Special issue on “neuromarketing”

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Guest editorial

About the special issue

This issue is dedicated to a topic that has gained increasing attention from both marketing scholars and practitioners during the past decade: “neuromarketing.” The application of methods from neuroscience has revolutionized the entire research process in marketing and consumer behavior. Methods from neuroscience like functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), magnetoencephalography (MEG) or electroencephalography (EEG) offer a promising avenue to investigate and better understand human information processing and emotional phenomena (see, e.g., Kenning et al. 2007; Lee et al. 2007). The term “neuromarketing” encompasses a fascinating interdisciplinary blend of natural sciences and traditional marketing research. It may support, help refine or reject established theories. In any case, it complements traditional ways of research based on the survey approach or classic experimental methods. The application of brain imaging techniques for resolving marketing-related questions is the core stream within “neuromarketing.” However, this field of research also includes an intensified focus on experimental studies combining behavioral and physiological data. In a broader sense, this includes also the use of other techniques that measure physiological parameters, like skin-conductance or eye-tracking in a marketing-related context. During the past decade, many scholars in marketing and consumer behavior have shown interest in the “neuromarketing” approach. Their efforts have resulted

in a multitude of contributions dealing with both conceptual discussions and empirical studies. These publications are found in leading journals of marketing, psychology and neuroscience as well as in edited books or textbooks.

This special issue on “neuromarketing” aims at highlighting recent developments and challenges as well as exploring opportunities implicated by the “neuromarketing” approach. In our call for papers, we were looking for innovative manuscripts which help to (1) gain new insight into marketing and consumer behavior from a multidisciplinary perspective; (2) improve our understanding of strengths and weaknesses of neuroscience in marketing; (3) provide behavioral and neural information on various topics related to marketing; and (4) point out future developments, chances, and risks of the “neuromarketing” approach. We are confident the reader will share our view that the six outstanding contributions published in this issue demonstrate that we have achieved our ambitious aims.

We wish to extend our deepest thanks to all of the scholars who submitted their manuscripts for consideration. After a rigorous double-blind-review process, we were able to accept six papers for publication in the special issue. We are very pleased to present this exclusive selection of articles drawing a colourful picture of current insights within the field of “neuromarketing” research.

Manuscripts presented in the special issue

The special issue comprises three theoretical/conceptual and three empirical manuscripts. The first theoretical paper by Nick Lee, Michael J.R. Butler and Carl Senior (*The brain in business: neuromarketing and organisational cognitive neuroscience*) gives a comprehensive overview of neuromarketing as a subfield of organizational cognitive neuroscience. The authors discuss this approach and provide a

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definition along with various examples of questions that could be addressed in this approach.

An empirical study applying EEG is presented by Tomasz Marcin Szczurko, Rafal K. Ohme and Michał Matukin (*Neurophysiology uncovers secrets of TV commercials*). The main goal of their study was to investigate the effects of primes used in advertising on a neurophysiological level.

Natalie Hofer and Wolfgang Mayerhofer present the empirical results of two eye-tracking studies analyzing print advertisements in the Yellow Pages and TV-commercials (*Die Blickregistrierung in der Werbewirkungsforschung: Grundlagen und Ergebnisse*). The authors discuss the potential of eye-tracking to enhance the effectiveness of advertisements. [This paper is in German].

Marcus Stumpf and Stefan Hix discuss the findings of a field experiment in grocery shopping. In their manuscript entitled *Erkenntnisse des Neuromarketing für das Sortimentsmanagement im Lebensmitteleinzelhandel—Aufbau, Durchführung und Auswertung eines Feldversuches sowie Ableitung von Handlungsempfehlungen*, the authors complement their findings based on behavioral data with additional interpretations from a “neuromarketing” perspective. [This paper is in German].

The theoretical manuscript by Kerstin Pezoldt, Jana Schlieuwe and Klaus W. Willbrandt (*Sexualdimorphismen im Kaufentscheidungsprozess*) gives a conceptual overview of state-of-the-art literature regarding gender-specific differences in consumer behavior. The authors base their arguments on literature from neuroscience, gender science, and consumer behavior. [This paper is in German].

Finally, the contribution by Gerhard Brenner (*Marketing und Sucht im neuronalen Belohnungssystem—ein gemeinsamer Fokus zweier Forschungsfelder*) represents a state-of-the-art discussion of shared theoretical underpinnings in both

marketing and addiction research from a neuroscientific perspective. [This paper is in German].

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Roberto Alvarez del Blanco, IE Business School, Spain

Doris Berger, IMC FH Krems, Austria

Gerhard Brenner, WU Vienna, Austria

Andrew J. Isaak, Universität Heidelberg, Germany

Johan de Jager, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria, Republic of South Africa

Andrija Javor, Department of Neurology and Psychiatry, General Hospital Linz and Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria

Claudia Klausegger, WU Vienna, Austria

Stefan Nüsperling, eye square GmbH, Director Asia (Japan)

Elfriede Penz, WU Vienna, Austria

Thomas Salzberger, WU Vienna, Austria

Rudolf Sinkovics, Manchester Business School, UK

Loredana Viola, WU Vienna, Austria

Isabell Welp, Technische Universität München, Germany

Alexander Zauner, WU Vienna, Austria

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