

Ted Matherly

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Education

Ph.D., Marketing, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, 2012 (expected).

Dissertation Title: Observer Interpretation of Signaling in Consumer Decision Making

Dissertation Co-Chairs: Amna Kirmani, Roland Rust

B.S., Communications, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 2006.

Research Interests

Signaling, identity construction, social influence, consumer inferences

Working Papers

Ferraro, Rosellina, Amna Kirmani, and Ted Matherly, "Are They Who They Claim? Intentionality and Authenticity in Identity Signaling with Brands," preparing for resubmission to *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Abstract. We examine conditions under which observers make an inference of identity signaling from the way in which consumers use brands, and the effect of this inference on perceptions of consumers' authenticity and traits. In three studies, we show that observers infer that a consumer engaged in conspicuous brand usage, such as flaunting or name dropping, is signaling identity. This inference leads to perceptions that the target is less authentic and less likely to possess brand-relevant traits. Moreover, the negative effects of brand identity signaling occur on brand-relevant traits, but not on brand-irrelevant traits. We show that perspective taking attenuates the negative effects of inferred identity signaling.

Matherly, Ted and Anastasiya Pocheptsova, "Is What You See What They Feel? Fluency and Identity Signaling," preparing for submission to *Psychological Science*.

Abstract. In this research, we consider the effect of processing fluency of identity signals on individuals behavior in intergroup interactions. Signals are used to show affiliation with an in-group, as well as to distinguish oneself from out-groups. In a series of studies we show that increase in difficulty of processing of identity signals amplifies ones desire to differentiate from out-groups.

Further, we demonstrate that less fluent signals led participants to behave less cooperatively in interactions with out-group members (making lower offers in an ultimatum game) and more cooperatively towards in-group members.

Dissertation

Observer Interpretation of Signaling in Consumer Decision Making

Committee: Amna Kirmani (co-chair), Roland T. Rust (co-chair), David Godes, Rosellina Ferraro, Charles Stangor (Department of Psychology).

Proposal defended: December 13, 2010.

Essay 1: “Observer Interpretation of Non-Ownership Brand Signaling”

Co-authored with Amna Kirmani.

Target Journal: *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Abstract. Consumers often elect to use branded T-shirts, tattoos, stickers and personal web pages as signals to communicate about themselves. We refer to these types of signals as non-ownership brand signals, or NOBS. NOBS are unique in that they do not require that the signaler own or use a brand’s core products. For instance, the wearing of a Prius t-shirt does not confirm that the individual owns a Prius. We suggest that observers infer that signalers use NOBS solely to communicate about themselves to others, because they do not serve a functional motive that differentiates them from an unbranded product. This contrasts with ownership signals, which can be used for functional as well as social identity purposes, and thus the motive for their use is less clear-cut.

Because of the strictly communicative function of NOBS, observers conclude that NOBS users are signaling about their attachment to the brand — that they have favorable attitudes towards and are more connected to the brand compared to someone using an ownership signal. Furthermore, observers should make these inferences more rapidly for NOBS, due to the relative clarity of the motives. However, observer beliefs about ownership of the brand and traits associated with brand users should be relatively constant between NOBS and ownership signals. This suggests that signalers may be able to use NOBS to inexpensively signal to others compared to ownership signals.

Essay 2: “Matching the Motive to the Market: Advertising for Socially Influenced Consumer Decisions”

Co-authored with Roland T. Rust.

Target Journal: *Journal of Marketing Research*.

Abstract. Brands frequently tailor their advertising strategies for positioning their products to best meet the needs of their potential customers. When these consumers have imperfect information, they may rely on the behavior of other customers to inform their decisions. How this behavior is interpreted can be affected by the observers’ motives, and the brand’s advertising can in turn drive these motives. A large group of people using a brand may be indicative of high quality, and thus allow it to satisfy

utilitarian motivations. At the same time, a consumer motivated by social identity may consider a brand's usefulness for identity signaling. A brand used by a group with preferences shared similar to the consumer's would be more effective for communicating about identity, and thus help achieve this goal.

We propose that consumers consider, in addition to their inherent preferences, the information they can infer from a brand's existing customers, and that brands can use their advertising to motivate consumers and affect how they weigh these different utilities. We develop an analytical model to demonstrate these propositions, and our results suggest that managers of brands with large market shares should use their advertising message to highlight their brand's popularity, because consumers infer that popular brands are of high quality. On the other hand, managers of niche brands should emphasize the character of their current users, because their differential advantage lies in potential customers identifying with the brand's installed customers.

Research in Progress

Pocheptsova, Anastasiya, Rosellina Ferraro, and Ted Matherly, "Effects of Reviewer Provided Context in Product Reviews," data collected, targeted to *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Tseng, Peggy and Ted Matherly, "Social Influence in Deal-Of-The-Day Website Sales," data collected, targeted to *Marketing Science*.

Presentations

Matherly, Ted and Anastasiya Pocheptsova (2011), "Is What You See What They Feel? Fluency and Identity Signaling," poster presented at *Marketing Academic Research Conference* College Park, MD.

Matherly, Ted and Roland Rust (2011), "Safety in Numbers," paper presented at Senior Students Research Colloquium, University of Maryland, College Park, MD.

Matherly, Ted and Anastasiya Pocheptsova (2010), "Is What You See What They Feel? Fluency and Identity Signaling," paper presented at *Association for Consumer Research*, Jacksonville, FL.

Matherly, Ted and Anastasiya Pocheptsova (2010), "Is What You See What They Feel? Fluency and Identity Signaling," paper presented at *Society for Consumer Psychology*, St. Pete Beach, FL.

*Session Co-Chair

Matherly, Ted and Anastasiya Pocheptsova (2009), "Is What You See What They Feel? Fluency and Identity Signaling," paper presented at *Society for Judgment and Decision Making*, Boston, MA.

Ferraro, Rosellina, Amna Kirmani and Ted Matherly (2009), "Signaling Identity Through Brands," paper presented at *Association for Consumer Research*, Pittsburgh, PA.

Ferraro, Rosellina, Amna Kirmani and Ted Matherly (2009), "Signaling Identity Through Brands," paper presented at *Society for Consumer Psychology*, San Diego, CA.

Matherly, Ted (2008). "Impacts of Motivation on Socially Influenced Product Choice," poster presented at *Association for Consumer Research*, San Francisco, CA.

Teaching Experience

Teaching Interests: Marketing Research, Consumer Behavior, Marketing Strategy

Marketing Research Methods (Undergraduate), Fall 2009, Instructor, University of Maryland.

Marketing Management (MBA), Spring 2009, Teaching Assistant, University of Maryland, Washington, DC.

Marketing Research Methods (Undergraduate), Fall 2008, Instructor, University of Maryland, Shady Grove.

Honors and Awards

2011 Nomination for Nash Award for Outstanding Doctoral Student, College Park, MD.

2009 AMA-Sheth Doctoral Consortium Fellow, Atlanta, GA.

2006 Michigan Men's Crew, Team Spirit Award, Ann Arbor, MI.

2003 ECAC Rowing National Championship, 1st place, Second Freshmen Eight, Cherry Hill, NJ.

Reviewing

Journal of Consumer Research, trainee reviewer.

Association for Consumer Research conference.

Society for Consumer Psychology conference.

Service

Professional

Association of Doctoral Students, Robert H. Smith School of Business, University of Maryland, College Park.

1. President (2009-2010)
2. Social Chair (2007-2009)

Community

Michigan Rowing Association.

1. Board Member (2006-Present)

Men's Crew, University of Maryland, College Park.

1. Head Coach (2008-2010)
2. Assistant Coach (2006-2008)

Professional Affiliations

Association for Consumer Research

Society for Consumer Psychology

Professional Experience

re:group Agency, 2006, Ann Arbor, MI.

Account Coordinator and Media Planning.

Developed database system for management and traffic for \$980K advertising account.

Managed advertising accounts within organization, established workflows from creative to media outlets.

Analyzed market data and developed media plans for clients.

Professional IT Skills

Language Familiarity: SQL, Perl, PHP, R, C++

Database Familiarity: MySQL, Access

Coursework

Marketing

Behavioral Research in Marketing	Joydeep Srivastava
Marketing Models in R	Michel Wedel
Survey Research Methods in Marketing	Janet Wagner
Survey of Marketing Models	P.K. Kannan
Information Processing	Rosellina Ferraro
Experimental Research in Marketing	Rebecca Hamilton
Marketing Strategy	Roland Rust
Mathematical Models in Marketing	Yogesh Joshi

Psychology

Quantitative Methods I	Kent Norman
Quantitative Methods II	Kevin O'Grady
Social Cognition	Arie Kruglanski
Goal Systems Theory	Arie Kruglanski

References

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Roland Rust, Ph.D.

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