the measurement construct from Brakus et al. (2009).

Summary of Findings
Results showed that social currency positively impacts all four dimensions of brand experience. Whereas the original study of social currency finds that Conversation, Advocacy and Identity are the three significant dimensions of social currency in the context of automobiles, our findings suggests that Conversation, Affiliation and Advocacy are the three dominant dimensions of social currency in the context of cosmetic consumption. The differences in the mature and patterns of consumption of those two product categories might also account for the observed difference. Even though Affiliation and Advocacy were found to have a positive influence on social currency, our study demonstrates that the Conversation dimension has a significant negative impact on social currency.

Key Contributions
This study demonstrates the importance of the newly developed concept of social currency as an antecedent of brand experience in the context of cosmetic consumption. To the best of our knowledge, our study is the first in the literature to explore the links between social currency and the four dimensions of brand experience. Our study reveals how this concept could enhance a fundamental component of brand equity, i.e. brand experience, and further contributes to the establishment of higher levels of validity for the newly developed concept of social currency. There are certain limitations to our study. The data obtained was based on the richness of information retrieved from participants’ memories, and also, we used self-administered questionnaires,

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which allow for little correction of possible misinterpretations and confusions. Finally, future research could investigate the potential links between each separate dimension of social currency and the four elements of brand experience, and also, evaluate the moderating effect of involvement in such context.

*References are available on request.*
The Attitude-Behavior Hypothesis and Green Purchasing Behavior: Empirical Evidence from German Milk Consumers

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Keywords: willingness to pay, theory of planned behavior, green marketing, organic, sustainability

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Buying green products like organic food is the most popular action to reduce an individual’s environmental impact (Isenhour 2010). The theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen 1991) is widely applied and acknowledged to explain such environmentally friendly behavior (Bamberg and Möser 2007). However, most studies either focus on intention as a proxy for behavior and/or rely on self-reported survey data. Therefore, results are limited and might be vulnerable due to self-presentational biases (Gaes, Kalle and Tedeschi 1978), incorrect estimation of own behavior (Barber et al. 2012) and the potential difference between stated intention and actual purchasing (Sun and Morwitz 2010). Other studies analyze real purchasing behavior, but only focus on attitude as a key factor determining behavior (Hauser, Nussbeck and Jonas 2013; Tarkiainen and Sundqvist 2009). Therefore, it is still unclear if consumers’ environmental attitudes and self-reported green behavior are consistent with actual green purchasing behavior and which factors besides attitude exert an influence on the latter.

Method and Data
The paper develops a model which takes into account the major factors of TPB and conceptualizes willingness to pay (WTP) as perceived control. Stated attitudes and self-reported green behavior are contrasted to actual behavior.

Purchasing data was matched with survey data by using the household’s identification numbers and was observed for a period of one year (January 2012 – December 2012). Panel participants record their everyday purchases by using hand-scan devices that GfK provides to each panel household. Survey data is based on a standardized survey questionnaire which GfK annually distributes to all participating households. The questionnaire includes items on purchasing behavior, media consumption, everyday life, needs and leisure time activities. For the present study, only items referring to environmental topics and shopping behavior were taken into consideration.

Summary of Findings
Willingness to pay and personal norms account for more than half of the variance of self-reported green behavior. The effect of attitude on self-reported green behavior was insignificant. Although WTP and norms were able to explain self-reported green behavior accurately, self-reported green behavior in turn is no accurate predictor of actual green purchasing behavior. The low share of explained variance of actual green behavior can partially be explained by the higher costs of green products, which often are suggested as a major barrier.

The findings address major issues in green consumer research. First, self-reported behavior is not able to adequately depict actual behavior. Second, even though all the central constructs of TPB were included into the analysis, the study’s results question the completeness of the theory. This implies that further constructs need to be integrated into TPB to enhance its predictive power in the context of green purchasing behavior. Impulsive components or situational factors might contribute to explaining actual purchasing behavior. Especially in the case of organic products, con-
cerns of personal health or self-benefits might play an important role as well.

**Key Contributions**
A full model with main drivers of green consumption is developed with explicitly identifying willingness to pay as a major perceived behavioral control. Stated attitudes and self-reported green behavior are contrasted to actual behavior. To the best of the author’s knowledge, this research is the first empirical demonstration of these associations.

The findings advance the understanding of green consumption behavior in the food sector. A gap between self-reported behavior and actual behavior was observed. The main reason for the gap is likely to be one which especially emerges in the field of environmentally sustainable or “green” consumption: Consumers are hardly able to assess the environmental impact of products correctly which leads to a gap between the subjective and objective assessment. Hence, self-reported green behavior might not reflect actual behavior because consumers do not know any better. This puts the discussion of the green gap into a new direction.

**Acknowledgment**
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*References are available on request.*
Is Play the Work of New Adulthood? An Interpretive Approach of Childlike Behavior

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Keywords: childlike behavior, inner child, adulthood, play

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question and Data Collection
The term “childlike” indicates the presence of social boundaries between conceptualizations of childhood and adulthood. But at a time when childhood and adulthood are blurring (Meyrowitz 1985), when consumer society overflows with cool and cute cultures, and when advertising asks consumers to release the inner child, the term “childlike” takes on a particular flavor. It goes beyond the idea of two antagonistic worlds, and lets appear another adulthood that challenges modern conceptions of logic and reason.

This research aims to provide deeper understanding of what is called childlike behavior in marketing. Given the lack of research on childlike consumption, I adopted a grounded approach within the paradigm of ethnoconsumerism (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Venkatesh 1995). First I collected 7741 comments posted on the Disneyland, CA and Disneyland Paris Facebook fan pages. Besides social networks, I conducted participant observation for two years and fifteen in-depth interviews with Disneyland fans and cosplayers.

Summary of Findings and Key Contributions
The findings are:

1. The redefinition of adulthood,
2. Play as the new anthem of consumption, and
3. Continuous escapism as a consequence of playful consumption.

New adulthood is characterized by the acceptance of childlike behavior in marketplaces that feed childlike rejuvenated feelings through the triggering of playful attitude. Postmodern society has not only favored consumption over production, and play over work, it has also transformed adulthood into a time when one makes children’s dreams come true thanks to re-enchanted marketplaces that hyper-realize the imaginary. Meanwhile brands develop structures in which consumers engage into ludic agency. Adult consumers do not ask “why?” anymore, but “why not?”. Pleasure principle is guiding their lives outside social norms and taboos. Magical thinking becomes acceptable, and a whole new world appears to the consumer. Such a world is constructed through the manipulation of symbols, and merges with reality since symbols are provided by product and services that come from real life. By feeding this constructed world with real objects and people, consumers get the opportunity to permanently escape the shackles of rational and responsible adulthood.

This paper contributes to a better understanding of childlike behavior within the process of consumption and proposes a new conceptualization of adulthood. It brings insights to the development of experiential consumption during the last thirty years, and also underlines how marketing participates in the release of the inner child in order to suspend rational adult control and boost sales.

References are available on request.

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A Dimension of Fun at Experiential Market Settings: Exploring Consumer Experience Intensity

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Keywords: experience consumption, intense experiences, experiential settings, sensory stimuli, marketplace stories

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Experience as a market phenomenon has been commanding greater recognition. The value that consumers construct within and derive from most market encounters is highly dependent on the experiences they find in them. Yet, it would be misleading to assume that all experiential contexts and the experiences consumers derive from them are equally influential. It is critical to understand the characteristics of experiential settings that lead to powerful experiences. Even though some characteristics of significant experiences and experiential settings, such as extraordinariness and transcendentality have been investigated in the consumer behavior literature, there is a need for a further exploration of the dimensions of specific experiential contexts to understand how and why people consume and value them. This study investigates the intensity dimension of consumer experiences, as one of the heeded characteristics of commercial experiences that influence consumers’ assessment. We define experience intensity as the consumer’s outcome evaluation of the strength of total senses, emotions, imaginations, and thoughts that s/he lived through in an encounter. The main research question of the study is:

What are dimensions of positive intense experiences in experiential market settings?

Method and Data
Qualitative data is collected on the context of Las Vegas for two main reasons: 1) it is an experiential context that within itself involves many different experiential settings; 2) it is one of the largest tourist destinations in the US that symbolizes something unique.

The framework established is based on the combination of the findings from various qualitative data collection: 1) systematic observations conducted at the Las Vegas Strip, 2) interviews and informal chats with Las Vegas consumers and managers at Las Vegas businesses, and 3) analysis of social media posts and blogs on Las Vegas with review of literature from multidisciplinary fields. Visual data in addition to textual data was collected in the process. One of the authors conducted ethnographic observations at two different times in one year—one for two full weeks, and one for four days—in Las Vegas Strip. The social media and blog posts were systematically tracked for over two years.

All textual data were analyzed using the constant comparison method. The findings were combined with a through literature review as mentioned above. The findings from the textual data were supported by the findings of the visual data as well.

Summary of Findings
Qualitative data revealed that managers of experiential settings build their contexts, and consumers evaluate the experiential contexts primarily based on two design elements: sensory stimuli (texture) and stories (textuality). Texture refers to design elements such as color, layout, and architectural style that create a sensual delight. Sensory presentationality, multiple modalities, and spectacularity were found to be the dimensions based on which contemporary consumers evaluate the significance of the sensory stimuli presented to them in market settings. Textuality refers to the text, or in other words, narratives (e.g. stories, themes, messages and tales) employed in the contexts. Narrative presen-
tationality, readability, and appropriability were found to be the dimensions based on which contemporary consumers evaluate the meaningfulness of the stories presented to them (texture).

**Key Contributions**
Marketplace experiences are complex, multi-dimensional phenomena. This research investigates the characteristics of positive experiences that consumers find to be powerful and meaningful. Scholars previously have tried to understand some processes of extraordinary experiences that are perceived to be intense, such as flow experiences. However, there are also some other valuable experiences in the market that are intense, yet are not necessarily spiritual in nature, and/or do not necessarily lead to self or identity transformation and actualization, or lasting shifts in the worldview of consumers. This research offers a broader framework to understand the different types of intense market experiences.

Understanding dimensions of experience intensity would be useful for both consumers and marketers in creating more meaningful, significant, and desirable market encounters. Understanding how and why consumers feel, think, imagine, and sense intensely has the potential to bring insights into some of the major discussions ongoing in the fields of consumer behavior and marketing. These involve utilization of some new perspectives and strategies in marketing endeavors that are challenging traditional ones, authenticity/inauthenticity and fantasy/reality perceptions of consumers, the process of co-creation of value in the market, and antecedents of consumer immersion in market encounters.

*References are available on request.*
Investigating the Pleasures of Sin: The Contingent Role of Telic Personality Disposition on Consumers’ Evaluations of Vice and Virtue Product Offerings

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Keywords: virtue, vice, telic dominance, arousal

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Investigating primarily food contexts, this paper contrasts consumers’ evaluations of pure vice offerings (e.g. rich chocolate) versus mixed offerings of virtues and vices (e.g. healthy chocolate). We propose that pure vice offerings involves uncertainty involving the simultaneous presence of pleasure and sin, leading to increased arousal levels. In turn, we propose that such increased arousal leads to increased preference for pure vice offerings. Consistent with this explanation, we expect that arousal-seeking consumers will prefer pure vice offerings, whereas arousal-avoidant consumers will prefer mixed offerings.

Method and Data
We report results of three behavioral laboratory studies using over 300 undergraduate participants. In study 1, we used mediation analyses to examine if differences in arousal levels explained differences in preferences across pure vice offerings versus mixed offerings. In study 2, we used floodlight analyses to examine if differences in arousal-seeking (measured using the Telic Dominance Scale or TDS) moderated differences in preferences across pure vice offerings versus mixed offerings. In study 3, we replicated study 2 examination in a non-food context.

Summary of Findings
We find that differences in arousal levels explain differences in preferences between pure vice offerings and mixed offerings. Further, and consistent with prior findings, we find that arousal-seeking consumers (i.e. those low on the TDS) relatively prefer pure vice offerings, whereas arousal-avoidant consumers (i.e. those high on TDS) relatively prefer mixed offerings. These results extend across food contexts and gambling contexts.

Key Contributions
This is the first paper that provides a detailed examination of how consumers evaluate pure vice offerings versus mixed offerings of virtues and vices. Given the growing importance of mixed offerings (e.g. healthy chocolates, healthy sodas, edu-tainment enriched cruises), especially in the foods sector (see details in this paper), this research provides important insights for public policy planners and marketers, and marks an initial step in the examination of an emerging and important product category.

References are available on request.
The Relationship Between Family Identity and Communication, Commitment, and Continuity in Family Activities: An Examination of Family Meals in Four Chinese Cities

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Keywords: China, family meals, family rituals, family identity, food consumption

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
What is the contribution of commitment, continuity, and communication in rituals to family identity, as tested through the context of family meals in China?

Method and Data Used
Data were collected from households from four Chinese cities, resulting in a sample of 1,319 households. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) substantiated the reliability and validity of the multi-item scales. Regression analysis was used to test the hypothesized relationships. Simultaneous between-group model testing was used to compare differences between cities.

Summary of Findings
The results confirm that a positive relationship is found between family identity and the degree of commitment and continuity to family rituals. A significant relationship was not found between degree of communication in rituals and family identity at the 95% confident level (note, however, that \( p = .06 \)). Moderate variations among the model was found according to the level of economic development of the cities.

Key Contributions
This research appears to demonstrate that, at least in the context of family meals in Chinese cities, as family practices are elevated from routines to rituals, a greater degree of family identity is generated. In addition, the study shows how, within this rapidly changing socio-economic environment, the family dinner provides stability and a sense of unity for Chinese families.

References are available on request.
Adding New Perspectives to the Zero-Price Effect: The Role of Non-Monetary Cost Perceptions

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Keywords: zero-price effect, non-monetary cost perceptions, free e-services

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
1. Is the zero-price effect only based on the increased perception of the benefits of free offers, as suggested by Shampanier et al. (2007)?

2. Or is there an additional effect based on a reduced perception of non-monetary costs?

3. Moreover, what are boundary conditions to the zero-price effect?

Method and Data
We used two between-subjects design experiments (N = 200; 223), t-tests, and the differences-in-differences method.

Summary of Findings
In two studies we show that consumers perceive not only the benefits of free offers but also their non-monetary costs. Moreover, we show that consumers actually overemphasize the benefits of a free e-service but also disregard its non-monetary costs (i.e. advertising intrusiveness). We further investigate boundary conditions of these effects. We show that the lower perception of non-monetary costs disappears for critical non-monetary costs like personal data. Also, both the attribution of extra benefits and the lower perception of non-monetary costs disappear when the offer is mainly utilitarian. Consequently under these conditions also the zero-price effect vanishes.

Key Contributions
We extend research on the zero-price effect (Shampanier et al., 2007) by empirically giving evidence for an extra benefit that consumers attribute to free offers and furthermore by applying it to free e-services. Second, we challenge prior assumptions of constant costs and show that the perception of non-monetary costs of advertising has an influence on the perception of free products. Hence with the consideration of non-monetary costs we add a new perspective to the research on the zero-price effect. We further show boundary conditions for the zero-price effect. We close the research gap by differentiating between hedonic and utilitarian offers, showing that for utilitarian products, the zero-price effect disappears. Furthermore we show that consumers differentiate between different non-monetary cost dimensions. The present research is intended to make contributions to the literature on the zero-price effect, free e-services and non-monetary cost perceptions.

References are available on request.
Did You Earn Your Louis Vuitton? The Impact of Unearned Conspicuous Signals

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Keywords: conspicuous consumption, luxury brands, fairness, justice

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Consumers who are motivated to present themselves in a socially desirable manner often choose to display images of higher status, wealth, and prestige through conspicuous consumption. However, will conspicuous consumption have its desired social benefits even when conspicuous products are purchased with unearned money (i.e., money acquired without consumers’ own effort)?

In this research, we propose that when individuals are aware that a target consumer spends conspicuously using unearned money, they may perceive the target consumer negatively because this consumer is not perceived as having high prestige. The negative effect of unearned money on individuals’ attitude toward the target consumer will be more pronounced if the individuals place high value on justice in making moral judgments. Furthermore, there will be carryover effects of unearned conspicuous consumption and value of justice on consumers’ attitude toward the particular luxury brand displayed by the target consumer.

Method and Data
Three experimental studies were conducted to test these predictions. Study 1 examined undergraduate participants’ perceptions of a classmate who engages in conspicuous consumption. Participants in the unearned (earned) money condition read that their classmate won a competition with a cash prize through inadequate effort (hard work). The classmate was considering the purchase of a Louis Vuitton wallet using the award money. Participants indicated their overall attitude toward the classmate and value placed on justice, using fairness items from the moral foundation scale. A significant two-way interaction between source of money and value of justice revealed that unearned money led to more negative evaluations of the classmate, particularly when participants highly valued justice.

Given that positive images from conspicuous consumption are based on perceptions of personal qualities that generate wealth or status, the perceived prestige attributed to others should mediate the effect demonstrated in study 1. In study 2, we examined participants’ evaluations of a classmate who was wearing an Emporio Armani jacket and the process underlying these evaluations. In the unearned (earned) money condition, the jacket was bought with money received from the parents (vs. a paycheck). Participants indicated their attitude toward the classmate, prestige perceptions, and the value placed on justice. As in study 1, unearned conspicuous consumption led to negative evaluations of the classmate, particularly when people valued justice. As predicted, the indirect effect via prestige perceptions was significant. Thus, people who value justice perceived the target consumer who engages in unearned conspicuous consumption less favorably because they did not perceive the target to be prestigious.

Study 3 examined the carryover effects on consumers’ attitude toward the luxury brand used as a conspicuous signal. Study 3 manipulated source of money as in study 2 and measured participants’ attitude toward the target consumer who purchased a Louis Vuitton handbag, value of justice, prestige perceptions, and brand attitude. Consistent with study 2, participants evaluated the target consumer more negatively when money was unearned, particularly when they placed high value on justice, because they did not infer prestige from the target’s conspicuous consumption. Moreover, participants had a more negative attitude toward Louis Vuitton brand,

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which was used as a conspicuous signal by the target consumer, when unearned money was spent on this purchase.

**Summary of Findings**
In sum, these findings suggest that consumers who value justice do not perceive a target consumer who engages in conspicuous consumption using unearned money positively because they do not infer prestige from the target’s conspicuous consumption. Additionally, they also denigrate the particular luxury brand used by the target consumer as a conspicuous signal.

**Key Contributions**
A growing body of literature has examined consumers’ conspicuous consumption of luxury goods and its social benefits, but little is known about negative aspects of conspicuous consumption. We contribute to the literature on conspicuous consumption and justice motives in marketing by demonstrating that social benefits of conspicuous consumption do not accrue when luxury products are acquired using unearned money, especially when observers place high value on justice. This research also extends the brand and social influence literature as well as provides implications for marketers of luxury brands by demonstrating the carryover effects of other consumers’ unearned conspicuous consumption on observers’ attitude toward the brand displayed by others.

*References are available on request.*

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Keywords: price fairness, price fairness perception, economic growth, meta-analysis

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
While research on price fairness is still fairly recent compared to general research on price, a substantial number of studies have investigated the consequences of price fairness perceptions. None of these studies, though, has investigated how this relationship depends on the economic situation consumers in a country are facing. This is surprising given the fact that turbulent economic times call firms to increase their prices due to unforeseen business costs, and consumers experience such price increases with less money in their pockets. A primary reason for the fact that previous studies have not investigated the moderating influence of the economic situation on the effects of price fairness perceptions is the difficulties involved with a study design that requires variance across national economies and across time, which cannot be assessed in experiments or cross-sectional studies in a single country. Therefore, we perform a meta-analysis that accumulates 78 price fairness studies providing 253 effect sizes, spanning a period of more than 20 years and collected in 18 different countries that provides a unique opportunity to examine the moderating role of the economic situation on price fairness perceptions’ effects on consumer responses.

Method and Data
For this meta-analysis, we included all empirical studies that measured buyers’ perceived price fairness and provided estimates on the relationship between the construct and any of its consequences: behavior, behavioral intentions, negative emotions, negative post-purchase engagement, perceived quality, perceived value, positive post-purchase engagement, price evaluation, satisfaction, and seller evaluation. The effect size metric selected for the meta-analysis is the correlation coefficient. A positive coefficient indicates that price fairness increases its consequences, while a negative coefficient indicates the reverse: price fairness reduces its consequences. To test the influence of GDP growth rate (as provided by the World Bank) and cultural variables (measured by Hofstede indices) on the effect size, we performed a variance-weighted meta-regression.

Summary of Findings
Perceived price fairness shows a significant effect on all consequences in line with the expected direction of the effect (i.e., negative effects on negative emotion and negative post-purchase engagement, and positive effects on all other consequences). The mean effect sizes are all large, with negative emotions showing the strongest effect. Price fairness explains between 17% (seller evaluation) and more than 70% (negative emotion) of the variance in the dependent variable.

The consequences were combined into positive consequences (price evaluation, evaluation of seller, behavior, positive post-purchase engagement, perceived quality, perceived value, behavioral intentions, satisfaction) and negative consequences (negative emotion, negative post-purchase engagement) to...
ensure sufficient effect sizes for a regression analysis. The findings of the meta-regression show that GDP growth rate has a significant influence on both relationships. With increasing GDP growth rate, the effect of price fairness perceptions on positive consequences becomes weaker and so does the effect on negative outcomes.

**Key Contributions**

The study provides several implications for research and practice. First, the meta-analytic effect sizes we found are all large and higher than effect sizes that are typically found in meta-analysis in marketing dealing with effects of other instruments such as advertising, products, or distribution. It seems that prices are the most effective tool in influencing consumer reactions.

Second, the moderating effect of the economic context indicates that we cannot simply generalize previous findings of price fairness perceptions across countries and time, but we have to take into account the economic context consumers are dealing with when interpreting the findings. In particular studies that investigate cultural differences of price fairness perceptions and their effects should control for economic situations to avoid confounding effects.

Third, practitioners can learn from these findings about the importance of price fairness perceptions for consumer responses, in particular in times of economic crisis.

*References are available on request.*
It Is Not Fair to Pay More! A Study of the Perception of Justice and Price Fairness in Hedonic and Utilitarian Purchases

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José Afonso Mazzon, University of São Paulo

Keywords: perception of justice, price fairness, hedonic and utilitarian purchases, experiment

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
This paper aims to study the perception of justice and price fairness during hedonic and utilitarian purchases. Based on the assumption that emotional and rational attitudes are respectively associated with hedonic and utilitarian consumption (Alba & Williams, 2013; Kronrod & Danziger, 2013), we defined the following research questions: May utilitarian products cause more price unfairness and less perception of justice than hedonic products? Is anger a mediator on perception of justice/price fairness and price change? Two experimental studies were done to test hypotheses:

H₁A/₁B: When consumers pay more than others for purchasing utilitarian products (they perceive this situation as less just than when the product is hedonic / they perceive the price unfairness compared when the product is hedonic).

H₂A/₂B: When consumers perceive that they paid less than others for purchasing utilitarian products, (they perceive this situation as less just than when the product is hedonic / they perceive the price unfairness compared when the product is hedonic).

H₃A/₃B: Anger will be a mediator on (perception of justice and price change / between price fairness and price change).

H₄: In unfairness situations, consumers feel more anger with utilitarian products than hedonic ones.

Method and Data
The context situation in first study was the price change in a physical store. Seventy people participated in a 2 (product: hedonic and utilitarian) × 2 (two different prices) experimental design. We used a fruit for the utilitarian dimension, where people rationalized it as being a better option than a slice of cake. Before running the study one, pre tests were done to define the prices and products. In the second study, 129 participants imagined purchasing a product online. The experimental design was a 2 (kind of products: utilitarian vs hedonic) × 2 (Price change: 25% up vs 25% down) between subjects. Ten products, five from each extreme hedonic and utilitarian dimensions, were used with their fixed prices. Manipulation checks were applied and confirmed in both studies. The scales of measurement were similar in both studies. Participants rated the perceive of justice from Mazzon and Toni (2013), price situation being unfair, reasonable and fair, from Darke and Dahl (2003) scale. Richins’ scale (1997) was used to measure emotions. We evaluated price-level perception using the Zielke (2011) scales. The hedonic and utilitarian products/dimensions needed classified by the consumers to guarantee that they perceive the products differently; we used Voss, Spangenber and Grohmann (2003) scale.

Key Contributions
Nowadays, we still find studies about hedonic and utilitarian products, services or contexts in the top 10 marketing journals (Choi et al., 2014; Kronrod & Danziger, 2013; Palazon & Delgado-Ballester, 2013). Although the topic is still very important, no studies have explored the impact of the products after the purchase decision has been made. Therefore

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paper aimed to fill the gap of the perception of justice and price fairness after hedonic and utilitarian purchases. This study contributes to managerial implications, especially in regards to pricing and promotion. This suggests that strategies for marketing products (hedonic products versus utilitarian products) should be managed differently. The viability of online dynamic pricing or differential pricing for the same product from the same seller has been increasing, especially in online retail companies. The perception of unfairness may lead to negative outcomes, such as buyers leaving the exchange relationship, advising other consumers not to purchase from the same store or trying to damage the company in some way. We verified that consumers are much more sensitive to the price variation of utilitarian products than hedonic products. It is important to state that price fairness is not only important to online retailers, but it is also a concern to consumers, policy makers and politicians.

**Summary of Findings**

In the first study, the results demonstrate that when consumers pay more than others for purchasing utilitarian products, they perceive this situation as less just than when the product is hedonic (H1A: $F(65,1) = 4.646; p = .035$); when consumers pay more than others for purchasing utilitarian products, they perceive the price unfairness compared when the product is hedonic (H1B: $F(65,1) = 4.588; p = .036$); in unfairness situations, consumers feel more anger with utilitarian products than hedonic ones (H4: $F(65,1) = 4.900; p = .031$).

In the second study we supported hypotheses: when consumers perceive that they paid less than others for purchasing utilitarian products, they perceive this situation as less just than when the product is hedonic (H2A: $F(129,1) = 5.605; p = .019$); when consumers pay less than others for purchasing utilitarian products, they perceive the price unfairness compared when the product is hedonic (H2B: $F(129,1) = 7.662; p = .006$); anger was a mediator on perception of justice and price change and on price fairness and price change (H3A, H3B). Therefore, the experiments showed how consumers when purchasing utilitarian products perceive the price and situation unfairness compared then the product is hedonic. In addition, consumers felt more anger towards utilitarian products than hedonic ones in unfair situations. Those results are relevant to academic and marketing managers.

*References are available on request.*
Show the Devotion, Not the Depravity: Implicit and Explicit Guilt Appeals in Advertising

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ABSTRACT
This paper proposes that there are two different types of guilt appeals that can be used in advertising that have not been thoroughly explored in the literature, described herein as explicit and implicit guilt appeals. Nearly 600 consumers evaluated advertisements that presented either an explicit or implicit guilt appeal.

Keywords: advertising, guilt appeals, persuasion knowledge model, affective marketing

Introduction
A malnourished child looks at you with despairing eyes, his starvation and poverty unavoidably evident. An unnaturally bald girl holds a balloon, her potentially fatal illness draining the life from her. Children warily huddle around a muddy stream, the effects of a lack of clean water immediately apparent. Images like these have been traditionally employed by guilt advertisers to evoke an affective response from viewers by displaying the effects of a failure to act on others’ behalves. But consider another guilt tactic: a starving child’s eyes filled with hope, holding the food you donated apparently provided; the unnaturally bald girl, smiling and laughing, overcome with joy due in part to your contribution; children playing and splashing in clean water around a recently dug well, a well you helped finance. Empiricism aside, it cannot be denied that these two sets of images evoke markedly distinct emotional reactions. When it comes to consumer advertising, though, which reaction is more effective?

Five percent of advertisements employ guilt appeals, a figure that is equitable to the oft-researched fear appeal (Basil, Ridgeway, and Basil 2008; Huhmann and Brotherton 1997). The rise in guilt advertising over the past several years has even led some to state that “guilt has taken over from fear as a dominant human emotion” (Roberts 2009, p. 15). This paper explores the notion that guilt may not be as static a construct as traditionally assumed. Two new concepts are proposed: explicit guilt appeals, which employ the traditional depravity-focused guilt tactics described above, and implicit guilt appeals, which use a more subtle, uplifting approach, focusing on the positive results of alleviating guilt rather than the source of the guilt itself. Utilizing the persuasion knowledge model (Friestad and Wright 1994), the objective of this paper is to explore the behavioral implications of explicit and implicit guilt appeals in advertising.

Guilt Appeals in Advertising
In their seminal work on guilt in the consumer environment, Burnett and Lunsford (1994) define the subject as “a violation of one’s internal standards, and subsequently a lowering of self-esteem” (p. 35). Coulter and Pinto (1995) extend this definition to include the individual’s acknowledgement that a social or ethical principle has been transgressed. Huhmann and Brotherton (1997) explain that people may feel guilty for failing to follow through or even accept responsibility. Burnett and Lunsford (1994) also define the concept of consumer guilt as “a negative emotion which results from a consumer decision that violates one’s values or norms” (p. 33). The authors explain that much of guilt advertising is employed to encourage consumers to avoid feeling guilty for failing to follow through with or even accept responsibility. Burnett and Lunsford (1994) also define the concept of consumer guilt as “a negative emotion which results from a consumer decision that violates one’s values or norms” (p. 33). The authors explain that much of guilt advertising is employed to encourage consumers to avoid feeling guilty (Burnett and Lunsford 1994). A guilt appeal in advertising is designed to evoke feelings of guilt in the receiver and to offer the potential for guilt reduction through the opportunities for action presented in the ad (Boudewyns et al. 2013).

However, guilt appeals may not always achieve advertisers’ desired results. Coulter and Pinto (1995) found that moder-
ate or low-level guilt appeals may effectively connect with consumers, but intensive guilt appeals could be perceived as blatant attempts at manipulation and may lead to anger, offense, or irritation. Guilt elicits displeasure in individuals and can lead to maladaptive responses contrary to advertisers’ intentions (Basil, Ridgeway, and Basil 2008), and one study relates people who viewed guilt in a commercial to high levels of anger, scorn, and disgust along with low levels of happiness (Englis 1990). Boudewyns et al. (2013) explain that the unintentional shame derived from a guilt appeal could ultimately lead to rejection of the message’s advocated action. These consistent findings of severe unintended reactions should be of concern to advertisers, especially when the proposed message involves social issues such as children’s health and poverty.

Because few advertisers should be defined as purposefully manipulative, the potential misperceptions described above must be attributed to the consumers themselves. This paper looks to the persuasion knowledge model proposed by Fries- tad and Wright (1994) to explain these phenomena. The model purports that, over time, consumers gain knowledge of the persuasion tactics marketers employ and become more adaptable and responsive to such tactics to achieve personal goals rather than the intended objectives of the marketing efforts. Rather than viewing consumers as unidimensional, effortless receptors on whom marketers can subjugate persuasive tactics resulting in attitude change, the model describes the coping strategies that are formed in response to persuasive tactics and explains that consumers allocate cognitive resources to react in ways that align with their own goals (Friesstad and Wright 1994).

In light of the persuasion knowledge model and its impact on advertising appeals, Hibbert et al. (2007) state, “Consumers do not simply succumb to marketing communications but incorporate inferences about the message framing, source credibility, and communications context” (p. 726). Several studies have confirmed this notion by finding that a marketer’s persuasive tactic causes consumers to activate their persuasion knowledge. This can lead consumers to evaluate advertising claims with heightened suspicion, resulting in perceptions of deceptive or manipulative marketers and resistance to persuasion (Campbell and Kirmani 2000). In regards to the context of this paper, Coulter, Cotte, and Moore (1999) reasoned that, because guilt appeals are frequently utilized in charitable domains, consumers can be expected to have a certain amount of persuasion knowledge about advertisements of this nature. The persuasion knowledge model explains how consumers may be negatively predisposed to guilt appeals in advertising due to their experience with such appeals. This paper proposes a way to elicit guilt appeals while avoiding the negative perceptions consumers may already have.

**Explicit and Implicit Guilt Appeals**

A recent *Journal of Marketing* article investigates the nature of guilt in ethical consumption. Peloza et al. (2013) define explicit guilt appeals as “direct attempts to heighten consumer guilt” and explain that “explicit guilt appeals are most often characterized as negative appeals because they create guilt” (p. 107). They contrast this notion with more optimistic emotional appeals that direct the consumer toward the positive outcomes that can be achieved by the alleviation of anticipated guilt. The authors show how explicit guilt appeals may not be as effective as subtle appeals that influence positive responses, and that consumers may be averse to blatant attempts by advertisers to change behavior through guilt appeals (Peloza et al. 2013).

Much of the research discussed thus far pertains to explicit guilt appeals. Coulter and Pinto (1995) explain that explicit guilt appeals can potentially result in a backfire effect in which consumers display decreased preferences for the advocated position and that high levels of guilt produce feelings of irritability and anger. In line with the persuasion knowledge model, Scott (1994) demonstrated through his study that guilt appeals containing well-known manipulative persuasion techniques don’t always work in evoking the intended emotional response from consumers. O’Keefe (2002) stated that, “although explicit guilt appeals may create greater guilt, they may also arouse other negative feelings that interfere with persuasive success” (p. 331).

More recent discussions have begun looking into the concept of implicit or subtle guilt appeals. The previously discussed study by Peloza et al. (2013) revealed that guilt can motivate consumers by a more subtle execution that encourages consumers to feel positive about their behavior. Cotte, Coulter, and Moore (2005) showed that, even though guilt is a negative emotion, advertisements using guilt appeals that are perceived as credible and non-manipulative lead to positive attitudes. Turner (2013) explains that people are more likely to respond favorably to ethical products when marketing appeals make them feel good about their behavior instead of feeling guilty about not acting. On the same note, Roberts (2009) states that “playing on positive emotions is more often than not more effective in getting people to part with their cash than making them feel bad about themselves” (Roberts 2009, p. 18). With this in mind, the following conceptual definitions are proposed (Figure 1):

**Explicit Guilt Appeal:** an affective appeal in which the marketer focuses on the source of guilt as it relates to a particular issue, inciting consumers to act to alleviate the negative feelings associated with guilt.

**Implicit Guilt Appeal:** an affective appeal in which the marketer focuses on the outcome of alleviating guilt as it relates
Figure 1. Explicit and Implicit Guilt Appeals

![Diagram](image)

Manipulation Check

As an initial empirical investigation into the distinction between implicit and explicit guilt appeals, a manipulation check was conducted to measure the level of perceived guilt and affective response between two different ads. A questionnaire was distributed online that presented one of two ads (either an explicit guilt appeal or an implicit guilt appeal) followed by several questions. The ads, which were created for this study, were identical in their presentation layout and included the same company, the same company tagline, and the same statistic about the number of people who lack access to clean water across the world. This source of guilt was chosen based on literature intoning that charitable appeals are the most frequently used sources of guilt appeals (i.e., Cotte, Coulter, and Moore 2005; Coulter, Cotte, and Moore 1999).

The two ads were distinct in several ways. One showed a picture of a sad child, while the other showed a similar picture with a happy child. Several aspects of the copy were altered, such as the headline and the call to action. For the explicit ad, the headline read, “How long was your shower today?” and the call to action stated, “Please help change the lives of millions who need you.” For the implicit ad, the headline stated, “Water changes everything,” and the call to action read, “Join us as we continue changing millions of lives!” To clarify a full understanding of the elements of the ads that were most effective in eliciting the responses from consumers, three versions of each ad were put together. One included all of the elements described above, one included only the image, the statistic, the brand name, and the call to action, and one included only the text. Focusing primarily on the images and text in separate ads was beneficial in understanding how the characteristics of the ad related to guilt appeals. All six advertisements can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Participants were asked to view a randomly distributed advertisement and then indicate their responses to the proceeding questions. A seven-point bipolar semantic differential scale was adapted from Cotte, Coulter, and Moore (2005) to assess perceived guilt (guilty/not guilty, responsible/irresponsible, accountable/unaccountable, ashamed/unashamed). A seven-point bipolar semantic differential scale was adapted from Priluck and Till (2004) to ascertain affective response (unpleasant/pleasant, dislike very much/like very much, left me with a bad feeling/left me with a good feeling). A mechanical turk (Mturk) was run utilizing Amazon.com and Qualtrics software, resulting in 598 usable responses through a between-subjects design (guilt (explicit, implicit) and type (full, image, text)). 199 respondents evaluated the full advertisement (66.8% male, average age of 28.8), 203 evaluated the image advertisement (70% male, average age of 28.3), and 196 evaluated the text advertisement (71.4% male, average age of 28.6).
T-tests were conducted for each item to ascertain whether or not significant differences existed between the two ads (p < .05). When measuring perceived guilt, across all three types of ad, two items possessed significant differences between the explicit and implicit ads, guilt and shame. The ads were significantly different in terms of responsibility for the full and text ads, but not for the image ad. There were no significant differences for accountability for any type of ad. In terms of the affective response, across all three types of ad, two items possessed significant differences between the explicit and implicit ads: the pleasantness of the ad and the feeling respondents were left with. The item pertaining to how respondents liked the ad was significantly different for the full and image ads, but not the text ads. Table 1 displays the means for each item among the six ads as well as its significance level.

Concerning perceived guilt, in Figure 2, it can be seen that respondents rated the explicit guilt appeal ad stronger in terms of perceived guilt, irresponsibility, and shame. The implicit guilt appeal was perceived as less guilty, more responsible, and less shameful. This distinction corroborates this paper’s assertion that explicit and implicit guilt appeals possess different levels of perceived guilt while presenting

<table>
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<th>Table 1. Manipulation Check Results—Means</th>
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<td>Guilty (1) - Not Guilty (7)</td>
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<td>Ashamed (1) - Unashamed (7)</td>
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| Unpleasant (1) - Pleasant (7)          |
| Full                                    | 2.73 | 4.43 | -7.522 | < .0001 |
| Image                                   | 2.88 | 3.91 | -4.967 | < .0001 |
| Text                                    | 3.38 | 4.18 | -3.855 | < .0001 |

| Dislike very much (1) - Like very much (7) |
| Full                                    | 4.22 | 5.10 | -3.810 | < .0001 |
| Image                                   | 4.04 | 4.58 | -2.473 | 0.014  |
| Text                                    | 4.19 | 4.66 | -2.189 | 0.030  |

| Left me with a bad feeling (1) - Left me with a good feeling (7) |
| Full                                    | 2.94 | 4.72 | -8.185 | < .0001 |
| Image                                   | 3.30 | 4.24 | -4.423 | < .0001 |
| Text                                    | 3.61 | 4.38 | -3.493 | 0.001  |
the same source of guilt (in this case, the clean water statistic) and the same call to action (in this case, the purchasing of a bottle of water).

In terms of the affective response, Figure 3 shows that respondents perceived the explicit guilt appeal ad as more unpleasant than the implicit guilt appeal ad. They also indicated that they liked the explicit ad less than the implicit ad, and the explicit ad left them with a worse feeling than the implicit ad. These results display the different affective responses each ad evoked in respondents and sheds light on the potential for the future direction of this research. As a next step would entail exploring dependent measures such as attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand, purchase intentions, and word of mouth intentions, the distinction between affective responses revealed in this manipulation check provide initial confirmation that explicit and implicit guilt appeals in advertising may achieve the objectives proposed in this study.

**Discussion**

The premise of this paper has been to extend extant literature on guilt appeals in advertising to propose two distinct concepts, explicit and implicit guilt appeals. The notion of guilt has traditionally been conceived and researched as a negative emotion. However, this research contends that there may be ways to present such a negative emotion in a positive light, making salient the inherent benefits of reducing the negative feelings associated with guilt rather than the source of the guilt. Based on the persuasion knowledge model (Friestad and Wright 1994), it is proposed that consumers will activate coping mechanisms in the face of a manipulative explicit guilt appeal, reducing its effectiveness and decreasing attitudes toward advertisements that employ such appeals. More subtle, positive guilt appeals, described here as implicit guilt appeals, are proposed to not activate consumer guilt as readily and thus will result in more acceptance of the advertisement.

Theoretically, this research complements previous studies that have utilized the persuasion knowledge model. Validating the model’s assertion that manipulative intentions increase consumer coping behaviors, this research extends the model’s utility to the context of guilt. Furthermore, as two new constructs are proposed, their impact on future research remains to be seen. It may be worthwhile to revisit previous work on guilt appeals to determine which guilt appeal the authors employed in their experiments, explicit or implicit.
implicit, and whether or not the effects of these constructs impacted the empirical results in any way.

Not only does this research propose a new level of complexity to the guilt construct, but it provides behavioral implications through its preliminary measures of affective response as well. After all, knowing that guilt appeals can be classified between explicit and implicit dimensions lacks utility unless a direct impact on consumers can be found. This research intends to further examine the behavioral effects of utilizing explicit and implicit guilt appeals in advertising, and future research that extends these constructs to new contexts as well as additional moderating variables would contribute significantly to advertising research.

Appendix 1. Pre-Test Advertisements

References


Why Is It Still Here? Examining the Determinants of Consumer Avoidance of Personalized Advertising on the Web

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Keywords: personalization, ad avoidance, irritation, privacy intrusiveness, boredom

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Question
Personalization is one of the major characteristics of Internet advertising. Advertisers can personalize their advertisements (ads) and make their promotional marketing messages match individual consumers’ needs by analyzing consumers’ information on the Internet. Today, more and more firms, such as Google, Yahoo!, eBay, and Facebook, use personalized Internet advertising as an effective marketing communication tool. However, consumer reactions to such ads may not always be positive. What determines consumer avoidance of personalized online advertising becomes important for advertisers to understand. Based on psychological reactance theory, Baek and Morimoto (2012) proposed and tested a structural model describing determinants of consumer avoidance of personalized ads.

However, their model does not apply directly to Internet advertising because they focused on unsolicited text messages and e-mail ads. In this study, we developed and tested a new model to describe the determinants of consumer avoidance of personalized Internet advertising, proposing the following hypotheses: irritation has a positive impact on ad avoidance (H1); perceived privacy intrusiveness has a positive impact on irritation (H2) and on ad avoidance (H3); perceived usefulness has a negative impact on irritation (H4) and on ad avoidance (H5); and perceived boredom has a positive impact on irritation (H6) and on ad avoidance (H7).

Method and Data
To test the proposed model, we applied structural equation modeling to a consumer dataset. We used multiple scales developed by previous studies. Some indices, like scale composite reliability (SCR) and average variance extracted (AVE), suggested good reliability and validity. We administered a consumer survey to students in a business school. They were asked to recall an experience in which they shopped for an item online one day and then were exposed to personalized Internet ads for the item on another day. To examine whether the proposed model fit the data better than alternative models, we used three competing models. The results of analysis showed that the proposed model fit the data. All parameter estimates had adequate signs, as previously hypothesized, and were significant to the 1% or 5% level, except H3. The results of the Sobel test indicated that the relationships between ad avoidance and the three determinants were mediated by irritation. The proposed model had more favorable Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) than all competing models. Also, for the proposed model, Goodness of Fit (GFI) and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) were highest, whereas Relative Chi-square ($\chi^2$/df), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were lowest, suggesting a closer fit of the data to the model than to the competing models.

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Summary of Findings
First, the results of structural equation modeling show that irritation has an impact on ad avoidance; if a consumer is irritated by personalized Internet ads, he/she is more likely to avoid the ads. Second, the results show perceived privacy intrusiveness produced by personalized Internet advertising may irritate consumers, but this may not make them avoid such ads. This may be because tracking of personal information is already common practice. Third, the results show that the perceived usefulness of personalized Internet ads may have a direct negative effect on ad avoidance as well as an indirect negative effect, mediated by irritation; if a consumer perceives that a personalized ad is useful, he/she is less likely to be irritated by it and therefore less likely to avoid the ad. Finally, the results show that boredom may have a direct positive effect on ad avoidance and an indirect positive effect via irritation; if a consumer is bored with a personalized Internet ad due to repetition, he/she is more likely to be irritated by and, therefore, avoid the ad.

Key Contributions
We developed a model to explain why consumers avoid personalized Internet ads. Our study contributes knowledge of this new issue to both researchers and practitioners. For researchers, our empirical research indicates that ad irritation plays an important role as a mediator variable. In contrast, perceived privacy intrusiveness affects consumers’ avoidance of personalized ads. However, the impact is indirect and relatively weak. Perceived boredom, which has not been a concern in previous studies of personalized ads, was shown to have a stronger direct impact on ad avoidance. This finding suggests the importance of accommodating wear-out effects, i.e., boredom. While perceived privacy intrusiveness and perceived boredom have positive impacts on ad avoidance and irritation, perceived usefulness has a negative impact via irritation.

For practitioners, our research suggests that the risk of ad irritation and avoidance could be mitigated when practitioners provide useful ads to the consumer. The results show it is important that practitioners pay close attention to dealing with personal information; however, at the same time, advertisers should try to provide a rich variety of personalized ads in their portfolio.

References are available on request.
Is Naming Your Competitor in the Comparative Ad a Good Idea? The Effects of Typicality and Alignability

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Yuping Liu-Thompkins, Old Dominion University
Edward Markowski, Old Dominion University

Keywords: comparative advertising, typicality, alignability

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Research Questions
The mixed results from previous studies related to direct versus indirect comparative advertising would certainly lead us intuitively to believe in the possibility of the existence of moderating variables. In recent comparative advertising research, marketing researchers have looked at what types of comparative advertisements are more effective than others (Choi and Miracle 2004; Miniard et al. 2006; Pechmann and Ratneshwar 1991; Yang et al. 2007). To find these answers, in this research, two attribute-specific moderators, attribute typicality and structural alignability, were investigated using theoretical support drawn from the literature and marketing theories to try to answer following questions:

Is naming your competitors in the comparative ad a good idea?

Under what circumstances should firms focus on typical/atypical attributes in the comparative ads?

When should firms feature alignable or non-alignable differences in the comparative ads?

Methods and Data
In study 1, cell phone service providers were used as the stimulus with T-Mobile as the advertised brand and AT&T as the competitor brand. In study 2, tablet computers (Samsung vs. Apple) were used as the stimulus. Two experiments were conducted in which 2 (direct/indirect comparative advertising) x 2 (typical/atypical or alignable/non-alignable differences) between-subject designs were used. Data were collected via Amazon Mechanical Turk. Participants were adult customers in the United States.

Summary of Findings
In study 1, it was found that when the compared attribute was typical, direct comparative advertisements generated more positive attitude toward brand than indirect comparative advertisements and there was no difference in attitude toward the brand and purchase intention generated by direct and indirect comparative advertisements when the compared attribute was atypical. In study 2, it was hypothesized that there would be no difference in attitude towards the brand when the comparative advertisement features alignable differences. The findings supported this expectation. On the other hand, a significant opposite result was found and showed that indirect comparative advertisements indeed generated more positive attitude towards the brand when the comparative advertisement features nonalignable differences. It can be speculated here that it is better for those firms which want to compare themselves with more than one competitor to develop their own “specialized attributes” rather than focus on the attributes that have been well provided and served by many other companies.

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Key Contributions
First, the results tell the managers that it is important for those companies who use direct comparisons to understand what attributes are typically considered by consumers when they make purchasing decisions. Nowadays we have seen more direct comparative advertisements, such as Apple vs. Samsung or Coke vs. Pepsi, and most of them directly compete with each other in multiple countries and markets. This issue can become even more critical when a company is targeting multiple market segments because typical attributes may be different in different market segments. In addition, the results provide important recommendations to marketing managers that they should make sure that its indirect comparative advertisement features nonalignable differences to claim that they have some “special attributes” that their competitors lack of. When nonalignable differences are used in the advertising messages, they should claim it is better than others in general instead of naming any specific competitors. By doing this, the firm is further providing evidence that they are indeed the best because no other firm offers the special and unique attribute stated in their advertisement.

References are available on request.
Research Question
This study aims at replicating and concurrently validating previously found interference effects induced through competitive advertising in a real-world media context. The anticipated negative effects on consumer memory (recall and recognition) as well as brand evaluations are explored in the context of a real, naturalistic women’s magazine employing real advertisements of familiar brands. Furthermore, this study is the first to investigate potentially beneficial effects of competitive advertising on consumer behavior thereby enhancing prior knowledge. This research tries to answer the question whether a competitive advertising environment induces a latent product desire and behavioral intentions for the advertised product category which would be a beneficial effect of competitive advertising.

Method and Data
The research questions are investigated on the basis of a one factor between subjects experimental design in which three levels of competitive advertising intensity (low, medium, high) are manipulated within a naturalistic real-world magazine surrounding. The treatment consisted of a mock *Glamour* magazine including excerpts of real advertisements and editorial content. The low intensity magazine contained two competitive ads for each of the two target categories (watches and perfumes), the medium condition contained 5 competitive ads each and the high intensity group was exposed to ten competitive ads each. Filler ads were used for the other advertisements yielding a total of 30 advertisements per magazine. 113 women between the age of 20 and 39 with a general interest in women magazines participated in the experiment and were randomly allocated to one of the three experimental conditions. Respondents had to answer questionnaires before and after the treatment, which necessitated 30 minutes of magazine reading. The obtained data was analyzed using ANOVA and Logistic Regression analysis.

Summary of Findings
The results of the study confirm that interference effects are present in recall of brand names as well as for recognition of advertisements in a real-world media setting.

Commonly it is assumed that an increasing advertising level decreases the recall of all advertisements (Danaher et al., 2008), however the competitive intensity threshold for interference effects to set in differs by product category. The consumer needs to be exposed to a high number of competitive ads for watches whereas for perfumes medium clutter intensity is sufficient for compromised recall. Extending prior findings with beneficial implications, competitive advertising is also effective in inducing a significant consumer desire for a product of the advertised category; however this effect could only be shown for one of the two target categories (watches but not for perfumes) leaving ambiguity.

One reason why differences occur may be that perfumes are heavily advertised in general, thus the resulting ad over-exposure could potentially lead to weaker advertising effects. Purchase intentions for the advertised product categories could not be stimulated, yet search intentions for the next shopping trip were significantly increased when exposed to a substantial amount of clutter.

Key Contributions
First, this study validates impairing effects of competitive advertising on consumer memory within a real, naturalistic...
women magazine. By embedding the advertisements within editorial material, the findings add external validity to previous research.

Second, this study set out to challenge the common assumption of preceding research in this field that competitive advertising is not desirable. Thus it contributes by demonstrating that competitive advertising does not only induce negative effects on the consumer. In fact, an individual advertiser actually profits to a certain degree from competitive ads by an increased consumer desire for the advertised product category.

References are available on request.