

Topics for the Master seminar – winter term 2024/2025

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 Master seminar

1. Unveiling Ethical Dilemmas: Nudges in Digital Marketing and E-commerce

This seminar paper takes a critical look at the ethical dimensions of the use of nudges in digital marketing and e-commerce. It examines the potential ethical issues and dilemmas that arise when nudges are used to influence online consumer behavior and how these issues can be addressed (e.g. nudge plus). Through an analysis of the ethical framework, the research aims to identify and analyze the ethical considerations related to the implementation of nudges in these areas. It addresses issues of autonomy, transparency and the manipulation of consumer decisions and highlights the limitations and responsibilities of marketers when using nudges.

2. Strategic use of social media in non-profit organizations: A comprehensive analysis

This seminar paper conducts a comprehensive analysis of the social media strategies used by non-profit organizations. Based on a comprehensive literature review from the fields of marketing and communications, the paper will analyze the diverse use of social media in the non-profit sector. It will examine how these organizations strategically use social media platforms and influencers to raise awareness, engage stakeholders, mobilize support, and advance their missions. By analyzing relevant studies, this study seeks to uncover key factors that contribute to effective social media strategies for nonprofits. The insights gained from this study can serve as valuable guidance for nonprofit organizations looking to optimize their social media presence and increase their impact in the digital landscape.

3. Impure altruism & warm glow: A systematic literature review

This seminar paper examines how the concept of "warm glow" is used in marketing contexts to understand and influence consumer behavior. The author should systematically review the literature to identify the different contexts in which 'warm glow' is used as a construct, such as charitable giving, cause-related marketing and sustainable consumption. By analyzing how "warm glow" is conceptualized and measured in various studies, the thesis aims to provide a structured and holistic overview of its application and implications in marketing strategies. This comprehensive overview provides insights into the use of "warm glow" to, for example, improve consumer engagement or stimulate prosocial behaviors.

4. Between freeriding and generosity – Consumer behavior within livestreams

Livestreams on platforms such as Twitch and TikTok are becoming increasingly popular and successful streamers can accumulate thousands, sometimes even tens of thousands of concurrent viewers. The goal of this study (systematic literature review) is to decipher consumer reactions during such streams, for example regarding messages sent, money spent, reactions to product placements, or the emotions they feel. Furthermore, reasons for livestream consumption are investigated and the (parasocial) relationships developed by consumers towards livestreams are considered.

5. Voice and music analytics – Deriving a toolbox from the academic literature

The goal of this study is to consolidate research on the use of voice and music in a diverse set of areas (e.g., marketing, advertisements, movies) from a methodological point of view (systematic literature review). Exemplary questions include how voices and music can be classified or how information from voice and music can be extracted through various software solutions in the first place.

6. Trends in Social Media Engagement Research

Content on social media is very diverse, comprising texts, images, videos, livestreams, stories, and many other types. Unsurprisingly, researchers employ various methods and tools to investigate social media engagement (e.g., likes, comments) drivers. The goal of this study is to consolidate recent advancements in this research area, for example regarding text or image analysis methods or the potential of large language models in this context (systematic literature review).

7. Sustainability in B2B Marketing: Insights from the Research

The German Supply Chain Act and the EU corporate sustainability reporting - the political requirements for companies to establish and communicate sustainability are becoming stricter. Reason enough to take a closer look at the sustainability of B2B companies and to summarize and compare current research findings. The aim of this paper is to provide a systematic literature review on sustainability in the B2B context from a marketing perspective.

8. Sustainability marketing fundamentals - A theoretical perspective

Scientific theories (such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour) are the backbone of many scientific articles. Knowing and understanding them is therefore an important basis for categorizing and advancing science. The aim of this systematic literature review is therefore to identify and illuminate the most important theories and models in the field of sustainability marketing and thereby gain a basic understanding of research in this area. This review provides orientation and a basis for future research.

9. Why are customers behaving green? Reasons for sustainable consumption

Well-being, warm glow and prosocial behavior – There are a number of reasons that motivate customers to behave sustainably. The aim of this systematic literature review is to find out which reasons have been uncovered in science to date and to what extent they differ from one another. This work thus provides important insights into sustainability research, as future research can be used to promote prosocial behavior with the help of underlying motivation.

10. The role of mood in marketing research and consumer behavior

Understanding mood can significantly enhance marketing research and strategies. This paper delves into this construct, examining distinctions and specific roles in marketing research. Conducting a comprehensive literature review, you will explore the theoretical underpinnings and definitions of mood in the marketing context. Additionally, you will investigate how mood as a construct is utilized in marketing strategies and research, providing an overview of current studies and methodologies.

11. Theories in mood and emotion research

Discovering how mood and emotions influence consumer behavior can unlock new opportunities for more effective marketing strategies. This paper aims to explore theories of mood and emotions research, along with current applications in online marketing. Conducting a literature review, you will delve into how these theories explain their influence on consumer behavior. You will discuss the implications of these theories for marketing strategies, including online advertising and website design. The goal is to provide an understanding of how mood and emotions impact consumer decision-making and to explore practical applications for marketers.

12. Are We Being Manipulated Daily? Dark Patterns and Social Influence in Marketing

Why is it sometimes harder to log out than to log in? What is the idea behind the wording in cookie acceptance popups? Where does this additional item in my basket come from? Those are only some of the possible questions that relate to so called “dark patterns” found in websites, web shops and digital platforms. These patterns refer to specific designs that can indirectly affect the way we use a page and therefore influence our behavior as consumers. The goal of this thesis is to summarize research on this topic and to compare different websites regarding their usage of these patterns. Students interested in the psychological aspects of marketing are particularly well-suited for this topic.

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14. Framing Effects in Advertising: Influencing Consumer Perception

This seminar paper investigates the role of framing effects in advertising and how they influence consumer perception. Framing effects occur when the way information is presented affects individuals' decisions and judgments. Based on a comprehensive literature review, the paper investigates various framing strategies used in advertising, such as positive versus negative framing, and how they shape consumer attitudes, enhance the persuasiveness of advertisements, and drive purchasing decisions. The insights provided will help understand the mechanisms behind framing and offer practical implications for developing more effective advertising strategies.

15. Analyzing the Influence of Negative Reviews on Green Purchase Intentions

This seminar paper examines how negative reviews influence consumers' intentions to purchase green products. Based on a comprehensive literature review, the aim is to explore how different types of product reviews affect consumers' perceptions and buying behavior, particularly in the context of environmentally friendly products. The paper aims to provide actionable insights for marketers and businesses on how to effectively manage and mitigate negative customer reviews.

16. Exploring the Influence of Availability Heuristics on Consumer Behavior

This seminar paper investigates how availability heuristics influence consumer behavior. Availability heuristics refer to the cognitive bias where individuals make decisions based on the information that is most readily available or easily recalled, rather than considering all possible information. Based on a comprehensive literature review, the paper will explore how this bias affects consumers' perceptions, preferences, and purchasing decisions. The paper aims to provide valuable insights into how to leverage or mitigate the effects of availability heuristics to more effectively influence consumer behavior.