The bold items in the margin describe the subject matter and are keywords for text retrieval. The final reference number under each abstract is also used for this purpose.

Abstracts

Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice (2012) **14**, 73–76.
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Each abstracted article is awarded 0-5 stars for each of the four qualities:

- (1) depth of research
- (2) value in practice
- (3) originality of thinking
- (4) readability for non-specialists

Abstracts are not usually included for articles awarded less than seven stars overall.

Accounting scandals in the context of corporate social reporting (CSR)

N.T. Bhutta and M.M. Saeed

ADMONITORY. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management* (UK), Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 171 (14pp)

Notes a global rise in the practice of CSR, defined as reporting on the economic, social and environmental dimensions of a business. Suggests four dimensions of CSR: economic, legal, ethical, philanthropic. Looks at each of these in the contexts of Stakeholder Theory, Legitimacy Theory and Media Agenda-Setting Theory. Notes that media set the agenda for public belief by giving more, or less, weight to particular issues. Gives examples of accounting scandals at four banks: Daiwa Bank in 1995; National Australia Bank in 2004; Barings Bank in 1995; Allied Irish (Allfirst) Bank in 2002. All four involved rogue traders who exceeded their authority and involved their banks in huge losses by unauthorized trading. Adduces a number of reasons for such frauds, including negligence, or poor understanding, by top management; lack of supervision; ineffective IT. Identifies four groups of people who have responsibilities for these frauds: the fraudulent managers, the auditors, journalists, politicians. Ends with a series of recommendations for each of these four groups to improve corporate governance, but insists on the need for CSR, which governments should actively encourage.

Purloins the acronym CSR (where the R was hitherto taken to mean Responsibility, but now is identified with Reporting). Talks about CSR in broad terms before discussing, narrowly, four cases of rogue trading, to which CSR is of doubtful relevance.

Research: ** Practice: * Originality: ** Readability: **
Ref: 14101

**CSR, corporate
scandals, banks**

Shops, Deloitte, rents, leases, internet

Up to 40 per cent of high street shops 'will close over next 5 years'

J. Kollwe

REPORTAGE. *The Guardian* (UK), 21st March 2012, p. 25 (1p)
Reveals a recent report by Deloitte claiming that increasing internet shopping (forecast to reach £43bn, or 14 per cent of retail sales by 2015) has led to a drop in shop floor space amid claims that many store chains have too many outlets. Instances closures by Dixons, Halfords, Carpetright, HMV. Points to high rents, and attempts by Sir Philip Green to renegotiate leases. Notes the US development of free in-store Wi-Fi, to be copied by Tesco, and the growth of in-store kiosks, click-and-collect facilities, smartphone apps by retailers such as Tesco and so on. Paints a picture of a future high street lined with coffee shops, building societies and internet hubs.

O.K. it may come to this, but don't hold your breath: remember the hype of a few years back when Internet shopping was just starting and the imminent death of bricks-and-mortar retailing was predicted daily? The interesting feature is whether this trend will force a reduction in the current lunatic high street rentals.

Research: ** Practice: * Originality: * Readability: ***
Ref: 14102

Complexity, diversity, ambiguity, fast flux

The meta-challenge of complexity for global companies

W. Amann, C. Nedopil and U. Steger

THEORETICAL. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management* (UK), Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 200 (5pp)

Comments on the growth of complexity in all aspects of the business world. Notes four main drivers of complexity. First, diversity, that is, diversity of corporate goals, beyond financial goals, to include environmental and social goals; diversity of stakeholders, to include employees, customers, suppliers, investors and so on; diversity of markets. Second, interdependence caused by scarcity of resources and disappearance of market boundaries. Third, ambiguity, where clear cause-and-effect relationships are lacking, and the levers for operating the business machine are unclear in the light of unpredictable upheavals in the operating environment. Fourth, fast flux, that is, the accelerating speed of change, seen in decreasing product life cycles (eg in the auto or mobile phone markets). Identifies four simplifiers to modify complexity: first, set common goals and standards of behaviour, with no more than four key fundamental values; second, a clear focus on the strategic goals of the institution; third, decentralization for employee empowerment; fourth, standardization of core processes.

This article is at its best when dealing in concrete examples; elsewhere it suffers from an excess of semi-comprehensible consultant-speak.

Research: * Practice: ** Originality: ** Readability: ***
Ref: 14103

The impact of cookie 'consent' on targeted adverts

P. Lee

LEGAL. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management* (UK), Vol. 18, No. 3, p. 209 (5pp)

**Cookies, consent,
EU, ICO, targeted
advertising**

Rehearses the efforts of the EU to establish regulations that would oblige all users of cookies to obtain informed consent from consumers for any use of cookies on their computers. Indicates that the problem lies in determining the means by which this regulation should be observed: everybody's nightmare is a solution that involves the constant appearance of pop-up consent ads on consumers' computers, but the EU working party has made no effort to indicate what other method would be acceptable. Shows that most EU states have not yet legislated to implement the Directive; suggests that ultimately a regime of qualified consent will win out, with the UK Information Commissioner taking a 'pragmatic approach' to enforcement. Notes that the main target of the legislators is the use of cookies for targeted advertising, and explains how this is done. Offers a series of six steps that those involved in cookies for targeted advertising should take to minimize their risks.

This whole mess, which at present does credit neither to the EU nor the UK Commissioner's office, will ultimately have to be sorted out by common sense (there still is some in Brussels), compromise and pragmatism. Meanwhile, advertisers who can demonstrate that they have made some genuine effort to meet the objectives of the Directive should probably be safe — but who knows?

Research: ** Practice: *** Originality: ** Readability: ***
Ref: 14104

Relationship behaviour between customers and service providers in demarketing situations: What makes customers try to improve their relationships?

M. Suh, T. Roh and H. Greene

RESEARCH. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management* (UK), Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 39 (17pp)

**Demarketing,
relationships,
profitability**

Defines demarketing as an attempt to discourage customers in general, or a certain class of customers in particular, on either a temporary or permanent basis. Distinguishes three different types of demarketing: general (eg in situations of temporary shortage), selective (eg to get rid of unprofitable customers) and ostensible (apparently trying to discourage demand as a device for actually increasing it). Deals here with selective demarketing. Notes different types of demarketing: (rationing product, increasing price, restricting geographic availability,

reducing advertising). Describes an experiment designed to examine the effects of type and strength of demarketing on customers' relationship behaviour, using 147 US university students answering a questionnaire. Finds that using these methods it is possible to turn unprofitable customers into profitable ones, rather than simply causing them to exit the relationship.

The questions asked in this study are original and the answers reached are interesting and credible; the study that relates the two is as unconvincing as it is complex. An article not for the faint-hearted.

Research: *** Practice: ** Originality: *** Readability: *
Ref: 14105

The dark side of customer relationship management (CRM): Exploring the underlying reasons for pitfalls, exploitation and unfairness

B. Nguyen

THEORETICAL. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management* (UK), Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 56 (15pp)

Notes that rising privacy concerns over customer tracking, information storing, dynamic pricing, favouritism and so on are associated with CRM. Points to the paradox in CRM that it aims to treat customers individually according to each person's needs and wants, but can create perceptions of unfairness due to unequal outcomes. Notes a wide diversity of meanings that have been attributed to CRM, leading to different directions and practices, and to inconsistent applications. Holds that the essence of CRM must be explored in each individual case and defined such that unfair practices are avoided. Suggests also that CRM systems are frequently unclear on what constitutes a good relationship. Looks at four factors: trust and commitment; satisfaction; symmetry and dependence; fairness. Discusses each of these, recommending that an understanding of each must be a part of any CRM scheme, and that a measure of fairness should be developed and considered from the customer's perspective.

A rather rambling article, whose good sense could have been articulated in half as many words. Moreover, considerations of privacy and fairness long predate the arrival of CRM, and have to be sorted out by firms to whom CRM remains a mystery. Lacks concrete examples.

Research: * Practice: *** Originality: ** Readability: ***
Ref: 14106