
School of Marketing, Dublin Institute of Technology.
# Table of Contents

- From Tween to Teen; a qualitative analysis of the liminal period of the tween generation, from the perspective of a teenager. With an examination of the influences of SNS and OSM during this transitional period. ........................................... 3
- Neuromarketing: Where Neuroscience Meets Marketing ........................................... 4
- Creating Shared Value Through Strategic Alliances: A case Study of a Partnership between A & L Goodbody and Inspire Ireland ........................................... 5
- Brand Behaviour and The Facebook Effect. An Exploration of the Relationship between Brand-Related Activity on Facebook and Consumer-Brand Identification ........................................... 6
- An exploratory investigation into the use of digital media as a marketing communications tool from the perspective of the pharmaceutical company ........... 7
- How online Poker Firms Interact in an Online Poker Community: A Nethnographic Study of forms’ Value Creation Practices in an Online Community of Consumption ........................................... 8
- Children’s Recognition, Perception and Understanding of Advertising and Commercial Messages encountered in the Online Environment ................................. 9
- The importance of the social link in the Brand Community concept: An exploration of ‘Lush Cosmetics’ and its followers’ ........................................... 10
From Tween to Teen; a qualitative analysis of the liminal period of the tween generation, from the perspective of a teenager. With an examination of the influences of SNS and OSM during this transitional period.

Author: Karen Bell
Supervisor: Adrienne Czerwin-Abbott

Abstract

The aim of this dissertation is to offer a greater understanding of the liminal period of the tween generation, from a teenager’s perspective; along with identifying the role which OSM and SNS’s play in their daily lives and during this period. A literature review of the liminal period and the evolution of SNS’s and OSM are carried out in detail, to give greater understanding of the topic. This paper approaches this issue by interviewing eight thirteen year old teenagers regarding their transition through the liminal period and their use of SNS’s and OSM.

Friendship pair interviews were carried out as the data collection method. Although this technique is largely uncommon, this method was chosen as it was found to be an effective technique used to interview children as two friends or classmates together. (Malhotra, 2007) The results gained from this type of interview gives a greater understanding of the topic, as it allows the children greater comfort to converse with ease. Active interviewing was also chosen as a technique to be used throughout the interview; this was found to add greater depth to the results collected from the interviews. Rapley (2001) implies that the interview itself could be viewed as an area of research or “source of information”, implying that it is not simply the information which the respondent verbally offers which should be examined but also the behaviour of the respondent in giving the answer.

The findings were analysed with the use of discourse analysis, which allowed the author to take into account not only the teenagers verbal discussion but also their body language, facial expressions and their tone of speech. Given that the interviews are carried out in ‘Friendship pairs’, the researcher is aware of the influences which this may present to the results.

Given the unique perspective by the teenagers in this research paper along with the detailed literature review, the researcher was fortunate to gain a greater understanding of the research topic.
Neuromarketing: Where Neuroscience Meets Marketing

Author: Sandy Clements
Supervisor: Serge Basini

Abstract

The field of Neuromarketing aims to transfer insights from neuroscience to market and consumer research. Bypassing consumer claims it goes straight to the source and examines brain responses (Lindstrom, 2008). Replacing subjectivism with objectivity, Neuromarketing acknowledges the limitations of traditional self-report methods of marketing research, and seeks neurological evidence to support sensory, cognitive, and emotional responses to marketing stimuli. These limitations arise from the influential role of emotions in the consumer decision-making process, many of which are subconscious, as described by Steffen, Rockstroh, and Jansma (2009).

This research aims to explore this role of emotion and the irrational nature of consumer decision making, in order to develop a rationale for the use of Neuromarketing methods. As the theoretical and practical applications of this emerging field are still being developed (Garcia & Saad, 2008), the researcher attempts to identify additional applicability of the methods from consumer and industry perspectives. Furthermore, ethical considerations, consumer privacy, and legislation issues are explored.

Qualitative methods facilitated the research in the form of a focus group with consumers and in-depth interviews with professionals working within the marketing and advertising industry. Analysis of the data contributed to the development of seven major themes which highlighted the level of knowledge that currently exists in the industry and among consumers, opinions and experiences of the influential role of emotions, ethical considerations and limitations, practical applications, and perspectives on the future of Neuromarketing as a practice in marketing research.
Creating Shared Value Through Strategic Alliances: A case Study of a Partnership between A & L Goodbody and Inspire Ireland

Author: Bethany Fiore
Supervisor: Dr. Aidan O’ Driscoll

Abstract

Once a buzzword, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has become a necessity in today’s increasingly competitive global world. As such, it is a concept that continues to draw attention of academics and practitioners alike. The understanding of CSR – what it means, what it includes and how to do it well – continues to evolve as well and it must because if businesses are going to invest in CSR it needs to make business sense and society needs the cooperation of business if it is to survive and thrive for generations to come.

This research will focus on a small but crucial subset of the CSR world – creating shared value through strategic alliances between business and non-profit organisations (NPOs). In particular, using a case study methodology, the partnership between A & L Goodbody (ALG), a top corporate law firm in Ireland, and Inspire Ireland, a non-profit dedicated to mental health and well-being of young people, will be used to explore the topic of interest.

The research begins with an overview of CSR in Ireland in order to establish the cultural context for the case study. A literature review follows, exploring the history and modern trends in CSR as well as strategic partnerships between non-profits and businesses, thus providing the theoretical underpinnings for the research.

The case study of the partnership between A & L Goodbody and Inspire Ireland is then presented, allowing for interesting insights into business/NPO partnerships. This is followed by a discussion of the findings and final conclusions.
Brand Behaviour and The Facebook Effect. An Exploration of the Relationship between Brand-Related Activity on Facebook and Consumer-Brand Identification

Author: Kate Gaynor
Supervisor: Dr Kate UiGhallachoir

Abstract

The considerable changes to the marketing landscape as a result of Web 2.0 has brought the consumer-brand relationship into a new era as brand presence has rapidly begun to dominate the pages of social networking sites such as Facebook. As the social networking domain continues to demand a greater share of the marketing spend, organisations are now being forced to evaluate and determine exactly what value this activity is contributing to their brands. This research addresses the interaction between consumers and brands on Facebook and whether or not this interaction offers any indication of the strength of their relationship with the brand and thus the potential accrual of value for the organisation. The consumer-brand identification construct proposes a number of positive outcomes for the brand-consumer relationship such as brand loyalty, brand advocacy and future propensity to purchase. Thus, if the research was to indicate a relationship existed between consumer-brand identification and the brand-related activity of consumers, then the value of creating and building a brand presence on Facebook could also be established and recognised. Both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to analyse specific brand-related activities within the Facebook site and their relationship with the consumer-brand identification scores of consumers engaging in this activity.

The research also offers some response to the debate surrounding the measurable return on investment to both the brand and the organisation in relation to the continued investment of human and financial capital in the social media phenomenon. As this new era of co-creative branding continues to evolve, so too will consumer behaviour in relation to brands within the online space and thus marketers must be prepared to embrace this new consumer-brand relationship and capitalise on its inherent value.

Key words: Consumer-Brand Identification, Social Media, Facebook, Social Media ROI, Brand Relationships.
An exploratory investigation into the use of digital media as a marketing communications tool from the perspective of the pharmaceutical company

Author: Christopher Hendrick
Supervisor: Laura Cuddihy

Abstract
From a perusal of the literature pertaining to pharmaceutical marketing communications, it is evident that digital media is progressively attaining more importance as a promotion and information tool. Upon further investigation, it is realized that although there is a plethora of research on physician and consumer attitudes toward the implementation of digital media in the pharmaceutical industry, the perspective of the pharmaceutical company is largely neglected in the extant academic literature. Consequently, this dissertation aims to address that gap in knowledge by approaching pharmaceutical companies in order to obtain an internal perspective as to the utility and value of digital media.

The literature review commences with an exploration of pharmaceutical marketing communications. In order to embark on a piece of research concerning digital pharma, an in-depth understanding into digital media is imperative. Thus, chapter three maps the evolution and current status of digital marketing communications. Subsequently, chapter four provides a contextual analysis of the European digital pharma landscape. On balance, the literature review permitted the formulation of the research question:

An exploratory investigation into the use of digital media as a marketing communications tool from the perspective of the pharmaceutical company

As digital pharma is in its infancy, the research undertaken was bound to be exploratory in nature. The qualitative methodology employed was based on the interpretive paradigm and was conducted via four in-depth interviews with brand and product managers, as they are the digital decision-makers within pharmaceutical companies. It was concluded that the respondents perceived digital media as an integrative function, not a separate channel or mode. Furthermore, it is becoming embedded in the role of marketing communication functions such as the sales force, advertising and corporate communications. However, in a highly regulated environment the pharmaceutical industry has only begun to dabble in the digital waters, whilst other industries make waves.
How online Poker Firms Interact in an Online Poker Community: A Netnographic Study of forms’ Value Creation Practices in an Online Community of Consumption

Author: Niall Larkin
Supervisor: Aileen Kennedy

Abstract

This dissertation analysed the value co-creation efforts of online poker sites and consumers within the TwoPlusTwo.com virtual community, a virtual community of consumption based around poker.

The literature review discusses service dominant logic and the role of value co-creation within this paradigm. It shows the importance of interactions in the value co-creation process and goes on to show the value of virtual brand communities and virtual communities of consumption as platforms for value co-creation. Existing research into value creating interactions within virtual communities has focused on the interactions of consumers and the value creating practices they engage in through their interactions.

The research takes place in an online poker community called ‘TwoPlusTwo’. Chapter two provides a contextual analysis of the online poker industry and it was shown to be a suitable area for research due to the on-going interactions that have been taking place between consumers and online poker representatives for a number of years.

The research was conducted through netnography. Conversations discussing online poker sites and their offerings were analysed. From this analysis, a number of firm value creation practices were observed at different stages in the co-creation process. By defining these practices, a greater insight into how value is co-created can be gained.

The research also shows how the expectations of consumers increase as they become accustomed to influencing the brand.

By giving an insight into the value co-creation process this research can allow organisations to improve the quality of their interactions and co-create value more effectively.

The research also highlights the potential of the TwoPlusTwo community as a platform for further research into service dominant logic.
Children’s Recognition, Perception and Understanding of Advertising and Commercial Messages encountered in the Online Environment

Author: Teresita Molloy
Supervisor: Gerry Mortimer

Abstract
Purpose – This dissertation is an exploration of children’s experiences in the online commercial world, their capabilities when navigating this world and its potential impact on their consuming behaviour. Children’s recognition, perception and understanding of advertising and commercial messages seen online are principally considered.

Design/Methodology – A qualitative approach was adopted, comprising two single-sex focus groups with Irish children aged between 10 and 12 years.

Findings – The findings indicate that children have difficulties identifying online advertising. A lack of understanding of the main online ad formats was demonstrated, as was an inability to easily distinguish between commercial and non-commercial content. The recognition of persuasive intent was strong in cases where ads were identified. The author proposes that children’s understanding of why advertising appears online lacks sophistication when compared with previous findings relating to television advertising. Perceived relevance or irrelevance was found to be a key influence on children’s perception of online advertising and online commercial material.

Originality/Value – This dissertation seeks to redress the lack of literature relevant to children’s experiences of advertising beyond the medium of television. Extant research has largely focused on children’s ability to recognise persuasive intent in advertising seen on television. This study concludes that, without the perceptual cues children are familiar with from the medium of television, in the online environment it is the identification of advertising itself that proves difficult.
The importance of the social link in the Brand Community concept: An exploration of ‘Lush Cosmetics’ and its followers

Author: Hazel Walsh
Supervisor: Teresa Hurley

Abstract:

This dissertation excavates and examines the underexplored notion of ‘the social link’ in relation to the brand community concept, which is in turn is looked at through the lens of ‘Lush Cosmetics’ brand followers. Mainstream brand community literature is fragmented. Researchers, in their numerous attempts to define or characterise, and re-define and re-characterise brand community notions are largely ignoring the dominant presence of the social link. Where preceding papers have taken several different tangents, this dissertation will attempt to take a more linear view.

Firstly, the dissertation provides an overview or brand community literature, from the early notions of consumption communities, to modern debates on brand cults. The second portion of the literature review focus’ on the consumer and their relationship to consumption. From this review three distinct brand follower types are identified, which are then tested by means of qualitative analysis to determine the influence of the social link on their consumption habits in relation to ‘Lush Cosmetics’.

The dissertation concludes with the assertion that the social link is the most dominant force in differentiation between a loyal user and brand evangelist. The dissertation also calls for further research into the significance of the social link.