

Editorial

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Dear Sir or Madam,

This issue (50/4) of **der markt—International Journal of Marketing**, consists of four articles. One of **der markt's** main targets is to issue contributions regarding innovative and alternative approaches beyond the mainstream of science. Another fundamental aim is the bridging of the gap between scientific research and practical application. Against this backdrop, the articles of this issue cover different and novel marketing topics of relevance for both research and practice.

The issue begins with a piece of research by Timothy Butler and Giles D'Souza (University of Alabama). The authors focus on loyalty programs in the credit card industry. Specifically, the effectiveness of soft and hard loyalty program benefits in relation to customer attitude and behavior is analyzed. As basis for further considerations, a comprehensive literature review is provided. The second article, by Robert Mai und Julia Hintermeier (TU Dresden), concentrates on the question whether regional dialects of front-line employees have positive or negative effects in business settings. In extent literature a scarcity of research on this topic exists. Based on 48 interviews, the findings generally indicate that regional dialects are no disadvantage; however, dialects have substantial influence on consumer attitudes. Moreover, the authors provide theoretical and managerial implications. The third article, by Manfred Bruhn, Verena Batt and Michel Bogner (University of Basel) analyzes the effects of online communications on brand-related constructs like brand image or brand awareness. A conceptual model is developed and empirically tested using structural

equation modeling. Finally, the authors offer several implications, based on the findings of the study. In the fourth article of this issue, Heribert Gierl and Janine Schweider (University Augsburg) study the influence of conceptual fluency on product evaluations. The authors examine both existing research and theoretical background on this research field. Findings of four experiments are reported to provide new insight into the relationship between conceptual fluency and evaluations. By complementing and confirming existing research, the authors provide valuable conclusions.

This issue of **der markt—International Journal of Marketing** concludes with a book review, a brief report and a Call for Papers. The book review deals with a publication, titled: *Konsumentenverhalten* (8th edition), written by Volker Trommsdorff and Thorsten Teichert. Subsequently, Arne Floh provides a report of the VHB Marketing-Habilitandentreffen 2011, hosted by WU Vienna. A Call for Papers on "Marketing for a healthier world: Emerging topics in health marketing" edited by Stefan Hoffmann, Robert Mai und Ute Schwarz (TU Dresden) is also published in this issue of **der markt**.

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If you are interested in publishing your work in **der markt—International Journal of Marketing**, please contact alexander.zauner@wu.ac.at.

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