



**m.core**  
MARKETING & CONSUMER RESEARCH



# in focus

*Our focus is on the human being as consumer. Consumption is present in all domains of human behavior. Studying consumers means addressing phenomena that are relevant to individuals and society.*

*We embrace multiple perspectives and approaches because deep insights demand multiple viewpoints.*

*We are particularly known for our unique insights into the powers of ownership, the frame of customer value, and the psychology of sustainable and responsible behavior.*

*Curiosity, reflection and respect guide all our actions: as experts, researchers, teachers, partners and colleagues.*

m.core's mission

Dear alumni,

Welcome to 2023. We wish you health, success and inspiration and start the year with an attempt to contribute to the latter.

And we do so in English! Why? Because we now have international alumni that can only benefit from this in the lingua franca.

In our 9th "mcore in focus", accompany us through an eventful past year and learn what excites us in research and the classroom.

Stay in focus with us!

Prof. Bernadette Kamleitner  
Institutsvorständin m.core

PD Dr. Monika Koller  
stv. Institutsvorständin m.core

No. 9, 2023

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PS: Another alumni would also like to stay in touch and in focus? No problem. To subscribe or unsubscribe to the newsletter, simply send us a short e-mail to: [mcore@wu.ac.at](mailto:mcore@wu.ac.at).

Art of Saying Thank-You  
Thank-You Variations Can Affect  
Others



## Thanking too much? Successful defense.

Congratulations to Renato Regis who successfully defended his PhD thesis. In his thesis he looked at the power of thanking in different contexts such as charitable giving and everyday helping. One of his findings: sometimes people help others less after they were thanked (including for covid compliance and survey participation). The committee, consisting of Bernadette Kamleitner, Ulrike Kaiser, Monika Koller and Michaela Neumayr, quickly agreed that he performed "Very Good". We all congratulated him on this great achievement!

## We got even more international: Welcome to Burcak Bas our new team member!

Burcak Bas is our new Assistant Professor at the institute. She joined us after her PhD at Bocconi University. Broadly interested in consumer psychology as well as judgment and decision-making, she aims in her research to address questions that contribute to consumer well-being and societal welfare.



## Prizes and Awards

This year we were once again pleased to receive prizes and awards, including the "Goldenes Regal" for Bernadette Kamleitner, the nomination for the "Ars Docendi 2022 – Staatspreis für exzellente Lehre" for Monika Koller and Eva Marckhgott, the Best Poster Award at the ISTR Conference for Renato Regis, the "Würdigungspreis" of the BMBWF for our student Kathrin Hammerlindl and the ECR Academic Student Award for Johanna Resch.



## Research Project "Visual Boundaries in the City"

A current two-year project at the Institute, financed by the "Jubiläumsfonds der Stadt Wien" for the WU Vienna, is dedicated to the perception of visual boundaries in the city. Using various social science methods, Barbara Hartl, Monika Koller and Bernadette Kamleitner are investigating in the project how people in the city perceive visual boundaries, such as stop lines or fences, and how they influence their behavior.



## Icy fun

We used the pre-Christmas period for a team event and tested ourselves in curling. It was great fun for all of us and can only be recommended as a teambuilding activity. After the sporty activity we honoured international composition with dinner at a Brazilian restaurant.



For more news and information, visit the following platforms:





In this section, we put the focus on people. We continue the series with our Research and Teaching Assistant [Renato Regis, MSc.](#)



**You will soon complete your dissertation on the topic “The art of saying thank you”. What are your key research findings?**

Although people are thanked many times in everyday life, there is not a lot of knowledge about how variations to the way we thank people can affect them. Firstly, I looked into real thank-you letters that charitable organizations send to donors and validated the idea that there is a big variation in how they do it. Some organizations communicate in a more distant way, while others try to reduce the distance to donors. Also, while some seem to solely focus on the positive outcome of a donation, others make sure to still bring reminders about the problems that they are addressing. Another common aspect was the use of intensifiers, including the use of capital letters and bold font, as well as the addition of words such as “herzlichen” and “vielen” to the “thank you”.

This variation, the thank-you intensity, is the focus of my other two projects. I find that sometimes thanking someone intensely can backfire and reduce his or her willingness to help again. This effect seems to be dependent on how the people being thanked see the behavior they are being thanked for. On the one hand, if the behavior is not important to one’s self, people can be demotivated by the intense thank-you, not helping upon a second chance. On the

other hand, when engaging in something important to the self, an intense thank-you can motivate prosocial behavior.

There are many nuances to a thank-you and they seem to affect receivers’ subsequent behavior. My research results suggest that people can also be thanked too much and sometimes the simple words “thank you” might be best to ensure that thanking makes the world a better place.

**In July you also won the Best Poster Award at the ISTR conference in Montreal. This also illustrates the importance of your research. What are the implications of your research for practice?**

My research can be of high relevance for charitable organizations. These are organizations that constantly have to thank donors and hope to build relationships with them. Knowing about best practices in thanking is important in the effort of turning one-time donors into recurrent ones.

**You will now soon successfully complete your PhD degree. What are your plans for the future?**

I am still quite open about the future and excited about new opportunities. I love academic research, but also want to see more of the practical side of the industry.

**About the person:**

Renato Regis is a Research and Teaching Assistant at the Institute for Marketing & Consumer Research. His research focuses on consumer behavior, marketing communications, moral licensing, and gratitude. His PhD thesis is about expressing gratitude and its effects on receivers. <https://www.linkedin.com/in/renatoregis/>





## POP - Possession, Ownership and Property

Property, legal ownership as well as psychological ownership (i.e., the feeling that something is “mine”) play a fundamental role in human behavior. They determine social interactions and are central to all economic transactions. The feeling that something is mine has consequences that go far beyond economic transactions. It can be felt for almost anything (goods, organizations, jobs, ideas, etc.), helps form identity, provides orientation, and implies acceptance of responsibility and willingness to engage. Therefore, it has an impact on how we deal with private and public goods, on our job satisfaction, but also on our willingness to buy and pay. (Psychological) ownership contributes to social problems as well as their solution. Psychological ownership is one of the central research topics of our institute and we want to share our knowledge with all interested parties.

### We have launched the POP Collection

The POP Collection at WU Library contains some of the most important works on the topics of “Possession, Ownership and Property” and is internationally unique. This is mainly due to the fact that the collection at WU is interdisciplinary; from philosophy, to economics, to anthropology and psychology, you will find a wide variety of works that address the broad complex of topics in different ways.

**P** **O** **P**  
**Possession** **Ownership** **Property**

Find out how Possession, Ownership or Property might matter for you and the things that you are interested in!

<https://viewer.wu.ac.at/viewer/pop/>

The collection originated as a gift from Floyd Rudmin (University of Tromsø) to the Institute for Marketing & Consumer Research, which continues to expand the collection in collaboration with the library team and with the involvement of the scientific community.

In this video you will get an insight into the POP Collection and learn from international researchers how important the topic is.



### Want to learn more about Possession, Ownership and Property?

In the video series “Bernadette Kamleitner in conversation with...” we give you an insight into this topic. The video series is continuously updated with new conversations with renowned international researchers. Click on the image to see the video.



Want to learn more? The following links take you straight to openly accessible resources:

- [search the POP Collection](#)
- [read our Blog](#)
- [find Q&As on our website](#)





### Visual Attention

Rinklin, Isabella, Hubert, Marco, Koller, Monika, Kenning, Peter (2022). Visual Attention to Novel Products – Cross-Cultural Insights From Physiological Data. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 13, 840862.

#### Abstract:

Consumer Neuroscience has been established as a field that can provide additional insights beyond what traditional qualitative and quantitative methods in marketing research can offer. Regarding methods, papers published within the area of Consumer Neuroscience apply various sets of techniques, from fMRI to more psychophysiological measures, such as skin conductance or heart rate. In our article published in *Frontiers in Psychology*, in the Decision Neuroscience section, electrodermal activity, as a measure of arousal, as well as eye-tracking, to capture the gaze motions of respondents to research the topic under scrutiny, are applied. Using those alternative methods enables us to derive implications on consumers' perception beyond questionnaire data.

In our study, we aimed to investigate visual attention and perceived attractiveness of known versus unknown (novel) products above and beyond self-report data, applying physiological methods. We also aimed at detecting differences across participants with different cultural backgrounds. We use a cross-cultural exploratory approach, comparing which allows for comparing results gathered in the United States and China. We collected field data on physiological parameters (electrodermal activity and eye-tracking) and complemented them by behavioral data. Mobile eye-tracking was employed to capture

attention by measuring gaze parameters and electrodermal activity serves as indicator for arousal at an unconscious level. A traditional scale approach measuring perceived attractiveness of known versus novel products provide insights at a conscious level. Our results suggest that US-American and Chinese consumers in our sample indeed process novel products differently. This can be observed at an unconscious as well as conscious level. At an unconscious level, we observe different gaze movements and arousal levels. Regarding behavioral data, the level of vertical orientation shapes the perceived attractiveness of novel products at a conscious level. Next to those intriguing findings, regarding the perception of novel products, the study also showcases how physiological methods can complement behavioral ones when investigating visual attention to products. It underscores varying conscious as well as unconscious visual attention and attractiveness ratings, comparing known versus novel products, driven by cultural differences. Data from a field setting further enrich the implications derived for new product development and applied marketing.

[Read the full article...](#)





Digitalization and our desire to own

Kamleitner, Bernadette, Kokkoris, Michail D. (2022). How Digitalization Blurs Boundaries, Makes Things Ungraspable, and Affects Psychological Appropriation, The Routledge Handbook of Digital Consumption. Llamas, R. & Belk, R. (Hrsg.). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Abstract:

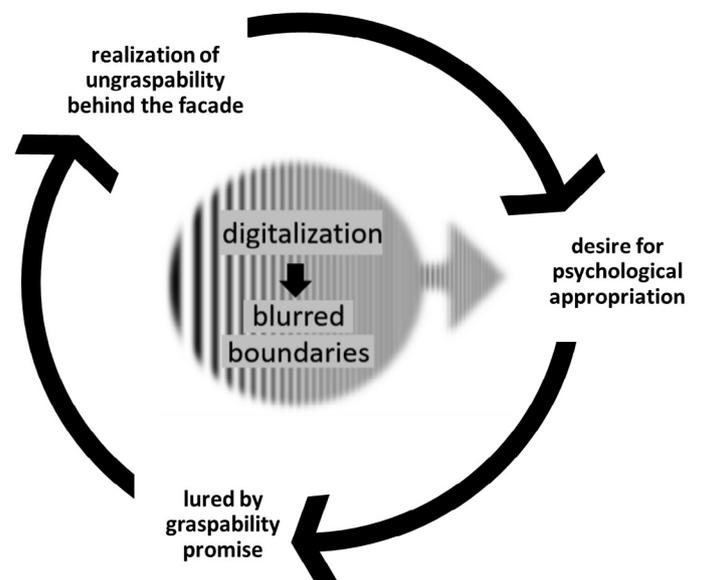
We offer a new lens on what this actually means. We suggest that digitalization is subtly undermining the degree to which people are able to psychologically appropriate objects, concepts, and all else that they can experience as “mine” or “ours”. The force giving rise to this is a blend of mechanisms (i.e. dematerialization, acceleration and simultaneity) that essentially blurs all sorts of boundaries.

This “Big Blur” (Kamleitner & Kokkoris, 2021) leaves people unable to fully grasp what they are interacting with while making them crave experiences of mastery and ownership. The marketplace shows evidence for that in various ways. My claims abound across industries and promises of mastery as well as calls to make things yours are frequent appeals.

However, we also show how many of these promises of graspability and appropriation are superficial and do not really deliver on the promise (e.g., userfriendly interfaces for complicated services that people do not really grasp). We culminate in suggesting that

there might be a vicious circle of trying to grasp the ungraspable and that this is fueled by the reinforcing powers of thwarted desires of ownership.

We conclude by implications for future research and the future of consumption more broadly.



[Read the full article...](#)





### Sharing on Platforms

Marth, Sarah, [Hartl, Barbara](#), Penz, Elfriede. 2022. Sharing on platforms: Reducing perceived risk for peer-to-peer platform consumers through trust-building and regulation. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*. 1-13.

#### Abstract:

In the last decade a new method of peer-to-peer (P2P) or consumer-to-consumer (C2C) exchange has developed, triggered by economic crises, increased environmental awareness and facilitated by a number of technological innovations, which have simplified sharing of goods. In the academic literature, this exchange is referred to as a “sharing economy”, “collaborative consumption”, or “platform economy”. The sharing economy has become a phenomenon of relevance, especially in marketing, providing challenges and opportunities for business and consumers worldwide. For instance, sharing a flat with strangers is no longer hypothetical but well accepted by many consumers who participate in P2P services. Online platforms connect consumers worldwide to enable sharing with strangers on a large scale. Those P2P sharing platforms act as intermediaries between providers of goods and services and consumers. As the sharing partners do not know each other personally, sharing via platforms entails a certain amount of risk. In order to attract consumers to participate in the sharing process, platforms need to apply mechanisms to reduce the perceived risk of potential customers.

The main interest of the current research is to answer how perceived risk can be mitigated by regulatory

and trust-building measures on the platforms’ website. The current research investigates whether trust-building measures and regulation mechanisms presented on a website can reduce the potential customers’ level of perceived risk and increase their willingness to participate in a platform’s sharing offer. To test these research questions, a pre-study and two experimental online surveys were conducted. First, the websites of existing P2P accommodation platforms were analyzed to identify whether and how trust-building measures and regulation mechanism are communicated by the platforms. The analysis revealed a lack of regulation mechanisms. Second, the information on a fictitious platforms’ website was manipulated in two online experiments. The analysis revealed that regulation mechanisms led to lower perceived risk and a higher intention to engage in sharing. However, commonly used trust-building measures on P2P accommodation platforms showed no significant effect on risk perception and the intention to engage in sharing in the present study. The current research has valuable implications for the marketing of P2P platforms. The way they act as an intermediary, enabling strangers worldwide to organize sharing, can either increase or reduce risks for consumers, e.g., by running background checks on new customers. In practice, managerial strategies aiming to reach potential consumers of online offers within the sharing economy need to be customized for this specific online environment. Based on the impossibility of relying on physical and personal cues, such as a store or salesperson, the website of such platforms needs to provide a good impression and establish trust in the potential customer.

[Read the full article...](#)





## WU matters. WU talks. - MEINS WIRD DEINS - Güter wechseln ihre Besitzer\*innen

Passing on instead of throwing away, reusing used goods instead of buying new ones - everyone can make a contribution to sustainability. What psychological mechanisms play a role in the second-hand market? What opportunities are there and who benefits? These and other questions were discussed at the event "WU matters. WU talks. - MEINS WIRD DEINS - Güter wechseln ihre Besitzer\*innen".



The lecture by Bernadette Kamleitner and the subsequent discussion with the communication and sustainability consultant Nunu Kaller and the moderator Andreas Obrecht (Ö1), illustrated that everyone can make a contribution via second hand.



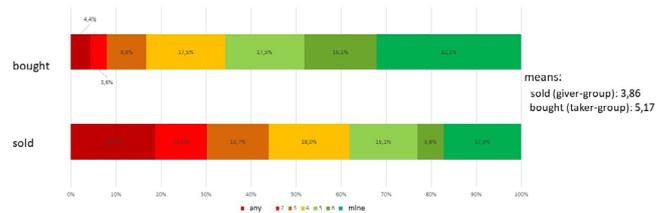
Moderator and sociologist Andreas Obrecht, communication and sustainability consultant Nunu Kaller and WU professor Bernadette Kamleitner, © WUtv

### When does mine become yours and what does that have to do with sustainability?

In the Second-Hand market, goods change hands, what does that mean for the people involved, what does it take for this to work and is it really sustainable? Bernadette Kamleitner, Nunu Kaller and Andreas Obrecht discussed

these questions at the event and it showed possibilities and limits in the direction of sustainability, which concern everyone. The prerequisite for the continued use of used goods is to be able to both accept and let go.

How strongly do you feel a sense of ownership for the last used good you sold vs. the one you bought?



Goods purchased second-hand are perceived significantly more as "mine" than goods that are resold ( $t(274) = -5.732, p < .05$ ).



Im Fokus, February 2022, N = 139 (giver) & N = 137 (taker) (45,5 % male, 54,5 % female, 0% diverse) average age=43,2 years

A closer look at the concrete practices and possible undesirable side effects is worthwhile in any case.

Sustainability is becoming increasingly important and for this very reason it is particularly important to know which measures are target-oriented and how we can all influence them.

For those who could not be at the event or would like to see Bernadette Kamleitner's presentation and the discussion with Nunu Kaller and Andreas Obrecht again, you can do so in the following video (in German).



On the day of the event series WU matters. WU talks. the POP (Possession, Ownership and Property) Collection was also ceremonially opened at the WU Library.

Get all the insights in this short follow up report (in German):



## Events and initiatives

In our event series “Marketing Insights”, we invite guests from business and society to WU to engage in insightful and reflective discussions with our students and the m.core-faculty. It allows students to gain insights into timely topics. “Marketing Insights” captures the most current issues in contemporary marketing and consumer research. We invite different international experts from academia and practice to share their knowledge with our students. “Marketing Insights” provides a platform for in-depth and critical discussions of marketing and consumer research questions that are of academic, applied and societal relevance. It challenges students to apply their customer-centered knowledge to a broader context of real-world problems. Moreover, it adds to their professional training in marketing and consumer research. The course concept was introduced by Monika Koller and Eva Marckhgott. In 2022, “Marketing Insights” was held by Monika Koller, Bernadette Kamleitner and Barbara Hartl.

Next to our guests featured below, in 2022 we also welcomed Susanne Vockenhuber, Louis Vuitton and Julia Pernt, Winkelbauer GmbH. Thank you very much for the great insights we discussed in class.

In November 2022, Heidi Porstner from Foodwatch Österreich joined us for a guest talk. She informed us about consumer rights and talked about various examples Foodwatch is currently dealing with (e.g., marketing to children). She brought a couple of current examples to class which inspired a reflective discussion about marketing and communications. A big thank you for the great insights and the exciting discussion.



Martina Ableidinger (MA48) visited us at WU in October this year. We learned more about the great variety of marketing strategies of MA48 and talked about the upcoming challenges for marketing. A big thank you for the great insights and the exciting discussion. You can get further insights into the topic watching the accompanying Marketing Insights video



Marketing Insights is traditionally been held as an evening event. So we were also able to enjoy the nice view from WU campus and get inspired by the sunset.



### Nomination of Monika Koller and Eva Marckhgott for the “Ars Docendi” – “Staatspreis für Exzellente Lehre” for their course Marketing Insights

The course concept of “Marketing Insights” was introduced by Monika Koller and Eva Marckhgott. In 2022, they were now nominated for the “Ars Docendi” – “Staatspreis für Exzellente Lehre” 2022. This underlines the success story of this innovative teaching concept, bringing together students, practitioners and academic expertise. The course concept is now featured in “[Atlas der Guten Lehre](#)”, a selection of excellent teaching concepts at Austrian Universities.



Interviews of our video series Marketing Insights with speakers and practice partners you can find under [www.wu.ac.at/mcore/partner/insights](http://www.wu.ac.at/mcore/partner/insights)



**m.core**

Science inspired by consumers



## Keep in touch

Contact to our alumni, our students and to science and practice is a special concern for us.  
Use our platforms to stay in touch and up to date.



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[wu.ac.at/mcore](http://wu.ac.at/mcore)



Here you can find brief and succinct news messages.  
[facebook.com/WU.mcore](https://facebook.com/WU.mcore)



On LinkedIn, we mainly provide insights from the world of consumer research. The platform also offers you the opportunity to network with other alumni.  
<https://www.linkedin.com/company/mcore-wu>



On Instagram, you can take a glimpse on what moves us in the moment. Above all, this platform allows a look behind the scenes and illustrates the interdisciplinary everyday life of the m.core institute.  
[www.instagram.com/mcore\\_wu](http://www.instagram.com/mcore_wu)



Our YouTube channel offers you exciting insights. See research results in our video series 1 Paper 1 Minute, get insights into the POP collection and experience interviews with well-known people from science and practice.  
[youtube.com/channel/UC8VDH-0BCxP3SPBcBscNkCA](https://youtube.com/channel/UC8VDH-0BCxP3SPBcBscNkCA)

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