Interessensbereiche zur Betreuung: Florian Dost

Zeitnahe/Kapazitätsbeschränkte Themen

Bachelorarbeit – Schülerumfrage in Cottbus

Ausgearbeitete Themenvorschläge

(General theme: group size effects in WOM)
In a group, you need a leader: The interplay of sender characteristics and receiver group size on receiver perceptions in amplified word of mouth

Amplified word of mouth has entered the toolbox of many marketers. Specialized agencies generate additional “amplified” word-of-mouth conversations with the help of seeding agents. Most of these agencies rely on the power of one-on-one recommendations, but others suggest their agents to invite several guests at once to throw so-called word-of-mouth “house parties”. Current research finds that organic word of mouth differs when talking to a group or to a single person. But is the WOM or the content it it also perceived differently by the receiver? And is the sender (the seeding agent) perceived differently by the receiver? Furthermore, research in sociology, psychology and organization management have found certain leader characteristics (e.g. Emotional Intelligence, or Empathy, or Theory of Mind) to be relevant in larger groups, but not smaller ones or pairs. Does this mean that an agency has to select “better” seeding agents for house parties than for one-to-one conversations? And what is the best audience size for an amplified WOM conversation, depending on the capabilities of the seeder?

Instructions: You will need to identify a suitable seeding agent trait or capability, set up an experiment with a suitable variation of receiver group sizes, and a standardized WOM message, survey the receivers after the manipulated WOM incident about their perceptions and analyze if both, seeders traits and group size interact regarding their effect on receivers’ perceptions.

References:

(General theme: editing options v. appeals as cost-effective means to optimize media)
No-brainer or slow-brainer: using slow-motion in advertising video to convey intent.
Können verlangsamt Handlungen in Werbevideos die wahrgenommene Bewusstheit der dargestellten Handlungen beeinflussen?

Research on crime video footage has found that people, when shown a video of the crime in slow-motion, think the accused may have acted more intentionally. They assume that the accused had more time to think and, for example, was less likely to simply react in spontaneous self-defense. This effect may be useful to advertisers. The person in an advertisement video could, for example, grab the advertised product very quickly—a sign of affect and spontaneous reaction—or slowly—a sign of careful deliberation. Consequently, the depicted choice might convey different product qualities (“a craving” vs. “a solid choice”). Does this work? And is it useful to an advertiser?

Instructions/ additional description / hints:
Transfer the theory to a marketing context. Set up an experiment with a suitable video(s) (existing or self-made) and test the effects on viewers perceptions and inferred actor intentions.
A history of advertising perception – in big data

Advertisers often face a bad public image and mourn the golden days of their profession in the past. But was public image of advertising ever better? Research evidence is very scarce and mixed: In the 50s and 60s, an empirical study found the public’s perception of advertising remarkably positive, but a study from the 70s found the image to be rather negative. Then in the 90s, data suggested the image of advertising to be unexpectedly positive again. So, was there a change over time? What is the image now? And is the prevalence of a positive or negative image simply the absence of the other?

Similar changes in perception can be observed regarding advertising effectiveness. While believes in advertising power were strong until the 80s, effectiveness doubts crept in in the 90s and 2000s. While digital advertising was regarded as highly effective throughout the 2000s and 2010s, in recent years large advertisers like P&G have drastically lost confidence in digital advertising effectiveness.

Today, historical text collections like Google Ngram database or the Twitter API allows to search for related words (such as advertising) in a vast body of published texts over time. Combined with simple modern natural language processing (NLP) tools for the extraction of meaning from such data, this would allow to explore if and how meaning, perception and connotation of advertising in the body of English texts changed over the last half of a century, and how it is today.

Instructions: empirical: apply a current (simple) NLP approach to the ngrams database or a different database and identify the changes in meaning for advertising, commercials, or its many derivatives. Synthesize these findings to answer some of the research questions.

Starting Literature:


The currently most hyped psychological theory, Construal Level Theory (CLT), posits, that with higher expertise, people will process more information at an ever more concrete level of information processing. Whereas the novice will see only an abstract “wood”, the expert will see many different and interlinked “trees”. In this vein, many scholars, students or apprentices have experienced during their studies that they become better at focusing and learning the details, but sometimes the ability to see the (abstract) “big picture” gets even lost right in the middle of the learning process. However, for some, at an even higher expertise, the abstract “big picture” of the wood becomes accessible again, because a true expert understands all the concrete details as well as the abstract big picture. This study investigates whether construal level (or psychological distance) follows a U-shaped curve over expertise, or more precisely, if true experts can be manipulated more easily in very abstract or very concrete modes of thinking, while the apprentice is restricted to the concrete, and the novice to the abstract.

References:

Media richness and construal level in advertising (or word of mouth) – How brand communication for different richness affects consumer construal level and interacts with message stimuli of different abstractness or concreteness.

Media Richness und das Construal Level – Der Einfluss unterschiedlich reicher Kommunikation auf das Construal Level und die Wahrnehmung unterschiedlich abstrakter oder konkreter Kommunikationsinhalte

Are abstract or concrete stories and information perceived and processed differently? Does it make a difference the richer and more detailed a brand message is shown (think virtual reality versus TV versus mobile display ad)? Not every message needs a rich medium, but which one does? And how does it have a different effect on a consumer?

Instructions: apply an experiment with at least a 2x2-factorial between design: abstract versus concrete message/content and more versus less rich medium.

for your experiment.

References:
Top model configuration versus entry model configuration – price anchoring in customized products

When a new customizable product (e.g., a new iPad, a new car, etc.) is advertised, marketers commonly show the “entry model” specifications, with prices “starting at” *ridiculous small price for a product few consumers will choose*. They do that to communicate an affordable price image. However, research on anchoring would suggest it is smarter to communicate the highest possible price to set the cognitive anchor (or reference price). For a customizable product, that would be the “top model”. In theory, every configuration below the top model should then be perceived as relatively affordable in comparison to the expensive anchor. This could improve perceptions of value and quality. The questions remain: does it? And which strategy works better, entry, or top model pricing?

Instructions: empirical: design an experiment to test entry versus top model pricing for a customizable product to see if it affects choice and attitudes, and why? Build a theory with at least one (better two: one for the high-price route, one for the low price route) mediator that could explain the result.
(General theme: surprising recommendations for tricking human perception – using dating advice for out of the box marketing thinking)

Advertise like a pick-up artist: Can (aggressive) romantic dating advice be used by marketers to start or improve a consumer-brand relationship?

Many marketers believe that consumers form relationships with the brands they use. In a sense, they assume that these relationships mimic human (romantic) relationships. But then why don’t marketers also use the age-old (or modern) advice on one of the most ancient topics that has grappled the human mind? The topic which has caused authors throughout history to condense their observation into ever new (and remarkably recurring) books and treatises on dating advice? Historically, advise has ranged from the obvious and flattering to counterintuitive “tricks” like nagging, feigning disinterest, or changing locations often. Additionally, a complicated set of social rules has emerged, like what is acceptable at what date. If marketers would heed dating advice, how would a brand strategy, or a new product look like? Which “tricks” could a marketer readily adapt to lure the consumer into having a “date” with her product? Would dating tricks that affect consumer self-esteem, or simulate a common history, or change perception of time passed work in a marketing context? And what would the fictional trickster Barney (from how I met your mother) do as a marketer?

Instructions: Theoretical, creative, “legendary”: Describe and discuss potential dating-advice-derived marketing strategies. Outline and discuss any differences to common brand relationship approaches.

References:

- Well, whatever advice book you think fits and “turns on” – there are uncounted examples, historically probably starting around the time of the “Ars amatoria” (Ovid, 1 BC).

Advertising and drinking: Does alcohol increase or decrease advertising effectiveness?

Werbewahrnehmung bei Alkoholgenuss: Überwiegen die negativen oder die stimulierenden Effekte?

Media, advertising and alcohol are often consumed together. Interestingly, the most expensive advertising times are often also the times of increased alcohol consumption. For example, on superbowl Sunday 52 million bottles of beer are consumed, bars have their highest revenues with public viewing events, and at every evening prime time, many adults have formed a habit to consume alcohol and watch TV. Many studies have shown the detrimental effects of alcohol on awareness and self-control, for example when driving or choosing a mate. On the other hand, alcohol may also stimulate bodily and psychic functions. Yet, marketing research has not covered the potential effects of joint alcohol and advertising consumption. Is prime-time advertising more or less effective, when accounting for the drinking behavior of viewers?

Bearbeitungshinweis: Sehr explorative, aber trotzdem empirische Arbeit. Denkbar wären z.B. Beobachtungsstudien zum typischen Alkoholkonsum, Quasiexperimente (einer bleibt nüchtern), oder sogar Labor-Experimente. Haftungsausschluss- und Einverständniserklärungen der Probanden sind unbedingt erforderlich, ebenso ist unbedingt stets auf Volljährigkeit zu prüfen!!! Eine Erklärung über
die Gefahren des Alkoholkonsums muss den Probanden vor den Versuchen gegeben werden (noch ohne Alkoholeinfluss...). Bearbeitung bevorzugt in Englisch.

- Es gibt fast keine Literatur zu Werbung und Alkohol, aber reichlich medizinische Literatur zu den generellen Auswirkungen des Alkoholkonsums.

**Marketing warfare revisited**
**Das Konzept der Kriegführung im Marketing**

Marketing warfare is the application of warfare principles to marketing purposes. It has been applied in highly competitive settings. However, the research stream did not continue beyond the 80th. Additionally, how would more modern strategies like “asymmetric warfare” or “network centric warfare” be represented in marketing terms? How would current warfare thinking like “A2/AD”, or “hybrid warfare” be represented? And finally, how could marketers use warfare knowledge and principles to achieve the ultimate strategic goal, that is avoiding conflict in the first place?

**References:**
(General theme: opinion leader research is likely wrong)

A critical reliability test of opinion leadership effects – Die Reliabilität von Opinionleader Effekten

or

A meta-analysis of opinion leadership effects – Eine Meta-analyse von Opinionleader Effekten

Should marketers care about opinion leaders? Many studies have investigated these questions, but they all share one common theme: Evidence for the effect has been weak. This casts doubts on the reliability of the effects as well as the magnitude of the effects.

A new and easy to use tool may answer the reliability question. The new tool, p-curve analysis, can check if the existing research is powerful enough to back a finding—just by collecting and checking the p-values in the articles.

Standard meta-analysis is now available as simple-to-use excel-sheets. Effect sizes can easily be collected and analyzed.

Instructions for p curve: empirical: collect the p-value data for your topic, just like in Vadillo et al (2016). Perform a p-curve analysis on the data and discuss the findings—and the implications for the investigated research stream.

Instructions for meta analysis: empirical: collect the effect size data for your topic, just like, for example, in Brinckmann et al (2010). Perform a meta-analysis on the data to integrate effect sizes and discuss the findings—and the implications for the investigated research stream.

Requirement: in English or German.

Starting Literature:


"As threats of environmental degradation loom, there is an increased need to determine how to induce people to adopt more environmentally friendly behaviors. In addition to legal regulations and financial incentives, there is a clear interest in stimulating people to voluntarily change their environmental behaviors. A number of intervention techniques are available to accomplish this (see, for example, Abrahamse, Steg, Vlek, & Rothengatter, 2005). One very popular method is to ask people to make a promise or pledge to do something for the environment” (cited from starting source)

This is how a recent meta study on environmental commitments or “pledges” starts. It find only very small and troublesome evidence. Possibly some of the results were affected by publication bias. A new and easy to use tool may answer this question. The new tool, p-curve analysis, can check if the existing research is powerful enough to back a finding—just by collecting and checking the p-values in the articles.

**Instructions:** empirical: extend the studies from Lokhorst et al (2013) and perform a p-curve analysis on the p values. Discuss the possibility of publication bias.

**Starting Literature:**

Weitere Themenideen

- Emotional Intelligence als ein besserer Meinungsführer - auswählen von Sämlingen/influencers durch emotionalen Intelligenz

- Pay-what-you-want when buying for others – wie das Erwerben eines Geschenks (Geburtstag, Weihnachten, usw.) für ein Drittes unter PWYW Bedingungen die Preise beeinflusst und die Wertperspektiven des Geschenkgebers und der Empfänger beeinflusst.

- Consumergeschenk (oder “Inertie”) als eine wichtige neue Variable für Verbraucherverhalten

- Verwendung von Erzählungsschemata und Schemata, um die Effektivität von Nutzer-generated Content zu bewerten/zu verbessern

- Warum Kunden entscheiden, nicht WOM zu übertragen (Ziel: exploratorisch, könnte auf Datensätzen und mit NLP mitteilen)

- Modellierung dynamischer Interaktionen in Verhandlungen als komplexes System (mit EDM-Maschinenlernen)

- Funktionsoptimierung bei wechselnden Niveaus von Werbeblockierung oder Werbebotschaften

- Makroeffekte von Werbung (was alle Werbung die Gesamtverbrauch steigern? Ist all pharma Werbung die Lebenserwartung erhöhen? Etc.)

- Makroeffekte von e-commerce (z.B., steigert ein-wertiger online-Commerce die Preise und ändert die Inflation? Etc.)

- Shop-in-shop: praktische und Forschungsentwicklungen (können aus der Literatur stammen)

- Pop-up Stores: praktische und Forschungsentwicklungen (können aus der Literatur stammen)