

Topics for the Bachelor thesis – summer term 2025

General information

- Below you will find an **overview of topics** from which you can select your preferred topics for your Bachelor seminar.
- Please select at least four topics and prioritize them (→ indicate topic number and title) in your CV together with the usual information.
- We will do our best to consider your prioritizations as much as possible.
- Students who have indicated our chair as priority 1 will be given preference in the allocation of topics.
- **The specific design of the topic will be discussed in the individual meetings with your supervisor.**
- The papers should preferably be written in English – writing in German is also possible.

Topics for the Bachelor thesis

1. **Understanding the marketing expenditure of non-profit organizations: Impact on donors' willingness to give**

This thesis deals with the perception of marketing expenditures of non-profit organizations and their influence on the willingness of potential donors to donate. Based on a systematic literature review and appropriate theories, hypotheses are derived, a study model is created and conceptual framework is designed (without data collection and analysis). Finally, it lays the foundation for an empirical study (which may be conducted in the future based on this bachelor thesis) that aims to analyze how individuals perceive and react to the marketing efforts of non-profit organizations. By examining donor behavior, psychological triggers, and communication strategies employed by nonprofit organizations, the relationships between perceptions of marketing expenditures and donor behavior will be uncovered. Ultimately, the results will provide insights that can help nonprofits optimize their marketing strategies to effectively communicate their mission while encouraging greater donor support and engagement.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

2. Do Certifications Help? The Influence of Ecolabels on the Choice of More Sustainable Shipping Options

This thesis analyses how eco-labels influence consumers' decisions in favour of sustainable shipping methods. The goal is to analyse whether certifications that indicate environmentally friendly practices encourage customers to choose more environmentally friendly shipping options. Based on a systematic literature review and appropriate theories, hypotheses will be derived, a study model will be set up and a conceptual framework will be designed (without data collection and analysis). Ultimately, the groundwork will be laid for a study to determine consumer perceptions of ecolabels and their effectiveness in promoting sustainable choices. The results will shed light on the role of ecolabels in promoting environmentally friendly shipping practices in e-commerce.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

3. Navigating Choice Overload in Online Shopping Environments

This thesis explores the phenomenon of choice overload in online shopping environments. Choice overload refers to the difficulty consumers face when presented with a large number of options, leading to decision paralysis or dissatisfaction. Based on a comprehensive literature review, this paper uncovers research gaps in the field of consumer behavior regarding choice overload. The goal is to derive a conceptual framework and the description of a potential experimental set-up (without testing). The focus lies on exploring strategies and mechanisms, such as user interface design and personalized recommendations, that online shops can employ to enhance user experience and help consumers navigate choice overload effectively.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

4. „Green Guilt“: Understanding Consumer Motivations Behind Ethical Consumption

This thesis examines the mechanism driving ethical consumption. It explores how consumer motivations, including moral responsibility, social pressure, and personal values influences purchase intentions. Based on a comprehensive literature review, this paper uncovers research gaps in the field of consumer behavior concerning the interplay of emotional triggers and decision-making processes. The goal is to derive a conceptual framework and the description of a potential experimental set-up (without testing). The research focuses on identifying factors that encourage sustainable purchasing behaviors, with the goal of deepening understanding of consumer motivations and informing the development of effective and ethical marketing strategies.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

5. Static vs Dynamic: How the Aesthetics of Product Ratings Shape the Perceived Rating

The design of product ratings in online shops (e.g. bars vs. stars) has been found to impact consumers' estimate of the displayed rating. In particular, there is evidence of a visual rounding-down effect for ratings slightly above the closest integers when displayed as stars. This thesis discusses how an online experiment could be designed to expand on existing research by investigating whether the animation of the displayed stars can mitigate the rounding-down effect.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

6. Attracting and sustaining attention on social Media

Consumers can interact with content (e.g., on TikTok or Instagram) in many ways (e.g., liking, commenting, sharing, saving). However, users see far more posts daily than they can process and interact with. Moreover, only a small number of posts users encounter are viewed until the end (i.e., users skip a lot of content, too). The aim of this study is to design a potential experiment (without testing) regarding the post characteristics that increase or decrease attention and engagement on TikTok. For example, the student could focus on how consumers might react to AI generated voices or media objects that are used within videos in terms of user reactions (e.g., skipping content more often).

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

7. Viral content on TikTok

Millions of people upload content to platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitch and TikTok on a daily basis. Some of these do not receive many reactions in terms of likes and comments while others go viral (i.e., reach engagement levels far beyond the average posts of a specific account). The goal of this thesis is to design an experiment (without testing) to study why some posts on social media are (much) more successful than others). Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to, the use of emotions, music, humor, or trends and sounds on TikTok.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

8. Persuasion Tipping Points in E-Commerce

Marketers use various tactics to stimulate purchases. Some may leverage scarcity or social proof cues within webshops, while others may design interfaces in a way to manipulate user behavior (i.e., use dark patterns). While both benefits and risks of these approaches have received great attention from past research, it remains unexplored how to balance persuasion attempts in business practice. The

goal of this research is to design an experiment (without testing) to explore “persuasion tipping points”, shedding light on how different persuasive elements are perceived, how users react to combinations of these elements and points beyond which more persuasion attempts backfire. The student is free to choose specific webshop elements for this purpose. Programming expertise is not required for this research.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

9. Broadening the Horizon of Loyalty Program Research

Loyalty programs are a very popular way to maintain and strengthen customer relationships. The goal of this research is to zoom in on recent research research on loyalty programs and to ultimately design an experiment (without testing) to study study new loyalty program types. For example, the student could focus on new formats, such as McDonalds Monopoly points earned via purchases and that are linked to certain as well as uncertain rewards, or loyalty points on the live streaming platform Twitch and how these formats shape consumer behavior.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

10. Balancing Information Overload in E-Commerce

The phenomenon of information overload occurs when consumers are presented with excessive amounts of information, such as product descriptions, reviews, specifications, and advertisements. This can lead to cognitive fatigue, decision paralysis, or reduced satisfaction. Based on a structured literature review and consumer behavior research, this paper examines strategies and mechanisms, such as streamlined user interface design or prioritization of essential information, that online retailers can use to mitigate information overload. The findings aim to provide practical recommendations for enhancing user experience, improving decision-making, and increasing satisfaction in digital shopping environments. The goal is to propose a conceptual research model and show how such a study would have to be structured to answer questions on this topic.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

11. Design Inferences and Obstruction in Marketing - Are We Being Manipulated Daily?

Why is it harder to log out than to log in? Why are some processes unnecessarily complicated? These are examples of design inferences and obstruction, two types of dark patterns that subtly influence consumer behavior online. Design inferences use visual hierarchy or misleading layouts to nudge users,

while obstruction adds friction to discourage actions like canceling subscriptions. The goal is to explore these patterns, reviewing literature and identifying key website elements that implement them. This thesis will propose a study set-up to evaluate their effects on usability, satisfaction, and decision-making, offering insights into their psychological and ethical implications in marketing.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

12. E-Commerce and the new Accessibility Guidelines

This thesis examines how the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 align with existing website quality frameworks, such as ISO 25010, SiteQual and WebQual Framework. While these frameworks address dimensions like usability, trust, and performance, accessibility often remains underrepresented. With WCAG 2.2 setting global standards for web accessibility and new regulations making compliance mandatory for large E-Commerce sites, integrating accessibility into quality frameworks is more critical than ever. This research aims to compare WCAG 2.2 with established frameworks, highlighting gaps and possible differences in user behavior. The goal is to propose a unified model that ensures legal compliance while enhancing inclusivity and user experience.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **no**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

13. Just-Below, Round, or Precise: The Effect of Prices on Perception of Product Quality

Just-below prices (e.g. \$7.95) are common practice in retail and have been found to increase sales in many contexts because they are perceived to be lower than they actually are. This thesis investigates how different pricing schemes impact (expected) product quality by developing a conceptual model and describing how primary data on this issue could be collected.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

14. How Can B2B Marketing Influence Sustainability Perception Among Companies? A Review and Conceptual Framework

Sustainability has become a key priority for businesses, as stakeholders, investors, and consumers increasingly demand environmentally and socially responsible practices. For companies, aligning with sustainability not only improves brand reputation but also enhances competitiveness and compliance with regulatory standards. This study aims to provide an overview of the current state of research on how B2B marketing can shape the sustainability perceptions of other businesses. By analyzing existing literature, the thesis will explore the role of marketing in communicating sustainability. Additionally,

the work will propose a conceptual framework to test the effectiveness of various B2B marketing strategies in influencing perceptions of sustainability.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **no**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**

15. Do Consumers Differentiate Between Sustainability? An Investigation of Consumer Perceptions

This thesis investigates whether consumers differentiate between sustainability. For example various types or dimensions of sustainability could make a difference. Additionally, the research could examine whether consumers recognize varying levels of sustainability, from minimal efforts to more comprehensive, impactful practices. The goal is to understand how these distinctions influence consumer behavior and to provide insights for businesses on how to communicate sustainability effectively in their marketing strategies. To this end, the aim is to summarise the current state of the literature, propose a conceptual framework and develop a study-sup (without testing) to investigate this research question.

- Literature review: **yes**
- Development of a conceptual framework: **yes**
- Development of a study set-up (without testing): **yes**
- Empirical testing (data collection & analysis): **no**