Bachelorseminar Marketing & Vertrieb

Themen und Auswahlprozess

01.07.2026

Foto von Nick Morrison auf Unsplash

Zielgruppe und Bewerbungsprozess

Zielgruppe:

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

Anzahl Plätze:

- Es stehen 12 Seminarplätze zur Verfügung
- Platzbeschränkung macht Bewerbungsprozess nötig

Die Bewerbung für das Seminar erfolgt über die Plattform https://portal.wiwi.kit.edu/ys/9265

Auswahlmechanismus:

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

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

Termine

Vor Ort:
Seminarraum Geb
01.87, R 5B 25
(psd Bank Gebäude)

Themen online:	ab 02. Juli 2026
Bewerbungsfrist:	bis zum 19. Juli 2026, 23:55 Uhr
Bekanntgabe der ersten Zusagen:	20. Juli 2026
Frist zur Annahme zugesagter Plätze:	bis zum 23. Juli 2026, 23:59 Uhr
Kickoff (Anwesenheitspflicht!) & Bearbeitungsstart:	29. Juli 2026, 15:45 – 17:15 Uhr, vor Ort
Abgabe der Seminararbeit:	18. November 2026, bis 12:00 Uhr
Präsentation (Anwesenheitspflicht!):	3. und 4. Dezember 2026, vor Ort, vorauss. 09:00-16:00 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) 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 12
- 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 (1/6)

1. Jenkins, M. R., Fombelle, P. W., & Steffel, M. (2026). Are Apologies Always the Best Policy? Apologies for Service Failures Backfire When Consumers Are Not Aware of the Failure. Journal of Consumer Research, 53(1), 1-21.

Technological advancements enable firms to anticipate service failures and apologize to consumers more effectively than ever. However, are apologies always the best policy? Five experiments, including a large-scale field experiment, demonstrate that apologies backfire when consumers are not aware of the failure. Apologies decrease consumer satisfaction, trust, recommendation intentions, and repatronage behavior. This is because apologies increase awareness that a failure occurred. Accordingly, apologies backfire for both mild and severe failures so long as there is room to increase awareness of the failure. Moreover, apologies backfire more than notifications about a service failure because although both increase awareness of the aspect of the service experience that was a failure, apologies uniquely increase awareness that this constituted a failure. Beyond increasing awareness, apologies backfire by decreasing perceived service quality and competence. However, apologies also increase perceived warmth and honesty. Consequently, apologizing can be beneficial when consumers are already aware of a failure because apologies are less likely to backfire and more likely to enhance positive perceptions of the firm. These findings challenge the conventional wisdom that apologies are always the best policy when something goes wrong and provide insight into when and when not to apologize.

2. Li, B., Lai, E. Y., & Wang, X. (2026). From tools to agents: Meta-analytic insights into human acceptance of AI. Journal of Marketing, 90(3), 13-33.

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-perspective framework, AI as a tool versus AI as 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 an 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.

Themenliste (2/6)

3. Shaddy, F., Friedman, E. M., & Toubia, O. (2026). Fairness Perceptions in Demographic Targeting. Journal of Consumer Research, 53(1), 22-47.

Deciding which customer segment(s) to serve, or targeting, is a cornerstone of marketing strategy. Although companies commonly target based on demographic characteristics, recent cultural movements (e.g., #MeToo, Black Lives Matter) have heightened sensitivity to the differential treatment of certain demographic groups. Yet, research to date has not examined whether demographic targeting itself seems fair or appropriate. Fourteen experiments (N = 9,399), 13 supplemental studies (N = 7,065), and 2 Facebook A/B tests (N = 513,151) reveal that when consumers learn or infer that they or others have been targeted based on demographic characteristics, fairness perceptions and brand support suffer (relative to broad advertising). To explain why, we propose a conceptual model based on the extent to which consumers view demographic targeting as discriminatory (i.e., differential treatment based on attributes that are irrelevant and/or uncontrollable) and whether the discrimination is perceived as intentional (i.e., knowingly or willingly bringing about an avoidable outcome). Consequently, factors that (a) improve relevance (i.e., whether belonging to the targeted segment is diagnostic of preferences), (b) increase controllability (i.e., whether consumers themselves determine their membership in the targeted segment), or (c) reduce perceived intentionality (e.g., firm size, industry norms) attenuate perceptions of unfairness.

4. Wang, H. S., & Yim, C. K. (2025). Shifting perspectives: How communicating user innovations' self-focus enhances adoption. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 53(3), 931-948.

Deciding which customer segment(s) to serve, or targeting, is a cornerstone of marketing strategy. Although companies commonly target based on demographic characteristics, recent cultural movements (e.g., #MeToo, Black Lives Matter) have heightened sensitivity to the differential treatment of certain demographic groups. Yet, research to date has not examined whether demographic targeting itself seems fair or appropriate. Fourteen experiments (N ¼ 9,399), 13 supplemental studies (N ¼ 7,065), and 2 Facebook A/B tests (N ¼ 513,151) reveal that when consumers learn or infer that they or others have been targeted based on demographic characteristics, fairness perceptions and brand support suffer (relative to broad advertising). To explain why, we propose a conceptual model based on the extent to which consumers view demographic targeting as discriminatory (i.e., differential treatment based on attributes that are irrelevant and/or uncontrollable) and whether the discrimination is perceived as intentional (i.e., knowingly or willingly bringing about an avoidable outcome). Consequently, factors that (a) improve relevance (i.e., whether belonging to the targeted segment is diagnostic of preferences), (b) increase controllability (i.e., whether consumers themselves determine their membership in the targeted segment), or (c) reduce perceived intentionality (e.g., firm size, industry norms) attenuate perceptions of unfairness.

Themenliste (3/6)

5. Carney, S., Riveros, I., & Tully, S. M. (2026). Made with AI: Consumer engagement with social media containing AI disclosures. Journal of Consumer Research.

Social media shapes how people connect, communicate and consume information. As generative artificial intelligence (AI) becomes an increasingly common tool for content creation, many platforms have introduced disclosure requirements to inform consumers when content has been created or significantly edited by AI. Yet, little is known about how such AI-generated content (AIGC) disclosures influence consumer engagement—a key metric for creators, platforms, and brands—in part due to the unique setting of social media relative to other examinations of responses to AI. This research examines whether and why AIGC disclosures affect engagement on social media. Analysis of engagement behavior on TikTok following the introduction of AIGC disclosures and six preregistered experiments find that disclosures reduce consumer engagement. This reduction does not stem from content-related explanations such as lower perceived quality or concerns about manipulation. Instead, we identify a novel process: AIGC disclosures reduce parasocial connection—one-sided emotional bonds between consumers and creators—by signaling reduced effort from the creator. As such, disclosures that signal greater effort can mitigate reductions in engagement. We discuss the implications of these findings for platform policy, content creator strategy, and the future design of AI disclosure practices.

6. Fossen, B. L., Kim, P., & Chae, I. (2026). The Impact of Ad Length on Ad Effectiveness: Do Micro Ads Work?. Journal of Marketing, 90(3), 34-58.

As media viewers shift expectations toward content and ads, advertisers are increasingly exploring micro ads. Yet, limited research has examined micro ads, especially on TV. This article uses a multimethod approach to investigate micro ad effectiveness on behavioral outcomes and, more broadly, provide insights into the relationship between ad length and ad effectiveness in the current media landscape. Analyzing observational data on retailers' TV advertising, web traffic, and online sales, the authors find that micro ads spur more immediate web traffic than longer ads. Micro and nonmicro ads exhibit similar direct impacts on online sales, but micro ads can indirectly increase online sales more by driving increased traffic. Results from a field experiment using social media ads corroborate these findings, showing that micro ads outperform nonmicro ads in driving web traffic and social media engagement. The analyses suggest that viewer impatience for longer ads may be a plausible mechanism that explains why micro ads are more effective. The findings offer timely insights for advertisers and ad platforms seeking economical, attractive ad inventory.

Themenliste (4/6)

7. De Freitas, J., Oğuz-Uğuralp, Z., Uğuralp, A. K., & Puntoni, S. (2026). AI companions reduce loneliness. Journal of Consumer Research, 52(6), 1126-1148.

Chatbots are now able to engage in sophisticated conversations with consumers in the domain of relationships, providing a potential coping solution to widescale societal loneliness. Behavioral research provides little insight into whether these applications (apps) are effective at alleviating loneliness. We address this question by focusing on “artificial intelligence (AI) companions”: apps designed to provide consumers with synthetic interaction partners. Study 1 examines user reviews of AI companion apps and finds correlational evidence suggesting that these apps help alleviate loneliness. Study 2 finds that AI companions successfully alleviate loneliness on par only with interacting with another person and more than other activities such as watching YouTube videos. Moreover, consumers underestimate the degree to which AI companions improve their loneliness. Study 3 uses a longitudinal design and finds that an AI companion consistently provides momentary reductions in loneliness after use over the course of a week. Study 4 provides evidence that both the chatbots’ performance and, especially, whether it makes users feel heard, explain reductions in loneliness. Study 5 provides an additional robustness check for the loneliness-alleviating benefits of AI companions and shows that self-disclosure and distraction alone do not explain AI companions’ effectiveness.

8. Oba, D., Howe, H. S., & Fitzsimons, G. J. (2025). Brand teasing: how brands build strong relationships by making fun of their consumers. Journal of Consumer Research, 52(1), 70-92.

Popular brands like Wendy’s, Postmates, and RyanAir have gained notoriety by making fun of their consumers, but is this an effective strategy to build strong consumer relationships? Across 11 (seven pre-registered) studies, using lab data, field data, and a variety of analytical approaches, the current research demonstrates that teasing communication increases consumer engagement with and connection to the brand compared to merely funny or neutral communication. These effects occur because consumers anthropomorphize brands more when they use teasing communication. This leads to greater engagement with brand messages and greater self-brand connection (SBC). We also leverage the interpersonal teasing literature to distinguish between prosocial and antisocial teases and highlight an important boundary condition. Specifically, we demonstrate that while prosocial teasing evokes a positive human schema, antisocial teasing, although still anthropomorphic, activates a negative human schema, which reduces connection to the brand. As a result, antisocial teases lose their relational advantage over purely funny communication. This work contributes to the streams of research on brand humor, anthropomorphism, and consumer–brand relationships. It also provides actionable implications by demonstrating a novel antecedent to consumer–brand connection and the boundaries within which these positive effects are expected to occur.

Themenliste (5/6)

9. Liu, R., Zhang, W., & Chintagunta, P. K. (2026). Customers’ review content and their referral and (Re) Purchase behaviors. Journal of Marketing, 90(3), 127-147.

This research examines how customer review content influences review writers’ subsequent decisions. Employing a mixed-methods approach, including a field experiment, a scenario experiment, and archival data analysis, the authors investigated the effects of affective content, cognitive content, and length of customers’ reviews on their subsequent referral and (re)purchase behaviors across various contexts (household services, podcast trials, and airline services). The authors leveraged the random assignment of experimental interventions and other shifters to induce exogenous variation in review content features. Additionally, they employed instrumental and proxy variables to address endogeneity issues. Findings from the three studies consistently demonstrate that affective content in reviews enhances referral and repurchase behaviors, whereas cognitive content exerts adverse effects. Moderation analyses show that the effects of review length on these behavioral outcomes depend on individual and contextual factors that affect customers’ elaboration likelihood during review writing. Overall, this research provides actionable insights for strategically shaping customer review content to drive critical business outcomes and enriches theoretical understanding of how content features of customer reviews affect review writers’ decisions.

10. Xu, H., Ding, Y., Ding, Y., Zhang, Q., & Zhang, C. (2026). Whispers in your mind: the role of voice features in customer acquisition and retention. Journal of Marketing, 90(1), 29-50.

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.

Themenliste (6/6)

11. Habel, J., Hartmann, N. N., Wiseman, P., Ahearne, M. J., & Vaid, S. (2025). Sales pipeline technology: automated lead nurturing. Journal of Marketing, 89(5), 66-87.

Many business-to-business sales firms use automated lead nurturing (ALN) systems, which track leads' online behavior and nurture them through personalized content. ALN software providers claim that ALN improves lead conversion, but whether this benefit materializes is unclear. Therefore, this research examines ALN's effect across one qualitative and three quantitative studies. The findings indicate that ALN can provide valuable information to both sellers and leads and thereby improve the quality of salesperson–lead interactions, which in turn drives lead conversion. On average, ALN increases the probability of lead conversion between 0 (Studies 1 and 3) and 23 (Study 2) percentage points. However, these effects strongly depend on a lead's sales cycle length, expected sales volume, and preexisting relationship with the seller. Thereby, this article conducts the first rigorous fact-check of ALN and provides evidence that understanding the effect of ALN requires a contingency view. The findings also call on practitioners to change their current practices related to ALN. Rather than accepting industry claims at face value, practitioners should verify whether ALN improves lead conversion in their specific context. Furthermore, they should employ ALN particularly for leads where information asymmetry persists and is unlikely to be resolved through other, more costly means.

12. Wu, M. W., & Ham, S. H. (2026). More Ads, More Viewers? Analyzing Behavioral Shifts from Advertising Permissions to Live Streaming Consumption. Journal of Marketing, 90(2), 96-114.

There has been little exploration of how audience content consumption may change in response to advertising permissions on live streaming platforms. Brands use ads to generate revenue through ad exposure, but is this benefit thwarted by the reduction of audience consumption of content? Using a dataset containing over 12 million observations in the live streaming space and a difference-in-differences estimation approach, the authors study the effects of a policy intervention by a live streaming platform that provided (some) streamers the ability to display midroll advertisements. Although the ad avoidance literature infers that audiences view ad-supported content unfavorably, the results of this study indicate that providing the mere ability to introduce midroll advertisements has a notable positive effect on live streaming content consumption (average viewership and total hours watched). The authors discover that a viable explanation for this response is through increases in broadcasting airtime, stream frequency (somewhat), and quality by streamers after the intervention, as these adjustments are drastically easier to implement in a live streaming setting than in more traditional forms of media. The authors further explore heterogeneity in these effects in relation to initial streamer success, streaming tenure, content activity, culture (of the streamer and audience), and impact across time.