

Session 1: Brands and Attitudes Room 311 (Friday, April 7 900am-1000am)

Julian Arnold (Alabama)

The Role of Brand Identity on Brand Attitude Component Consistency

This study examines the role of brand identification as displayed by frontline employees (FLEs) and brand authenticity as perceived by customers during frontline service interactions. Specifically, this study operationalizes customer perceptions of brand authenticity as a mediating mechanism explaining the relationship between FLEs' brand identification during frontline service interactions and customers' brand identification, brand loyalty intentions, and brand advocacy behavior following frontline service interactions. Results show that (1) FLE-brand identification positively influences customer perceptions of brand authenticity during frontline service interactions; (2) customer perceptions of brand authenticity incurred during frontline service interactions positively influence customer-brand identification, brand loyalty intentions, and brand advocacy behavior following frontline service interactions; and (3) the effect of FLE-brand identification on customer-brand identification, brand loyalty intentions, and brand advocacy behavior is mediated by customers' perceptions of brand authenticity incurred during frontline service interactions with brand-identified FLEs.

Rui (Aray) Chen (Georgia)

Unbearable Lightness of Shaky Inference:

When Misused Product Inference is Detrimental to Verified Product Hypothesis

Consumers often face choices that involve deciding between two competing hypotheses supported by evidence that vary in terms of its levels of certainty (i.e., the supporting evidence could be either missing, inferred, or observed). Understanding how consumers integrate multiple pieces of evidence varying in levels of certainty helps marketers develop better arguments for their products. Previous research has examined the roles of inferred and observed evidence in consumers' judgment and decision making. This paper is the first attempt to directly test how inferred evidence influences the value of observed evidence in hypothesis testing when two hypotheses are pitted against each other. Specifically, we investigate an under-studied pattern of hypothesis-testing bias in which consumers misuse inferred evidence which is perceived to be diagnostic and is associated with only one hypothesis to evaluate the validity of a competing hypothesis, which is fully verified by observed evidence (we label this phenomenon the "spillover effect of inference"). Experiment 1 established that consumers devalue the observed evidence supporting the verified hypotheses and judge the probability of validity across two hypotheses as a function of the extent to which the inferred evidence favors the to-be-verified hypothesis. Experiment 2 directly tested the "spillover effect of inference". Experiment 3 showed that perception of diagnosticity of evidence is not only a function of availability of evidence and inferential rules, but is also determined by whether the missing evidence could accommodate a broader scope of evidence. This paper contributes to a broader inquiry of a puzzling phenomenon where a hypothesis which requires a greater number of pieces of evidence to be supported (including missing

evidence) could irrationally gain the upper hand over a hypothesis which requires fewer pieces of evidence that is fully verified to be supported.

Rebecca Rast (LSU)

First-Hand and Second-Hand Messaging Influence on Attitude and Posting Likelihood

Consumers are constantly inundated with a plethora of marketing, sales, and advertising information, receiving information both first-hand (via their own personal sales experiences), and second-hand (directly from firms and other consumers). These messages may be consistent or inconsistent with marketing and sales efforts. Gaining an understanding as to how consumers process these multiple messages warrants investigation. This study investigates competing theories of additive, recency, and primacy effects, in focusing on consistent and inconsistent information a customer might receive regarding a salesperson in the form of a Facebook post, and a personal sales experience vignette. The findings indicate that individuals process consistent information differently than they do inconsistent information. For consistent information, results show an additive effect; whereas for inconsistent information, findings support a recency effect. In addition, results show that first-hand information has a greater impact than second-hand information. Furthermore, a personal sales experience has a stronger influence when a Facebook post about a salesperson is viewed first.

Session 2: Services and Consumers Room 399 (Friday, April 7 900am-1000am)

Corinne Kelley (FSU)

The Ambassador Effect: A Frontline Approach to Increasing Consumer Prosocial Behavior and Loyalty

Influencing consumers to commit to and engage in behaviors that are beneficial to a firm's success is not often an easy task. This is particularly true for prosocial behavior. Still, prosocial behaviors, such as using reusable shopping bags, can provide a firm with many reputational and monetary benefits. As a result, this research investigates a novel, pre-commitment technique, referred to as the "ambassador effect," as a means to prompt prosocial commitment and behavior. The ambassador effect demonstrates that asking a consumer to involve another person in a prosocial initiative increases the consumer's subsequent prosocial behavior. Moreover, our research examines when positive (reward based) and negative (penalty based) reinforcement (in the form of retail policy) is effective at encouraging prosocial behavior. We show that penalty based retail policies (e.g., charging a fee to use disposable bags) are most successful when combined with the ambassador effect. For penalty based policies, the ambassador effect enhances commitment to the policy as well as store loyalty. This increased commitment mediates the relationship between the ambassador effect and store loyalty.

Jennifer Locander (Ole Miss)

Frontline Service Employee Complaining Behavior: Effects on Consumer Evaluations and Intentions

A substantial amount of research is devoted to examining employee behavior and the role of employee-customer interactions on consumer evaluations of service quality, satisfaction, and patronage intentions (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996; Babin & Boles, 1998; Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000). Hartline & Ferrell (1996) examine the three interfaces of the service delivery process and find that the employee-customer interface is the most important determinant of customers' perceptions of service quality.

What is missing from the literature is a more thorough understanding of how customers react to, and are affected by, employee complaining. Much of the research into complaint behavior focuses on employee's reactions to, and handling of, customer complaints. In contrast, the present research study examines the effect of employee complaints, and the context of the complaint, on customer evaluations based on the perceived impropriety of the employee's behavior.

Additionally, this study examines the effect of an employee's parting remarks on the perceived impropriety of the employee complaint behavior and its influence on customer evaluations. Numerous studies have examined the impact of the presence (or absence) of an apology, and the nature of an apology, on service recovery efforts (Brown, Wohl, & Exline, 2008; Fehr & Gelfand, 2010; Roschk & Kaiser, 2013). The present research focuses on the framing of the parting remark (apologetic/gracious) as a moderator of the relationship between employee complaint behavior and customer evaluations and intentions.

The proposed study utilizes a 3 (no complaint/employee-framed complaint/customer-framed complaint) x 2 (apologetic/gracious parting remark) experimental design to examine these relationships and their influence on perceived service quality, attitude toward retailer, patronage intentions, and the intention to disseminate negative word of mouth.

Sotos Pagiavlas (South Carolina)

Social Service in Online Communities

Although the value of user-generated content across platforms for firms has received significant research attention, little is known about interactions between users specifically related to service issues. Increasingly, consumers interact with one another on online forums devoted to specific products about service-related topics, diverting conversation away from official firm service channels and instead relying on other users to generate solutions. This form of online interaction, termed user-generated service, is a valuable informal service delivery vehicle for firms, but the volume, valence, and firm-related impact of these conversations has not been well-studied. This research examines the substantial social service that occurs in online communities and describes how firm presence in the forum can lead to varying outcomes.

Session 3: Communications Room 391 (Friday, April 7 900am-1000am)

Alireza Golmohammadi (Arkansas)

More Money in the Pocket: How New Ventures' Social Media Communication can Drive Venture Capital Funding

Despite the rapid increase in budgets allocated to social media marketing, research has been slow to discover effective social media strategies that can drive business outcomes. Employing effective social media strategies is especially important for new ventures because these young firms often lack financial resources necessary for establishing and expanding their business, and thus they strive to connect with and attract venture capital firms, angels, and other investors.

The current work draws on the literature of collaborative relationships, signaling theory, and marketing ambidexterity to reason that new ventures' social media communication style (i.e. the pattern of language used in their tweets) can signal their ability to accomplish two important tasks that are key to superior performance (i.e. value creation and value appropriation), and as a result, can increase their chance of attracting investors and raising funds. More specifically, using a unique dataset which consists of the tweets and the amount of financial capital raised by 382 B2B Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) new ventures over multiple stages of their fundraising, and employing a random-effect regression model that accounts for unobserved heterogeneity and the endogeneity of variables, we demonstrate that verbal **similarity** of new ventures' tweets to those of their potential customers is associated with higher amounts of funding. We suggest that this is because such a similarity *signals* greater alignment between the new venture and its potential customers, increasing the possibility of a collaborative relationship with their customers, impacting perceptions about the new venture's likelihood of future success.

By contrast, we show that verbal **dissimilarity** of new ventures' tweets to those of other new ventures in the same industry (i.e. competitors) is associated with higher amounts of funding. This is because a distinct communication style can signal the new venture's ability to differentiate itself from competitors, which means higher value appropriation capabilities. Importantly, the results of elasticity analysis indicate that one standard deviation decrease in verbal similarity to competitors increases funds raised by 2.6 percent, and, one standard deviation increase in verbal similarity to customers increases funds raised by 2.4 percent.

Jordan Moffett (LSU)

Understanding Communication and Message Feature in Omni-Channel Communication Strategies

This paper examines the impact of richer (face-to-face, telephone) and leaner (email) communication channels on customer relationships over time, to uncover the conditions under which each channel is optimal for building customer relationships. Specifically, this paper investigates six drivers of communication effectiveness: communication frequency, diminishing returns (communication maxima), carryover effects, channel synergies, message timing, and message complexity.

Sina Aghaie (South Carolina)

Stay a Little Longer: The Dynamic Effect of Marketing-Mix Instruments on Firms' Market Exit

There is empirical evidence that an incumbent would respond to competitors' attacks to its market by adjusting marketing mix variables. Although prior research investigates the antecedents of these reactions, the typical consequences of these moves have not been explored. Applying hazard duration analysis, I empirically assess the effect of the incumbent's marketing mix reactions on the newcomer's survival. In particular, I analyze how adopting a new pricing strategy and quality provision level would affect the new entrant's exit likelihood. The study shows that cutting prices in response to the entry would increase the newcomer's exit likelihood in the short period after the entry. However, incumbent's price will have less impact on the new comer's exit likelihood in a long-term. In other words, a new entrant who could stay a bit longer in the market would be less likely to leave the market. The findings suggest a need to consider a dynamic effect of the incumbent's marketing mix on the new entrant's survival and offer prescriptions for managers on how to protect their markets more effectively.

Session 4: Pricing and Services Room 311 (Friday, April 7 1015am-1115am)

Wenjing Li (UK)

Temporal Delay: How Price Promotion can Backfire

Marketers use all different kinds of new price promotions to increase their sales. How effective these creative price promotions are? Are they more effective than the traditional price promotion? The current research tries to investigate the effectiveness of one of the new price promotion, temporal delay of showing the sale price. Across four studies, we compare the impact of temporal delay with that of traditional price promotion on consumer purchase intentions. Discount level moderates the effect of temporal delay on purchase intentions. When discount level is relatively low, temporal delay leads to lower purchase intentions compared with traditional price promotions. When discount level is high, temporal delay works as well as traditional price promotion. Expectation for the discount and positive affect are identified as the mediators for the effect of temporal delay on purchase intentions.

Liang Huang (South Carolina)

The Impact of Pain of Payment on Variety Seeking Behavior

People often have to decide whether to acquire similar or different products within a product category. We introduce a novel predictor of variety seeking, type of payment, and show that types of payments that lower pain of payment increase variety seeking by increasing the overall attractiveness of the choice set.

Nayoung Lee (Tennessee)

Does Meaningful Work Strengthen or Weaken the Performance Effects of Frontline Employee Organizational Identification: A Meta-Analytic Evaluation

This study tests competing theoretical predictions about whether the level of meaningfulness (or sense of purpose) inherent in a frontline occupation enhances or attenuates the positive effect of organizational identification (OI) on frontline employee job performance. Building on meta-analytic data and alternative measures of meaningfulness, we find that: (1) autonomy and competence (but not relatedness) determine the meaningfulness frontline employees experience at work, (2) meaningfulness attenuates the positive effect of OI on in-role performance, and (3) the positive impact of OI on extra-role performance is unaffected by work meaningfulness. The study's findings are most consistent with social exchange theory, challenge prior evidence which suggests that a supportive work context enhances the effect of OI on frontline employee performance, and imply that the effect of OI on in- versus extra- role performance may be governed by different psychological mechanisms. To managers, our study suggests that internal marketing investments in frontline employee OI are advisable when improving extra-role performance is the goal, and that doing so in hopes of improving in-role performance is most appropriate when the work performed requires high levels of competence but only affords limited opportunity to experience autonomy (as occurs in the case of nurses and bank tellers).

Session 5: Sales and Services Room 399 (Friday, April 7 1015am-1115am)

Gerard E. "Jerry" Kelly (Memphis)

Is the Importance of the Seller's Communications in a B2B Context Underrated? A Preliminary Study

Salesperson service behaviors have been demonstrated to produce a significant effect on customer/buyer satisfaction and on trust in a business-to-business relationship (Ahearne, Jelinek, & Jones, 2007). Information communication behaviors are identified as one of the most important salesperson service behaviors; however, the information communication construct is restricted in definition as pertaining to product information (Ahearne *et al.*, 2007). The focus of this researcher's study is to examine a broader construct of Salesperson Communications – as perceived by the customer – along four dimensions: communication frequency, communication responsiveness, knowledge communication, and communication value. It is hypothesized that this broader construct of Salesperson Communications will account for a greater portion of the variance explained in B2B customer satisfaction and commitment than the extant literature suggests. From an academic perspective, support for this hypothesis will increase the marketing academician's knowledge regarding the importance of Salesperson Communications in a B2B seller-customer relationship. Future expansion of the scope of this study will include theory relevant moderating and mediating variables and utilize research methods that will enhance the external validity of the research, in an effort to suggest actionable marketing practitioner recommendations as well.

Kevin Chase (UK)**The Impact of Restricted Buyer-Supplier Access on Organizational Buying Behavior**

There is an increasing trend where buying organizations limit access between buyers and suppliers during the buying process. This is especially true for public organizations that are governed by strict rules and regulations. However, much of the existing research on buyer-seller exchange assumes buyer-supplier access is unrestricted. The purpose of the present research is to fill this significant gap by identifying how suppliers can be successful in a restricted environment. Due to the limited nature of research in this area, we employ a grounded longitudinal approach that includes detailed observation and analysis of eight organizational purchases in the public sector. Our research provides evidence that a focal supplier can increase success by using a strategic approach in providing information and solutions to buyers during limited communications, such as the supplier RFP response. When buyer-supplier access is restricted, this advantage occurs for two reasons: 1) buyer impressions of suppliers are harder to change and 2) competitors have a limited ability to respond to unique information and customer solutions identified by the focal supplier.

Stacie Waites (MSU) and Jennifer Stevens (MSU)**Eat Green, Get Lean: Promoting Sustainability Reduces Consumption**

The overconsumption of food contributes greatly to health problems affecting a large portion of society while also straining earth's natural resources. Attempts by policymakers to encourage sustainable practices relative to food often focus more on the role of producers and less on the role of consumers, even though a growing number of consumers are concerned about the sustainability of the products they consume. Yet, consumers often fail to perceive any immediate, personal benefits from consuming sustainably; instead they envision benefits only for future society as a whole. Three studies, which all capture actual behavior—the consumption of food and beverage—provide evidence that food promoted as sustainable can produce individual consumer benefits through reduced consumption. Study 1 shows the effect of sustainability lessening consumption. Study 2 demonstrates how sustainability semantically primes a prosocial focus, which is the mechanism involved in the reduction of consumption. Study 3 then shows that this effect is enhanced for those with higher levels of self-control.

Session 6: Embarrassment and Emotion Room 391 (Friday, April 7 1015am-1115am)

Christian Barney (MSU)

How Embarrassing! The Effect of Anonymity on Customer Embarrassment

For the first time, online purchases have outnumbered purchases made in-store (excluding groceries) with 51% of purchases being made through web channels. This number is continuing to grow, even among older generations (Stevens 2016). While many retailers are struggling with how to get shoppers in their doors, another problem is how to keep them there and sell products. One reason shoppers make certain purchases online is to minimize the embarrassment of being seen with certain products (e.g., condoms, diet related products, or plus-size clothing). While much research talks about the success of product differentiation (e.g., Dickson & Ginter, 1987; Ampuero and Vila, 2006), our research conversely shows that for embarrassing products, increasing product anonymity can be a more strategic approach to selling products. In order to minimize embarrassment in the context of shopper behavior, consumers use preemptive strategies to avoid embarrassment, such as going to a not-crowded store, waiting for other customers to leave the aisle, not asking store employees for help, and adding more items to their basket to distract from the embarrassing item (Blair and Roese, 2013). Our research shows that another tactic shoppers use to mitigate embarrassment is to buy the most anonymous looking product as determined by the packaging.

Alex Ziegler (UK)

How Embarrassing for You (and Me): Antecedents and Effects of Observer Embarrassment

Although previous research on consumer embarrassment consistently demonstrates that the presence (real or imagined) of observers is necessary for consumers to experience embarrassment, the impact on these observers remains underinvestigated. The current research introduces the concept of observer embarrassment to the literature and uses appraisal theory to explain why people who witness an embarrassing event may be embarrassed themselves and how this negatively affects observers and marketers. Across five studies, the authors use physiological and self-report measures to validate the concept of observer embarrassment. They also examine the process by which observers experience this embarrassment and its negative outcomes through the moderators of a shared identity between the observer and embarrassed consumer and the social presence of other observers. Implications for researchers and marketers conclude.

Leah Smith (Tennessee)

Emojional Contagion in Mediated Communication

In-person communication utilizes both verbal and nonverbal cues to convey meaning. However, the lack of nonverbal cues in most mediated communication (e.g., text messages, social media etc.) limits the amount and type of information that a sender can convey. These limits of mediated communication, however, are now slowly eroding as emojis are now commonly utilized to convey meaning through such media. This study uses emotional

contagion theory to explore how and when emojis function within a digital message to provide nonverbal signals of the sender's emotion and enable emotional transfer between the sender and receiver. That is, the study explores whether emojis serve as a substitute for facial expressions in mediated communication. Moreover, as emoji usage has spread beyond interpersonal communication (e.g. social media posts from brands, companies, or public figures), it is important to establish whether their effectiveness varies across contexts. This study thus seeks to identify both the types of meaning that emojis can add to a message and the conditions that determine whether emotion transfer through emojis occurs.

Session 7: Services and Strategy Room 311 (Saturday, April 8 1000am-1100am)

Ji "Miracle" Qi (Alabama)

The Influence of Operational Rationalization Practices on Frontline Employee Engagement

The ongoing prevalence of disengaged frontline employees (FLEs) delivering poor or indifferent levels of customer service is an issue at the forefront of many firms' strategic agendas. Yet, research that addresses service improvement initiatives continues to focus more on the perceptions of service recipients than on FLE service providers. Based on the apparent dearth of FLE engagement, service provider firms need to better understand antecedent factors that influence employee engagement. Drawing on social exchange theory and recent evidence from exemplar retailing contexts, the study findings show that operational rationalization practices commonly implemented in manufacturing contexts are also significant predictors of FLE engagement in service provision contexts. In addition, organizational support and customer focus are identified as mediating conduits that, consistent with role specific conceptualizations of employee engagement, differentially influence FLE job and organization engagement.

Harrison Pugh (FSU)

A Customer Scorned: Effects of Employee Reprimands in Frontline Service Encounters

This research examines the implications of manager reprimands of frontline employees following a service failure incident. Drawing upon social exchange theory and looking at both customer and employee reactions, three studies find that customers are more satisfied with failed service encounters when they are aware the employee was reprimanded. This effect is mediated by deontic justice perceptions and moderated by the customer's just world beliefs, such that high believers are more satisfied than low believers when they are told about an employee's reprimand. Direct observation of the reprimand acts as a key boundary condition whereby customers become dissatisfied when they are present during the reprimand. Furthermore, we find that customer perceptions of frontline reprimands are tied to reprimand privacy whereas employee perceptions are tied to reprimand civility. This research is the first to simultaneously examine the effects of workplace reprimands on customer and frontline employee satisfaction. For managers, our findings illuminate the usefulness of communicating employee reprimands to customers, a low-cost alternative to other types of recovery efforts.

Ashish Sharma (Georgia)

Behavioral Outcomes of Frontline Employees' Orientation Ambidexterity in Customer Engagement: The Role of Customer Base Characteristics

Recent research has begun examining frontline employees' (FLEs') ambidexterity in pursuing two seemingly incompatible tasks, such as exploration of new opportunities and exploitation of existing ones. Ambidexterity advocates tout a synergistic, positive interaction effect when pursuing both tasks; yet empirical results are mixed. In two studies on the relationship between FLEs' orientation ambidexterity in "exploration" of new customers (i.e., hunting) versus "exploitation" of existing customers (i.e., farming) and their behavioral ambidexterity, the authors demonstrate that these mixed results can be explained by a closer examination of (1) whether FLEs' behavioral ambidexterity takes place sequentially or concurrently after receiving feedback and (2) whether FLEs possess resource slack created through customer base characteristics that enables them to resolve conflicts in orientation ambidexterity. The empirical results have implications for how to better manage FLEs' ambidexterity.

Session 8: Sensory Marketing Room 399 (Saturday, April 8 1000am-1100am)

Ashley Thomas (Ole Miss)

The Impact of Food Package Color on Consumers' Food Evaluations and Choices

There has been a recent proliferation of front-of-package (FOP) nutrition icons in the marketplace, and much attention has been paid to the effects of these icons on consumer behavior. In doing so, however, researchers have overlooked other package features that could also be influential at the point of purchase. In particular, we propose that the color of food packages can similarly serve as an important signal to consumers. Utilizing a processing fluency theoretical framework, we examine the interaction of evaluative and objective FOP nutrition icons with various package colors on consumers' healthfulness evaluations and choices. We also consider the potential mediating role of perceived congruency between the package colors and icons.

Amy "Rebecca" Jones (Memphis)

The Power of Scent: Effects of Scent on Temperature Perception Due to Synesthesia

Most research on the impact of scent has focused on its effects on memory and brand recall (e.g., Krishna, 2012; Morrin and Ratneshwar, 2003). Scent has been shown to have an effect on behaviors through the use of mood mechanisms (Baron and Bronfen, 1994). Given the mixed findings on scents' effects (Ellen & Bone, 1998), there is a need for further exploration in the scent research area. Synesthesia is a phenomenon in which stimulation of one human sense causes abnormal experiences in another sense (Hubbard and Ramachandran, 2005). In regards to synesthesia, several studies have found that certain scents can carry haptic-based affiliations where some scents are perceived as warm (e.g. vanilla) and others are perceived as cool (e.g. peppermint). Krishna, Elder, and Caldara (2010) found that gel packs that were infused with a cool (vs. warm) scent were evaluated as

more effective at cooling (vs. warming) participants' hands. Kotler (1973, pg. 50) defined atmospherics as "the effort to design buying environments to produce specific emotional effects in the buyer that enhance his purchase probability". An important factor in atmospherics is the element of the atmosphere. We are concerned with atmosphere in reference to the quality of the area in which the product is presented. Since this type of atmosphere is processed through our senses, it is possible to describe the atmosphere utilizing sensory language. Scent may be an influential element in producing useful perceptions of a retail atmosphere. This research proposes that semantic associations of a scent can be used to manipulate an individual's perception of body temperature in order to influence purchase behavior. In this study, I test whether people will subsume warm and cool scents' associations with self-perception of temperature when making certain product purchasing decisions.

Brandon McAlexander (Arkansas)

The 'Artworlds' of Consumer Cultures

This study attempts to understand how art emanates from a subculture of consumption by exploring the context of consumers building their own computers and modifying their cases. Data was gathered using participant-observation and in-depth interviewing. As art is a difficult concept to define, this article draws on social theory from both Danto and Bourdieu to help understand this phenomenon. Both argue that art cannot be defined directly, but is defined by the institutions that surround it, called the Artworld. In this article, it is argued that many smaller artworlds exist independent of the over-arching "Artworld" provided similar institutions exist in that subculture. The article then describes the analogous artworld institutions that exist within the chosen subculture to demonstrate the existence of a subculture-level artworld. Using this information helps managers understand how to create and sustain a marketplace that encourages creative consumers to develop products that the subculture itself considers art.