

Research on Contemporary Marketing Issues

M Sc Marketing

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Introduction

Welcome to this seventh edition of Contemporary Research in Irish Marketing from students of the M. Sc. Marketing full-time masters programme at DIT.

This is Ireland's premier 'conversion' programme, recruiting graduates from non-business disciplines such as arts, engineering, media and science and developing their capabilities to become excellent marketers in twelve months.

The dissertation task, a central feature of learning and research at the School of Marketing, allows the students to define, shape and research a marketing issue in great depth, using leading-edge theory to formulate a research question. This question is examined 'out there' in the word of marketing industry practice and consumer reality through the use of appropriate research methodologies. Such an engagement with research defines and differentiates these graduates and the 'black book' produced by them ensures that these graduates have demonstrated the core marketing competences needed at the highest level.

Students have provided a summary or abstract of his or her work in their own words. Their academic supervisor is also listed. If you are interested in any particular work you should contact myself or the staff member concerned. Details can be found on <http://www.dit.ie/marketing/staff/>

I hope you find the students' work stimulating and interesting.



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An Exploration of Consumer Complaint Behaviour Through the Lens of EVLN Theory: An Online Context

Author: Shelly Allen

Supervisor: Dr. Tara Rooney

Abstract

The primary aim of this research was to explore how and why consumers complain online, and the association between complaint behaviour and online firestorms. This research aimed to determine how consumers complain online, the role of dissatisfaction on action types, the motivations for engaging in online consumer complaint behaviour, and how complaint behaviour contributes to online firestorms. An interpretivist qualitative approach was adopted. Semi-structured interviews combined with netnography were utilised to generate the findings presented in the analysis. The results of the primary research highlighted a three-stage process, explaining how consumers engage in online complaining behaviour. The results also outlined an interesting contradiction in the perception that consumers choose a single course of action in response to dissatisfaction. The primary research identified that consumers often engage in exit, voice, and loyalty actions simultaneously. Additionally, the results highlighted the motivations for consumers to engage in public complaining behaviours online. Altruistic and vengeance motivations are primary influencers of online complaint behaviour. Further motivations include economic motivations, venting of negative emotions and the ease and convenience of complaining online. The results also demonstrated that the typical consumer does not contribute to online firestorms, suggesting that individuals who contribute are perhaps more vociferous and malicious in their intent.

These research findings add to the current literature on online consumer complaining behaviour and online firestorms, and provides marketers and organisations with further insights into these concepts and further understanding of how and why consumers complain online, as complaints through online channels are becoming more predominant.



An Exploration into Feminism and Public Pedagogy within Film and Television

Author: Maedhbh Deeney

Supervisor: Kathleen Hughes

Abstract

Reducing gender inequality is a major worldwide concern (Fisher & Naidoo, 2016). The purpose of this dissertation is to explore feminism and public pedagogy occurrences within film and television through the discourse and visuals of *The Handmaid's Tale* and *The Battle of the Sexes*.

Literature was collected and analysed in areas such as public pedagogy and feminism and resistance to establish an overview of the key factors of public pedagogy and feminism in film and television. Critical Discourse Analysis and Multimodal Analysis were utilized to explore this research topic.

The qualitative data collected was in alignment with previous literature and revealed that public pedagogy and acts of feminism occur regularly in both examples of film and television.

Several themes were established in the analysis stage, with the most prevalent being feminism, power, resistance and public pedagogy. The significance of these findings lies in the potential for societal corrections in terms of feminism and equality that public pedagogy in film and television can impact, therefore presenting a valuable addition to the literature.



Tribalism, Team Branded Merchandise and League of Ireland Fans

Author: Garrett Lavin

Supervisor: Ciara Nolan

Abstract

Tribalism is a characteristic of sport consumerism yet there is very little research by sports marketers to measure this phenomenon. This thesis develops measures of tribalism, and the role that team brand merchandise plays in tribal culture in League of Ireland fans. These measures (constructs) have not been developed previously in regard to these sports. A quantitative research technique was used in this dissertation.

The primary research method involved the development and delivery of a comprehensive online survey that was distributed via a targeted Facebook group. These survey responses were then used to develop and test measures of identified constructs using a Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) programme. Using the two step approach to SEM, measurement models and their associated observed indicator variables were developed for each construct with acceptable model fit indices (χ^2 , GFI and RMSEA) for each model. Determination of validity and reliability for each of the scales used to measure the constructs was established prior to examining a final structural model.

Acceptable model fits for each construct indicated that the sets of items (indicators) were unidimensional. These construct measures were then used as inputs for a structural model based analysis – step-two of the SEM process, which involved the development and assessment of the structural model that specified the interrelationships between the constructs. An acceptable structural model was found and the relationships between the various constructs were identified. The results of the tests of these models were then used to assess differences between these different groups of fans in regard to tribalism and its relationship with the remaining constructs. The relationship between these measures and their relevance to the marketing of these sports and to sport marketing is also discussed in the thesis.

Key words: Tribalism, team brand loyalty, individual and group identity, Irish professional team sport, measurement and structural, model development, sport marketing, team brand merchandise.



The impact of smartphones on social behaviour: A comparative study of generation X, Y & Z.

Author: Sarah Martin

Supervisor: Donncha Ryan

Abstract

Research suggests that people tend to use smartphones as their first choice of convenient communication. This current dissertation examines the impact of smartphones on social behaviour, investigating comparisons and contrasts between generation X, Y and Z on face-to-face communications and computer-mediated communication, smartphone usage, smartphone etiquette and present absence. The literature teases out these smartphone influences to expose their effect on individual's social behaviours. It discusses the theoretical background on where these ideas stemmed from and how they have been developed through contemporary living.

This literature presents studies surrounding the topic area and reveals a gap in relation to a potential comparative study regarding how smartphones are influencing different age group's social behaviours. The studies reviewed in the literature may also be considered out-dated as smartphone technology continues to grow rapidly leaving a further gap for an up to date view of the topic. As well as that, the majority of the studies previously researched on smartphone behaviour mainly focused on millennials, generation Y, thus leaving a gap for a broader study including a wider age bracket. As discussed throughout the literature, the largest generational study conducted was AdReaction by Kantar Millward Brown, which was a global study on generations X, Y and Z's attitudes towards advertising. The aim of this study was to gain an understanding of the differences and similarities between the three generation cohorts from a marketing perspective in order to effectively be able to engage with the different age groups. The study touched on different aspects of smartphone use among the generations, which fuelled this comparative study as it took on a different approach by examining the three generation's attitudes towards smartphones and how the device affects social behaviours.

Through a positivist approach, a quantitative research style was used for the purpose of this study to present visible and accurate results on the social behaviours of generation X, Y and Z in relation to smartphone use. This dissertation revealed that smartphone use has become an integral part of society across all ages. This results in each generation group having a similar social behaviour that has stemmed from the influence of their smartphone device. The results from this study are interesting as they differ from other previous research studies that are examined in the literature review.



An Exploration of the Consumer Ideologies in the Naming Devices of Colour Cosmetics: A Critical Discourse Analysis

Author: Sinead O' Connor

Supervisor: Dr. Olivia Freeman

Abstract

This research identifies the consumer ideologies constructed through the naming devices of colour cosmetics. Through Fairclough's 3 stage framework for conducting critical discourse analysis prominent discursive practices evident in the texts of eight colour cosmetics brands were identified. The brands analysed include Charlotte Tilbury, Urban Decay, Estée Lauder, Rimmel, Max Factor, Lancôme, Benefit and Catrice.

From the critical discourse analysis 21 main discursive practices were identified and from thorough analysis of the most dominant discursive practices 10 key consumer ideologies were identified and explored. The strong presence of detrimental ideologies contributes to the existing critique of advertising and supports a growing awareness of the use of naming devices as a means of supporting hegemonic structures.

The research shows that naming devices can now be seen in a similar light to the harmful and persuasive practices used in advertising, but worryingly naming devices are integrated further into brands. The knowledge retrieved from conducting the critical discourse analysis provide the basis for the critique of the ideologies present in colour cosmetic naming devices. This study contributes to the research on naming devices and provides a rich source of ideological information that can be applied and used as the foundation for many other theories regarding consumer ideologies.



Informing Digital Content Marketing Strategies in the Context of the Video Game Industry: An Exploration of Digital Content Consumption

Author: Aaron Poole

Supervisor: Dr. Kate UiGhallachoir

Abstract

The video game industry as it exists today is one of the most lucrative. Despite this, consumer trust is diminishing due to games being inappropriately marketed. To better market games and repair this trust dynamic, marketers need adopt a digital content marketing strategy that is informed by the consumption habits of gamers, facilitating the curation of tailored content that consumers will recognise as engaging and valuable. With this in mind, this dissertation explores the digital consumption behaviour of gamers to inform marketers of the video game industry.

This dissertation implemented the use of qualitative digital diaries among gamers to identify the digital content that gamers were engaging with, to understand why they were engaging with, and to understand the frequency at which they were engaging with it. The data was subjected to thematic analysis via emerging and predetermined codes to identify utilitarian and hedonic content engagements. Uses and gratifications theory was then employed to identify content, self, and relationship oriented motives to engage with content forms.

The results identified factors that led to both heightened and reduced engagement with gaming related content. These were identified as user generated content, nostalgia, and immediacy with regards to heightened engagement, and ignorance, sensationalism, and recurrence with regards to reduced engagement.

This study adds to the academic literature surrounding digital content marketing and its associated strategies, as well as the video game industry and its consumers. The data produced will inform marketers of the industry on gamer consumption behaviour, enabling them to create valuable and engaging content.



An Investigation into the Impact Emotional Branding has on Consumers' Relationships with the Brands to Which They are Loyal.

Author: Hollie Power

Supervisor: Roger Sherlock

Abstract

Due to an influx of products on the market and a lack of differentiation in the early 70s a decline in brand loyalty occurred. This shift in loyalty caused a development in how brands positioned and represented themselves.

The aim was to establish a unique brand image to create connections with consumers on an emotional level, as this emotional connection is what holds the value for the consumers and enables consumer retention.

This dissertation reviews this change, the use of emotional branding and how consumers have reacted to this. It analyses the consumers behaviour in terms of using this emotional branding to their benefit and investigates the connection emotional branding has to loyalty.

This study will seek through quantitative methods to determine the impact emotional branding has on consumers' relationships with brands to which they are loyal.



An Exploration of Young Peoples' Trust and Attitudes Towards Banks and Their Current Marketing Strategies

Author: John Smith

Supervisor: Dr. Ruth Casey

Abstract

Following the Global Financial Crisis, public trust towards banks eroded and negative attitudes towards the sector increased. This is a cause for concern for banks, as literature has illustrated that trust is crucial, not just in broader societal terms, but in banking particularly. Due to this erosion of trust, banks have altered their marketing and advertising strategies to appeal to customers' emotions, in order to rebuild trust.

To date, studies have primarily looked at older demographic's and their levels of trust and attitudes towards banks, with younger demographics often overlooked. This research study focuses exclusively on young people, exploring their levels of trust, opinions, and attitudes towards banks, in addition to gathering feedback on the current approach banks are taking with their marketing and advertising.

Through six, semi-structured, interviews, the study finds that young people are cognisant of the Global Financial Crisis, yet hold moderately-high to high levels of trust in banks, and have neutral to positive attitudes towards banks overall also; a contrast to the views held by older generations. This being said, young people still have issues and grievances with banks, for example, banks' over-complicating of processes, and feel that banks could provide more services and advice to students. The marketing and advertising approach banks are currently taking is being well received by young people, however they feel as though there is a lack of differentiation among banking advertisements, with similar themes appearing in advertisements across the sector.

It is concluded that banks must engage more with young people, to increase their knowledge and interest in the sector, create points of differentiation through their marketing and advertising, and invest in student-based products and services, to capture customers at a young age.

