

Bachelorseminar Marketing & Vertrieb

Themen und Auswahlprozess

07.07.2025



Zielgruppe und Bewerbungsprozess

Zielgruppe:

- Interessenten an einer Bachelorarbeit im Marketing
- Die Teilnahme vor dem Verfassen der Bachelorarbeit wird dringend empfohlen

Anzahl Plätze:

- Es stehen 10 Seminarplätze zur Verfügung
- Platzbeschränkung macht Bewerbungsprozess nötig

Die Bewerbung für das Seminar erfolgt über die Plattform <https://portal.wiwi.kit.edu/ys/8791>

Auswahlmechanismus:

- Modifiziertes Bestenprinzip, d.h. die leistungsstärksten Bewerber werden – unter Berücksichtigung von Studienplanung u. Schwerpunktsetzung – zuerst berücksichtigt.

Fragen zum Bewerbungsprozess bitte an luisa.weber@kit.edu

Termine

Themen online:	ab 07. Juli 2025
Bewerbungsfrist:	bis zum 20. Juli 2025, 23:55 Uhr
Bekanntgabe der ersten Zusagen:	21. Juli 2025
Frist zur Annahme zugesagter Plätze:	bis zum 23. Juli 2025, 23:59 Uhr
Kickoff (Anwesenheitspflicht!) & Bearbeitungsstart:	04. August 2025, 14:30 – 16:00 Uhr, vor Ort
Abgabe der Seminararbeit:	19. November 2025, 12:00 Uhr
Präsentation (Anwesenheitspflicht!):	4. und 5. Dezember 2025, vor Ort, vorauss. 09:00-17:00 Uhr

(Grobe) Form der Seminararbeit (1/2)

Zielsetzung

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

Umfang

Schriftliche Arbeit: nicht mehr als 15 Seiten

Präsentation im Seminar: 15 Minuten + 15 Minuten Diskussion

(Grobe) Form der Seminararbeit (2/2)

Bewertung der Leistung

30 Punkte Seminararbeit

60 Punkte Präsentation

10 Punkte Beteiligung am Seminar

Konkretisierung

Genauere Hinweise zur konkreten Ausgestaltung werden in der Vorbesprechung (Kick-Off) am 04. August 2025 gegeben

Zu den Themen

Gemäß der vorgestellten Zielsetzung (Folie 4), beziehen sich die einzelnen Themen des Seminars auf aktuelle Forschungsarbeiten im Marketing

Eine Liste der aktuellen Themen finden Sie auf den Folien 7 bis 11

Die Präferenzen können im Seminarmodul angegeben werden. Die Zuteilung der Themen erfolgt nach einem modifizierten Bestenprinzip (siehe Folie 2)

Themen werden nicht doppelt vergeben, d.h. es kann einem Teilnehmer auch ein Thema zugeteilt werden, das er oder sie nicht explizit als Themenwunsch genannt hat

Eigene Themenvorschläge durch Studierende sind nicht möglich

Themenliste (1/5)

1. Li, B., Lai, E. Y., & Wang, X. (Shane). (2025). EXPRESS: From Tools to Agents: Meta-Analytic Insights into Human Acceptance of AI. *Journal of Marketing*



As artificial intelligence (AI) becomes more autonomous and socially present, it is critical to understand how people accept AI not just as a technological tool, but also as an agent capable of (semi-)autonomous decision-making and interaction. With a meta-analysis of 287 effect sizes representing over 119,000 individuals, this research examines the factors driving human acceptance of AI. Through a dual-perspectives framework, AI as a tool versus an agent, the authors identify key AI characteristics, including capability, role, expertise scope, and anthropomorphism, that significantly influence acceptance. These engineerable AI characteristics, along with contextual and individual factors, form an AI-task-user framework that explains AI acceptance across different use scenarios and user groups. These findings contribute to the discourse on AI acceptance and human-AI interactions: revealing a small, decreasing reluctance to accept AI and, more importantly, directing future research to empirical testing and theory building of AI acceptance from an agentic perspective. This research also provides actionable user-centered design roadmap for practitioners to develop and communicate AI features that align with human expectations and enhance positive responses, especially at a time when agentic AI is rapidly becoming a technological and societal reality.

2. Madan, S., Savani, K., & Johar, G. V. (2025). Over-reliance on aesthetics? The role of appearance-reveals-character lay theory in consumers' devaluation of unattractive produce. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*



Approximately 40% of all produce is rejected because it appears unattractive, contributing significantly to food waste. Whereas previous research attributes this devaluation to the ugly-is-bad effect, this research identifies an important moderator of consumers' reliance on this heuristic: the lay theory that a person's outer appearance reveals their inner character. Specifically, consumers who believe that people's appearances reveal their character are less willing to accept unattractive (vs. attractive) produce because they generalize their lay theory to produce and are, thus, more likely to infer that unattractive produce is of lower quality. Consumers who do not hold the lay theory do not demonstrate this effect. An intervention emphasizing that produce's outer appearance does not reflect its inner quality blocks this generalization of the lay theory to produce, thereby increasing acceptance among those who endorse the lay theory. Importantly, the intervention has no negative effect on those who do not hold the lay theory, making it broadly applicable in the field without the need to segment consumers based on their beliefs. Incentive-compatible studies conducted in-person and on Facebook™ show that this intervention is more effective at increasing consumers' interest in unattractive produce than an intervention directly targeting the ugly-is-bad effect. This research contributes to the science of consumer lay theories and the beautiful-is-good effect and offers actionable solutions to reduce food waste.

Themenliste (2/5)

3. Heitmann, M., Jansen, T. P., Reisenbichler, M., & Schweidel, D. A (2025). EXPRESS: Picture Perfect: Engaging Customers with Visual Generative AI. Journal of Marketing



Generative artificial intelligence (AI) is poised to transform how brands communicate with consumers. Recent research demonstrates AI's benefits in producing text, but marketing research has not yet explored how marketers can leverage AI to create visual advertising. Despite their impressive capabilities, “off the shelf” generative AI models are not aligned with marketing objectives, raising the question whether fine-tuning generative AI directly on conventional advertising objectives like evoking attention or driving interest is possible. In this research, we train an open-source generative AI model on marketing mindset metrics and show that the resulting visual content can match and even exceed conventionally produced advertising content in associated performance metrics. We also demonstrate that generative AI can be fine-tuned on multiple communication objectives simultaneously and adapted to specific audiences. In addition to highlighting generative AI's potential in marketing, we probe the limitations of aligning visual generative AI with marketing objectives.

4. Sisodia, A., Burnap, A., & Kumar, V. (2025). Generative interpretable visual design: Using disentanglement for visual conjoint analysis. Journal of Marketing Research, 62(3), 405-428



This article develops a method to automatically discover and quantify human-interpretable visual characteristics directly from product image data. The method is generative and can create new visual designs spanning the space of visual characteristics. It builds on disentanglement methods in deep learning using variational autoencoders, which aim to discover underlying statistically independent and interpretable visual characteristics of an object. The impossibility theorem in the deep learning literature indicates that supervision with ground truth characteristics would be required to obtain unique disentangled representations. However, these are typically unknown in real-world applications, and are in fact exactly the characteristics that need to be discovered. Extant machine learning methods are unsuitable since they require ground truth labels for each visual characteristic. In contrast, this method postulates the use of readily available product characteristics (such as brand and price) as proxy supervisory signals to enable disentanglement. This method discovers and quantifies human-interpretable and statistically independent characteristics without any specific domain knowledge on the product category. It is applied to a dataset of watches to automatically discover interpretable visual product characteristics, obtain consumer preferences over visual designs, and generate new ideal point designs targeted to specific consumer segments.

Themenliste (3/5)

5. Demirci, O., Hannane, J., & Zhu, X. (2025). Who is AI replacing? The impact of generative AI on online freelancing platforms. *Management Science*



This paper studies the impact of generative artificial intelligence (AI) technologies on the demand for online freelancers using a large data set from a leading global freelancing platform. We identify the types of jobs that are more affected by generative AI and quantify the magnitude of the heterogeneous impact. Our findings indicate a 21% decrease in the number of job posts for automation-prone jobs related to writing and coding compared with jobs requiring manual-intensive skills within eight months after the introduction of ChatGPT. We show that the reduction in the number of job posts increases competition among freelancers, whereas the remaining automation-prone jobs are of greater complexity and offer higher pay. We also find that the introduction of image-generating AI technologies led to a 17% decrease in the number of job posts related to image creation. We use Google Trends to show that the more pronounced decline in the demand for freelancers within automation-prone jobs correlates with their higher public awareness of ChatGPT's substitutability.

6. Dew, R. (2025). Adaptive preference measurement with unstructured data. *Management Science*



Many products are most meaningfully described using unstructured data such as text or images. Unstructured data are also common in e-commerce, in which products are often described by photos and text but not with standardized sets of attributes. Whereas much is known about how to efficiently measure consumer preferences when products can be meaningfully described by structured attributes, there is scant research on doing the same for unstructured data. This paper introduces a real-time, adaptive survey design framework for measuring preferences over unstructured data, leveraging Bayesian optimization. By adaptively choosing items to display based on uncertainty around a nonparametric utility model, the proposed method maximizes information gain per question, enabling quick estimation of individual-level preferences. The approach operates on embeddings of the unstructured data, thereby eliminating the requirement for manual coding of product attributes. We apply the method to measuring preferences over clothing and highlight its potential for both the general task of marketing research and the specific task of designing customer onboarding surveys to mitigate the cold-start recommendation problem. We also develop methods for interpreting the nonparametric utility functions, which allow us to reconstruct consumer valuations of discrete attributes, even for attributes that were not considered or available a priori.

Themenliste (4/5)

7. Xu, H., Ding, Y., Ding, Y., Zhang, Q., & Zhang, C. (2025). Whispers in your mind: the role of voice features in customer acquisition and retention. *Journal of Marketing*



While most marketing studies have focused on what salespeople say, less is known about the persuasiveness of how they say it, particularly in the distinct contexts of customer acquisition and retention. This research investigates how salespeople's vocal brightness and loudness influence new and existing customers' purchase behavior. Based on two studies conducted in China (a field study using a large real-world dataset of over 8,000 telephone calls and a randomized controlled experiment), the authors find that high brightness and high loudness positively predict new customers' purchase behavior and timing, whereas low brightness and high loudness positively affect existing customers' repurchase behavior and timing. The authors demonstrate that perceived arousal is the underlying mechanism driving customers' purchase behavior in customer acquisition, while perceived competence serves as a mediator in customer retention. No effect of brightness or loudness on purchase volume is observed in either customer acquisition or retention. This research makes theoretical contributions to the marketing and nonverbal communication literature and provides valuable managerial insights regarding how to manipulate voice features to improve sales performance.

8. Brynjolfsson, E., Li, D., & Raymond, L. (2025). Generative AI at work. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*



We study the staggered introduction of a generative AI-based conversational assistant using data from 5,172 customer-support agents. Access to AI assistance increases worker productivity, as measured by issues resolved per hour, by 15% on average, with substantial heterogeneity across workers. The effects vary significantly across different agents. Less experienced and lower-skilled workers improve both the speed and quality of their output, while the most experienced and highest-skilled workers see small gains in speed and small declines in quality. We also find evidence that AI assistance facilitates worker learning and improves English fluency, particularly among international agents. While AI systems improve with more training data, we find that the gains from AI adoption are largest for moderately rare problems, where human agents have less baseline experience but the system still has adequate training data. Finally, we provide evidence that AI assistance improves the experience of work along several dimensions: customers are more polite and less likely to ask to speak to a manager.

Themenliste (5/5)

9. D'Assergio, C., Manchanda, P., Montaguti, E., & Valentini, S. (2025). The Race for Data: Utilizing Informative or Persuasive Cues to Gain Opt-In? *Journal of Marketing*



The European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) mandates explicit user opt-in consent for data access. It recommends transparency in opt-in requests about data collection, storage, and use, without specifying the format of these requests. Consequently, the GDPR gives firms flexibility in designing opt-in messages. This research uses theory, multiple datasets, and methods to investigate firms' communication formats for opt-in requests, addressing three questions: (1) How do firms design their opt-in requests? (2) Does the chosen format affect consumer response? (3) What drives firms' choices of formats? The analysis of 1,506 repermission emails from 1,396 firms post-GDPR shows that 26% use only persuasive cues to request data, while 24% blend persuasive and informative cues. Notably, businesses with an offline presence use more persuasive cues compared with purely digital entities. A field experiment rationalizes this behavior showing that informative cues alone did not improve opt-in; a mix of persuasive and informative cues proved more successful. Additionally, firms dependent on personal data use persuasive cues more often than firms concerned with reputational risks of GDPR noncompliance. This study offers pivotal insights for regulators, firms, and consumers, revealing variations in how different firms acquire consent and the impact of their strategies on user behavior.

10. Arora, N., Chakraborty, I., & Nishimura, Y. (2025). AI–Human Hybrids for Marketing Research: Leveraging Large Language Models (LLMs) as Collaborators. *Journal of Marketing*



The authors' central premise is that a human–LLM (large language model) hybrid approach leads to efficiency and effectiveness gains in the marketing research process. In qualitative research, they show that LLMs can assist in both data generation and analysis; LLMs effectively create sample characteristics, generate synthetic respondents, and conduct and moderate in-depth interviews. The AI–human hybrid generates information-rich, coherent data that surpasses human-only data in depth and insightfulness and matches human performance in data analysis tasks of generating themes and summaries. Evidence from expert judges shows that humans and LLMs possess complementary skills; the human–LLM hybrid outperforms its human-only or LLM-only counterpart. For quantitative research, the LLM correctly picks the answer direction and valence, with the quality of synthetic data significantly improving through few-shot learning and retrieval-augmented generation. The authors demonstrate the value of the AI–human hybrid by collaborating with a Fortune 500 food company and replicating a 2019 qualitative and quantitative study using GPT-4. For their empirical investigation, the authors design the system architecture and prompts to create personas, ask questions, and obtain responses from synthetic respondents. They provide road maps for integrating LLMs into qualitative and quantitative marketing research and conclude that LLMs serve as valuable collaborators in the insight generation process.